

Integration of Requirements of Nature Management Plans to Municipality Spatial Plans: Daugavpils County and Nature Park “Daugavas loki”

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Abstract. The Specially Protected Nature Territories in Latvia have specific nature management plans, which have to be integrated in spatial planning documents of all levels. The experience shows that transfer of requirements of Nature management plan to municipality spatial plan is still in progress. The case study about the Daugavpils County and Nature Park “Daugavas loki” planning experience will highlight problems and offer recommendations for their solution.

Keywords: nature management plan, spatial plan, development program, Nature Park “Daugavas loki”.

INTRODUCTION

Latvia has about 15 years of experience of development of nature management plans for Specially Protected Nature Territories (SPNT), and now there are about 170 plans developed. Nature management plans are developed for huge SPNT's – national parks, for example, Gauja National Park (about 92 thousands hectares), and for really small areas – nature monuments which have the area of some hectares.

The process of development and implementation of such plans is regulated by several legal acts (the Law and Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers) now, and the legislation on spatial planning requires ensuring protection of nature, landscape and cultural monuments. The planning is a routine practice; nevertheless it is still challenging to achieve integration of the requirements of nature management plans (NMPs) into spatial planning (SP). At present, this issue is especially topical because of the amendments to the legislation in the field of spatial planning.

Even the best nature management plan alone cannot guarantee conservation of nature values and a favourable conservation status for species and habitats. An important issue in the nature conservation policy implementation is involvement of main stakeholders (landowners, local people, and municipalities) in management activities and implementation of conservation regimes, especially if the economic interests are touched.

The governance of Specially Protected Nature Territories is a complicated system of biological diversity management, public relations, and local socio-economics. Therefore, there is the increasing need for additional efforts and innovative ways to reach the balance between conservation and development. The dramatically important stage in this process is harmonization of other planning documents at all levels with nature management plans.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The goal of the research is analysis of experience and opportunities, and provision of recommendations for qualified integration of nature management plans in municipal spatial plans.

The methods include analysis of planning documents, interviews with spatial planning specialists and an integrated case-study: integration of requirements of the nature management plan for Nature Park “Daugavas loki” into spatial planning documents (the development program and the spatial plan) of the Daugavpils County.

DISCUSSION

There are both subjective and objective obstacles to transfer information and to integrate requirements of a nature management plan into the relevant municipality spatial plan. Among objective obstacles, we can list differences in procedures and contents of both planning documents. If spatial plans are valid for the 12-year period, nature management plans could be developed for different periods, depending on the choice of an expert group and the managing authority of the concrete SPNT – 5 to 15 years. The structure of both documents is principally different, which can confuse spatial planners, municipality staff and local people. Moreover, the procedure of developing a planning document is different. Both procedures involve public hearing and other kinds of stakeholder involvement. It is worth to mention that usually the same institutions are involved, but not the same persons, and often there is an obvious lack of an internal flow of information.

The most influencing factor is different goals of these planning documents (nature conservation in case of nature management plans, and the regional development in case of spatial plans), and the most challenging and important is balancing of these aims in both planning documents.

The area of a planning object is different and the administrative borders differ: one SPNT can be included in several municipalities. The difference in administrative borders of SPNTs and municipalities can be both an advantage and challenge, because there is the opportunity to gather together more people from different municipalities and get more information and opinions. Nevertheless, there is more risk of “underwater stones” – personal/historical disagreements among people from different administrative units. Hence, the former disagreements among different towns or villages could be brought into the process of development

of NMPs. Even if we could exclude the abovementioned personal factors, the SPNTs being managed by several municipalities in most cases have different development scenarios, and there have to be strong intermediate linking organization or structure to rule the management of a territory as one unit.

The most widespread obstacle is low awareness of nature conservation among spatial planning specialists, as well as among other municipality specialists. Therefore, there are situations, when municipality spatial planners ignore nature management plans at all, because “we don’t know what to do with this huge information about beetles and plants”, or the opposite, but not less harmful situation, when the area of SPNT is set aside from the spatial plan or the development program as a “green spot” where nothing is allowed. The same stands for the limited knowledge among developers of nature management plans for SPNT’s about spatial planning.

CASE STUDY

Nature Park “Daugavas loki” is large SPTN with the area of about 12.5 thousands hectares, and it is included in the administrative territory of two municipalities: Daugavpils and Krāslava County (Fig.1). There are rich biodiversity values, as well as beautiful landscapes and cultural monuments. Nevertheless, the territory is inhabited, and the economic development and infrastructure for this area is necessary. Moreover, “Daugavas loki” is a popular tourism destination in Latvia, which needs lots of efforts to achieve high standards and avoid harm to nature values [2].

