

Constitutive Elements of Hunting Tourism in the Bačka Region (Vojvodina, Serbia)

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Abstract

The constitutive elements of hunting tourism in the Bačka region are represented by the following components: spatial, motivational, technical-technological, organizational and employees, legal and time component. Spatial component deals with the position and basic features of hunting grounds (size, structure and capacity). Motivational component comprises game species observed through their qualitative and quantitative aspects. Technical component is represented through several structures: hunting and tourism, hunting and game breeding, hunting and protection, receptive and tourism, etc. Organizational and employees component is a complex system of different factors: users of hunting grounds, state bodies, complementary values and contents bearers, and mediating agencies (primarily in propaganda and sale of tourist arrangements). Legal component refers to the legal and sub-legal acts, statutes, the books of regulations which define the hunting tourism and hunting issues. Time component manifests in the season-bound nature of hunting and the stay period of tourist hunters. Constitutional elements may be observed as both restricting and supporting factors of hunting tourism in Bačka.

Key words: hunting tourism, constitutional elements, the Bačka region

Introduction

Hunting tourism is a complex phenomenon, whose continuation is caused by different factors, i.e. constitutive elements. Hunters' Association of Vojvodina points out that hunting tourism is defined by spatial, time and technical-technological and legal component. Furthermore, motivational and organizational component are as well constitutive elements of hunting tourism in the Bačka region. (Figure 1).



Figure 1 The constitutive elements of hunting tourism in the Bačka region

The cited constitutive elements are the only stable basis for the existence and development of hunting tourism resources in the Bačka region and their tourist market offer.

Spatial component

The Bačka region is situated in southern part of Pannonian (Carpathian) plain and north-western part of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, i.e. in north-western part of Serbia. It occupies the area of 9.244 km², between 45°16' and 46°22' of the north geographic latitude and 18°36' and 20°37' of the east geographic longitude. The east border of the Bačka region overlaps with the main flow of the Tisa (the border with the Banat region) and stretches from the state border with Hungary to the mouth of the Tisa into the Danube. The river Danube forms the south border (the border with the Srem region). The part of the state border

with Croatia (Slavonija and Baranja) from Bačka Palanka in the south, parallel to the Danube, up to the state border with Hungary forms western border of the Bačka region. The north border of the Bačka region overlaps with the state border with Hungary, from the village of Bački Breg in the west to the Tisa in the east.

Hunting grounds on agricultural soil in the Bačka region are conceptualized as open hunting grounds for breeding, protection and use of small and large game (hare, pheasant, field partridge and doe deer). One open hunting ground is established in each of the following 15 municipalities in the Bačka region - Subotica, Kanjiža, Senta, Sombor, Apatin, Kula, Mali Idoš, Odžaci, Vrbas, Bač, Bačka Palanka, Bački Petrovac, Žabalj, Titel, and Temerin. Two open hunting grounds are established in municipalities of Ada and Bačka Topola, whereas three hunting grounds are established in each of the following municipalities: Bečej, Srbobran and Novi Sad, whereas Novi Sad and Sremski Karlovci municipalities share one hunting ground.

Furthermore, eight fenced hunting grounds are established in the Bačka region. Their basic purpose is intensive breeding, protection and use of large game – deer and doe deer, wild boar and mouflon. One hunting ground is established on the territory of each of the following municipalities: Subotica, Sombor, Apatin and Odžaci, and two hunting grounds on the territory of the municipality of Bač and Bačka Palanka, and one hunting ground for the territory of Novi Sad, Titel, Sremski Karlovci, and Indija municipalities.

There are seven hunting grounds situated by fishing ponds in the municipalities of Sombor, Apatin, Odžaci, Bač, Novi Sad, Žabalj, and Bečej on the territory of the Bačka region (Figure 2).

