



PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF PROTECTED AREAS IN SHARR MOUNTAIN, MAVROVO AND KORAB-KORITNIK PROJECT

MANUAL OF CO-MANGAMENT STRUCTURE FOR PROTECTED AREA SHARR-KORAB MASIVE

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Foreword

For many years, the Albanian Local Capacity Development Foundation (ALCDF) has worked with multi-stakeholder structures, co-management, and community-based management in local governance, natural resource management, and tourism.

Since the project “Protection and Sustainable Use of Protected Areas in Sharr Mountain, Mavrovo and Korab-Koritnik”, financed by PONT – Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust, started the implementation, there has been an increasing demand for guidance/manual on what ALCDF has learned about co-management, particularly across different geographical settings, socio-economic conditions, and histories of operation; and how it could apply to protected areas management, link to other livelihoods, and respond to the seasonal nature of natural resources. This manual attempt to respond to this demand by compiling recent experience from as wide a cross-section of research as possible.

During the development of this manual, both ALCDF and the authors (ANTTARC) wrestled with the concept of co-management.

- Given the evolving nature of this science, for example, what does co-management cover and how widely is the concept accepted?
- Importantly, there has been increasing acceptance of the idea that co-management is not an endpoint but rather a process – a process of adaptive experiences learning. Recognizing the diversity of both local contexts (ecological and social) and factors depleting the Protected Areas, however, would it even be possible to put together a manual of existing co-management structures experiences?

As you will discover through this manual, ALCDF and the authors felt that it was neither possible nor desirable to produce a blueprint for Protected Area co-management. Rather, we agreed that it would be more useful to document the co-management process, as undertaken by both ALCDF partners and others, and to put this experience into a form that could be shared with anyone interested in learning more about co-management and what others have done with these structures. In the manual pages, you will find a picture of the co-management process in each target-protected area in Albanian and North Macedonia.

We hope this manual will serve to provide a practical reference on a process for co-management for use by the various co-management partners. We request feedback from you, the users, on how to improve the manual. As co-management is a process, so is the development of a manual. There is still a great deal to learn and share as we use co-management to hopefully improve protected areas and natural resources and the lives of the people who depend upon these resources.

Lindita Manga

ALCDF Executive Director

Preface

PONT financed the project “Protection and Sustainable Use of Protected Areas in Sharr Mountain, Mavrovo, and Korab-Koritnik” which focuses on good governance of protected areas on the cross-border between Albania and North Macedonia, implemented by Albanian Local Capacity Development Foundation (ALCDF), in partnership with local organizations of Center for Sustainable Community Development (CSDC) in North Macedonia, and LAG "Dibra Turistike" in Albania. The project intends to improve measures to strengthen environmental governance in the target PA(s) cross-border regions through coordinated actions that increase the impact of operations to reduce threats and ensure the preservation and sustainable use of natural resources in both countries. Nature conservation professionals across borders have the same objectives, and a common understanding is easily gained. What is important in transboundary conservation is to secure a high level of participation of local communities and integration in cross-border management processes for the benefit of nature and all those who share the resources. Co-management structures are one of the project instruments that will contribute to effective and equitable governance of cross-border Sharr-Korab region protected areas (PA) to enhance the ecological, economic, and social benefits.

During the last decade, there has been a shift in the governance of protected areas to a broader approach that recognizes local communities' participation, local stewardship, and shared decision-making in the management of protected areas. Through this process, local communities are empowered to become active members of the protected areas management team, balancing rights and responsibilities, and working in partnership, rather than antagonistically, with protected areas management authorities and national government. This approach is called co-management.

Co-management is one of some promising new and alternative management approaches that have emerged in recent years for protected areas management. These new management approaches are part of a discussion of new directions for protected areas management vision with a human face and a people focus. It recognizes that the underlying causes of natural resource overexploitation and environmental degradation are often of social, economic, institutional, and/or political origins. It recognizes that protected areas management should focus on people, not protected areas, *per se*.

It is becoming increasingly clear that protected areas management authorities and governments, with their finite resources, cannot solve all protected area's problems. Local communities will need to take more responsibility for solving local problems. To do this, however, communities must be empowered and resources provided to make decisions locally and to take actions that meet local opportunities and problems. The assistance and support of the protected areas management authorities will still be needed to achieve these results, although the role and responsibilities of government will also need to change.

The protected areas manager needs to be creative and innovative. There is no blueprint formula for managing protected areas; each one is different. Different approaches will need to be tried and integrated. There will be success and there will be failure. There must be learning and adaptation. The local community, protected areas management authorities, and the government, through a co-

management arrangement, will need to work together to decide the best combination of approaches for their situation.

However, the actual process of co-management has often been problematic as the definition of co-management is quite broad and means different things to different people. In addition, the complexity of issues and relationships and the time involved in planning and implementing co-management arrangements have also led to problems with implementation. This has often led to misunderstandings among the co-management partners and vague adoption of the concept as a protected areas management strategy.