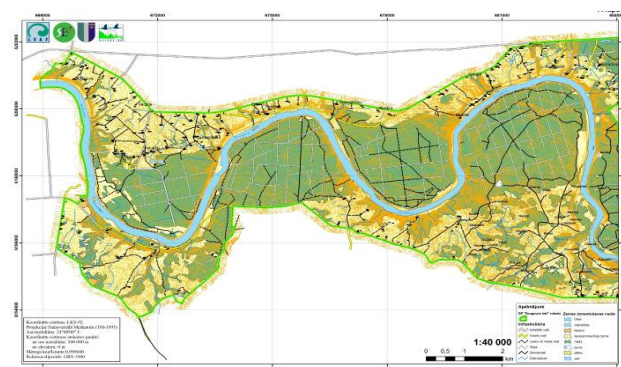
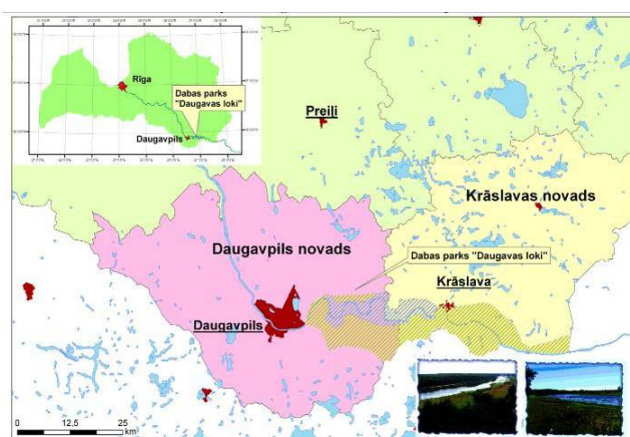


Fig. 1. Nature park “Daugavas loki” [2].

The nature management plan for “Daugavas loki” was completed in 2010. The work on a development program and a spatial plan for the Daugavpils County began in 2010 as well.

There are several recommendations to the spatial plan and development program developers, based on the experience of the Daugavpils County and the nature management plan of Nature Park “Daugavas loki”.

1. The Daugavpils County specialists were involved in preparation of the nature management plan of “Daugavas loki”, therefore they are aware of the situation. Moreover, the Daugavpils County has been employing the Nature Park Manager for more than 17 years, and the County is the leading partner in the project concerning improvement of infrastructure in “Daugavas loki”.

2. Nature management plans include the following parts, which are important for their connectivity with spatial plans:

- Analysis of all planned activities in existing SPs against nature conservation aims (building versus species and habitats, tourism and habitats, linear objects (roads, railways, power lines) versus migratory routes and defragmentation of habitats;
- Suggestions for amendments of existing SPs (if needed);
- Map of the functional (structural) zoning (Fig.2);
- Draft individual Regulations for specific SPNT with restricted activities in each defined zone.

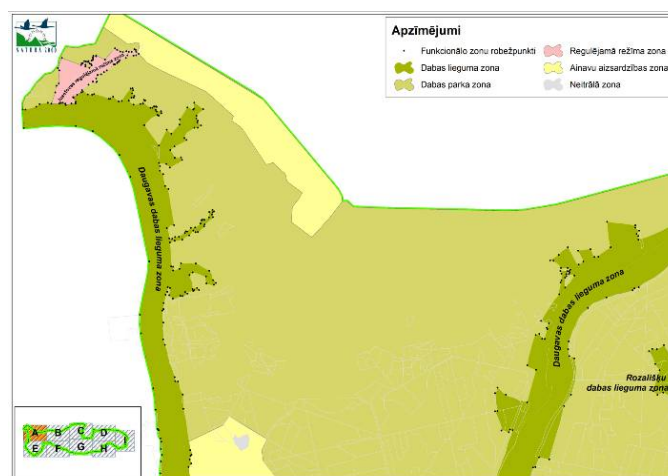


Fig. 2. Functional (structural) zoning of Nature park “Daugavas loki” [2].

The planning specialists of the Daugavpils County are acquainted with these parts, and they invited the experts who developed the NMP to take part in working groups for the Daugavpils County development program.

3. The Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) is a part of the spatial planning procedure where all aspects of possible environmental impact during implementation of spatial plans have to be evaluated and possible development scenarios must be provided. SEIA includes analysis of impact on vulnerable habitats and species in SPNTs, even if potentially threatening activities are planned outside SPNT.

