

# **Governance of the National Parks on the Curonian Spit**

**Applied Management, Conflicts and Stakeholder Co-operation.**



Fig. 1: View on the Nagliu Reserve with the Curonian Lagoon (right) and the Baltic Sea (left)

**Research Report**

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By

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**Governance of the National Parks on the Curonian Spit**  
Applied Management, Conflicts and Stakeholder Co-operation.

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## **I List of Abbreviations**

ALSPR	Association of Lithuanian State Parks and Reserves
CSC	Coastal Sustainability as a Challenge
EU	European Union
KN	Kursiu Nerija National Park (Lithuania)
KK	Kurshskaya Kosa National Park (Russia)
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation
MoE	Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRMS	The Federal Supervisory Natural Resources Management Service (Russia)
SSPA	State Protected Area Service (Lithuania)
TBCA	Trans-Boundary/Border Protected Area
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHC	World Heritage Commission
WHL	World Heritage List
WHS	World Heritage Site
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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### **III Abstract**

As nature possesses no administrative borders and common ecosystems span across these human made frontiers and boundaries trans-border co-operation and governance to manage environmental protection are of major importance to safeguard our world's valuable territories. Thus in recent years a set of trans-border conservation areas have been established often supported by international environmental organizations and the interest in this topic increases. However, national states still display large differences in their political or societal structures as well as their mentalities in terms of environmental and cultural protection.

As the European Union presents a common set of laws and regulations concerning the issue on nature protection this research focuses on an external European Union border. The border with the Russian Federation, especially the exclave of the Kaliningrad Oblast, appeared to present a very good example to study cross-border environmental governance whereby the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit offers a perfect hence single ecosystem under common (UNESCO) as single protection status of different authorities. Additionally, the political situation of Lithuania as a new European Union member but a former part of the Soviet Union seemed of interest too, studying an issue of local environmental governance and cross-border co-operation.

The focus of this report is on the modes of governance and management in trans-border conservation in the two national parks of the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit within the Russian Federation and Lithuania. This case study presents stakeholders from the governmental and private sector drawing a picture of responsibilities, tasks as well as conflicts. Main attention is on the national park administrations and their relations with other authorities responsible in area management. The territorial governance and its network are observed in their scale and in relation to decision making power of separate actors. Thereby, the construction of the actor network structure and differences of influence in the applied management are determined in relation to local environmental governance and cross-border co-operation.

The general governance structures of the territory are strongly influenced by the higher state level in terms of decision making whereby most problems emerge from local conflicts among stakeholders. Co-operation within the national parks and across the border are increasing yet insufficient to solve those conflicts and to jointly manage the area as favored by UNESCO and in accordance to local environmental governance for trans-border conservation areas. Additionally, missing or overlapping legislations are presenting problems as do different mentalities of stakeholders. As a territory, situated on the external EU border political differences threaten co-operation possibilities further and distribute another set of problems.

# 1. Introduction

In this report I long to observe the modes of governance and management in a trans-boundary conservation area (TBCA) for several reasons which contribute to the actual importance of this topic. While conservation areas are widely discussed throughout academic society and in major fields of political and social life, there still exists a lack of informative data on their modes of governance and the networks they include (Brunner 2002, 6). When discussing the issue on trans-border areas, the co-operation and the management efforts of these territories are not solely implemented by bilateral agreements but contain a number of links and connections in order to establish a sustainable structure.

More than 135 TBCA's are recognized and TBCA's with more than two state bodies involved is not an exception (Zbizc 1999). The number of UNESCO trans-boundary World Heritage Sites at count is 20 since the latest meeting of the World Heritage Commission (UNESCO 2008a). In regards to these numbers, the limited research addressing this subject was surprising to me in the beginning of my research. Different regulations on conservation areas as national parks contribute large shares of European literature and highlight TBCA's focuses more on legal agreements between state parties and large trans-boundary projects as the European Green-Belt (Engels et al. 2004). On account of this, I observed a lack of TBCA related case studies in Europe concentrating on the local as the global actors independent from projects of specific global importance.

Recent studies, related to TBCA and local actors seem more frequently conducted in developing countries as Africa, where different research carried out by Duffy (2005), Dressler and Büscher (2007) and Steenkamp and Grossman (2001) address the issue of local environmental governance. However, this kind of research seems almost absent on European TBCA's and even more in relation to conservation areas spreading over external EU borders as for example to the Russian Federation. In choosing one of these TBCA's, the Curonian Spit WHS, I seek to provide a still missing part of research concerning TBCA's situated on the exterior border of the EU. Thus, several studies have been conducted on TBCA's between Finland and Russia as studies on the politics of nature of the Fenno-scandian Greenbelt by Lehtinen (2006) and on Finnish Russian nature conservation cooperation (Haapala et al. 2003). However, none of these protected areas can be considered as an all including, homogenous traditional landscape, as is the case of the Curonian Spit. Furthermore, the lack of local inhabitants in some of these areas is changing the needs for the governance of these territories as well as the management.



Thereof, the idea of conducting a study describing the modes of governance and management practices in a single territory conservation area should contribute to the knowledge on TBCA's especially on the exterior EU border. This research longs to distribute to the knowledge on TBCA's from a global point of view as well situating itself in the row of different case studies on TBCA's around the globe. Additionally, this report should present and determine projects, problems or practices of administrations and stakeholders responsible for the management of the area. Thus, the stakeholders of the specific area but as well from further TBCA's may draw conclusions or discover parallels in the management and governance of their own territories.