That is the purpose of this manual; to provide a practical reference on a process for co-management for use by the various co-management partners. This manual is meant to be a working document that is revised and adapted to a specific situation.

This is not possible as there are as many approaches to co-management as there are communities. Each situation in which co-management may be used is different and will require a unique response. Rather, this manual will present a process that is 'generic' in that it will provide the manual user with a place to start and with an understanding of how a process works and the variety of activities and methods that can be used to plan and implement co-management.

This manual is written for use by the initiators and facilitators of co-management – government, change agents, community leaders, and community members, as well as motivated protected areas specialists. The manual is written to allow each partner in co-management to clearly understand their role and responsibility in the co-management process, and how to relate to the other partners in co-management. The manual is meant to be used to plan and implement co-management, as a reference source to specific co-management activities. More will be said about each partner and their roles and responsibilities in the chapters below.

Introduction of Sharr-Korab massive protected area.

The mountain massive of Sharr-Korab is one of the biggest protected area in Europe, with around 244,000 ha of Sharr Mountain National Park (NP) in Kosovo, national parks of Shar Mountain and Mavrovo in North Macedonia, and Korab-Koritnik Natural Park (NP) in Albania, as a natural habitat for a large number of species, many of them endangered.

The “Protection and Sustainable Use of Protected Areas in Sharr Mountain, Mavrovo, and Korab-Koritnik” project, implemented by ALCDF, is focused in the cross-border protected areas between Albania and North Macedonia, covering more than 191,338 hectares of PAs, specifically in: Shara Mountain National Park (62,700 ha), Mavrovo National Park in NMK (73,088 ha), and Korab-Koritnik natural park in AL (55,550 ha). Protected Area Management Authorities (PAMA) are in four offices specifically in Mavrovo for NP of Mavrovo, Tetovo for NP of Sharr Mountain, Diber and Kukes for Korab-Koritnik NP. Korab-Koritnik: Located west of Mavrovo and , the park was established in 2012.

The protected areas have a direct population around 44,600 inhabitants, including 10 local government units (Municipalities and communes) specifically the municipalities of Dibër and

Kukës, with a population of around 19,000 (in Korab-Koritnik Natural Park), the municipalities of Mavrovo-Rostushe and Gostivar (Mavrovo National Park), with a total population of around 8,600, and in Shar Mountain National Park living a population of around 17,000 across seven municipalities (Bogovinje, Gostivar, Jegunovce, Mavrovo-Rostushe, Tearce, Tetovo, and Vrapchishte).

The Governments of Albania and North Macedonia have established a representative system of protected areas, which currently covers 18.31% of Albanian territory and 16.3% of North Macedonia territory. Both countries have progress on major national targets achieved in the adoption of the Strategic Policies, institutional and legislative framework, and have also established the legal basis for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and achieving the targets related to EU directives. Laws on Protected Areas were adopted, as well as the number of management plans for protected areas were workable and action plans for threatened species (Dalmatian pelican adopted in 2017, Balkan Lynx is under the process of adoption) which shows the country's remarkable efforts undertaken and continuously action in scaling up the achievements set by the CBD.

In both countries, the system of protected areas has a specific Law or article of the Environmental Laws on Protected Areas. According to the law, the national categories have been defined as:

- Category I – (Ia) Strict Nature Reserve (SNP), (Ib) Wilderness Area (WA),
- Category II – National Park (NP),
- Category III – Monument of Nature (MN),
- Category IV – Nature Park (NP),
- Category V – Protected Landscape (PL) and
- Category VI – Multipurpose Area (MPA).

National Park “Mavrovo ” is category (II) and it is established by law of the National Assembly of the People’s Republic of Macedonia 19. 04. 1949, by which forest areas around Mavrovo field were declared a National Park. Under this law, the National Park ” Mavrovo ” was formed “because of its exceptional natural beauty, the historical and scientific importance of forests and forest areas around Mavrovo field. Although a draft management plan for Mavrovo exists, the management authorities are in the process of studying for valorization and a new management plan.

Shar Mountain: Located east of Mavrovo and , the park is the latest of the four protected areas to be proclaimed as such, being established in July 2021 (category II). It covers an area of 62,700 ha with a population of around 17,000 across seven municipalities (Bogovinje, Gostivar, Jegunovce, Mavrovo-Rostushe, Tearce, Tetovo, and Vrapchishte). There is a draft of operational plan for the protected area, which is envisioned to be adopted in 2022. In addition, insufficient zoning of the park area and its different classifications was mentioned by stakeholders.

Korab-Koritnik: Located west of Mavrovo and, the park was established in 2011 (category IV. Nature Park) and covers an area of 55,550.2 ha. The park includes the municipalities of Dibër and Kukës, and has a mostly rural population of around 19,000. A park management plan exists but it has either expired or is not in use. Stakeholders provided different information about the status of the management plan.

