

# Local inhabitants' opinion about the Triglav National Park management

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**ABSTRACT** The Triglav National Park is the only national park in Slovenia. The statute of the Triglav National Park came into force in 1981. The article presents the local inhabitants' opinion about the Triglav National Park management, their knowledge of the park management's tasks and activities and opinion about the park management's activity in the future. The results show that 20% of the interviewed inhabitants are dissatisfied with the park management. 9% of the interviewed inhabitants are very satisfied with the park management and 26.5% are satisfied with the park management. 76.1% of the interviewed inhabitants who live within the park and 44.2% of those who live outside the park had contacts with the park management, which indicates that the place of living has influence on people's contacts with the park management.

*Key-words:* national park, park management, local inhabitants' opinion.

*Received* in November 2008

*Accepted* in April 2009

## 1. Introduction

An awareness of the beauty and special nature of the Julian Alps or rather their value, gave rise to its conservation. Similar thoughts were also appearing elsewhere in Europe, and above all in America, where the first national park in the world was created in 1888. The seismologist and naturalist Albin Belar (1864–1936) proposed the conservation of the region above mighty cliffs of Komarča in 1908. The idea matured until 1920 when the section for conservation of the heritage of the Slovenian Museum Society wrote a memorandum to the Slovenian regional government which included a proposal for a nature park in the Valley of the Triglav Lakes. The proposal was accepted in 1924 with a validity of twenty years. So Slovenia became the fifth European country, after Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and Italy, to have a national park. During the Second World War, in 1944, the validity of the contract

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expired and the national park formally ceased to exist. Protection was restored in a somewhat enlarged scope (2000 ha) in 1961. Immediately after the designation, proposals were made for a larger area of the Julian Alps to be protected, above all Triglav, which is the highest peak (2864 m) in Slovenia and Slovenian national symbol, which by then had not been included in the national park. The preparation of technical plans and discussions were rather demanding and protracted, so the Triglav National Park has only been protected in its present extent (83.807 ha) since 1981 (Fabjan et al., 1985; Skoberne, 1991; Lukan Klavžer and Šolar, 2003).

On the basis of the level of protection the Triglav National Park is divided into outer (28.475 ha) and central (55.332 ha) zone. The former is made up of settled valleys and forested plateaus. Restrictions and prohibitions are milder, directing development and only prohibiting activities which could be detrimental to the environment. Protective measures in the central zone, embracing the entire high mountain area, representing better preserved and economically less active part of the park, are stricter (Skoberne, 1991; Lukan Klavžer and Šolar, 2003). There were three activities of the main economic importance, executed in this area in the past: ironworks, mountain pasturing and forestry. Nowadays the human's influence is much more variegated. Staying in the central part of the park is mostly of the season character and connected with the tourism and recreation as well as with holidays-spending (Rejec Brancelj and Smrekar, 2000).

The management of the Triglav National Park is the responsibility of the Triglav National Park Public Institution. The Triglav National Park Public Institution operates under Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning. According to legislation, the national park is protected area that has the following aims: (1) nature protection and conservation of cultural landscape, (2) ensuring sustainable park development, (3) promoting opportunities for enjoyment of the park, (4) research, (5) education activities and (6) management (Lukan Klavžer and Šolar, 2003; Triglavski ..., 2008).

The Triglav National Park management is divided into the following departments or services (Triglavski ..., 2008):

- planning, administration and development service,
- service for interventions in space,
- science and research service,
- agriculture, forestry and rural area development service,
- education and education on nature conservation service ,
- ranger service,
- protection and administration of wild fauna ,
- administrative affairs,
- finance service,

- public relations services,
- department for promotion and marketing,
- service for legal affairs,
- technical maintenance and real estate administration.

