

Dear Reader

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We are pleased to announce the publication of the first issue of the Newsletter on the National Marine Park Karaburun-Sazan (NMP K-S). Through this publication we aim to distribute area-related periodic information on various activities, news, scientific and entertainment information, etc. as well as any other mutually beneficial information.

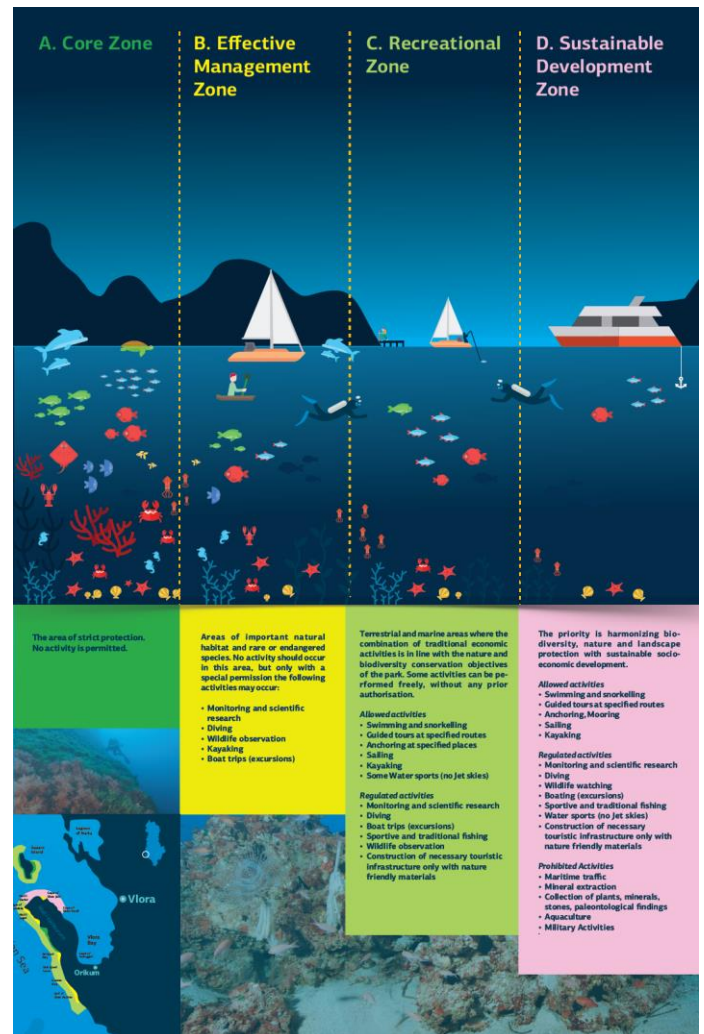
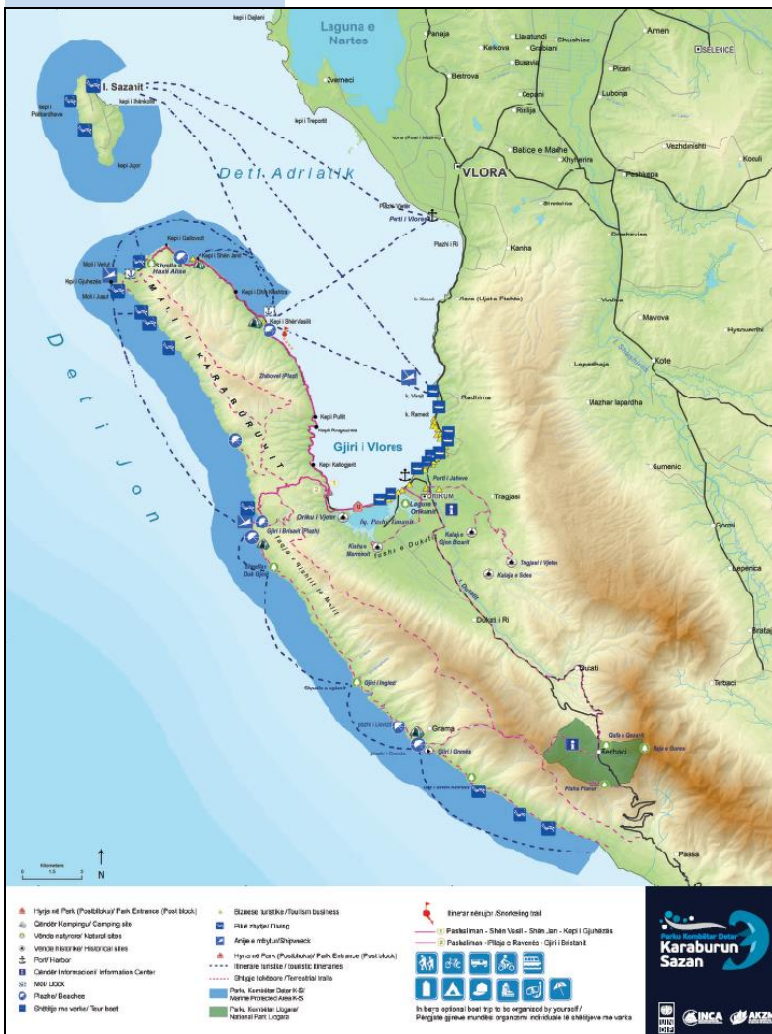
Visitors Center (VC) of NMP K-S is uniquely positioned to achieve all of Park's conservation and development objectives. VC provides a community focal point for stakeholders interested in preserving the Park and utilizing its unique assets in a sustainable manner. Through both the further development and application of suggestions contained in the relevant strategic documents, continuous efforts are made to integrate key stakeholders in the process of conservation, management and development of the area. This Newsletter itself constitutes an integral part of these efforts.

