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PARTICULARITIES OF GOLIJA NATURE PARK AND CONDITIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM¹

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Abstract

Nature Park „Golija“ is a mountainous area in Serbia with big the ecological and tourist potentials. The paper discusses the possibilities for development of rural tourism in the context of sustainable development and multifunctional agriculture, on the basis of present resources. Predisposition for the development of tourism is based next to the natural attractions and to develop local brands, which would be based on the improvement of livestock, dairy and meat production of autochthonous products for which there is a fair demand in the market. The standardization of the technological process of obtaining Golija cheese as a unique autochthonous dairy product is an activity that contributes to achieving the objective of improving the tourist offer Golija region.

Key words: *nature park, livestock breeding, rural tourism, sustainable development, Golija cheese*

Introduction

Golija is a mountain located in Dinara massif and represents a part of Starovlaska-Raska Mountain. The nature park Golija is located in south-west part of Serbia and outspreads at 75.183 ha on Golija Mountain and partly on mountains Radočelo and Čemerno; administratively, this area belongs to municipalities Ivanjica, Sjenica and Raška and to the towns Novi Pazar and Kraljevo. This area established as the nature park in July 2001, by Serbian government, while in the same year, within UNESCO program „Man and biosphere“, a part of this area (53.804 ha) was proclaimed as biosphere reserve, under the name „Golija-Studenica“.

Golija is characterized by the beauty of nature and according to many this the most beautiful and richest mountain forests in Republic of Serbia. Located about

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250 km from Belgrade and 39 km from Ivanjica is very attractive, but not enough popularized and used a tourist destination. The highest mountain is "Jankov kamen" 1833 m, due to good visibility and visibility from the slopes of this mountain some claim "to see it with half of Serbia".

In addition to the rich forest eco-system, there are high-quality pasture and meadow communities. Deciduous forests are mostly beech, it must be stressed, and the presence of relict species of mountain maple (*Acer heldreichii*). There are also represented mixed type forests; somewhere even of virgin forests nature. Evergreen juniper forests are especially amazing owing to some bog and lake ecosystems (Dajić lake and Košanin lakes). Beside relict Greek Maple is also significant an endemic of European Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*); except that, among other plant species (there are around 1100) there should mention those relict and endemic at the same time, like:

- *Allysum markgrafi*,
- *Allysum jancheni*,
- *Viola elegantula* i
- *Verbascum adamovicii*.

Local endemics are Serbian Spruce (*Paniccia serbica*) and adamovic's thyme (*Thymus adamovicii*).

In terms of animal species there are the following types of mammals: the wolf brown bear, fox, mole rat and the alpine shrewmouse. More than a hundred species of birds are present in the area. Some of the most represented species are: wild lark, wheatear, redshank etc.

Golija is a rich source of clean and healthy water (some are in use as sources of water that is bottled and is valued in the market). Streams from the wells form rivers rich with fish. On Golija are wells of Moravica (it springs on altitude of 1425 m and slopes down to 392 m of altitude) and Studenica (it springs on altitude of 1500 m and slopes down to 629 m of altitude).

From the point of climate view, summers here are cool, while winters are cold with snow that keeps for a long. There must be also stated the influence of Mediterranean climate in valley of Ibar, Studenica and Moravica, which lessen harsh continental climate, and makes this area more pleasant to stay in. Due to impermeable geological substratum and abundant rainfalls comes to creation of water accumulations and here are water resources very rich. The soil is suitable for forests and meadows, although can be grown cereals, potato and fruits.

As one of many preconditions for development of rural tourism is livestock breeding development. Golija can offer to potential tourists the high quality products, like Golija cheese, prosciutto, and Rakia that are among the organic products.

The condition of livestock breeding on Golija

At the level of Serbia livestock on the basis of statistical indicators in the nineties and the last ten years of the new century, showed a declining trend in relation to the size of the eighties. Such trend has reflected also on livestock breeding condition

on Golija, although this has represented a traditional activity of the population on Golija Mountain. In tables 1 and 2 are listed data on the number of cattle in Golija municipalities and cities, given the statistics on the overall level of municipalities and cities of 2006th and 2007th years. (Mijajlovic, et al. 2009)

Table 1.- The number of cattle and sheep in the investigated municipalities and cities for 2006.

	Count of cattle, state on 15. 01. 2006		Count of sheep		Count	
	Total	Cows and in-calf heifer	Total	Sheep for breeding	Cattle on 100 ha	Sheep on 100 ha
Sjenica	21.738	15.025	17.830	11.500	63	22
Ivanjica	14.335	7.992	28.940	23.441	39	56
Kraljevo	27.812	19.918	22.147	17.847	59	31
Novi Pazar	10.343	8.236	8.067	4.612	49	22
Raška	6.448	4.553	10.558	8.222	37	32

Source: Municipal Yearbook 2006th

It can be seen as indicators of the republican level, the trend to reduce the number of cattle or stagnation in the two observed at the level observed in all administrative areas, except in cases where Sjenica is recorded growth of sheep.