Local inhabitants and other visitors very often meet park rangers, who carry out protection and supervision in the area, take part in professional services of TNP (collecting of analytical data), take part in preventive and educational work, management and awareness raising activities and work with young population. All park rangers spend a lot of time putting up and maintaining the park infrastructure and taking care of TNP mountain huts. Besides the nature conservation tasks two thirds of them deal with hunting tasks and take care of wild animals. Some of them are mountain guides, mountain rescuers, and all of them are certainly a good source of information for visitors and local inhabitants as they know very well the park area. Within the framework of TNP Ranger Service a voluntary ranger service and Junior Ranger Program operates (Triglavski ..., 2008).

An important element of the park's activities has recently been a participation in the preparation of the new Triglav National Park Act (Triglavski ..., 2008).

The purpose of this article is to present local inhabitants' opinion about the Triglav National Park management, their tasks, knowing their activities and their opinion, what they expect from park management. The main question was if there were any differences in satisfaction with park management among interviewees who lived within the Triglav National Park and those, who lived outside the borders of the protected area.

## **2. Material and methods**

Data for the analysis were collected within the project "Triglavski narodni park – Analiza izkušenj lokalnega prebivalstva", using a questionnaire (Rodela, 2007) with 200 randomly chosen local inhabitants within and outside the Triglav National Park. Data collection took place from 5<sup>th</sup> until 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2006. Inside the Triglav National Park 46 residents from 19 villages were questioned, which represents 23% of the whole sample. In the areas around the Triglav National Park, 154 residents from 36 villages were questioned and that represents 77% of the whole sample. Comparing the area of living, there were 80 inquiries made in Posočje, 80 in Kranjska Gora and Bled area and 40 in Bohinj area. The interviewed people were chosen randomly, by considering the next criteria: they had to be adult local inhabitants having a permanent residence in that area. In the poll we wanted to equally include people employed in different economic spheres, namely farmers, tourism entrepreneurs, people employed in tourism, other entrepreneurs and craftsmen, people employed in bigger and smaller companies and people employed in public institutions.

People, who took part in the poll, were asked about the following socio-demographic characteristics: place of residence, gender, year of birth, number of members in their household and number of children, marital status, employment status, place of work and education.

The people were also asked to estimate the Triglav National Park management performance. Local inhabitants' opinion about the Triglav National Park management was studied using the following variables: satisfaction with park management, opinion about park manager's tasks, knowledge about park management work, participation in park management activities and satisfaction with the offer, the most proper ways of informing local people, expressing what would be the most interesting that the park management should offer.

There were three types of questions used during the research. Statements about the Triglav National Park management were rated with a seven-point Likert scale, with 1 representing that people totally disagree with the statement and 7 representing that they strongly agree with the statement. Some of the questions had pre-defined answers and respondents stated their opinion according to given options, e.g. Yes, No or I do not know. Some of the questions were open for respondents to answer at their will.

Statistic analysis of the questionnaire was made by using the SPSS 15.0 programme for Windows. Basic statistic parameters for each variable were calculated. Where necessary, mark 2 and 3 were put together as well as mark 5 and 6 on the 1 to 7 scale, because of small number of answers. Differences were tested with Chi-square test.