Co-management structure in Sharr-Korab massive

The definition of Co-management structure.

Co-management can be defined as a partnership arrangement in which the community of local resource users (foresters, tourism operators, householders, shepherds, etc.), government, other stakeholders (local government, state authorities, businesspeople, etc.) and external agents (non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic and research institutions) share the responsibility and authority for the management of the protected areas with PAMA. Through consultations and negotiations, the partners develop a formal agreement on their respective roles, responsibilities and rights in management, referred to as 'negotiated power'. Co-management is also called participatory, joint, stakeholder, multi-party or collaborative management.

Co-management covers various partnership arrangements and degrees of power sharing and integration of local (informal, traditional, customary) and centralized government management systems. Protected areas co-management can be classified into five broad types according to the roles government and communities or interested actors play .

- *Instructive:* There is only a minimal exchange of information between PAMA and communities or interested actors. This type of co-management regime is only different from centralized management in the sense that the mechanisms exist for dialogue with communities, but the process itself tends to be government informing interested actors on the decisions they plan to make.
- *Consultative:* Mechanisms exist for PAMA to consult with communities or interested actors, but all decisions are taken by the government.
- *Cooperative:* This type of co-management is where PAMA and communities or interested actors cooperate as equal partners in decision-making.
- *Advisory:* Communities or interested actors advise PAMA of decisions to be taken and the government endorses these decisions.
- *Informative:* PAMA has delegated authority to make decisions to community groups who are responsible for informing the government of these decisions.

Protected Area Management Authority (PAMA)

The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning is responsible for all protected areas in the Republic of North Macedonia. Also, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment is responsible for the conservation and management of protected areas network in Albania.

In Albania, the National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA) acts as a central body responsible for the management of protected areas, and it has the status of Directorate General for day-to-day

management, protection and development of the protected areas is entrusted to the twelve Regional Administrations for Protected Areas (RAPA) headed by a Regional Director and organized through the Management and Administration Section and Monitoring Section. For Korab-Koritnik the RAPA in Kukes and Diber are responsible for administration of the daily work. There are the Protected Area Management Authorities (PAMA).