Additionally to the mentioned facts above, my own interest in environmental local governance in the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as new EU members as well as former members of the Soviet Union contributed to the choice of this topic. Furthermore I am interested in determining possible obstacles, which may arise from legacy, as well as to observe the modes of an increasingly denser border regulation system on both sides. However, this research is not to judge single actors on their behavior and acting or to blame anyone of failure. Anyway, problems and sources of problems will be determined to ease the access to them for the actors in order to improve or develop management or governance practices. In general, the research should especially enable the local stakeholders themselves as well as stakeholders of equal TBCA's, to take a look at their actions and perceptions, presented from an independent point of view.

For this reason, I will first describe the territory of the Curonian Spit WHS itself, including some geographical and historical background, before presenting the main research question in Chapter 1. In the Second Chapter the methodology utilized to conduct this research as well as topics related to the data generation will be discussed, followed by a description of the structures for the management and governance in the territory of the Curonian Spit WHS in Chapter 3. As support and further deepening of the knowledge on the matter, Chapter 4. further discusses and presents former literature related to the Curonian Spit in terms of governance and stakeholder co-operation. Following this, interview based issues and topics on stakeholder responsibilities and duties as well as co-operation between the different stakeholders will be discussed in Chapter 5. to provide further data and support to the findings, a small visual survey of the area is presented whereby the focus is on the tourist infrastructure provided by the national park administrations. The final pages of this report

present the wishes and the future hopes of the interviewed personnel and a final conclusion on the modes and the recent state of governance and management in the WHS Curonian Spit.

## **1.1 Research Area: The Curonian Spit and its National Parks**

The Curonian Spit is situated on the east coast of the Baltic Sea and stretches about 98 kilometers along the Russian-Lithuanian coast separating the Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea (See Fig. 2). The southern 46 kilometers of the Curonian Spit are part of the Russian Federation, respectively the Zelenogradsk district of Kaliningrad Oblast directly connected with the mainland. The northern part and the additional 52 kilometers belong to the Republic of Lithuania (UNESCO 2000a, 10) reaching up to the city of Klaipeda, where a 300 meters wide water connection between the Baltic Sea and the Lagoon separate it from the mainland (See Fig. 3). The Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit is administered by the Town Municipality of Neringa and the City Municipality of Klaipeda, to which the settlement of Smyltine belongs. Both parts are protected as national parks and enclose a number of inhabited settlements whereas the official population between the Russian and the Lithuanian part differs greatly. In Lithuania the settlements of Nida, Juodkrante, Preila and Prevalka which together form the municipality of Neringa count 3371 inhabitants (Neringa Municipality 2007) plus another 100 in Smyltine (KN 2001-2008a). On the other side, the national park in the Russian part encloses the settlements of Rybachy, Lesnoye and Morskoye with a population of 1525 (UNESCO 2000b, 31). Even though the presented numbers of the Russian territory date back to 1999 due to the lack of accessible data, the large differences in inhabitant numbers between the national parks remain valid until today. Hence, at the time of the preparation for the joint nomination to UNESCO the Lithuanian part presented largely higher inhabitant numbers than on the Russian side (UNESCO 2000b, 31). However, almost one third of the registered inhabitants in Lithuania are utilizing their homes on the Curonian Spit mainly as weekend or holiday home and therefore the amount of full time inhabitants is fairly lower in reality (Neringa Municipality 2007). Another difference between the settlements is that the Russian settlements do not belong to the national park unlike in the Lithuanian part (Snegiryov 2007).



Fig. 2: Geographical location of the Curonian Spit (Wikipedia 2008)

Along the seaside of the Curonian Spit runs a sandy beach over the entire length, as well as a protective dune which separates it from the littoral plain beneath. On the lagoon side of the spit runs a crest of higher dunes which stretch over 72 Kilometers of the Spit (Strakauskaite 2005, 51; UNESCO 2000a, 10) and in some places a littoral plain is present on the lagoon shore. The dunes rise to 67, 2 meters in height and the spit width itself varies from less than 400 meters near Lesnoye to nearly four kilometers at the Bulvikis Horn (See Fig. 3 & 4). Altogether, the Curonian Spit occupies an area of 180 kilometer<sup>2</sup> (KN 2001-2008b). Today approximately 70 percent of the Curonian spit is covered by forest whereby pine trees dominate the landscape (Strakauskaite 2005, 53).

From the political side, the Curonian Spit has been governed for long time by a single authority, the Prussian state, and the northern areas just become a part of Lithuania in 1923.

However, in 1939 the Curonian Spit fell under a single rule again after being occupied by the German Reich until being annexed by the USSR in 1945 (KN 2001-2008c). Even though, the Curonian Spit belonged to the same state until Lithuanian independence in 1990 the two parts have been managed separately from that point on (Koloksanskis 2007).

The history of environment and landscape protection started already in Prussian times with a law against the violation of landscape beauty and non-traditional buildings in 1908 and therefore already inherited a set of protective measures for decades (Bucas 2002). Today the Lithuanian and the part in the Russian Federation are national parks whereby the Russian national park, Kurshskaya Kosa, was established in 1986 and the Lithuanian national park, Kursiu Nerija, in 1991. Both areas have had different protection status before this time (KN 2001-2008c; KK 2008a). Today, the Kursiu Nerija National Park (KN) is 26 474 hectares whereof 9 774 hectares are landmass and the rest includes attached water areas of the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic Sea (KN 2001-2008d). The Kurshskaya Kosa National Park (KK) covers an area of 16 421 hectares whereof 6 621 hectares are landmass (KK 2008b). Both national parks are presenting the same set of natural and cultural value and the national border which divides them is political. Cultural differences derived primarily from the post 1945 period when new inhabitants got settled on the Spit. Hence, in 1999 both national parks, supported by a set of governmental authorities and non-governmental organizations handed in a joint nomination to be listed in the UNESCO World Heritage List (WHL) as a site of outstanding natural and cultural landscape features under several UNESCO criteria (UNESCO 2000b, 5-8). Finally, in 2000 the Curonian Spit was accepted and enlisted to the World Heritage List by criterion “v” as:

“...an outstanding example of a landscape of sand dunes that is under constant threat from natural forces (wind and tide). After disastrous human interventions that menaced its survival the Spit was reclaimed by massive protection and stabilization works begun in the 19th century and still continuing to the present day.” (UNESCO 2008b)

This enlistment united the two sides once again to a single entity even though the enlisting has no policy tools to enforce a united management except for the threat of being taken off the World Heritage List and the pressure of the global community, which is more aware of the site since its enlistment. Finally, the current situation of the Curonian Spit is established as Lithuania has joined the European Union (EU) in 2004 and therefore had to adapt to a specific set of EU environmental policy regulations and projects as Natura 2000 (Keilbach 2006, 7).

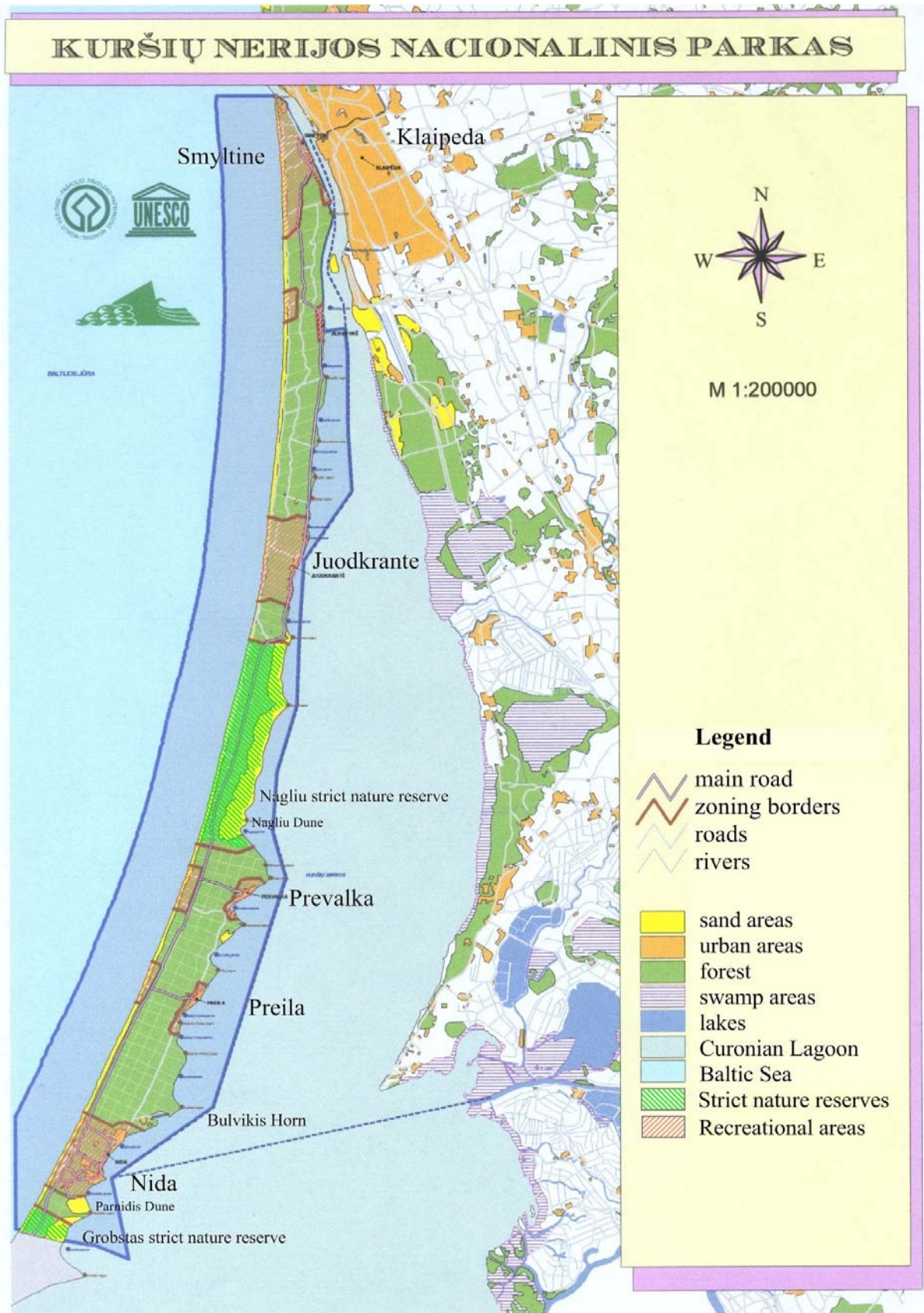


Fig. 3: Map of KN territory including tourist zones (Zacharzenko 2008, modified by author)



