The landscape of seasonal mountain settlements - *katuns* - in SE Montenegro. From natural to cultural landscape and back

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Montenegro

Total area: 13 812 km²
Population: 620 105
Through the history, mountain areas represented the core of traditional agriculture for the dominant majority of Montenegrin population. Due to the very limited area of land that can be used for crops, animal husbandry has traditionally been the main agricultural sector, while the summer high temperatures and drought forced the search for mountain pastures. Only they could provide food for livestock during summer months, as well as creating surpluses for the market and reserves for the winter.
“Valorisation of Montenegrin katuns through sustainable agriculture and tourism – KATUN”

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Participants:

University of Montenegro - Biotechnical faculty, Historical institute and Faculty for tourism and hotel management

International partners: University of Ljubljana, Svedish University of Agricultural Science, CNR - Institute for the technologies applied in cultural heritage, University of Basilicata

Commercial partners: HM Durmitor, Stara kuća d.o.o, Intertehna
Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

*European Landscape Convention, 2000*

Branislav Peric, Tales from the Stones, www.stonetales.org
Cultural landscape
“represents the combined work of nature and of man”

UNESCO, ICOMOS
The main elements and categories of traditional katuns’ landscape

Agriculture - pastures, crops, forests

Immovable cultural-historical heritage
– settlements, housing and auxiliary objects, monuments -
The richness in biodiversity is a recognized feature of Montenegro (index of floristic diversity is about 0.86). With more than 3,600 taxa of wild vascular plants (Stešević and Jovović, 2008) as well as more than 1,200 taxa of macrofungi (Lazarević et al, 2011).
Due to decreased number of cattle, many corrals are now used as potato crops.
We researched forest communities of Balkan subendemic pine *Pinus heldreichii*, which inhabits a forest zone on the upper forest line and beech forests (*Fagus moesica*) on lower altitudes, assessed main factors of their disturbance and risks and evaluated their health condition, including pests and diseases. Research and inventory of biodiversity, with special emphasis on pathogenic and symbiotic fungi, as well as non-wood forest products, are also implemented. It is essential for development of relevant strategy for forest and biodiversity conservation and management.
Pioneer forest, pioneer vegetation, inclination more than 45°

- typical *P. heldreichii* habitat on limestone mountain slopes of high inclinations (45-60°).
- Altitude 1800 m a.s.l.

- typical climatogenous forest of *P. heldreichii* on mountain slopes on inclinations between 5 and 40°
- generally more moderate environmental conditions concerning moisture and supposing nutrient availability
- Altitude 1200 m a.s.l.
Mesophyloous forests of beech

Alliance *Fagion moesicae*

Ass. *Fagetum montanum*
Ass. *Fagetum subalpinum*
Main hazards:
- Forest fires
- Uncontrolled harvesting
traditional process of cheese making
A plenty of pasture resources for much bigger number of grazing animals

Infrastructure to/at katuns is not at satisfactory level

Rearing of sheep and cattle are dominated, other species occasionally, few pigs to use whey, horses for timber...

Big heterogeneity in cattle breeds (purebred and crosses), in production capacity and performances

Facilities for housing of livestock are not appropriate

Market channels are not stable, fluctuate very much, what creates problems in selling the products

Facilities for production of dairy products are still very traditional (hygienic standards sometimes questionable, many improvisations)

Males are mainly new knowledge and information takers, dairy products (cheese and skorup) manufacturing are in female hands (lessons learned from the work with farmers (trainings))
Built vernacular heritage is the basic expression of the culture of a community and its relationship with its own territory.

*Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage (1999), ICOMOS*

The katuns’ settlements
Cultural heritage includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.

Cottages (called gladas in Kući area) are, alongside corrals, the main elements of cultural landscape of katuns.
Cottages / gladas analyzed during the field research conducted within "Katun" project in Kučka Mountain area from June 2015 to September 2016, more than 170 katuns and 2300 gladas were identified and analyzed, while 85 cottages, including 8 dubirogs, were surveyed.
Corrals
Religious objects
Due to changed contemporary social habits and trends, such described traditional living concepts receive less attention

**Katuns’ potentials today**

- Multi-values and functions for society
  - High diversity in landscape, biodiversity, agriculture and in areas for high natural value farmlands;
  - Extremely high percentage of meadows and pastures in the total agricultural area (c.ca 90%) can be used for cattle rearing;
- The trend of the *katuns’ abandonment* and their transformation to recreational areas
- **Researches missing** - only descriptive data can be found, lack of formal researches on *katuns* in all domains (social sciences, economics, technology...)

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*Katuns* are traditional rural communities found in certain regions of Eastern Europe and the Balkans. They are characterized by a high diversity of land uses, including agriculture, grazing, and hunting, and are often associated with a strong sense of community and traditional practices. As contemporary social habits and trends change, the traditional living concepts associated with *katuns* are receiving less attention, and research into these communities is lacking.
Thank you for your attention

Obrigado pela sua atenção