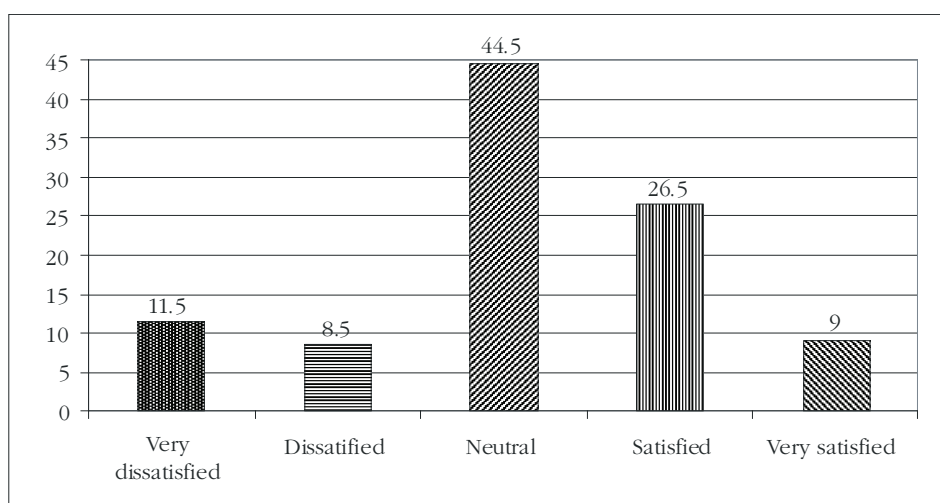
### **3. Results and discussion**

The number of people questioned was at the end distributed in favour of women (54.5%) against men (45.5%). The majority of people questioned were aged between 26 and 55 years (74.5%), and as such belong to the most active part of the population. Education level indicates that the majority of interviewees have secondary school education (64.5%). As for the employment status 14% of people included in poll were farmers, 32.5% employed in tourism and 53.5 employed in other economic branches. 38.5% of the questioned people live in families with 2 members, 25.5% in families with 3 members and 25.5% with 4 members. More than one half of the people included in the poll (53%) do not have any children. 21% of asked have only one child and 18.5% have two children. 61% of questioned inhabitants are married, 18.5% are single and 16.5% live together with a partner. 88.5% of people, who took part in the poll, work in the same municipality as they live in and 7% commute to work to the neighbouring municipality.

### 3.1. Satisfaction with Triglav National Park management

The Picture 1 shows that 20% of the interviewed inhabitants are dissatisfied with park management. 9% of the interviewed inhabitants are very satisfied and 26.5% of the interviewed inhabitants are satisfied with park management.

Picture 1.  
Satisfaction with park management (%)



Although the differences are on limits of statistical significance ( $p=0.061$ ), the results show that men are less satisfied with park management than women. 16.5% of men and 7.3% of women are very dissatisfied with park management and 8.8% of men and 8.3% of women are dissatisfied.

### 3.2. Making contact with park management

103 interviewees (51.5%) have had contacts with park management for different matters. 95 (47.5%) of the interviewed inhabitants have not had any personal contacts with park management. Two of the interviewees did not know if they had ever had any personal contacts with park management employees.

The results in Table 1 show that 76.1% of the interviewed inhabitants, who live within the park and 44.2% of those who live outside the park, have had contacts with park management, which indicates that the place of living has influence on people's contacts with the park management ( $p=0.000$ ).

Table 1.  
Contact with park management compared to the area of living (within or outside protected area) (%)

			Contact with park management		
			Yes	No or I do not know	Total
In/outside	inside	Number	35	11	46
		% in/outside	76.1	23.9	100.0
		% contact with park management	34.0	11.3	23.0
	outside	Number	68	86	154
		% in/outside	44.2	55.8	100.0
		% contact with park management	66.0	88.7	77.0
Total		Number	103	97	200
		% in/outside	51.5	48.5	100.0
		% contact with park management	100.0	100.0	100.0