When traffic communication is concerned, hunting grounds have high quality communication due to the road network of public transport. The major access to the hunting grounds in the Bačka region is by means of the following road lines: international highway E-75 (Belgrade-Novı Sad-Subotica), Novi Sad-Bečej-Senta-Horgoš,

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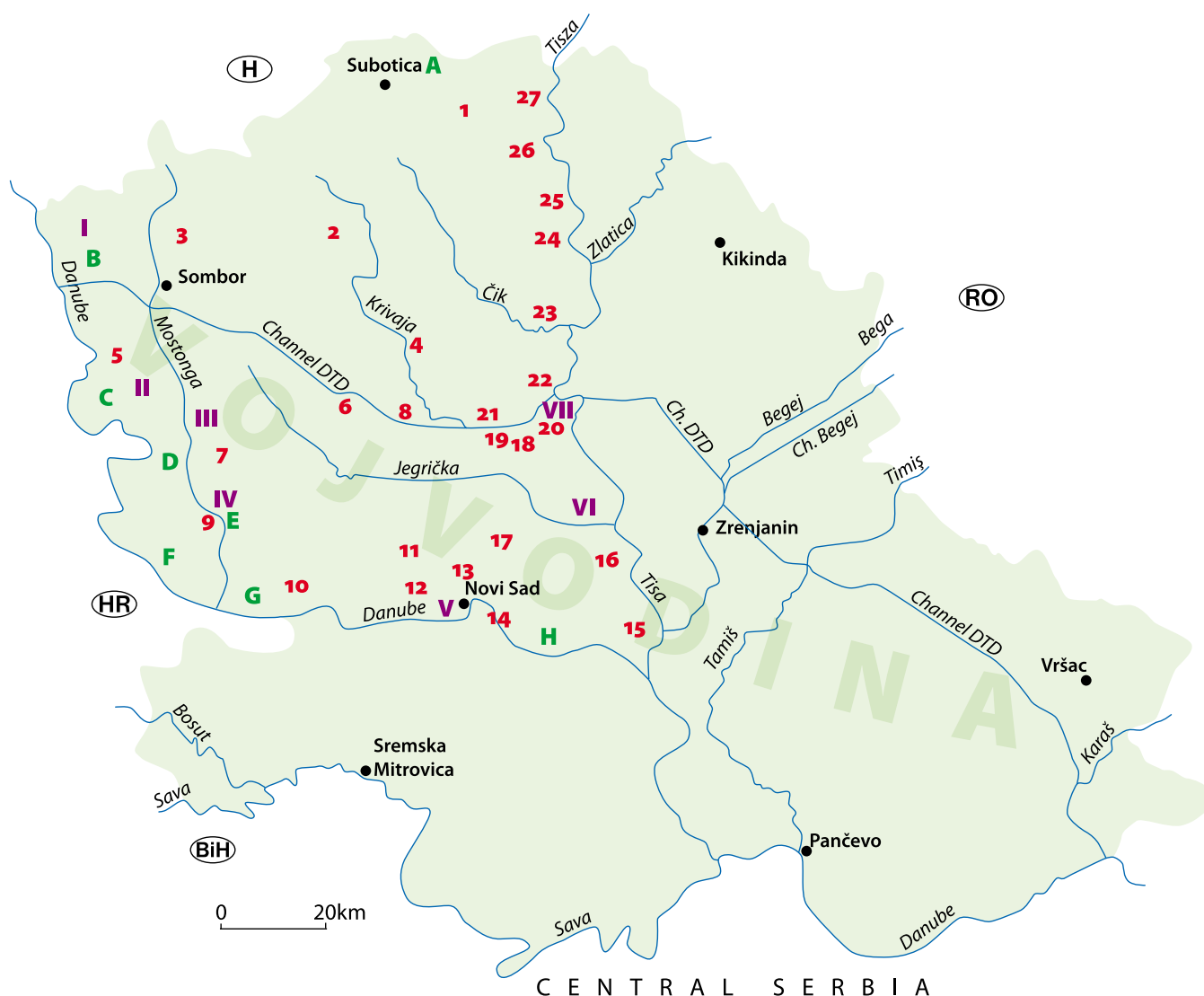