The Project "Improving Coverage and Management Effectiveness of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas - PHASE II" (MCPA2) would like thank all the actors involved in this process for their support, contribution and participation in the identification and further on working for the achievement of conservation and development objectives. Their engagement is an essential element in reaching the balance between preserving natural resources and creating a productive environment to be enjoyed by present and future generations.

A lot of professionalism and love is invested for the preparation of this edition. We assure that each opinion and suggestion by your side will be treated with the same dedication.

Enjoy your reading

*This edition is prepared by*  
**UNDP Project on Marine and Coastal Protected Areas**



## ACTIVITIES FOR JUNE - AUGUST 2018

On August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018, at the big square on the promenade, with the support of AICS Tirana, NAPA and UNDP Albania, was organized the activity on promoting the natural values and tourist attractions in



Vlora Region. The aim was to inform tourists and every citizen about the importance of protected

areas and their role in the sustainable development of tourism in the Vlora region. The broadcasted video and the stands of National Marine Park Karaburun-Sazan transmitted the unique biodiversity values of the area.

With the support from UNDP Albania and through close cooperation with Vlora Municipality, the Visitors Center of National Marine Park Karaburun Sazan, will be more visible and accessible by tourists, through installation of 8 directional signs positioned on the access roads from both sides of the VC. There are installed 5 signs along the road Vlora - Radhima and 3 signs along the road Llogara – Radhima.

In cooperation with the border police, a number of inspections were conducted at the National Marine Park Karaburun-Sazan on illegal activities in the area with focus on illegal fishing.

A number of coordinating meetings have been held with relevant institutions such as County Prefect, Municipality, Port Authority, Border & Migration Directorate, Harbormaster, and with the participation of

representatives of UNDP Albania, local media and touristic operators who offer boat tours at the National Marine Park Karaburun-Sazan. The purpose of these meetings was to coordinate the actions with tourism institutions and operators in the context of facilitating the visitors' navigation and transportation procedures and avoiding the negative impacts on the NMP K-S from tourism in this area and from illegal fishing.

During the period June-August 2018, several sea turtles of *Caretta caretta* species were assisted at the Sea Turtles Rehabilitation and Recovery Center in Radhima. For each individual were performed the appropriate check-ups followed by relevant treatment with medications and vitamins, as



needed. Turtles are placed in the relevant recovery aquarium, and then are cleansed and returned to the sea. It is greatly appreciated the commitment of RAPA Vlorë staff and relevant experts.

In the framework of the joint program "Junior Ranger", and aiming the experience exchange among the young people of both Vlora and Elbasan RAPAs, a visit was organized to the National Marine Park Karaburun-Sazan, with the young people that participate in this program. During this visit the young people became acquainted with the natural values of the park, its typical characteristics, biodiversity, etc.

Under the slogan "Where nature and Antiquity go hand in hand", has started the testing of eco-tourism package of protected areas in Vlora region, conceived in cooperation with local actors to guarantee the transmittal of authentic taste of the area's natural and cultural values with the lowest impact on the environment.

During the summer season of 2018, at the NMP K-S Visitors Center has started the implementation of the Inters program. For this purpose, with the support of UNDP Albania and in cooperation with the University of Vlora, six students of Biology Department have been engaged in the program. They are involved in various tasks, mainly of explanatory and promotional character for the region in general and NMP K-S in particular. This program is foreseen to continue for the next seasons in the framework of continuous cooperation with university.

Visitors Center of NMP K-S, supported by UNDP Albania, has already developed the document of Strategy and Action Plan in support of its operation and functionality. Contacts and discussions with local partners and actors have been an integral part of the entire process of drafting and finalizing this document. The goal is to co-operate and implement activities foreseen by and with partners to develop a model center for the park and area visitors.



## DID YOU KNOW?

**M**editerranean Monk Seal is **known for the first time** from the descriptions of the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle, while its image is depicted in an **antique coin of 5<sup>th</sup> century BC** in Athens.



**P**osidonia is an **excellent producer of oxygen**. Each day, 1m<sup>2</sup> of Posidonia's meadow produces up to 14 liters of oxygen through photosynthesis, which is **twice as high as tropical rainforests**.

