REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

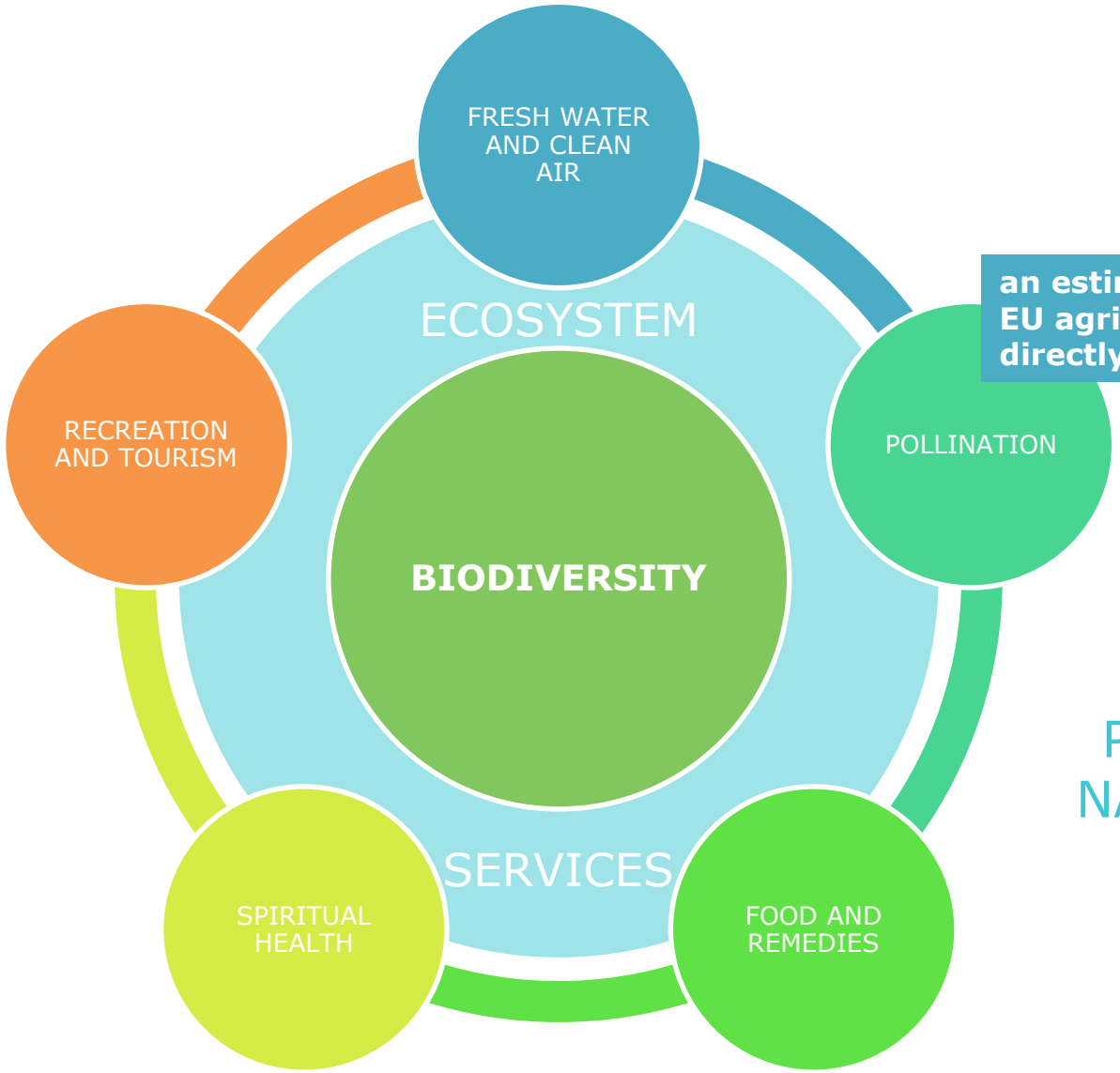
Nature under pressure

„Loving it to death”

CEETO Conference on Protected Areas & Sustainable Tourism
22 to 24 October 2018, Opatija, Croatia

Igor Kreitmeyer, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Environment and Energy

Nature's benefits to people



an estimated EUR 15 billion of annual EU agricultural output is directly attributed to pollinators