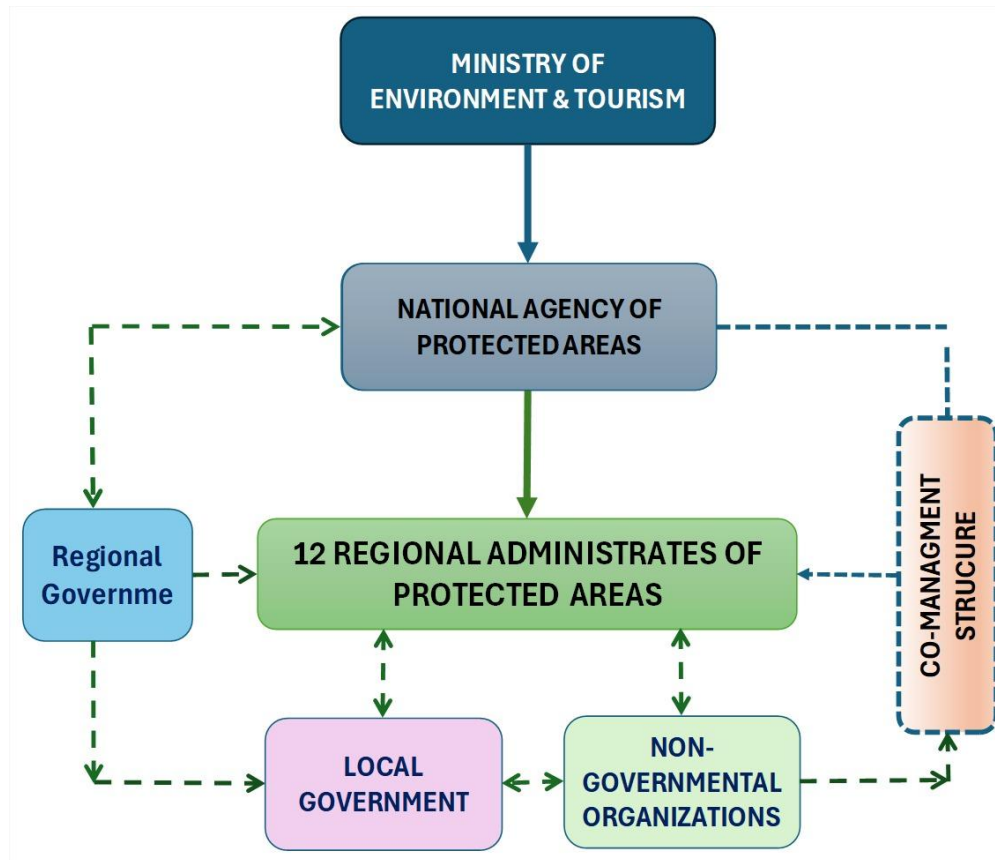


Fig. PAMA and co-management structure in Albania

In North Macedonia, the Public Institution Mavrovo National Park and the Shar Mountains National Park are responsible for managing the PA. According to the Law on Nature Protection, the NP defines the statute based on the criteria and appoints the Director by the government who has a four-year mandate. Furthermore, the management and governance structure include the following bodies such as: Management board; Operational board director; Expert board; and Board for operational and financial management. The Management Board of the Public Institution – National Park is defined in Article 138 of the Law on Nature Protections. The body managing the National Park shall be the Managerial Board, consisting of 5 members: 2 representatives of the founder, 1 representative of the municipality on the territory of which the National Park is located, and two representatives of the expert body. The members of the Management Board shall be appointed and dismissed by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. The NPs are Protected Area Management Authorities (PAMA).

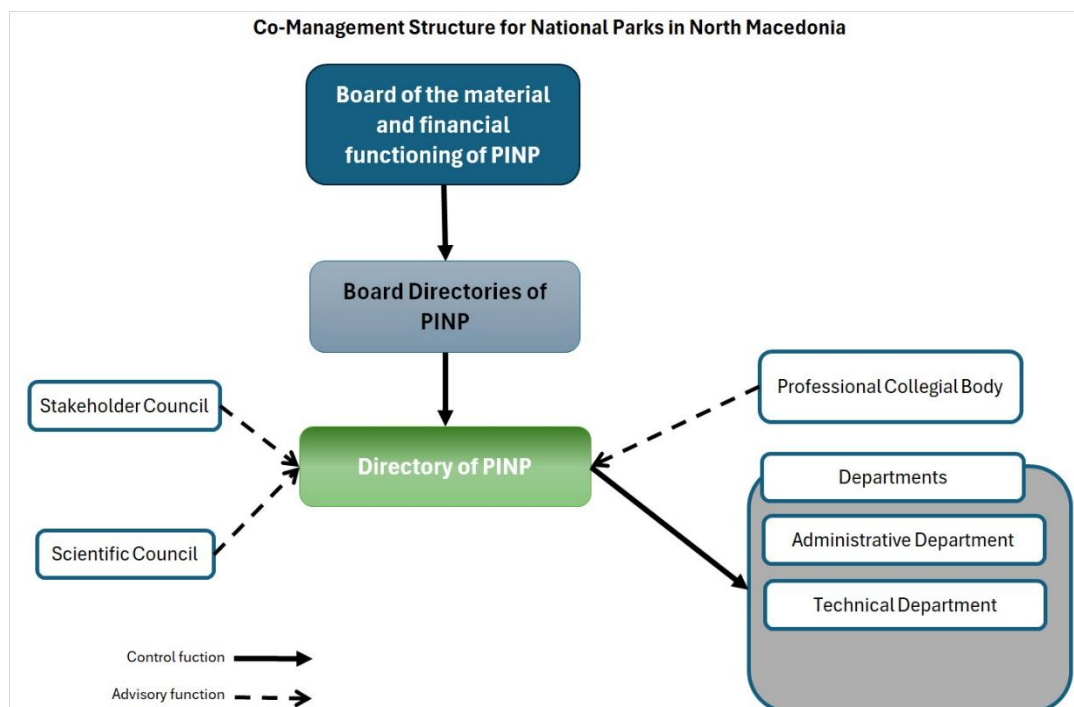


Fig. PAMA and co-management structure in NP of Sharr Mountain and Mavrovo

Co-Management Structure in Sharr-Korab role and responsibilities

The co-management structure is not a regulatory technique, although regulations are used in co-management. It is a participatory management strategy that provides and maintains a forum or structure for action on empowerment, rule making, conflict management, power sharing, social learning, dialogue and communication, and development among the partners. In North Macedonia is more participatory and local based as advisory role, and in Albania is more in regional level and its is focused more in the motoring and supervising the PAMA work.