**350** million years ago, **algae and bacteria consumed all oceans' oxygen**, therefore slowing down the Earth's regeneration.

**C**orals **like very much to eat plastic!** Chemical additives found in plastic seem to act as stimulants, making it attractive for corals.



## Visitors at the National Marine Park Karaburun-Sazan

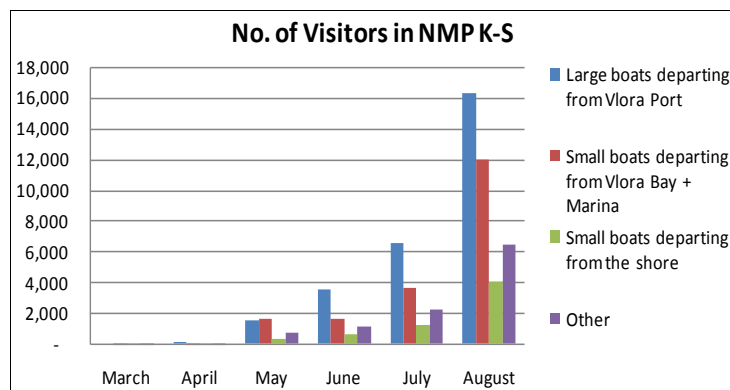
The first touristic visits to the Marine National Park Karaburun-Sazan for 2018 occurred in March, with 30 visitors and peaked in August with 38,723 visitors. For the period March-August 2018, the NMP was visited by 63,300 visitors in total.

Departure Site	March	April	May	June	July	August	TOTAL
Large boats departing from Vloora Port	-	65	1,450	3,498	6,526	16,322	<b>27,861</b>
Small boats departing from Vloora Bay + Marina	17	46	1,600	1,610	3,604	11,947	<b>18,824</b>
Small boats departing from the shore	8	11	300	561	1,185	4,000	<b>6,065</b>
Other	5	24	670	1,134	2,263	6,454	<b>10,550</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>4,020</b>	<b>6,803</b>	<b>13,578</b>	<b>38,723</b>	<b>63,300</b>

The table above and the following figure highlight an increasing trend in the number of visitors at the MPA K-S, with the “peak” being reached in August, when the number of visitors has been 6 and 3 times higher compared to the preceding summer months, July and June, respectively.

This fact demonstrates that there is an exponentially higher demand during August, and indeed this has to be managed

either through good planning, or through diversification of the offer, i.e. providing other recreational activities in addition to the ones performed so far.



As regards the nationality of MPA visitors, it is noticed that there is almost the same number of both groups (Albanians and Foreigners) with just a slight difference in favor of Albanian Visitors. This proves that the area continues to be a very attractive tourist destination for Albanian citizens.

## Visitors at the Visitors Center, Radhima

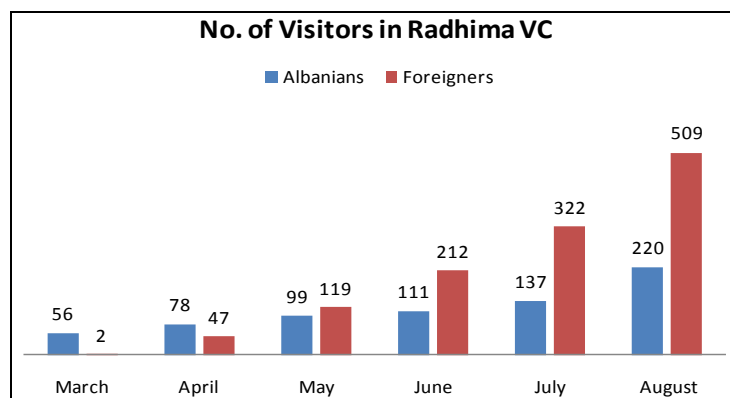
Visitors Center in Radhima, strategically positioned between Vloora and Orikum city is becoming more and more an important focal point where visitors/tourists receive various tourist information and are virtually acquainted with the area and its attractions.

For 2018, registration of visitors in this center started in March with 58 visitors, peaking in August with 729 visitors. During the period March-August 2018, the VC was visited by 1912 visitors in total.

Month	Nationality		TOTAL
	Albanians	Foreigners	
March	56	2	<b>58</b>
April	78	47	<b>125</b>
May	99	119	<b>218</b>
June	111	212	<b>323</b>
July	137	322	<b>459</b>
August	220	509	<b>729</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>1211</b>	<b>1912</b>

The table above and the following figure highlight that the presence of visitors to the VC follows the same trend as that of visitors/tourists visiting NMP K-S, indicating the

linkage between these two structures as well as their mutual benefit.



It is noticed that the largest number of visitors at the VC belongs to foreign tourists. This shows an increasing interest in obtaining preliminary information on the area and the various activities or services provided. Visitors get the first 'feeling and taste' of the area's amenities, therefore visiting the VC is becoming more and more part of the tourist packages offered by different operators.



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