NUTRIENT CYCLING

PROTECTION FROM NATURAL DISASTERS

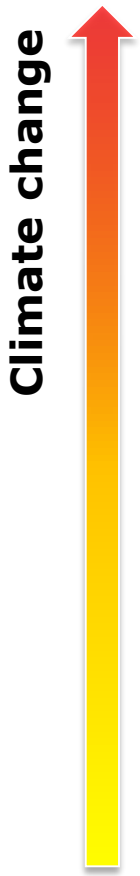
PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT

EROSION PREVENTION

CARBON SEQUESTRATION

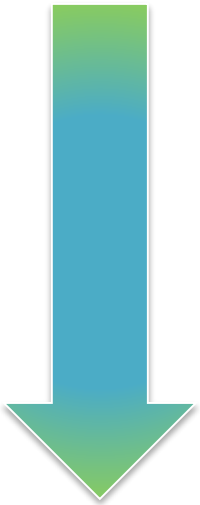
...

Biodiversity under pressure



Human population growth

- Only 12 years to go from 6-7 billion people
- 6th billon 1990
- 1st billion 1880



Loss of species and habitats

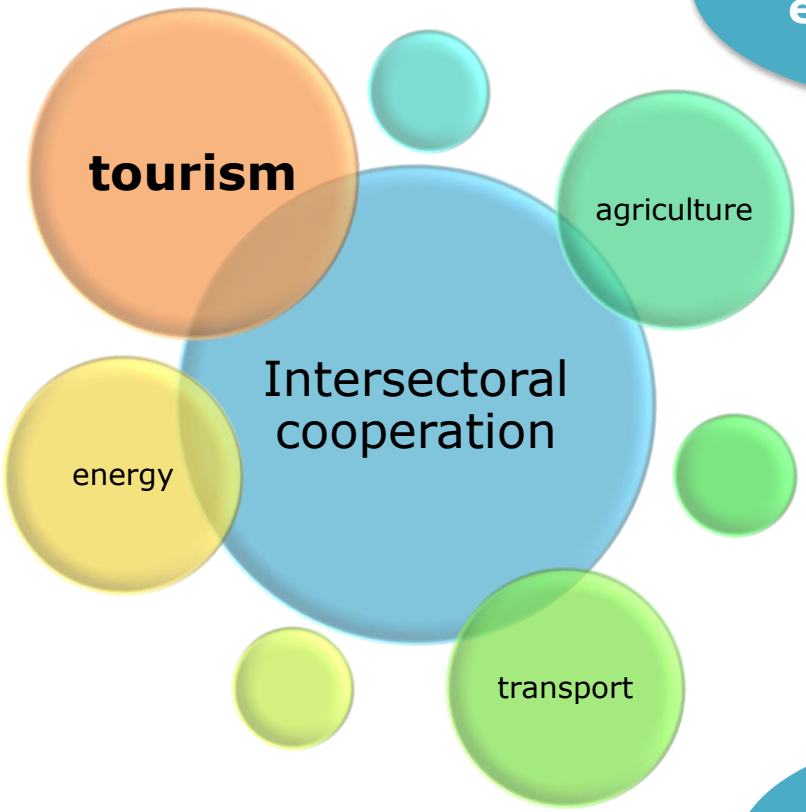
Degradation of ecosystems and their services