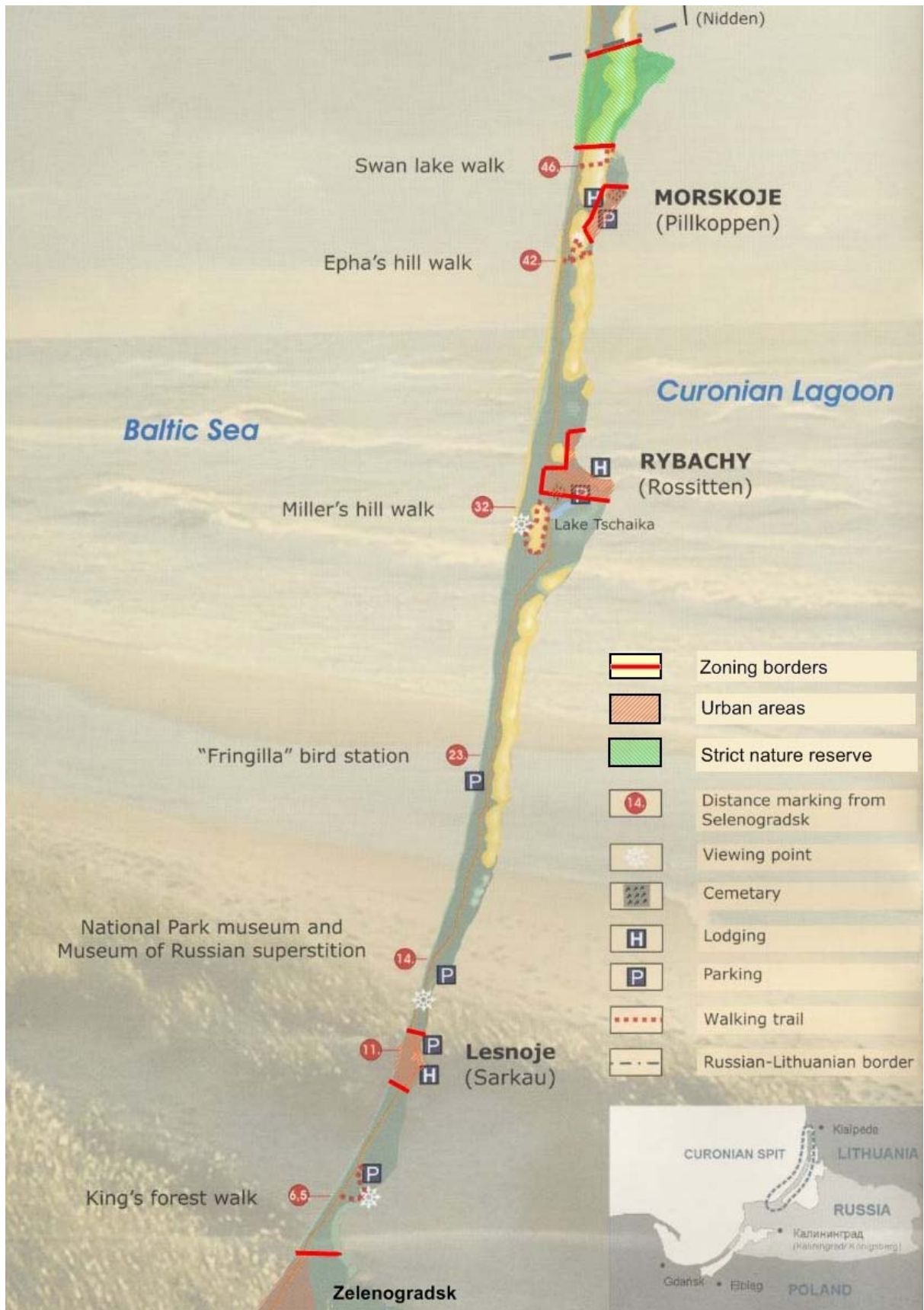


Fig. 4: Map of KK territory including tourist zones (BTE 2005, modified by author)

## 1.2 Historical Landscape management and construction on the Curonian Spit

Currently the Curonian Spit has to be recognized as a human shaped landscape and not natural formed in its shape. The Curonian Spit, naturally almost covered completely by forest, has had to face severe clear cuttings from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on especially in the period of the Seven Year War<sup>1</sup> from 1756 to 1763 where large selections of the natural grown forest were cut to use in the shipyards of Klaipeda (Strakauskaite 2005, 75). Thus the settlements on the Spit started to suffer more from shifting sands which additionally damaged the remaining vegetation. The village of Nida, for example, had to move location three times to prevent from being buried by sands between the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to its current location. To solve the problems on the Curonian Spit, in 1768 Professor J.D. Titius from Wittenberg University developed a plan to replant the Spit with forest to prevent the further shifting of sand. His ideas included the construction of a protective dune embankment on the seaside shore and reforestation of the main dune crests on the lagoon side (Strakauskaite 2005, 79). In addition he separated the landscape into two categories: first, the so called green or protective zone including the protective dune embankments, coastal plain and reforested dune crests and secondly, the protected zone, including settlements (Bucas 2002). Hence, he can be considered to be the first to separate the landscape on the Curonian Spit into different functional zones. However, it took more than 35 years from the publication to be implemented by the Prussian government in 1803.

The first protective dune embankments were built on a 20 kilometer strip between Lesnoye and Rybachy (See Fig. 4) and it took roughly 20 years to complete. According to J.D. Titius plans, 70 centimeter long poles in a double row were put into the beach about 50 meters from the shore. Being covered with sand after some time, a second double row of poles were put into the ground to enlarge the embankment and finally after their filling up planted with halophyte grass species. A net-structured construction of branches on the leese side of the dune helped to stabilize it and completed the process (KN 2001-2008e). All though villages were continuously covered by sand in the other parts of the Spit it took another 30 years until the Prussian government launched further protective embankment constructions. In 1859 protective embankments were erected from Zelenogradsk to Prevalka (Strakauskaite 2005, 79) and from 1869 on the missing northern section to complete the plan was constructed (Bucas 2001).