Good natural potentials, rich qualitative pastures, qualitative waters, preservation of these ecosystems make preconditions for organic plant and livestock production. But despite of all natural predispositions, it looked like the motivation and investments, necessary for livestock breeding development, have missed. In coordination with regulations which must be observed within the organic production, on Golija is possible to initiate and develop the organic production.

Table 2.- The number of cattle and sheep in the investigated municipalities and cities for 2007.

	Count of cattle, state on 15. 01. 2007.		Count of sheep		Count	
	Total	Cows and in-calf heifer	Total	Sheep for breeding	Cattle on 100 ha	Sheep on 100 ha
Sjenica	20.218	14.061	18.946	13.212	25	23
Ivanjica	11.420	6.625	24.319	19.149	22	47
Kraljevo	25.078	18.183	22.265	17.904	35	31
Novi Pazar	10.377	7.528	8.114	5.016	29	22
Raška	5.698	4.527	10.619	8.395	17	32

Source: Municipal Yearbook, 2007th.

The livestock breeding on the slopes of Golija has been mostly directed to satisfaction of local population needs. Purchasing and processing capacities for milk and meat are poor. Cattle breeding and sheep breeding are the most represented types of livestock breeding, although has started with breeding goats, too. On area of Ivanjica is small number of registered summer mountain pastures and two registered livestock breeding farms. Small number of private mini-farms is on that side which belongs to Raška municipality. In Sjenica settlement Vrujci/Duga Poljana is modern equipped ecological farm on area of 220 ha. Regarding that milk purchase, at the level of local shops and agricultural pharmacies, has been organized, the plans for enlargement and market-orientation of organic production of this farm have been directed to rural and ethno-tourism, according to management of this farm. The possibilities for standardization of technological procedure for making Golija cheese.

In regard to the standardization of technological procedure for making autochthonous Golija cheese, which could satisfy regulations of the Law on Safety Food, there was done some research on analyzing raw milk and cheese, which have been produced in individual households according to the traditional recipes (Vuković V., et al., 2010). There were made some analyses of raw milk from 6 Golija farms in accordance to the Rulebook on methods of chemical and physical milk and dairy products analyses (OG. SFRY No. 32/83); thus was noted that that 5 out of 6 collective samples were satisfying the parameters of milk fat and proteins percentage in relation to the reference values, regulated by the Rulebook on quality and other requirements for milk, dairy products, composite dairy products and starter cultures – Official Gazette SRY No. 26/02. From microbiological point of view, in accordance to the methods and norms, regulated by different rulebooks, the samples from all six farms have satisfied criteria, i.e. they have been microbiologically correct. In regard to pathogenic microorganisms existence, these samples were correct, but in sense of general hygienic correctness (which implies total number of microorganisms and number of somatic cells per 1 ml of sample), none of the samples were satisfactory. In regard to sensory evaluation of raw milk (colour, aroma, taste, general appearance and visible mechanical impurities), this raw milk is satisfactory.

In regard to the same parameters were analyzed also cheese samples after mentioned rulebooks in previous text. In regard to chemical parameters, analyzed cheese satisfies reference values, in microbiological sense were not find pathogenic microorganisms. Complete hygienic and sensory evaluation of cheese should be done in future researches. In initial phases of conditions review for standardization of technological procedure for Golija cheese production, by categorization, was determined that the cheese from Golija area was autochthonous cheese with maturation, white and soft, semi-fat cheese. It is necessary to undertake following activities in order to successfully perform the standardization.

Education of all that were included in cheese production (on terrain was noticed their interest to receive suggestions in this respect), Improvement of general hygienic conditions (passing from manual milking as more represented, to the mechanic milking – which requires enlargement of the flock).

Given the increasing interest of tourists in the local crafts and organic food production, would be necessary and education of the local population, which would milk and cheese producers to educate tourists to be found in an appropriate present to the production of traditional products of this regional brand “Golija cheese” made available in proposals of catering industry. In this way, in order to enrich the offer as a tourist and catering industry proposals and tourism product did different compared to other destinations in Serbia, which is the basis for obtaining competitive position in the market.

Perspectives of rural tourism

But points to the fact that Golija area designated as a separate state, and international status. Also, in this area related to more local administrative centers. This has hampered the application of integrated marketing at the tourist destination, and tourism, measurable results are below the objectively possible. The fundamental question in the future tourism development is : Will this division but with the standard political and economic problems at the state level (which is reflected in: the inadequacy of incentive measures, the price disparity, depopulation of rural population, increasing number of elderly persons in rural households, reducing the number of working-age population, fragmentation and other possessions.) complicate the plans and activities that are in the Spatial Plan Golija (2009) traced? Besides all the planned activities for improvement in this area must be viewed in the context of global economic crisis may also have a major impact on the realization of anticipated.