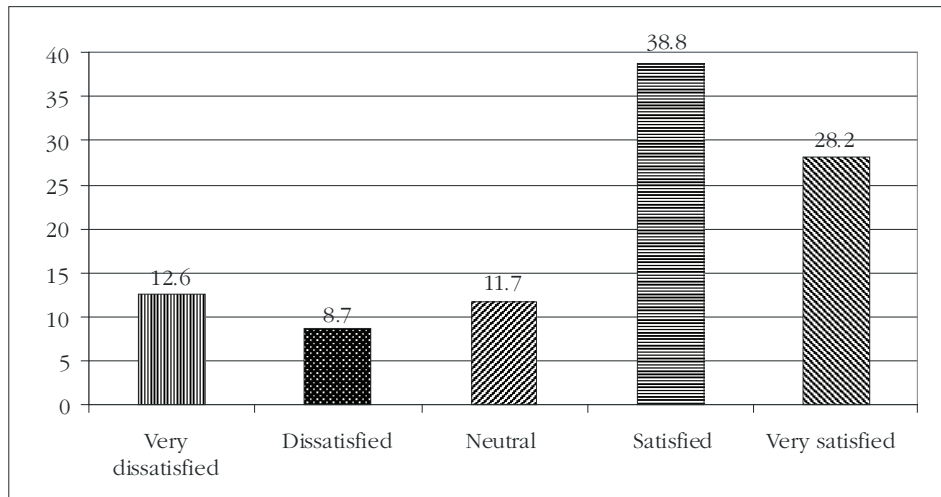
Contacting the park management seems to be a matter of education, as better educated inhabitants have contacted the park management in greater share than less educated interviewed inhabitants. 69% of the interviewed inhabitants with faculty education, 64.3% with college, 48.1% with finished secondary school and 21.4% with elementary school education have contacted park management ( $p=0.011$ ).

From 103 interviewees, 75 (72.8%) of them have contacted the park management once, 7 (6.8%) have contacted the park management more than once and 21 (20.4%) of the interviewed inhabitants have contacted the park management regularly (at least once a year, some of them have contacts with park rangers every day). From those who have contacted the park management once, 56 (74.7%) did it in years between 2000 and 2006, 13 (17.3%) in years from 1990 to 2000 and 3 (4%) in years between 1981 and 1990. Three of them did not remember which year they had contacted the park management.

The reasons why interviewed inhabitants have contacted the park management are different. Some have contacted the park management for personal interests, others for needs at their workplace, society, etc.

67% of the interviewed inhabitants that had contacts with park management were satisfied with what the management offered them and 21.3% were not satisfied with what the park management offered them (Picture 2).

Picture 2.  
Satisfaction with park management (just those who have personal contact with park management) (%)



### 3.3. Park management tasks

The results show that majority of the interviewed inhabitants agree with the statement that park managements task is to execute the protection of natural heritage (94%) and the protection of cultural heritage (93.5%), to actively cooperate with local community and local organisations (92.5%), to listen to local inhabitants' needs (92%), to execute projects of protecting natural and culture heritage (90.5%) and to support rural development (90.5%).

84.8% of the interviewed inhabitants who live within the Triglav National Park strongly agree and 8.7% agree that the park management task is to listen to local inhabitants' needs. 68.8% of the interviewed inhabitants who live outside the Triglav National Park strongly agree and 22.7% agree with this statement ( $p=0.040$ ). The results show that 97.5% of the interviewed inhabitants from Bohinj, 93.8% from Bled and Kranjska Gora and 87.5% from Posočje agree that park management task is to listen to local inhabitants' needs ( $p=0.005$ ). We found out that 97.5% of the interviewed inhabitants from Bohinj, 82.6% from Bled and Kranjska Gora and 81.3% from Posočje believe that the park management task is to offer help to inhabitants at work and in life in this area ( $p=0.006$ ). This difference in opinion can show the difference in problems that local inhabitants experience in their everyday life in connection with the Park. Especially the people living in Bohinj have already been for a long time trying to change some regulations, which would enable them to develop some tourist facilities which are at the moment forbidden (building within the park boundaries).

### **3.4. Knowing the offer of park management**

The interviewed inhabitants are well acquainted that the park management publishes informative newspapers, reports, brochures, etc. (78%), prepares exhibitions and culture events (73.5%), offers information about intervention in space – such as how to build or renovate buildings (71%), offers information about interesting plants and animals (68.5%) within the park, etc.

As many as 87% of the interviewed inhabitants living within the Triglav National Park and 66.2% of the interviewed inhabitants living outside the Triglav National Park know that the park management offers information about intervention in space ( $p=0.022$ ). 97.5% of the interviewed inhabitants from Bohinj, 68.8% from Bled and Kranjska Gora and 60% from Posočje are acquainted that the park management informs about intervention in space ( $p=0.001$ ). 76.9% of men and 66.1% of women is acquainted that the park management informs about intervention in space ( $p=0.028$ ).