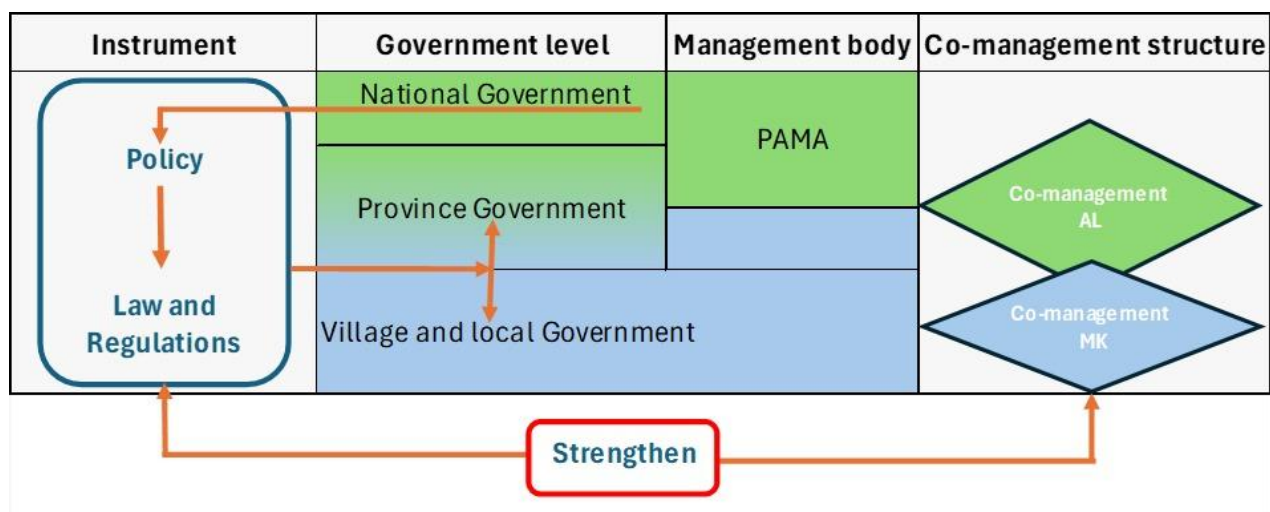


Fig. Co-management structure relation

Stakeholder Council of NP, Role and responsibilities

The co-management structure in North Macedonia is a more participatory and community-based organization. According to the law, the NP established two participatory structures such as scientific and stakeholder councils. These have advisory roles in the management of the protected area and decision-making on operational issues and are important in fostering and maintaining good cooperation between all relevant stakeholders. The NPs of Mavrovo and Sharr Mountain have established these structures.

- The scientific council is made up of representatives of state and local institutions, as well as other legal entities registered to carry out scientific research activities in the field of biological and geological diversity, as well as persons who independently carry out scientific research activities in the field of biological diversity and geological.
- The stakeholder council or council of concerning parties is composed by representatives of:
 - o local government units (communes or municipalities) and local communities, whose territory corresponds to the territory of the protected area.
 - o local associations of citizens which have in their mission environmental protection and nature.
 - o regional units of state administration bodies, enterprises and public state institutions that carry out activities and activities in the territory of the protected area.
 - o local public enterprises and institutions, which carry out activities in the territory of the protected area, and
 - o other legal entities that have activities or use of natural resources in the territory of the protected area.

Specifically for NPs of Mavrovo and Sharr mountain, the main stakeholders are:

- Local government Unit: Municipality of Tetovo; Municipality of Gostivar; Municipality of Bogovinje; Municipality of Tearce; Municipality of Vrapcishte; Municipality of Mavrovo and Rostusha; and Municipality of Jegunovce.
- Regional Units of state administration are: Public Enterprise National Forests; Public Enterprise for the Management of Pastures; etc.
- Private sector: Hunting concession holders; Hotel owners.
- Civil society organization: Universities and scientific institutions; Mountaineering clubs; Civil society and community-based organizations.

The role and responsibilities of the council are defined in the statute of the NP, and internal regulations (Annex 1) were developed and functional in both the NP of Mavrovo and Sharr Mountain. In the first meeting, the members elected the President of the Council, who is proposed by the Management Board of the NP.

Protected areas are public assets, and as such public participation is essential to ensuring they are properly managed and enjoy strong public support. A desire for greater public involvement in government decision-making has been clearly expressed in public consultation discussions in the region of NP. Ensuring collaborative public participation is a two-way process from which both national park management and stakeholders can learn and benefit.

The role of the council is defined in the box below:

Role of the stakeholder council:

- For efficient management of the protected area, the Management Board of the protected area within three months of its appointment is obligated to establish the stakeholder council of involved parties and scientific council, as advisory bodies of the NP.
- The members of the stakeholder's council are representatives of local government units, state regional enterprises, local civil society organizations, the private sector, etc.
- The members of the Council of Stakeholders have a 5-year mandate.
- In the first meeting, the members of the SC elected the President of the Council, who is proposed by the Management Board of the NP.
- The President is responsible for the coordination of the SC, represents the council, signs the acts approved by the SC, takes care of the implementation of the provisions of the Work Regulations, decides on the SC meetings, and performs other responsibilities.
- The SC has a secretary, who is part of the personnel of the NP, and S/he is responsible for the preparation and organization of the SC meetings, takes care of the regular and up-to-date submission of acts, and assists the President in the implementation of this Regulation.
- The SC meeting is organized at least once per year, but depending on the issues it can be held based on management needs.
- The council participates and provides opinions and proposals regarding the proposed management plan of the protected area, and approval for it.
- The council participates and provides opinions and proposals on an annual plan, and the revision of the plan for the management of the protected area;
- The council is involved and provides opinions and proposals in the process of implementation of special programs of the management plan of the protected area in terms of the interests of the parties included.
- The SC is part of the education program of the NP.
- The SC is part of and obligated to participate in the community meetings and awareness.