Spatial Plan Golija (2009), which includes the surface area of a broader nature park (93. 866 ha) is foreseen over the next ten years to create a tourist region, which along with a nature park existed and was of international and national importance. Naturally, the Tourist Organization of Serbia with the coordination of activities and the promotion of this area should play a crucial role for the future development of tourism. However, further investments are needed in both their quality and quantity. Based on planned accommodation facilities, tourist activities, natural resources, the attractiveness of the area, it is considered that the area met the Law of the Tourism and become integrated tourist region, which will facilitate the implementation of marketing and management of tourist destinations and also enhance tourism competitiveness.

The tourism development on the park Golija area is possible in many directions, regarding there are conditions for more tourist offers. The first line must be pointed out the high value of the cultural-historic bids that are monuments of great importance. In the first place to the medieval monasteries: Studenica, Brezova and Gradac, and Monastery Preobrazenje in Pridvorica and Monastery Svetih Arhangela in the village Smiljevo, hamlet Kovilje. Studenica the monastery from the 13th century which is located in the valley of the river Studenica and which is due to their cultural, artistic, religious, historical and other characteristics protected by UNASCO. As monuments of great importance in the area are outstanding churches of Sts. Alexia in Milici, Sts. George's in Vrh, Sts. Bogorodice in Doce, Sts. Nikole in Palez, Gornja Isposnica in Savovo.

One of the objective constraints to further development of tourism is also the matter of roads (their quality) that would connect the area to tourists from major urban centres. Spatial Plan of the 2009th it was adopted at the level of the Republic of Serbia is planning to invest in the development of Golija in terms of building transportation infrastructure, which will provide faster arrival to the desired and planned resort in the park.

To increase the attractiveness of the plan is the construction of ski terrain and accommodation facilities for tourists in winter, which would use all the benefits that the mountain has to develop tourism based on winter sports. It should be noted here that snow keeps up to five months on some slopes (potential ski terrain). In addition to seasonal, winter and ski tourism, natural features are the basis for rural development and rural tourism in the summer. This would be complementary development of rural tourism, winter and increase the results of the tourism season and the visit would be greatly extended.

Some rural households engaged in rural tourism, even the seventies, as is case in the village Devici of Ivanjica. On the hill "Daici" at 1400 m above sea level are already well-known apartment Golija's gift. So in terms of rural tourism, there are some conditions, but it is necessary to extend the existing accommodation facilities and make additional investments in their quality to meet all the demanding needs of tourists. Special types of tourism are hunting and fishery, while the forests are full of various hunting game, and rivers and lakes with fish.

Hospitality as a feature of the local population whose actual catchphrase, „get our guests and friends leave“ is a prerequisite for tourism development. So far, tourists have shown interest in the visual presentation of the agrarian, village of seasonal work and/or gathering forest products- especially visitors from abroad. Of rural environmental units, which can be distinguished in terms of potential for development of rural tourism, say it is located in the municipality of Raska. It is the villages untouched nature and excellent conditions for rest and recreation. One particularly attractive is the village Brvenica that is located od the road towards Brvenik-Gradac, 5 km away from Brvenik. The existence of the river Brvenica in her rich fish stocks, especially high-quality trout that can catch what the attraction for tourists who enjoy fishing. Walk along the river can be particularly interesting because the existence of the mill, which today generally rare and which are still active. In addition walking can lead to meadows with rare plants. In Brvenica are house still look and accomplishment as the beginning of last century, which is a separate ethno-attraction of area. Also, the mountainous areas in the presence of local air currents provide the opportunity for the development of paragliding and other sports activities that would just complete stay in the area and influenced the development of tourism specific interests. With a healthy and tasty food, clean water and air, here are conducted walking tours to nearby villages and monasteries Gradac as a special cultural monument.

Conclusion

Nature Park Golija preserved nature of the Republic of Serbia. Provided measures of protection and improvement of this area should ensure availability of all the natural resources of the area to tourists, but also use them so they do not disturb the natural environment in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Expansion and modernization of livestock production contributes to the improvement of production of milk and meat. In the process of standardization of indigenous Golija's cheese, which is an important part of rural tourism supply quality milk as starting materials must be preserved. This product, which is characteristic of the area Golija (its brand), may represent one of the backbone for the development of hospitality. Pristine nature offer great convenience to tourists, for the development of the winter, and summer tourism. This will enable the development of complementary extension of tourist season in the entire year, and potential income would be strong impulse in the development of this area. As potential forms of tourism that are for future development are distinguished:

Winter tourism,

Rural tourism,

Tourism of special interests (hunting, fishing, sightseeing, photo safari, tourism based on extreme sports - eg'. Paragliding, etc..

Bearing in mind the commitment of the Republic of Serbia to protect the area and declared a nature park, and development of existing documents, which emphasizes the tourist perspective of area, as one of the first step that the Tourist Organization of Serbia involved in the promotion and creation of tourist products of this area. This would clearly present resources (natural and social) are put in the tourist office and were conducted in accordance with adequate tourism principles. Multiplication of effects that tourism has on the overall economic and social life would be quickly felt, which would present negative socio-economic trend reduce and/or missing in time.

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