77.5% of the interviewed inhabitants from Bohinj, 71.3% from Posočje and 61.3% from Bled and Kranjska Gora ( $p=0.005$ ) know that the park management offers information about plants and animals.

Informative Triglav National Park web page is known to 66.9% of the interviewed inhabitants who live outside the national park and to 52.2% of the interviewed inhabitants who live within the national park ( $p=0.002$ ). The results show that 85.7% of the interviewed inhabitants with faculty, 82.8% with college, 58.9% with finished secondary school and 21.4% with elementary education know that the park management has informative web page ( $p=0.000$ ).

54.3% of the interviewed inhabitants who live within the Triglav National Park and 39% of the interviewed inhabitants, who live outside the Triglav National Park, know that the park management organises workshops and other education in elementary schools ( $p=0.002$ ). The residents from Bohinj (47.5%), followed by the residents from Posočje (43.8%) and Bled and Kranjska Gora (38.8%) ( $p=0.000$ ) are the most acquainted with workshops and other education that the park management performs in elementary schools, which confirms that activities of the park management are more intensive within communities that are more connected to the park area.

43.5% of the interviewed inhabitants who live within the Triglav National Park and 26.6% of the interviewees, who live outside the Triglav National Park know that the park management offers information about indemnifications for protective regimes ( $p=0.013$ ). 40% of the interviewed residents from Bled and Kranjska Gora, 25% from Posočje and 22.5% from Bohinj affirmatively answered the question if the park management gave information about indemnifications for protective regimes ( $p=0.000$ ). Comparing these two answers we are given a surprising result that even people living within the park know about possible indemnification, but actually those who live in the outer zone, are the ones who are asking more about indemnification information.



28.3% of the interviewed inhabitants who live within the Triglav National Park and 17.5% of the interviewed inhabitants, who live outside the Triglav National Park believe that the park management task is to give information about agricultural subsidies ( $p=0.002$ ). 28.8% of the interviewed residents from Posočje, 15% from Bohinj and 13.8% from Bled and Kranjska Gora know the park management informs about agricultural subsidies ( $p=0.000$ ).

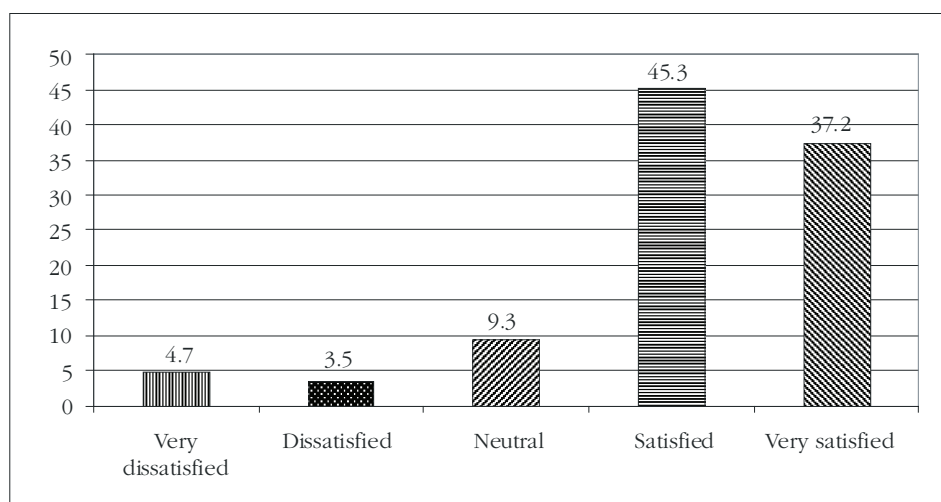
23.9% of the interviewed inhabitants, who live within the national park and 14.9% of the interviewed inhabitants, who live outside the national park believe, that the park management offers information about certificates in agriculture ( $p=0.005$ ). 20% of the interviewed inhabitants from Posočje, 17.5% from Bohinj and 13.8% from Bled and Kranjska Gora believe that the park management offers information about certificates in agriculture ( $p=0.000$ ). All these differences can be explained with the level of importance of agricultural production in different parts of the park, being the highest in Posočje.