Are we ready for **transformational change?**

in the **use** and **management** of biodiversity and ecosystems

changes in our **behavior** and **decision-making** at all levels

Transformational change at every level



Political engagement

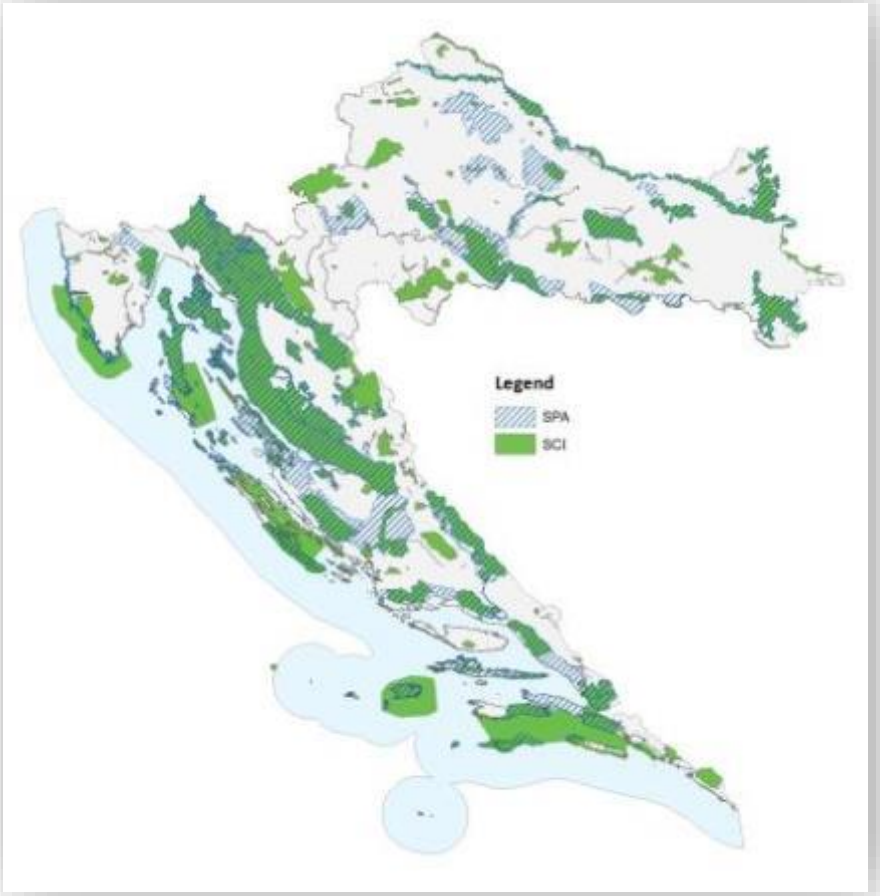
Public participation

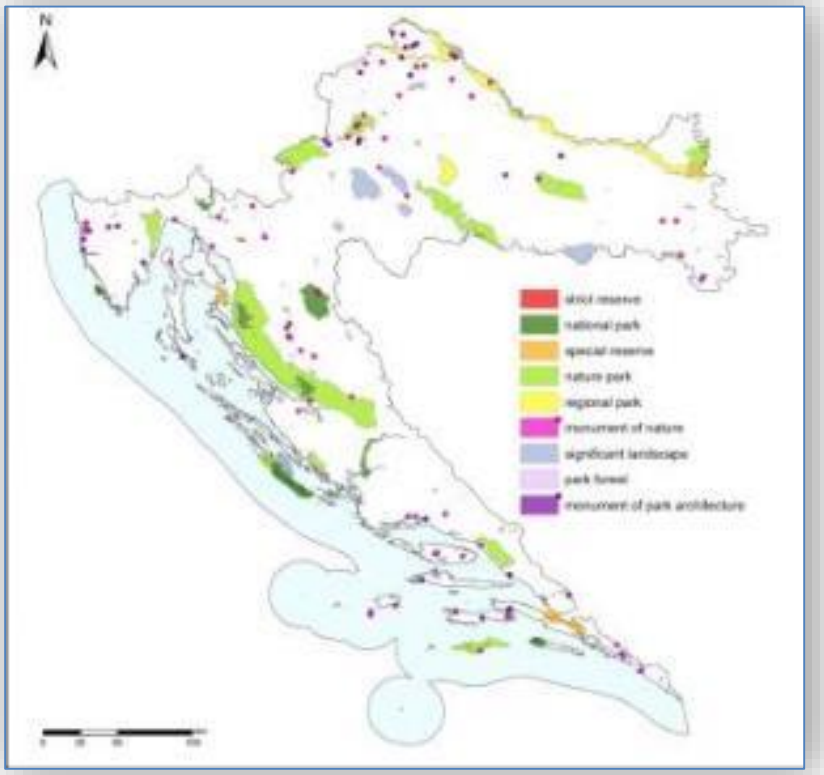