4. One of the most important issues in sound integration of nature management plans in spatial plans is awareness and understanding of local stakeholders. Therefore, it is extremely

important to use all possible procedures and tools for the information spreading, explanation, education and awareness raising. For the sake of better understanding, it is necessary to use all methods available to choose, prepare, visualize and show information about nature values in SPNT and ways to protect them. The GIS tools and mathematical methods help to show nature values and possible threats and impacts to them in an easy and accessible way. That helps to visualize scientific information and to involve people in discussion. The GIS based methods are one of the possibilities to achieve a better understanding of nature conservation issues among people who have no special knowledge about these problems.

Therefore, the Daugavpils County specialists use the GIS database and 3D models from the Nature management plan for the Nature Park “Daugavas loki” for visualization of planned activities in the Nature Park during the working group meetings (Fig.3) [1, 2].

5. The Daugavpils County has the Cooperation Agreement with the Daugavpils University, which includes transfer of knowledge in all fields, and there is a close cooperation with biology and nature conservation specialists and municipality specialists.

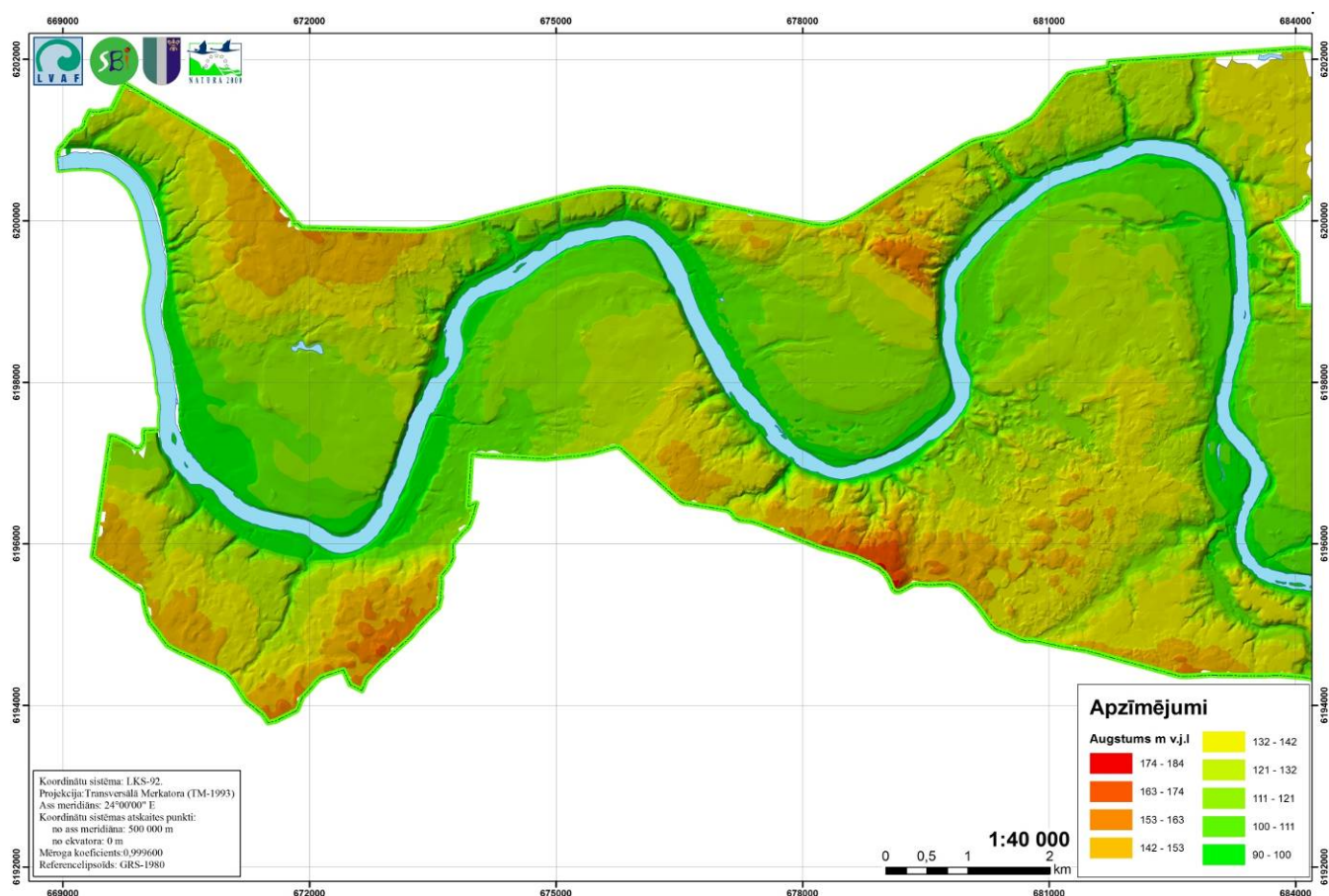


Fig.3. 3D model of Nature Park “Daugavas loki” [2].