Figure 2 Hunting grounds in the Bačka region

Open hunting grounds: 1 - "Subotička peščara" (Subotica), 2 - "Panonija" (Bačka Topola), 3 - "Zapadna Bačka" (Sombor), 4 - "Krivaja" (Mali Idoš), 5 - "Kruškovac" (Apatin), 6 - "Veliki bački kanal" (Kula), 7 - "Lalinske livade" (Odžaci), 8 - "Koviljak" (Vrbas), 9 - "Bođanski rit" (Bač), 10 - "Palanački rit" (Bačka Palanka), 11 - "Bačka" (Bački Petrovac), 12 - "Podunavlje" (Futog), 13 - "Neoplanta" (Novi Sad), 14 - "Gornji Srem" (Novi Sad), 15 - "Doroška" (Titel), 16 - "Stara Tisa" (Žabalj), 17 - "Kameni Bunar" (Temerin), 18 - "Nadalj" (Nadalj), 19 - "Turija" (Turija), 20 - "Plavša" (Bačko Gradište), 21 - "Srednja Bačka" (Srbobran), 22 - "Bečejski salaši" (Bečeј), 23 - "Čik" (Bačko P. Selo), 24 - "Donji Rit" (Mol), 25 - "Gornji Rit" (Ada), 26 - "Senčanski salaši" (Senta), 27 - "Kapetanski Rit" (Kanjiža)

Fenced hunting grounds: A - "Subotičke šume" (Subotica), B - "Kozara" (Sombor, Bački Monoštor), C - "Apatinski rit" (Apatin), D - "Kamarište" (Odžaci), E - "Ristovača" (Bač), F - "Plavna" (Bač), G - "Karadorđevo" (Bačka Palanka, Bač), H - "Koviljski rit" (Novi Sad, Titel, Semski Karlovci, Inđija)

Hunting grounds by fishing ponds: I - "Kolūt" (Sombor), II - "Svilojevo" (Apatin), III - "Srpski Miletić" (Odžaci), IV - "Mostonga" (Bač), V - "Mali Dunav" (Novi Sad), VI - "Jegrička" (Žabalj), VII - "D-Ribnjak" (Bečeј)

Novi Sad-Srbobran-Bačka Topola, Subotica, Novi Sad-Vrbas-Sombor-Bezdan, Novi Sad-Odžaci-Sombor-Bački Breg and Novi Sad-Bačka Palanka-Odžaci. These traffic lines are connected with local roads, enabling direct access to hunting grounds. Within the hunting grounds, traffic is performed on dirt roads.

The Bačka region, a lowland region with fertile soil and favourable climate, has been transformed into an agricultural district with intensive production. The largest hunting areas inhabited by the following wild game: roe deer, pheasant, hare, partridge and quail are mostly to be found on agricultural soil (Figure 3). Various waterfowls are found in swamps and reed marshes. Hunters' associations control

the total area of 1,986,076 ha in Vojvodina Province, out of which 852,149 ha (40.90%) are situated in the Bačka region. The size of open hunting grounds range from 121,781 ha (Western Bačka) to 121,781 ha ("Plavša", Lovački savez Vojvodine, 2000).

The major forest complexes stretch along or near the Danube, whereas "Danube elite hunting grounds" (Kozara, Apatinski rit, Kamarište, Danube Hunting Area - Plavna, Ristovača, Karadorđevo, and Koviljski rit) cover the area of 40,188.60 ha (Figure 4). The forests are primarily habitats of large game. Hunting grounds are used for intensive game breeding and shooting of high-value trophy game.

Hunting grounds by fishing ponds represent the third specific tourist destination

due to the abundance of waterfowls (ducks and geese) and other winged game, of high significance for hunting tourism in the Bačka region (Figure 5).

Marshes, reed marshes and water areas in all hunting grounds in the Bačka region (by fishing ponds, open and fenced hunting grounds) cover the area of 15,550.60 ha (1,68% of the total area of the Bačka region).

The capacity of tourist destination (tourist-ecological capacity) is represented by the maximum number of people present on a certain location (in this case hunting ground or a part of the hunting ground) without causing permanent damage or degradation to the location and without lessening the quality of recreational ex-