Civil society organisation

Scientific knowledge & education

Businesses

Croatia – Natura 2000 and PA´s

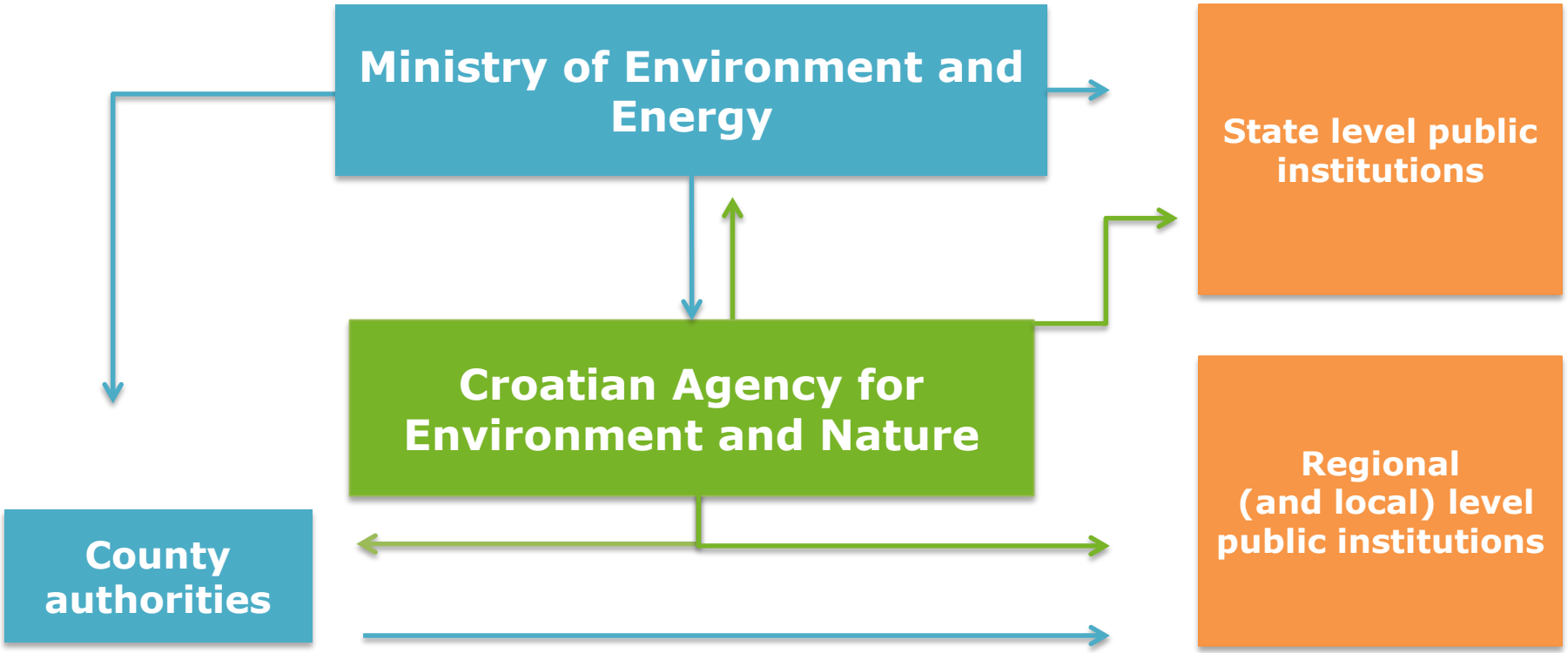




Natura 2000 = 37% land, 15% sea
2nd largest in the EU

- **408** Protected Areas
- **8** national parks
- **11** nature parks

Institutional framework



Where were we 10 years ago?

In 2010 analysis rated low:

A) Insufficient visitor infrastructure

B) Tourism impact monitoring in PA's

C) Stakeholder's involvement

D) Knowledge of tourism management

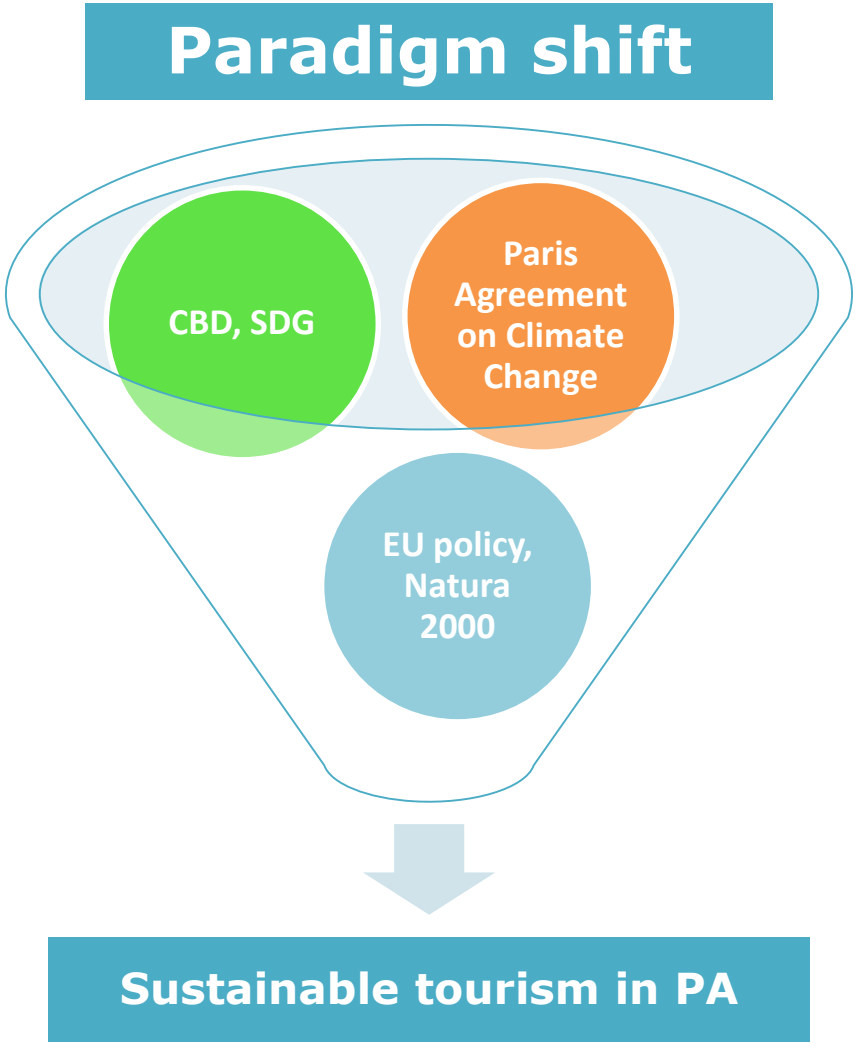
E) Promotional / marketing activities

F) Inadequate visual identity

G) Inadequate funding (decreasing state budget funding)

(reference: NIP and PARCS projects 2011-2017 – MEE)

Where are we going?



*CBD - Convention on Biological Diversity; *SDG - Sustainable Development Goals

Types of tourism in PA's

TOURISM

Sports/Recreation – cycling, trekking etc.
Green; Educational; Rural /Ethno Cultural; Nautical;
Congress (smaller scale)

VISITORS

- Middle age, educated, travelling with family and friends
- Want to experience nature, spend time with family, do recreation activities
- mostly half-day visitors