### 3.5. Participation or use of the Triglav National Park management's offer

86 interviewed inhabitants (43%) affirmatively answered the question if they have ever participated in or used one of the listed activities, performed by the Triglav National Park management.

The results show (Picture 3) that the interviewees, who participated in or used activities performed by the park management, are satisfied (45.3%) or very satisfied (37.2%) with the offer.

Picture 3.  
Satisfaction with park management's offer (%)



112 interviewed inhabitants (56%) have not participated or used the activities organised by the park management, above all because they did not know them and because there is no time for such activities. 45.5% of the interviewees strongly agreed and 13.4% agreed with the statement that they did not know them. 37.5% of the interviewed inhabitants strongly agreed and 17% agreed with the statement that they do not have enough time for such activities.

The interviewed residents living outside the Triglav National Park are less interested in participating and using the activities organised by the park management than the residents living within the Triglav National Park. 26.6% of the interviewed residents living outside the Triglav National Park and 18.2% of the interviewed residents living within the Triglav National Park agree with the statement that they are not interested in activities organised by the park management ( $p=0.041$ ).

Men in comparison to women have less interest in activities organised by park management (30.6% against 20.6%). 6.3% of women and 24.5% of men answered that they strongly agree they are not interested in park management activities. 14.3% of women and 6.1% of men agree they are not interested in park management activities ( $p=0,027$ ).

80% of the interviewed inhabitants, aged between 66 and 76 years, strongly disagree and 20% of them disagree that they do not participate in park management activities, because they are not interested in them. 44.4% of the interviewed inhabitants, aged between 18 and 25 years, 35.7% aged between 56 and 65 years, 27.9% aged between 36 and 45 years and 8.6% aged between 26 and 35 years agree that they are not interested in park management activities ( $p=0.024$ ).

The results show that there is no statistically significant connection between interest in the Triglav National Park management activities and education of the interviewed inhabitants ( $p=0.758$ ).

We wanted to find out which park management way of informing inhabitants is in their opinion the most adequate one. The results show that the most adequate ways of informing are post and advertising in local newspapers. 50% of the interviewed inhabitants strongly agree and 19% of them agree with informing by post. 48.5% of interviewed inhabitants strongly agree and 23% of them agree with informing by advertising in local newspapers.

### **3.6. Interviewees' wishes on what the park management should offer in the future**

The interviewees were asked what would be the most interesting that the park management should offer. Their most frequent answers were:

- The interviewed residents believe that it is important to make people aware about preservation of nature, cultural heritage and meaning of the Triglav Na-

tional Park. The park management should further perform education both for elementary school students as for adults.

- The interviewed residents show big interest in different lectures, workshops, exhibitions, theme paths, guided excursions, ...
- The interviewed inhabitants wish to know more about the Triglav National Park (presentation of their work and activities, informing about intentions and goals of the park, informing about regulations in the Triglav National Park, information about competence of park management, presentation of future plans). The park management should organise lectures about other national parks.
- The interviewed inhabitants want to learn more about tourism, forestry and agriculture. The park management should organise agriculture lectures together with agriculture advisory service to ensure good quality lectures, which would attract younger and not just older people.
- The interviewed residents want more social events, more opportunities for meetings and entertainment. The interviewees also expressed their wish of recreational activities, as for example guided tours in the Triglav National Park.
- The park management should help the local inhabitants in their life in the protected area and offer help in development projects. The inhabitants want financial support for their projects.
- The interviewees require better communication, cooperation and taking part in decision-making. For this purpose more public discussions about the change of the Triglav National Park statute should be organised.
- The interviewed inhabitants wish to be informed about the park management activities all the time.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The aim of the research was to compare the opinion of local inhabitants, who live within and outside the Triglav National Park, about the park management, their knowledge of park management tasks and activities and the opinion about park management activity in the future.