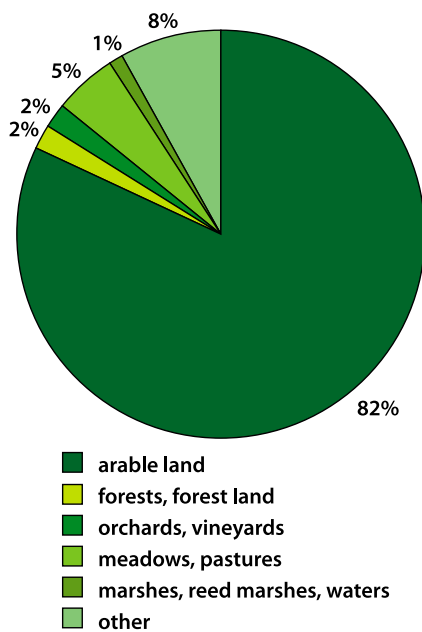


Figure 3 Cadastre structure of open hunting grounds in the Bačka region

perience (Mathieson and Wall, in Jovičić, 1998). Although the method for calculating the capacity of a certain destination type has not been established yet, the capacity of a hunting ground could generally be compared with the capacity of a nature park (15-70 visitors a day per ha, European Commission (1994), in Jovičić, 1998). However, the main features of hunting tourism in the Bačka region are not manifested through large concentration of tourists and their high pressure on the environment during the mass summer and winter tourist seasons (change in habitat conditions, water, air and soil pollution, inadequate and excessive construction, disturbances of tradition, culture and living conditions of domicile population, etc.).

Motivational component

The basic motivational issues within the tourist offer are game shooting, sale of high-quality trophy breeding game and game meat, as well as releasing breeding stock to other hunting areas. Thus, the fact that wild game is a partially restorable resource of restricted capacity should be taken into consideration.

In hunting areas controlled by hunters' associations of the Bačka region, there is 51.15% of the total hare population, approximately 43.31% of the total pheasant population, 27.22% of the total partridge population, and 45.95% of the total roe deer population in comparison to the total

Table 1 Major breeding game stock in open hunting grounds in the Bačka region and Vojvodina Province in 2004 (Beuković M. et al., 2004)

Wild game	Hare	Pheasant	Partridge	Roe deer
Bačka	141.236	50.817	12.920	18.330
Vojvodina	276.132	117.339	47.473	39.894

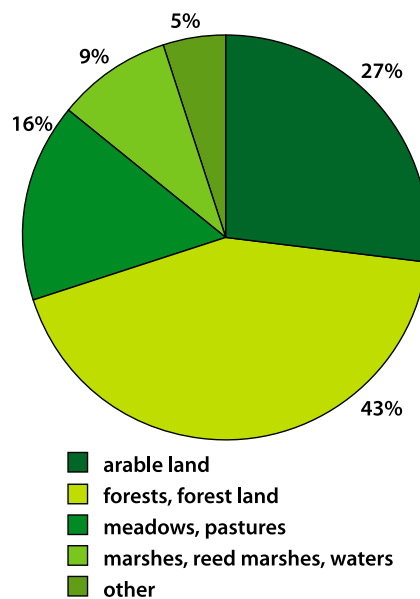


Figure 4 Cadastre structure of fenced hunting grounds in The Bačka region

stock of wild game in the hunting areas in Vojvodina Province (Table 1).

Hare population has shown decreasing tendency in the last five years. The main reasons for this condition are observed through the increased hunt of hares (due to the decrease in the number of pheasants), unfavourable climate conditions (abundance of rain during reproductive period, the highest in the period 1982-2000), intensive agriculture, etc. (Lovački savez Vojvodine, 2000).

Also, the number of pheasants has shown decreasing tendency, this being the result of deteriorated habitat conditions, decrease in releasing breeding stock from artificial production (due to lower profit from foreign tourist hunters, unfavourable economic condition in the country, lack of the application of regulation measures in the shelters, etc.). The capacities of artificial breeding of pheasants were expanded in 2003 (Mali Idoš, Ada, and Mol), which is considered a positive trend in breeding (Maletin, 2005).

The tendency of decline has also been observed within partridge population in the last few years. Certain measures should be taken to increase the total population of game species, for example decreased hunt pressure, improvement of habitat conditions which have become critical for game survival (intensive agriculture, etc.). Moreover, the foundation of partridge farms for artificial, intensive production would improve the situation.

Table 2 Major breeding game stock in hunting grounds of Vojvodina Forests public enterprise in 2004 (J.P.Vojvodinašume, 2005)

Wild game	Red deer	Wild boar	Roe deer	Fallow buck	Mouflon
Bačka	2.023	1.643	770	68	168
Vojvodina	3.119	3.643	2.384	68	168