Present tourism numbers

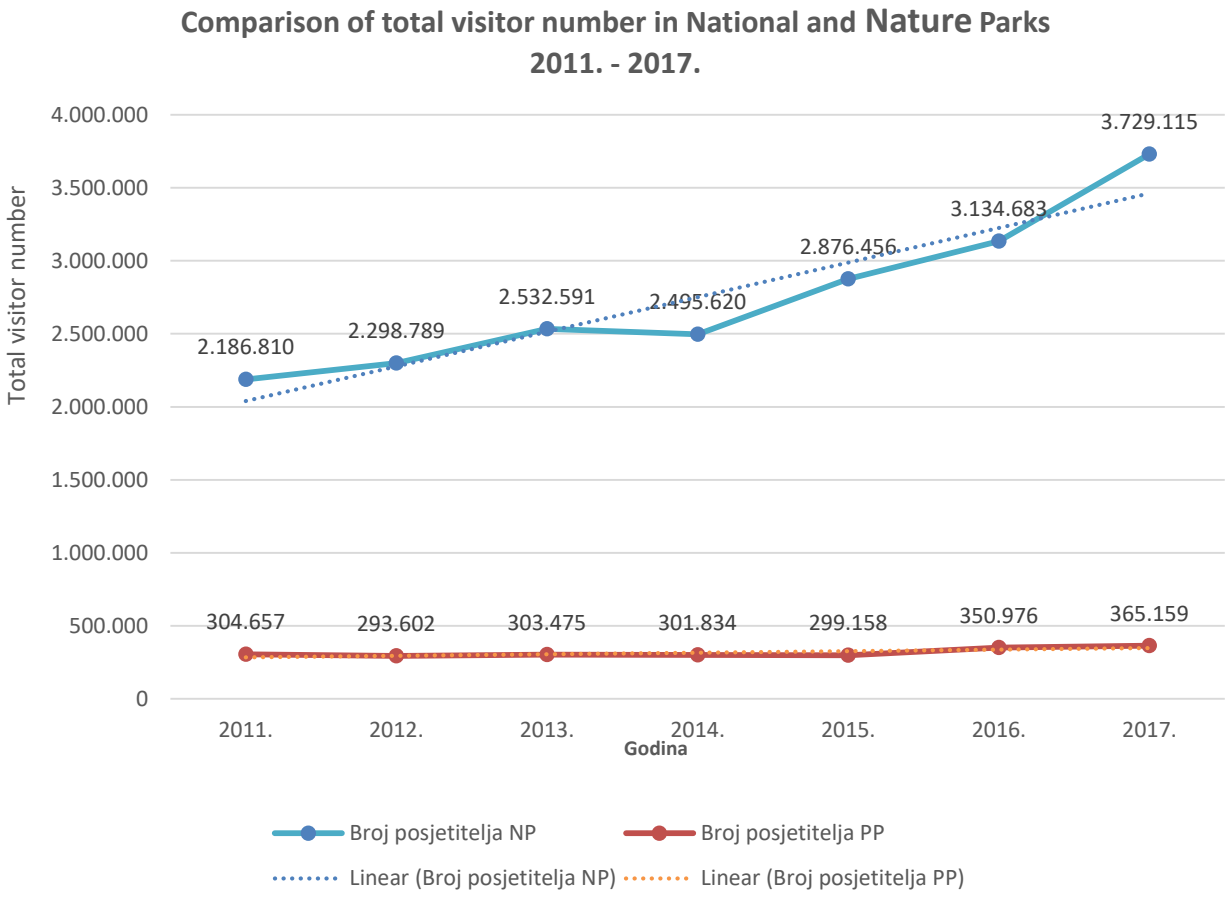
- Croatia 2017 - **17,4 million** tourists
- July/August - **8,5 million** tourists

> 4 million visitors in 19 national and nature parks → **¼ of all visitors actually visit some of 19 national and nature parks!**

„Tourism exploitation" varies – most of the parks have not yet reached their potential **BUT…**