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<sup>1</sup> Seven Year War: Third Schlesian War, Prussia and UK were fighting against a coalition of Austria, France, Russia and Sweden. Parallel to a colonial war between the UK and France in North America (Meyer 2002, 635)

The reforestation of the main dune crests occurred to be more difficult and was started by the local population at private expense, nevertheless, government authorities continued between 1811 and 1904. By then two thirds of the Curonian spit was forest again (Bucas 2001; Strakauskaite 2005, 80). The reforestation of the dune crests was mainly achieved by the construction of net-structured branch constructions plaited around poles. After sand filled up these net-squares, pits were dug in them and filled with soil. Grass was then planted followed by coniferous trees, mainly imported ones as the mountain pine (KN 2001-2008f). In the same manner the dune protection was carried on by the three forestry districts of Zelenogradsk, Rybachy and Juodkrante<sup>2</sup> until World War II (KK 2008c) wherein one third of the embankment was destroyed and the vegetation was damaged severely (Bucas 2001). After the war the area was separated into two parts, the Russian and the Lithuanian even though both being a part of the USSR. However, on both sides dune and forest protecting activities continued by their forestry districts established after WW II in the Russian part (KK 2008c) and in 1956 for Neringa Municipality (Bucas 2001).

The Curonian Spit is throughout human managed landscape since more than 200 years. However, at former time the landscape management was mainly performed by a single authority except for some private initiatives and the same authorities were responsible for the whole territory. Currently, the territory is separated between several authorities what raises the question on its governance and management structures in recent days.

### **1.3 Main Research Questions**

The main research aim of this report is to answer the question about: How governance and management structures of the two national parks on the Curonian Spit are formed? However, the main focus is on the KN in Lithuania. To answer this main research question, the following sub questions will be answered: Who are the main actors and what is their main role and responsibility? What kind of cross-border co-operation and governance exists between the actors? Additionally, how is the governance visible on the landscape of the national parks? In general, this research should present a view on how a trans-border UNESCO World Heritage site partly situated in the EU and partly in the Russian Federation operates and what challenges it has to face. The governance structures which will be examined should provide information about the main stakeholders, their relations and responsibilities or conflicts among each other. Hence, it will be determined; who are the main

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<sup>2</sup> Rybachy and Juodkrante forestry were joined in 1940 to a single forest district (KK 2008c)



actors and what are their roles, tasks and positions in the governance of the area. Furthermore, the status of international and national co-operation will be evaluated as well as the stakeholders' opinions towards the same. The results should primarily express the view of the national parks administrative bodies as they are the major focus groups of the conducted interviews. I long to present their opinions and understanding of governance and management of the area to explain the modes and planning directions of the two national parks and to present a comparison between the two perceptions of both administrations. Specifically, the issues of co-operation with stakeholders inside as outside the single national parks; responsibilities and duties of the different stakeholders in the area as protective measures or tourist infrastructure maintenance. Furthermore, the management of tourist development, related problems and future projects or plans and additionally, EU- and UNESCO status related issues as guidelines or funding possibilities.

This research further intends to present a comparison between the main tourist infrastructure and information of both national parks to provide an impression on the outcomes of the governance and its visibility in the territory of the responsible stakeholders. However, the comparison will focus on information material as signs, information stands and brochures available in the visitor centers but not hotels, rental facilities or public services. This should evaluate the directly by the national park administrations offered, produced and maintained infrastructure as rest sites, nature paths and museums. This comparison should also provide an evaluation of the visibility of the national park administrations in the landscape of the area by concentrating on the amount and the quality of signs and information stands. Additionally, the condition of the cultural heritage of both parks, although not maintained by the national park administration will be discussed and evaluated in short.

Another aim is to present the already existing literature in short to utilize as a comparable data set to the outcome of my own results. Thereby, the focus will be primarily on co-operation between the two national parks and their higher authorities as municipalities and/or environmental ministries. Additionally, the co-operation methods and the working climate of the national park administrations with the local population and administration are presented. In addition, this research compares the recent situation of management and trans-border co-operation with the guidelines presented by the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (1972) to highlight efforts, problems and recent failures of the authorities on both sides to cope with them.

Thus the above mentioned aims should fill the gaps in already existing literature on the governance and management of the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit and allow an insight to the therein working structures of governance and management. This also presents a case study on the only, single area, trans-border World Heritage Site which is shared by an EU country and the Russian Federation (UNESCO 2008c). This case study can provide advice and/or important background knowledge for further research and future projects in the field of trans-border protected areas including the Russian Federation and the EU. Additionally this report is intended to support the KN and the KK administrations with further knowledge about their partners work and opinions.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Governance as a Framework for Territorial Management and Decision-making**

In our modern society, influenced by free markets, competitiveness and raise of international authorities the central national states situation as the primary authority for policy implementation is decreasing (Hubbard et al. 2002, 175). Additionally, globalization which includes the previously mentioned phenomena as well as a strengthening of local actors, as the EU regions is eroding this political power further on (Paraskevopoulos 2006, 5). It follows that policy and decision making is shifting from top down to a more heterogenic direction in all areas of decision making. This is apparent in transition countries of the former USSR as the Russian Federation and the Republic of Lithuania where major changes in environmental policy decision making including its responsible authorities took place and had severe influence on environmental protection and management. Negatively in the case of the Russian Federation (Oldfield 2006, 84 & Brade et al. 2004, 105) and positive in the case of Lithuania (Keilbach 2006, 8) on the outcome of environmental protection.