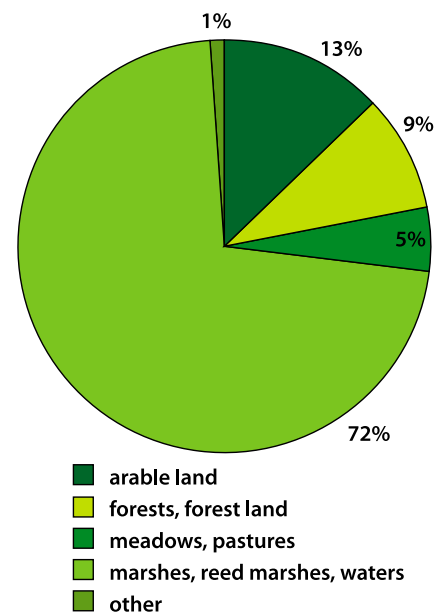


Figure 5 Cadastre structure of hunting grounds by fishing ponds in the Bačka

Although the total population of roe deer in spring records the increase, the stock size is still small. The main reason lies in inadequate professional control of the game – disturbed balance between sexes, unfavourable age and trophy structure, inadequate spring counting which leads to unrealistic shooting plans, etc. (Lovački savez Vojvodine, 2000). Therefore, it is necessary to remove those negative elements within the wild game control.

There is 64.86% of the total red deer population, 45.10% of the total wild boar population, 32.30% of the total roe deer population, 100% of the total fallow buck population, and 100% of the total mouflon population in hunting grounds of Vojvodina Forests public enterprise in the Bačka region as compared to the total stock of wild game species in the hunting grounds of Vojvodina Province. (Table 2).

The significant role of game breeding process in fenced hunting grounds is supported by the data on the total game stock compared to 21.20 times larger areas of open hunting grounds in the Bačka region. The population of red deer is estimated to 2,023 in the Bačka region (2004) and in Serbia to approximately 6,000. Despite the intensive production, the total population is rather small compared to neighbouring countries. For example, there are about 90,000 red deer, and about 600,000 roe deer in Austria, which could be compared to the size of all hunting are-



Plate 1 Hunters' house - Hunting ground "Apatinski rit" (Photo: Aleksandra Dragin)

as (8,242,891 ha) and the number of fenced hunting grounds in Serbia (Leitner, cited in Živković, 2005).

Technical-Technological Component

The elements referring to hunting areas and game stock are hunting-technical, hunting-breeding, and hunting-protective objects, i.e. fences, raised hides, drinking holes, feeding plots, salting points, coach houses, shooting lines, livestock feed storage, seed food storage, pheasant farms, game shelters, objects for preventive measures, etc.

For the purposes of improving the habitat conditions, some artificial devices are placed in hunting grounds (feeding places, salt-licks, watering places). This is how the game living conditions and the trophy quality are improved. During winter and dry periods of the year, the very survival of the game would be seriously endangered without those technical means (Dragin, 2005b). Over 4,000 feeding plots for small game, 1,640 feeding plots for big game (except from feeding places for deer and wild boars that are mainly to be found in fenced hunting grounds), 500 water places and 170 shelters are placed in different hunting grounds in the Bačka region. Considering the fact that game and habitat conditions are increasingly endangered by

humans, additional investments in building hunting-technical objects relating to the number of the main game breeds and their spatial distribution are necessary.

Receptive-tourist structure comprises the accommodation objects for tourist hunters (hunters' houses and hunters' lodges, hotels, salas farms, restaurants, etc.) and accompanying objects in hunting tourism.

There are about 100 hunters' lodges and 20 hunters' houses on the territory of the Bačka region. Apart from the head offices of a certain hunters' association, there are also available premises for members in hunters' lodges. On the contrary, hunters' houses offer accommodation facilities intended only for tourist hunters.

Due to the fact that accommodation facilities (hunters' houses, hunters' cottages) for the hunting tourism purposes are not subjected to current categorization system in Serbia, they are internally grouped into categories by the bodies controlling the hunting grounds in which the accommodation is situated. With the aim of improving hunting tourism offer in the Bačka region, the future period would be essential for conducting the categorization of accommodation facilities in hunting tourism according to official categorization principles of hospitality objects (Dragin,

2005a). Namely, it is necessary to categorize the objects according to the Statute on minimal conditions and categorization of hospitality objects, which is under jurisdiction of the Republic Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Services, in order to professionally approach the protection issues of offer and demand.

Organizational and Personnel Component

The term tourist organization stands for the coordinated activities which provide the most successful connections between powers and actions of tourism factors directed towards achieving prescribed goals in tourism, as an economic, cultural, social and political phenomenon, by means of special instruments (Vukićević, 1991).