Committee of Management of Protected Area, Role and Responsibilities

In Albania, the co-management structures are Committees of Management of Protected Areas (CMPA), which are defined based on the Decision nr 593 of the Prime Minister, for the compositions, function, duties, and responsibilities of CMPA. The co-management structure in Albania is more multi-stakeholder structure, like a monitoring unit than a community-based structure.

The co-management committee is a supervisory structure, with non-management activities, that is established for each protected area and is organized at the regional level, chaired by the Prefect or when the areas of protected areas (PA) include several regions, it is chaired from the Prefect that has the largest area of PA. For Korab-Koritnik Natural Park, the Prefect of Kukes is responsible for chairing the committee.

The memberships of the committee are representatives of:

- a. Representatives of the Ministry responsible for environmental issues, member.
- b. Representative from the National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA), member;
- c. Representatives from the other Prefectures, other regions (in cases where the PA is located in more than two regions), one member from each region;
- d. Representative from the municipality/s, member.
- e. Director/s of the administration of the protected area, at the regional level, one member from each region;
- f. Representatives from local institutions that are directly related to the management plan of the protection area, specifically of:
 - i) agriculture, member;
 - ii) tourism, member;
 - iii) infrastructure and energy, member;
 - iv) waters, member;
 - v) science and education, member;
 - vi) cultural heritage, in case the PA includes protected heritage values and areas and of the cultural landscape, members etc.;
- g. Representatives of environmental civil society at the local level who are related to the management plan of a PA, member.
- h. Representatives from the owners of forests and pastures, whose property is included in the area of the PA, member.

The Regional Administration of the Protected Area (RAPA) plays the role of technical secretariat and administers all the documentation that reflects the work of the committee.

The role of the committee for the management of protected areas are listed in the box below.

The management committee has the responsibilities and duties for:

- Supervision of the progress of the implementation of the PA management plan;
- Involvement in the process of preparation of MP and following its implementation, to ensure that it is under the local and sectoral strategy and respects the requirements for the protection of the area;
- Encouraging the ecological development of the surroundings of the area, as a result of the implementation of the plan, with the aim maintaining its quality;
- Analyzing the performance of tasks and functions of the RAPA, in function of the implementation of the management plan, as well as reports on income and financial expenses related to the implementation of the plan;
- Recommendation for determining the direction of investments in the area;
- Approval of the annual report on the state of the protected area;
- Proposal to the responsible Minister for the environment and NAPA for changes in the management plan of the area, the expansion of the borders, as well as additional measures to improve its qualities, when these rely on studies conducted and arguments on the need for change. In case the proposal includes an area that has and values heritage and cultural landscape, the proposal must also receive the approval of the decision-makers of the ministry responsible for cultural heritage;
- Encouraging the development and implementation of projects that improve the social and economic situation of the area;
- Following the implementation of the management plan of protected areas.
- The management committee of the relevant environmental protection area cooperates closely with RAPA for the implementation of its functional duties defined in the provisions of the law, "For the protected areas".
- The RAPA has the role of the technical secretariat for the committee.

Mechanisms and procedures of co-management structure work

The co-management structure in Sharr-Korab works based on meeting sessions. The meeting sessions are convened based on the PAMA needed, but at least once a year in Mavrovo and Sharr Mountain NP, and twice a year in Korab-Koritnik. As an exception, to solve the urgent problems faced by the NP, the Director may request the holding of an extraordinary session of the co-management structure.

For the co-management structure in North Macedonia according to the law, the meetings are public, and the media is present, but the co-management may decide to exclude the public.

The secretary of the co-management structure is responsible for the preparation of the meetings, and in close cooperation with the President SC (in North Macedonia) or the Prefect (in Albania) notifies the members of the meeting, and prepares the invitation for the meeting, which have the proper information for the time, place, agenda, and purpose of the meeting. The invitation will be distributed to all members at least 15 days before the meeting day, together with all necessary materials.

The meeting session is held if there is a quorum (i.e. more than half of all co-management members are present). At the beginning of the session, the chairman of the meeting determines the presence of the quorum for the work of the co-management structure meeting.

The minutes are kept for the meeting session progress of the co-management structure. The secretary is responsible as a minute taker. The minutes contain the basic data for the agenda of the meeting, the participant's list, the discussions on the items on the agenda, the approved issues, proposal issues, and conclusions. The minutes prepared by the secretary will be shared with all members, and comments and feedback for the minutes will be provided at the next meeting.

The minutes are approved at the beginning of the next session. During the approval of the minutes, any member can make comments on the minutes. For comments that will be approved, a correction is made in the minutes by a secretary. The approved minutes are signed by the Chairman of the co-management structure. The minutes will be filed in the archives of the public institutions.

Mechanisms and procedures of stakeholder consultation.