I choose to apply a governance approach for my research as this research deals with topics of environmental management of trans-border conservation areas, territory regulation and power relations who are mostly influenced by political decisions. Traditionally, governance is defined as the “Act or process of governing” (Johnston et al. 2000, 317) carried out by government authorities. Nevertheless, in social sciences the term governance is used differently. Governance, in wide parts of social science research as in most fields of research inherited the place of government and become the main choice in terms of decision making, whereby the traditional government is degraded to be solely a part of it and not the dominating agent anymore. Therefore, most researchers are labeling the rise of governance equal with a loss of state power to other involved authorities (Johnston et al. 2000, 317). In general governance can be regarded as a form of partnership between the government authorities and the different stakeholders at all different levels in the fields of business and non-governmental agents involved in the policy making process (Hubbard et al. 2002, 175). However, the involved actors cannot be separated in the tripartite of state, market and society anymore because a more heterogenic set of actors and levels overlapping and blurred to one another has evolved in our society (Hubbard et al. 2002, 192) as a increasing number of involved offices or agents appearing on the scene. Rhodes (1996, 660) describes governance to include four principles which connect this set of actors and creates networks for applied

governance. First as boundaries of responsibility are increasingly shifting in our society he points out the necessary “interdependence between the involved organizations”; second the “continuing interaction between the actors” which is based on the necessity to share and use the resource together. Third build on trust and network agreed rules which are genuinely accepted by all members of the involved network an existence of “game like interventions” and least with a “significant autonomy from the national state” (Rhodes 1996, 660). However, the state maintains a set of direct and indirect interfering powers. In general, governance can be seen as the total set of interventions and interactions of all stakeholders, resulting in the outcome of the decision making progress (Rhodes 1996, 657). Yet another definition, established by the Commission of Global Governance<sup>3</sup> is the following:

Governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interests (Commission on Global Governance 1996, 3).

However, the nation-state is often the authority which provides the non-state or semi state authorities with the legitimacy and redistribution of their actions and policy making efforts (Paraskevopoulus 2006, 5).

Owing to these facts, we can regard “Governance as an umbrella concept for a wide variety of empirical phenomena of governing” (Paraskevopoulus 2006, 6); it provides the tools to analyze and study modes and mechanisms of applied policy and management for a variety of situations. In addition, the governance approach is very suitable for analysis on environmental management. Hence, in reality natural systems are rarely cover solely the area a single administration authority is responsible for and thus spreading on a wider area including several stakeholders (Lipschutz 1996, 40). When speaking about governance, one always has consider using a governance approach which includes an understanding of the involved actor and policy networks. It follows, that for a complete understanding of the modes of governance the relation between the different actors in the networks have to be understood to gain an insight into the power relations in the networks and governance (Hubbard et al. 2002, 193). These networks may vary both, in space and in time as they may and often do in size and shape; whereby shape can be considered as their organizational structure and size as the

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<sup>3</sup>Commission on Global Governance: A former Commission of individuals from politics, selected by their influence and ability to implement decisions and longing for increasing global governance. Funded by the UN and several state governments and private foundations (Lamb 1996).

number of individuals or objects involved in the networks. On account of this it becomes obvious that networks of governance do not solely consist of humans but non-human actors as well (Hubbard et al. 2002, 194). As an example for a non-human actor in environmental governance, the environmental history or legal papers as planning documents can be mentioned even though behind a planning document in most cases an authority exists who is establishing and defending it. As described in Hubbard et al. (2005, 194) the functionality of networks following the modes of governance depend on the interaction between the actors in the network and their exchange and use of the non-human actors as information; texts or technologies.

Another subject is the levels or scales of governance, wherein the approach of ‘multilevel-governance’ provides an insight about the dimensions of governance networks. Multilevel governance separates co-operation in networks into a “vertical dimension” and a “horizontal dimension” (Paraskevopoulos 2006, 6). The former includes and discusses the co-operation between stakeholders of different authority scales as between local agents and the state government whereas the latter deals with co-operation on an equal scale (Paraskevopoulos 2006, 6), for instance the relation between a local government authority and a local public agency. Moreover the process of EU integration should open up fixed national structures to allow a wide variety of multilevel-governance relations however the progress of opening and applying this structure depends on the learning capacity of the national governments in the post accession period of new EU member states. It may also decide the success or failure of EU policy (Paraskevopoulos 2006, 6/3). As in the case of Lithuania as a new EU member that fact could result in specific differences towards the non-EU part on the Russian side of the Curonian Spit.

### **2.1.1 Local Environmental Governance**

Even though, the header of this paragraph is local environmental governance it also includes governance on a global scale. Since environmental issues are frequently discussed on a global level and new guidelines are ratified by national states under the umbrella of global organizations as the United Nations (UN) or the EU. Thus the environment spills over borders and requires international institutions (Bulkeley 2005, 878). For TBCA’s as the Curonian Spit, the global actors mentioned before are of major importance due to the territories status as a WHS situated half in the EU and half out of it. The worldwide slogan and frequently cited sentence for a sustainable management of environmental resources famous from the Stockholm Conference in 1972: ‘Think Global – Act Local’ (Joas 2003, 3; Wikipedia 2007)

has become a guideline for local governance directed by international treaties. However, the problem with that kind of international policy is its lack of legal binding policy tools what makes them negotiable from case to case (Jänicke 1992, 57). Regardless of power and influence in the governance of local systems, it can also be influenced by far distanced non-local actors (Hubbard et al. 2002, 194).

The theory of local environmental governance can be utilized for several purposes and topics of research. Potoski and Prakash (2004) are utilizing the theory while discussing the problem of regulatory intervention of state agencies on local business and their decision making if to establish environmental friendly standards. Further research concentrates on the values of people for their environment taking into account environmental justice and governance on a local scale (McIntyre 2001). However the questions observed by these topics can all be utilized in research on protected areas as conducted by Frontani (2006), Duffy (2006) as well as Dressler and Büschler (2008) whereby the two latter publications directly focus on TBCA's. Therein, local environmental governance is utilized to describe means of livelihoods and community based natural resource management as highlighted by Dressler and Büschler (2008) and conflicts of global environmental governance in a local system is noted by Duffy (2006). Thus, while local environmental governance may be utilized for several purposes, it has to be considered as a common theory to conduct research on TBCA's and on related issues in general.