Similarly, a hunting tourism organization (organizational personnel component as one of constitutional elements of hunting tourism in the Bačka region) is a complex system of various factors: *hunting ground users* (hunters' organizations and other subjects in control of the hunting grounds), *state subjects, complementary values and content holders and mediator agencies* (primarily involved in the process of propaganda and sale of tourist arrangements). Those components represent



Plate 2 Hunters' house - Hunting ground "Kamarište" (Photo: Aleksandra Dragin)



Scheme 1 Creators of hunting tourism product of The Bačka region (according to Maletin, 2005, modified)

HUNTING GROUNDS USERS			
Hunters' Association of Serbia			
Hunters' Association of Vojvodina			
Hunters' organizations	Public Enterprise "Vojvodinašume"	The State Army	fishing organizations
Hunters' societies/groups	Headquarters		
	"Lovoturs"		
	"Quattro Cervi" Agency		
STATE SUBJECTS			
Departmental ministries in charge of hunting, tourism, environmental protection and ecology, industry, and finances on national, republic, or provincial level, local government			
COMPLEMENTARY VALUES AND CONTENT HOLDERS			
Enterprises, manufacture (equipment, souvenirs, services)			
Traffic (international and within hunting tourism destination - locality)			
Receptive elements of hospitality (hotels, motels, salas estates, restaurants, etc.)			
Local community (local government, individuals, etc.)			
Institutions and cultural centres – museums, galleries, cultural artistic associations, etc.			
MEDIATOR AGENCIES (PROPAGANDA AND SALE CHANNELS)			
Tourist agencies (specialized or non-specialized in hunting tourism)			
Tourist organizations (of municipal, provincial, republic or national level)			
Tourist information centres			
Media – press, TV shows, etc.			

basic elements of organizational and personnel structure of hunting tourism in the Bačka region. Every element contributes not only to the present condition, but also to the possibilities of the improvement of hunting tourism offer. Therefore, cooperation and coordinated trends and programmes of the development of those elements form the base for the success.

From the point of view of time, space and quality, hunting tourism organization is the holder, instrument and executive holder of economic plan in hunting tourism sector. (Prentović, 2005)

Hunting tourism organization of the Bačka region can be shown and presented using various schemes. All the elements act as the creators of hunting tourism product of the observed area (scheme 1).

Legal Component

Hunting tourism is regulated by the Law on hunting, the Statute with other corresponding legal acts and the Book of Regulations of Hunters' Association, Serbian Hunters' Codex, the Law on Tourism, etc.

The Law on Hunting consists of the following issues: Basic Provisions, Wild Game Protection, Hunting Grounds and Areas, Management of Hunting Grounds, Funds for the Promotion of Wild Game Breeding and Protection, Hunting and the Use of Game, Prevention and Compensation for Damages, Guarding of the Hunt-

ing Ground, Monitoring, Penal Provisions, Transitory and Final Provisions ("Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Serbia" No: 34/93). Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Waterworks in cooperation with Hunters' Association of Serbia and other relevant subjects is preparing the draft of the Law on Hunting in concordance with contemporary conditions and specific features of hunting and hunting tourism in our country, and in following the principles of the laws on hunting in EU countries.

The Hunter's Association of Serbia, according to the Article No 7 of this Statute shall perform the following measures and activities: will establish the base of the Law and other regulations as well as of hunting politics; will be in charge of the application of the Law on Hunting, Statute and other regulations and international conventions on hunting; will apply contemporary professional and scientific achievements and trends when managing hunting grounds; will elaborate plans and programmes and coordinate their realization; will strengthen the organization of the Association and development of hunters' ethics; will monitor and coordinate the work of hunters' associations –members; will work on the realization of projects of mutual interest in cooperation with other organizations, institutions and enterprises; will develop cooperation with educational and scientific institutions; will organize scientific conferences; will inform members

about contemporary issues on hunting and hunters' associations, etc.