Stakeholder participation is a crucial issue for the PAMA and effective management of PA. The co-management structure members are the negotiation and facilitator of this process. Protected areas are public assets, and as such stakeholder consultation is essential to ensuring they are properly managed and enjoy strong public support. The co-management structure with their broader membership will contribute to the effective management of PA in the Sharr-Korab region for these main issues related to management of the PA such as:

- Establishment of a Forest Fire Protection System
- Sustainable management of wildlife
- Sustainable use of wild plants and fruits
- Sustainable use of agricultural land in the surroundings of villages
- Sustainable use of mountain grasslands
- Sustainable use of the forests
- Sustainable use of waters
- Maintenance and improvement of infrastructure and communal services
- Maintenance and adaptation of traditional architecture
- Other issues related to PA management.

The PAMA of Sharr Mountain, Movrovo, and Korab-koritnik suggested having stakeholder consultation meetings on different topics, in different periods of the year. The main stakeholder groups are:

- Municipalities and local community representatives.
- Tourism
- Scientific community and NGOs.
- Neighboring national parks
- Livestock grazing, farming and collecting wild plants, and
- Cultural associations and groups.

Proposed topics and mechanisms for stakeholder consultation and frequency are listed below:

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders to be involved	Topics	Frequency
Municipalities and local community representatives	• All municipalities • Representatives of villages in NP	• Prevention of illegal activities • Waste management • Road maintenance • Maintenance of electrical supply • Use of natural resources (wood, plants, water, etc.) • Risk management (erosion, fires, flash floods, avalanches, etc.)	Quarterly
Scientific community and NGOs	• Universities • NGOs • Consultants	• Scientific research • Monitoring of species and habitats • Education and awareness	Once per year
Neighboring national parks	• Mavrovo NP • Sharri NP (Kosovo) • Korab Koritnik NP (Albania)	• Establish regular cross-border collaboration • Transboundary financing • Prevention of illegal activities	Twice per year
Livestock grazing, farming and collecting wild plants	• PI Pastures • Pasture concession holders • Wild plant collectors • Farmers	• Use of pastures and development of sheepfolds • Dairy production • Grazing and tourism	Twice per year

		• Marketing products	
Cultural associations and groups	Local groups involved in maintaining traditions	• Promoting local traditions and culture in the region • Organizing cultural events	Twice per year
Tourism	• Tour operators • Tourism service providers • Hiking and other sports clubs • Ski resort management • Wildlife management	• Promotion of NP to visitors • Visitor monitoring system and impact of tourism • Development of ski resort	Twice a year

Public Awareness, Information, and Education Programme

According to the law and management plan, the PAMA is obligated to provide the information to the public and organize public awareness, and education programmes. Ensuring collaborative public participation is a two-way process from which both national park management and villagers, stakeholders, and the public can learn and benefit. A desire for greater public involvement in government decision-making has been clearly expressed in public/village consultation discussions in the Sharr-Korab region of PA.

The main target groups are:

- Villages in the NP and surrounding.
- Local schools.
- Visitors and other users of the NP, and
- Public, and other interested parties.

The PAMA are responsible for preparing and implementing the information, awareness and education program.

Public Information packaget

The PAMA is responsible for provided the public information. The co-management members will provided feedback and articulated the demands for key information issues and material. The co-management structures needs to approved the information program develop by PAMA in the Management Plan, and contributed on sharing and using these information materials. The action focused for public information by co-management structure are:

- Preparation of promotional informative material about the natural values of the local population.
- Development of infrastructure for information such as marking of zones, and establishing a limited number of entry signs and info boards.
- Preparation of the Communication program including developing and maintaining the website (if it has not been done yet), activities on social media within regular information about the park, etc.

The co-management members are actively involved in preparation and implementation of this information process for target PA. also, there are responsible for progress monitoring of the information process and control the quality of the information materials and their impact to the broader public. Based on this monitoring process, they will suggested recommendations for the next programme of information.

Educational programme

The education program is obligatory for each PAMA according to the Law. The main target group are primary, secondary and high schools, ven Universities. The aims is to develop key competencies of teachers and their students that lead to active citizenship for nature conservation. Each school participating in the program implements an environmental project in cooperation with the management of the protected area in their close proximity. In general, each Protected area has education programme approved in the MP and a dedicated contact person for educational programs. During the meetings of co-management structures one of the key point of agenda are the progress of education programme, and especially the representatives of CSO and education department who are members of the co-management structures are important “change agent” for development and implementation of this program. The co-mangement structure promote the initiatives of other CSO for education projects, support implementations and facilitate and monitor the progress of these activities. In general whole NP has:

- Educational programs for different target groups
- Educate group of park staff to work with organized groups of children (primary and secondary schools)
- Develop different educational packages for different target groups and different ages;
- Preparation and distribution of educational materials (species, allowed and forbidden activities, code of conduct, etc).
- Build educational infrastructure for children and people with disabilities