The local communities, especially in TBCA's have been determined to be the most important actors for these kinds of protected areas if longed to manage in a sustainable manner (Duffy 2006, 95). It follows international influence as well as the states influence may be undermined by the resistance of the local authorities or population (Joas 2003, 5). Yet another issue, concerning environmental governance is the estimation that people directly affected by changes of policy should be more aware of taking part in sustainable decision making as people governing from a merely partly affected distance (Lipschutz 1996, 39). According to Lipschutz (1996, 40-45) there are five major reasons for environmental governance at the local level:

1. *Scale of ecosystem and resource regime*: mainly local, even though, different national and global scale systems exist.

2. *Assignment of property rights*: importance to assign the property to stakeholders with sufficient information about the resource to guarantee a proper usage. Behold to 'sell' the property to the highest bidder.
3. *Availability and location of social knowledge*: existence of long time using practices for sustainable usage in the local population.
4. *Inclusion of stakeholders*: Participation of all stakeholders is necessary to safeguard the system. The conservation value has to be understood by all stakeholders whereby a simple public access to information about it is not sufficient. Science can merely give the information but politics has to give this value of the resource to the population.
5. *Sensitivity towards feedback*: Successful conservation and management relies on good feedback and a constant flow of information and discourse of all stakeholders.

Additionally Lipschutz (1996, 45) quotes the problem of top-down decision making as often opposed by the actors because it lacks the full stakeholder support and therefore easily creates problems and dissatisfaction. On the other hand, Duffy (2006, 92) states that in TBCA's the processes due to global environmental governance issues are determined by a hierarchy which may develop an even stronger authority power by the state or international institutions on the local communities. To avoid problems from deteriorating, the set of multi-level stakeholders in environmental governance the local population have to be motivated to participate in a sustainable manner by reasoning and expertise of the initializing institution whereby scientific knowledge may be utilized to convince or pressure groups to act in a specific way (Duffy 2006, 93 – 94).

### **2.1.2 Cross border Governance**

As this research discusses the topic of a trans-border conservation area the term of cross-border governance is of major importance to the subject. TBCA's are characterized by crossing national borders and involve at least two national states in their area (Wolmer 2003, 2). Cross-border governance becomes important as TBCA's are not established on empty lands but already include a set of stakeholders which have different interests how to use the natural resources around them (Duffy 2006, 96). Hence cross-border governance seems to be essential in achieving sustainable livelihoods as to solve these different interests in the good of all. Additionally, taking into account the nature of governance as including all

stakeholders, the importance to examine environmental governance in a TBCA becomes obvious as stakeholders are the “producers of nature” in the area (Duffy 2006, 92).

Cross-border co-operation provides a way to decrease the effects, whether intentionally or unintentionally, of borders on the surrounding area. As a main threat the isolating effect from borders may have long lasting effects for the environment for both sides (Landres et al. 1998, 39). Hence, cross-border co-operation is essential as, “administrative borders or boundaries are lines that separate different ownerships, jurisdictions, or responsibilities, and often different management philosophies, goals and practices,” (Landres et al. 1998, 40) and therefore are important to support the governance approach in a trans-boundary area. As an example, Rhodes (1996, 657) states the role of governments to enable socio-cultural interactions as co-operation and public private partnerships in order to achieve governance of an area. International borders, separating common ecosystems, in general put a traditional set of difficulties on the co-operation between stakeholders involved in their management. As an example national interest concerns can hinder co-operation so can differences in language and culture as well as political differences concerning the object (Zbicz 1999, 1). Additionally, Brunner (2002, 10) states a common problem of TBCA’s lacking fair information flow among stakeholders. Anyway, borders have to be considered as semi-permeable membranes which can block or allow a specific set of flows to pass it or not. However, the amount and the kind of flows are dominated by the whole range of stakeholders on both sides of the border who co-operate with each other (Landres et al. 1998, 56). A border can either be a barrier or a contact line especially in the EU depending on its restrictions and permeability (Ratti 1993, 241). As borders must be considered a social construct, co-operation across them can solely be achieved by a balance of human needs for both sides that all stakeholders accept. On account of that, Brunson (1998, 66) states that territorial self-interest for the wealth and prosperity of the whole region and community co-operation is the key element for a cross-border management even if cross border management may be vastly influenced by legal acts and federal institutions (Meidinger 1998, 87).

Another problem of co-operation may be global society which is becoming increasingly based on competition of regions which can result in competition of local resources and therefore hinder trans-border co-operation (Yaffee 1998, 302). The success of trans-border co-operation is based on the centripetal and centrifugal powers towards or from common interests of involved stakeholders. These interests have to be balanced and both sides have to be informed and aware of different perceptions of their partners (Brunson 1998, 72). It follows that trans-



border co-operation is an essential part in studying trans-border governance as it restricts or favors modes of governance by in or excluding different stakeholders.

Levels of co-operation differ from area to area and there exists TBCA's with a high amount of co-operation and reciprocal borderline protected areas with little or none co-operation (Hearns 1997, 229). Zbicz (1999, 2) sorts the level of co-operation for trans-border protected areas in six levels.