The Hunters' Codex of Serbia (Hunters' Association of Serbia) covers the following issues: hunters' relation towards the nature; hunter and wild game; hunter and hunter's weapons and equipment; relation of hunters towards national property; hunters' interrelations; a hunter and a dog; supervision of the codex implementation and Final Provisions (Hunter's Association of Serbia, 2004)

The Law on Tourism regulates the following sectors: **I Basic provisions; II Planning and development of tourism** (Integral planning, Areas of importance for tourism and their sustainable usage, Area organization of tourism, Stimulating measures, Tourist organizations, etc.); **III Tourist tax and tourist development tax; IV Tourism development fund; V Activities of travel, i.e. tourist agencies; VI Services in tourism** (1. Services of tourist professionals, 2. Special services for special aspects of tourism - Services in the hunting tourism, Services in congress tourism, etc.); **VII Catering activity; VIII Nautical activity; IX Supervision; X Penal provisions; XI Final and transitional provisions** (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No 45/05). The Law was adopted on May 31, 2005 and became effective on June 8, 2005.

The previous law on tourism (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No 35/94, 38/94 and 48/99) did not cover the provisions regulating the hunting tourism as a selective form of tourism. Aimed at broadening the legislation issues on the hunting tourism, the Hunters' Association of Serbia elaborated the draft of a new section in the Law on Tourism, addressing it to the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Services.

Article 78 of the Law on Tourism (adopted in 2005) states: For the purpose of this



Plate 3 Pheasant farm – Hunting ground "Ristovača" (Photo: Jaroslav Pap)

Law, hunting tourism shall include organization and conduction of the stay of hunters-tourists, their reception and accommodation, mediation in the organization and conduction of the hunts, renting of the hunting equipment as well as other services all in connection with the stay of hunters-tourists.

The provider of the services shall be obliged to render services from Paragraph 1 of this Article in accordance with this Law and regulations governing hunting and protection of the environment. (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No 45/05)

The supervision of tourist agencies and tourist guides shall be carried out by the ministry inspection under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Services. However, there are certain tourist agencies involved in hunting tourism operating without licenses.

The supervision over catering facilities (e.g. hunters' houses) shall also be carried out by the ministry in charge of health by means of employing sanitary inspectors; and by the ministry in charge of finances especially when the payment of the tourist tax and the tourist development tax is concerned (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No 45/05).

One of the crucial problems in the sector of hunting tourism in our country is disparity between domestic laws and regulations and the international ones, e.g. new regulations in European Union in the sector of veterinary health regulations do not recognize our veterinary documents (the result of which is blocked export of wild game meat to EU countries).

Time Component

The most intensive turnover in hunting tourism occurs in autumn, during typically low season, and winter, during high season; quite opposite to the areas attractive in other segments of tourist demand – seaside, towns, and other zones (Marić, 2003). The season bound character of hunting tourism contributes significantly to broader dispersion in time and space of the total tourism turnover and expenditures, and additionally to economic effects with assigned roles in equal regional development.

Generally, hunting tourism in the Bačka region is characterized by short term stays (2-3 days approximately) of foreign tourist hunters in hunting areas. Thus, improvement of hunting tourism of the considered area is performed by means of marketing plan, which would pay special attention to the organization, offer of content and forms of services rendered.

Conclusion

Hunting tourism in the Bačka region is characterized by complexity, i.e. multi-level feature, which is the result of constitutive elements (spatial, motivational, tech-



Plate 4 Games – mouflon (Photo: Jaroslav Pap)

nical-technological, organizational and personnel, legal and time component).

Motivational and spatial component (wild game, hunting areas) are not only powerful means of attracting demand but also the determinants of the scope, structure, and character of tourists who recognize the attractiveness of the Bačka region. Organizational and personnel component as an extremely complex system demands synchronized activities of all subjects involved. At present, technical-technological component is important from the aspect of existence and improvement of hunting areas; and maintenance of the optimal stock of wild game. It comprises receptive-tourist structure with the aim of offering basic and complementary services in hunting tourism. Thus, the legal component provides basic outline of hunting economy and hunting tourism in the Bačka region.

All the above mentioned features lead to the conclusion that market offer of

hunting tourism in the Bačka region, in concordance with its constitutive elements, tries to establish hunting tourism product on the tourist market. The product is represented as integral, i.e. complex group of partial elements: attractive elements (wild game, natural and anthropogenic complementary tourist values), accessibility (geographical, industrial and economic distance), organizational elements (scope and structure of personnel, marketing activities, sale channels, etc.), material elements (tourist infrastructure and substructure), economical – financial elements (prices of integral hunting tourism product and partial hunting tourism product).

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Plate 5 Roe deer (Photo: Jaroslav Pap)



Plate 6 Pheasant (Photo: Jaroslav Pap)

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