Public Awareness and community meetings

Communication and public awareness programs have been characterized in many different ways by many different PAMA. They have been described as programs that: attract and mobilize positive action for biodiversity; provide ways of managing multi-stakeholder dialogue; enable protected area managers to focus more on conservation and less on threat reduction efforts; help gain the cooperation of different groups; and provide the tools to develop community capacity to support conservation within protected areas. However, the essence of a protected area communication and

awareness program is the simple act of people exchanging information on biodiversity, and on the consequences of human behavior on that biodiversity, within and around a protected area. The protected area agencies have developed communication and awareness programs. Many of these programs focus on increasing awareness of people about the biodiversity within protected areas, and warn visitors not to take certain actions, such as litter, or feed wildlife. While these types of communication efforts may be helpful in certain circumstances, they are likely to do little to inspire communities to change behaviors that are harming biodiversity, and to adopt behaviors that support biodiversity conservation.

Some important topics for public involvement in the management and governance of PA are:

- Improved understanding of conservation issues;
- Support in monitoring, and advocacy for the protection of biodiversity;
- Support in fighting illegal activities;
- Rapid firefighting interventions;
- Increased technical knowledge of NP staff and community members;
- Increased credibility of NP management within the community;
- Improved quality of NP management decision making;
- Greater compliance of community through increased ownership of solutions;
- Greater access to community skills and knowledge.
- Improved understanding of tourists' expectations and user groups' needs;

Potential disadvantages of public involvement:

- Potentially time-consuming;
- Need for training and capacity building of NP management staff for communication;
- Challenging to reach constructive debate when interest groups have entrenched positions.

Community meetings

Community meetings are usually the first steps in implementation awareness campaign. Management and Specialist team of PAMA and members of co-management structure begin to identify the village meetings, and facilitate the process. Often, the PA specialist in the field and member of co-management structure (who is represent the community) establish initial relationships and credibility with community members, and local leaders at this time. These teams working with the local people, identify the most priority issue in the community, including local social structures and power relations, forums for discussion and conflict management, communication barriers by gender and class, and participation in decision-making.

A series of village meetings and discussions is held with village leaders, resource users, householders and local government officials to share the concept and process of

communication and a consensus on their interests and concerns, and to build awareness about resource protection, management and rehabilitation. Community members actively participate in these activities. At this point, it is useful for the co-management member working with community members, to conduct a feasibility analysis to determine their interest and expectations. The legal, political, institutional, economic and sociocultural feasibility need to be considered by co-management structure, to initially identify problems, needs and opportunities. Community meetings can be a long process and requires those linkages with co-management structure members, whose needs to have the skills, energy, commitment and personality to listen, share and work with the people of the community on an equal basis.

The meeting place needs to be determined at village in order to be accessible for all participants, and to ensure participation of all communities (men and women).

The invitation and agenda needs to be prepared at least 7 days before the meeting, and announcement to be displayed in the most public spaces at village hall, and in social media.

Time for the meeting needs to be discussed with village leaders and to be appointed at the most favorable time for the communities.

Frequency of the village meetings depends by the issues of PA management but we suggested at least three times per year to have a village meeting in coherence with issues.

Conflict management and appeals

Conflicts may arise within the common property regime and between users and PAMA. The intensity and frequency of conflicts are likely to be closely related to the perceived relative scarcity of the resource. Several factors can lead to conflict, including:

- absence of recognized rules,
- divergence in the interpretation of the rules, and
- outright trespass of a rule.

Part of the co-management process must include a mechanism for discussing and resolving what is and is not a rule violation and how to settle the dispute. This can be done formally or informally. In general, for monitoring and sanctions to be effective, the PA must have a stake in institutional processes and be involved in monitoring and enforcement.

Since conflicts will inevitably arise, the agreement must contain forms and mechanisms to address and resolve conflict. Conflict management is a process of dialogue and

negotiation. A co-management structure is a facilitator, mediator (serves as a neutral party to assist stakeholders in finding a resolution to the conflict), or arbiter (decides for the stakeholders at the request of the stakeholders) may be needed to guide the process toward constructive results.

The co-management structure should designate a forum for negotiation and agree on some rules for the process. They may generate and discuss various options for action, formally agreeing on one of those options. The conflict management mechanism should be multi-level to allow for an appeal process.

In the co-management structures, the representatives of regional and local government are members, and they provide enabling legislation to authorize and legitimize the right to organize and to make and enforce co-management. It is a form process and provision of decentralization, that creates legitimacy of co-management systems. For this reason, the co-management structure ensures accountability by overseeing local arrangements and dealing with abuses of regional and local authorities. Part of it, the conflict management and appeal mechanism are the role of these structures based in the legal framework of regional and local government functions. The main role of the local government unit is to support co-management initiatives within its jurisdiction. There must be a political willingness among the local political 'power elite' to support co-management. In addition, regional and local government staff and officials must also endorse and actively support the co-management program.