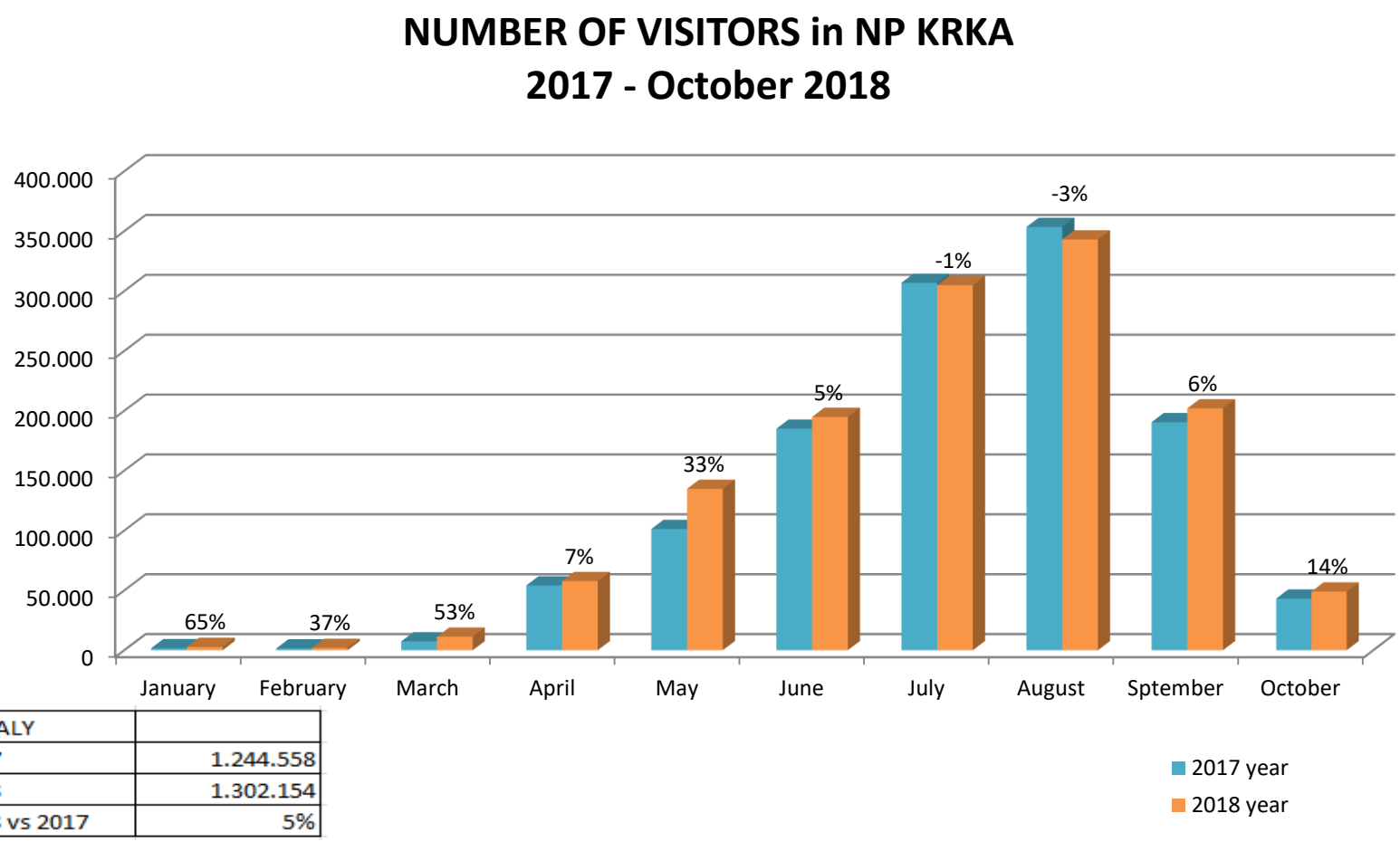
> 3 million visitors in NP "Plitvice lakes" and NP "Krka"!

Tourism numbers increase



- 96,6% **foreign visitors** in National Parks
- 80 % **domestic visitors** in Nature Parks

NP Krka example

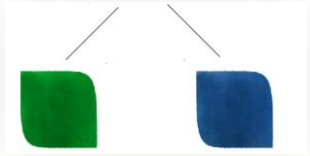


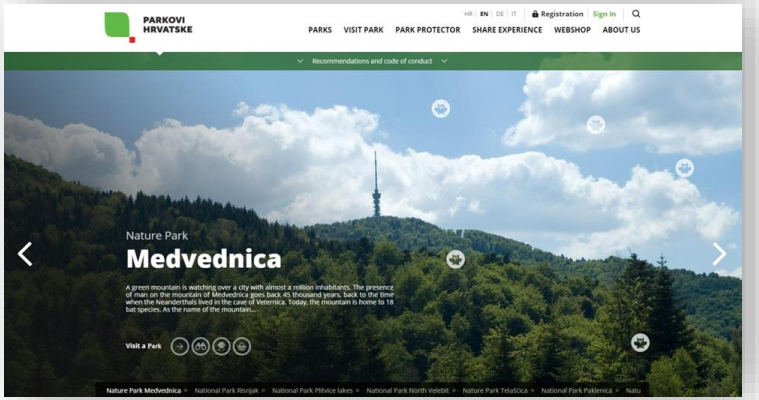
TOTALY	
2017	1.244.558
2018	1.302.154
2018 vs 2017	5%

Making Nature more visible and accessible

brand
„Parks of Croatia”

PARKOVI HRVATSKE





webportal/web shop
„Parks of Croatia”

- **Standardization** and networking of all 19 PA’s
- **Tourist signalization** of Parks on motorways

MEDVEDNICA
ŽUMBERAK SAMOBORSKO GORJE
LONJSKO POLJE
KOPAČKI RIT
PAPUK
UČKA
RISNJAK
PLITVIČKA JEZERA
BRIJUNI
SJEVERNI VELEBIT
VELEBIT
PAKLENICA
TELAŠĆICA
VRANSKO JEZERO
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BIOKOVO
LASTOVSKO OTOČJE
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PARKOVI HRVATSKE
Parks of Croatia
www.parkovihrvatske.hr

