

Combining nature protection and Tourism in Albania: Visitors of the Sazan Karaburun Marine Park to benefit from a new information center

If you were planning to visit the first National Marine Park in Albania and be amazed with its rich marine life, you do not have to wonder around. Visitors can now benefit from an Information Center recently established in Radhime which serves as the hub for Karaburun - Sazan-National Park.



The Center is established by UNDP in the framework of the project “Improving coverage and management effectiveness of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas” in Albania funded by the GEF and implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment. The Information Center has also benefitted from a partnership with World Wild Fauna and Natura 2000 project funded by the European Union.

UNDP has worked with the Government of Albania to proclaim the first Marine Park Karaburun – Sazani. In cooperation with local actors and communities in Vlora, UNDP has helped to establish the framework and structure which allow the management and conservation of the Marine Park. Interventions have included awareness raising about the natural values of the protected areas, law enforcement exercises for protected areas, patrolling and monitoring of the area, development of a management and business plan for the Marine Park and implementation of priority actions on site. The information center in Rradhima is part of communication and awareness pillar of the project.



“UNDP has been supporting biodiversity mainstreaming in Albania and Western Balkans and many other countries in the world and we have come to appreciate that biodiversity is not simply an element which needs to be added on to the policies, plans, and practices of productive sectors.

Instead biodiversity needs to be viewed as an indivisible component of, and often a prerequisite for, achieving sustainable development – including the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. We have seen this clearly through our support to protected areas, where conservation efforts have not only benefited the environment, but have also had numerous positive benefits for the lives and livelihoods of the local communities in Prespa, Kune Vaini, Vjose-Narta, Vlora”- said UNDP Resident Representative Brian Williams.

The Minister of Environment and Tourism Blendi Klosi present at the inauguration ceremony emphasized the importance of sustainable tourism development and sustainable use of nature resources.

The UN Secretary General has proclaimed 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development recognizing tourism as an important economic engine that contributes to the three dimensions of sustainable development, especially in developing countries. In Albania tourism has the potential to promote inclusive economic growth, create jobs and attract foreign investors and in the same time, tourism can help protect the environment and build buffers against climate change.

Through a second phase of the project funded by Italian Government, UNDP will continue to work with the National Agency of Protected Areas and Coastline municipalities to forge a more sustainable use of marine and coastal resources in order to achieve sustainable and people-centered development. Vlora Region will benefit from pilot interventions.