CONCLUSIONS

1. The best way for a municipality to have all information and knowledge about SPNTs in their territory is to take an active part in nature conservation activities here.
2. The spatial planning procedure should involve a detailed analysis of SPTN nature management plans.
3. One of the tools for integration of NMPs into spatial plans is the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) procedure, where all data layers from NMP can be used.
4. The municipality will receive the necessary information and assistance in the field of knowledge needed for spatial

planning, if there is cooperation ensured with relevant Universities and Institutes.

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Jolanta Bāra. Dabas aizsardzības plānu nosacījumu integrēšana pašvaldību teritorijas plānojumos: Daugavpils novads un dabas parks „Daugavas loki”
Latvijā dabas aizsardzības plānus īpaši aizsargājamām dabas teritorijām izstrādā vairāk nekā 15 gadus, un pašlaik ap 170 teritorijām ir šādi plāni. Plānošanas procesu regulē dažādi normatīvie akti, tomēr joprojām ir grūtības kvalitatīvi integrēt dabas aizsardzības plānu prasības pašvaldību teritoriju plānojumos un attīstības plānos. Īpaši šis jautājums ir aktuāls sakarā ar izmaiņām teritorijas plānošanas likumdošanā.

Rakstā atklāti objektīvi un subjektīvi ierobežojumi informācijas pārņemšanai un integrēšanai no dabas aizsardzības plāna pašvaldības teritorijas plānojumā. Visbiežāk sastopamo subjektīvo faktoru rada teritorijas plānošanas specialist un citu pašvaldības speciālistu zināšanu trūkums par dabas aizsardzību. Tādēļ teritorijas plānojumā vai nu vispār neņem vērā aizsargājamās teritorijas dabas aizsardzības plānu, jo „nevar saprast, ko darīt ar šo informāciju, vai tieši otrādi – aizsargājamās teritorijās neplāno nekādu attīstību, arī to, kas tur atļauta un pat vēlams. Tas pats attiecas uz dabas aizsardzības plānu izstrādātājiem, kuriem bieži nepietiek zināšanu par pašvaldību teritorijas plānošanu. Objektīvie faktori ir atšķirības plānojumu izstrādes procedūrā, dokumentu struktūrā, plāna darbības periodā. Pie tam plānojoša objekti ir dažādi un to administratīvās robežas atšķiras – viena aizsargājamā dabas teritorija var iekļauties dažādu pašvaldību administratīvajās teritorijās.

Pētījuma mērķis ir analizēt iespējas un veiksmīgo pieredzi plānu integrācijai (Daugavpils novads) un sniegt ieteikumus dabas aizsardzības plānu prasību kvalitatīvai integrēšanai pašvaldību plānošanas dokumentos. Darba metodes ietver plānošanas dokumentu analīzi, intervijas ar teritorijas plānošanas speciālistiem un integrētu gadījuma izpēti (case-study) par dabas parka “Daugavas loki” dabas aizsardzības plāna prasību un iepīlānoto rīcību iekļāšanu Daugavpils novada plānošanas dokumentos.

Иоланта Бара. Интеграция планов управления охраняемыми природными территориями в территориальное планирование: Даугавпилсский край и природный парк «Даугавас локи»

В Латвии планы управления охраняемыми природными территориями разрабатываются более 15 лет, и в настоящее время около 170 территорий имеют такие планы. Процесс планирования регулируется разными нормативными документами Латвии. Несмотря на это, до сих пор возникают трудности при интеграции их требований в территориальные планы самоуправления. Особенно актуальна проблема стала из-за изменений законодательства в сфере территориального планирования.

В статье раскрыты объективные и субъективные ограничения по переносу информации из планов управления охраняемыми территориями в территориальные планы. Субъективные факторы создают нехватку знаний специалистов планирования о охране природы и, наоборот - специалистам по охране природы не хватает знаний о планировании территории самоуправления. Поэтому планы либо совсем не берутся во внимание, так как непонятно, что делать с информацией, либо, наоборот – в охраняемых территориях не планируют никакого развития, хотя многое там желаемо. Объективные факторы – это различие в процедурах разработки этих планов, структура документов, период действия планов. Различаются и объекты планирования и их административные границы.

Цель исследования: анализировать возможности и положительный опыт интеграции планов (Даугавпилсского края), предложить рекомендации для качественной интеграции требований планов управления охраняемыми территориями в территориальные планы и другие документы самоуправления. Методика работы включает анализ документов планирования, интервью со специалистами территориального планирования самоуправления и интегрированное ситуационное исследование по интеграции требований плана управления природным парком «Даугавас локи» и внедрение действий, предусмотренных в плане, в документы планирования Даугавпилсского края.