Visitor infrastructure projects

NP Lastovo archipelago
Visitor centre „Vejo more”

NP Krka Puljane

NP Kopački rit (Castle Tikveš; Sakadaš Lake)

NP Krka „Centar Lozovac”

Monitoring of tourism impact in PAs

Visitor Management Plans under development
(condition for EU infrastructure projects)

- Training „**Visitor management planning in PA's – LAC methodological framework**”
- **LAC metodology -** defining **indicators** for **biophysical** and **social impacts of visitor use**
- **Setting standards** –deciding what levels of impact are acceptable
- **Relevant stakeholders** included

Sustainability in PAs

Involvement of stakeholders in PA management

-cooperation councils or similar mechanisms

(Stakeholder Forums; Charter for sustainable tourism; Plan for sustainable tourism)

- enable entities that are neither owners nor rights holders to assume care for protected areas

Nature and people together

Nature for People

opportunity to put ecological agriculture and farms at the centre of sustainable tourism development

People for Nature

Abandonment of agricultural areas and activities → disappearance of meadows and orchards (overgrowth), changes in landscape

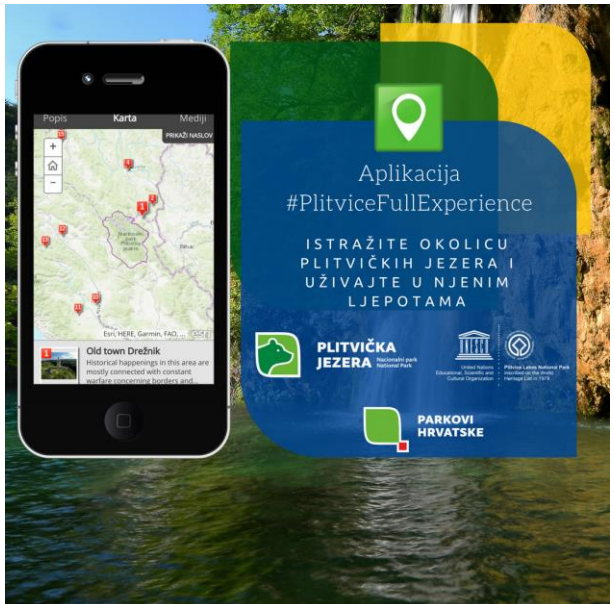
Extensive agriculture (agri-environment measures) → variety of landscapes, wealth of species

Need for continuous education of:

PA practitioners, authorities (national, regional, local), Stakeholders, service providers, local community

Pressures and sustainability

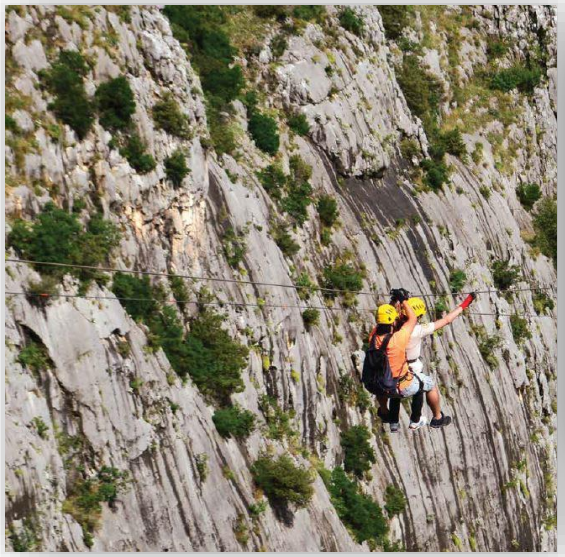
„Don't wait in line … buy online"



Visitor education and interpretation

Continuous **Visitor structure and attitudes research** needed
Increase PA's **capacity to respond** to emerging trends adaptively

-Educational programs
-Interpretative/guided walks
-Manifestations (EU Bat Night, Earth Day, Week of Parks, etc.)



How to know if tourism is sustainable?

- Every **stakeholder** involved in PA's tourism needs to be **sustainable**
- Sustainability in PA's won't be achieved without measuring indicators
- Many Quality Labels developed (EU, national level, etc.)
- **There is a gap – Nature is „hidden" under Environment**
- **Nature should be emphasized in the indicators defined in existing Quality Labels**

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