The results show that regardless their place of living 20% of the interviewed inhabitants are dissatisfied with park management, and 35.5% are satisfied. There is no statistical significant difference about satisfaction with park management and area of living (within or outside the protected area).

The results also show that more interviewees living inside the park than those living outside it, contacted the park management. From all residents who had personal contact with park management employees, almost 70% are satisfied with the offer of the park management.

The fact that local inhabitants, living within the park, contact park management in greater share or they often ask for information and help can be explained by the fact that they are much more concerned with the events in their direct area and therefore they are more interested in or they give more interest in it than the interviewed inhabitants living outside the park. Recently this interest has been increasing because a new Triglav National Park Act is in preparation, which will substitute for the previous one from the year 1981. Furthermore, for interventions in the space within the protected area, like pulling down old buildings and putting up new buildings, reconstruction of houses and farm buildings, reconstruction after earthquake, fortifying embankments, regulating rivers, road construction, etc., an investor needs the park management consent, which is stipulated by the Triglav National Park Act. Therefore we can say that these contacts were a consequence of obligatory legal provisions. These legal provisions or restricted disposal of real estate many times cause dissatisfaction of local inhabitants, namely because of higher investment cost.

The comparison between knowing the park management work and the area of living showed that the interviewed inhabitants, who live within the Triglav National Park, are better acquainted with park management work as those who live outside the Triglav National Park. On the contrary we found out, when asking about the informative web page, that it is better known to the interviewed inhabitants who live outside the Triglav National Park.

The interviewed inhabitants living within the park are in the middle of events and therefore they get more information and they wish and have a greater need to get information than the interviewed inhabitants outside the park. The Triglav National park management informs the inhabitants about different events, performances, workshops, etc through local media (radio, newspaper). The inhabitants of the park are informed about events in the park through newspaper published by the park management, which is distributed to the households and is the key element in informing about the activities of the park management. Nevertheless, the interviewed inhabitants think that should be more informed.

The interviewed inhabitants expect the Triglav National Park management to open information offices near their place of residence and so enable local inhabitants and tourists to be better informed. Furthermore, the inhabitants expect the Triglav National Park management to offer better cooperation with local inhabitants, better understanding of their needs and resulting from this to develop a stronger participatory protection of existing natural and cultural heritage.

The most important fact is that the interviewed inhabitants very much appreciate nature and cultural heritage in the protected area and they in a great share agree that nature protection (94%) and conservation of cultural heritage (93,5%) are among the most important tasks of the park management.

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Prethodno priopćenje

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## Mišljenje lokalnog stanovništva o upravi Triglavskog nacionalnog parka

### Sažetak

Triglavski nacionalni park je jedini nacionalni park u Sloveniji. Zakon o Triglavskom nacionalnom parku proglašen je 1981. godine. Članak predstavlja mišljenje lokalnog stanovništva o upravi parka, njihovo poznavanje zadataka i aktivnosti uprave parka i mišljenje o djelovanju uprave parka ubuduće. Rezultati pokazuju da je 20% intervjuiranih stanovnika nezadovoljno s radom uprave parka. S upravom parka je vrlo zadovoljno 9% i zadovoljno 26,5% intervjuiranih stanovnika. Upravu parka je kontaktiralo 76,1% intervjuiranih stanovnika koji žive u parku i 44,2% onih koji žive izvan parka, što pokazuje da mjesto stanovanja utječe na kontakte s upravom parka.

*Ključne riječi:* nacionalni park, uprava parka, mišljenje lokalnog stanovništva.

*Primljeno:* studeni 2008.

*Prihvaćeno:* travanj 2009.