1. *Level 0, No cooperation:* No co-operation nor any kind of communication between stakeholders
2. *Level 1, Communication:* minimum two-way communication between stakeholders as well as basic exchange of information.
3. *Level 2, Consultation:* Exchange of information and notification of happenings increase. Few projects are prepared together.
4. *Level 3, Collaboration:* Monthly exchanges of information and more than four common projects. The planning is partially coordinated and the partners are informed about happenings.
5. *Level 4, Coordination of Planning:* Frequent meetings of stakeholders. Planning is mainly coordinated and prepared for the area as one unit.
6. *Level 5, Full Cooperation:* Planning is completely coordinated and the area is managed as one whereby a joint decision-making process guides involved parties.

On account of the research areas situation and its properties the leveling system by Zbicz (1999, 2) seems to be a good tool to accomplish a sort of ranking for governance of the park in terms of trans-border co-operation.

## **2.2 Data Generation**

The main methods of data and information acquiring for this study are based on qualitative methods of primary data collection. Hence, I rely on intensive research methods which are more open and interactive methods of qualitative research with a focus on the mechanisms and procedures of processes (Cloke et al. 2004, 289 & 290). To deepen discussion and to obtain some outside views secondary literature resources are utilized. For example various reports on trans-boundary management for protected areas as well as international guidelines,

such as the UNESCO World Heritage Convention of 1972 (UNESCO 1972). These materials were acquired through an intensive library and internet research, additionally through expert contacts. Included into the set of secondary data is a small amount of quantitative data, for instance visitor statistics.

The primary data has been collected during a three and half month Erasmus exchange at Klaipeda University in Lithuania in autumn and winter 2007. With the help of members from the department of Social Geography I have been able to acquire contacts to the KN Administration and Neringa Municipality as well as to the Immanuel Kant University of Kaliningrad. The latter organized my contacts to the KK Administration and supported me with additional information. These contacts enabled me to conduct several interviews with personnel of the two national park administration bodies and with the representatives of Neringa Municipality. All interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner using a prepared set of main questions as a guideline however depending on the repliers answers and knowledge, the amount and focus of the questions varied. This type of research cannot be seen as a completely neutral tool because the interviewer creates the situation and may emphasize a specific outcome on their behavior (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, 353) however this method seemed to be the most suitable for my needs.

Specific individuals interviewed have been chosen as mentioned in Cloke et al. (2004, 290) by my thoughts on their relations to the topic and amongst each other, additionally, according to administrative structures of the authorities and their duties. The focus group of the interviewees was with upper-level management such as directors, vice directors and head of departments as to get the information's from the experts in charge. Additionally, three interviews have been conducted with mid-level experts in the KN Administration and Neringa Municipality. Furthermore one external expert interview at the Immanuel Kant University of Kaliningrad has been included. Altogether, six interviews were conducted with personnel from the KN Administration and two with personal from the KK Administration. Additionally, I have conducted two interviews with officials from Neringa Municipality of the Business and Strategic Development as well as Environmental Section. Besides these semi-structured interviews some information has been acquired by unstructured interviews and discussions with experts and personnel from the national parks likewise the Visitor Center in Smyltine provided information and support for my work. All except two of the eleven semi-structured interviews have been recorded and eight of the interviews were conducted with the help of translators. In the case of KN by personnel from the Visitor Centers and in KK the

translations were provided by two students from Immanuel Kant University of Kaliningrad. Interviews were transcribed and the content separated into different categories regarding context for an easier understanding and evaluation.

To provide some visual information about eventual differences, a small visual survey has been carried out comparing the national parks tourist infrastructure. Rest site facilities, nature paths and the amount of information or orientation signs as well as their quality have been photographed and compared on several visits to both national parks. Additionally, a field log has been maintained to highlight specific characterizations observed during the visits. As stated in Denzin & Lincoln (1994, 355) this adds visual detail to the interview based information and its explanation by the author. Thus to present a further set of non-human actors which are playing a role in the governance of the territory and represent parts of the stakeholders' duties. For Example, the visibility of regulations on signs in the landscape by the national park administrations to steer or regulate visitor flows.

During the research for the dissertation and this report a number complications challenging the research project have had to be overcome. English and German literature on governance and planning for the WHS Curonian Spit is quite meager even though, there are some conference papers discussing the topic; these have been presented by the national park administrations itself and not by independent researchers. However, these conference papers have been solely available for the Lithuanian part whereas literature about the KK is solely in Russian. Furthermore, the literature about the KK, in English has been published by NGO's and does not represent the official structures. Furthermore, it has been difficult speaking neither Russian nor Lithuanian to find easy access to any related literature, although more documents about the KN are becoming available in English in accordance to Lithuania EU membership. Anyway, these problems can even be seen as a positive aspect looking back on them because they proved me in the necessity of my this topic.

The second problematic issues for the data collection provided difficulties in the establishment of contacts of involved stakeholders and organizations. It has to be stated that no authority replied to my email contacts at first attempt. The Neringa Municipality replied once on a direct request before having established contact persons in the different authorities. Although having the support and direct requests via the University's of Klaipeda and Kaliningrad, communication was slow in the beginning and no motivation of the authorities could be sensed to discuss this topic; this may in part be due to language barriers as only the Director speaks English in the KK main Administration. Busy schedules of the responsible

people in the administrations could have also made a difference. Sensitivities occurred as a contact in the State Service for Protected Areas of Lithuania halted communication after being asked about a missed deadline for UNESCO co-operation report. However, it has to be mentioned that all except for the contact mentioned right above were well functioning after these first struggles to establish a direct contact person within, as it was the case for the KN, or in a position to deal with, as in the Russian case, the national park administrations. On the other hand, it was not possible to obtain direct information from Zelenogradsk Municipality even with several recommended contacts.

The third problem affecting the research was translation while conducting the interviews because I had to rely on unprofessional translators. Although Lithuanian interview translations seem good, answers could have been influenced by the translator's knowledge and attempts to help express the interviewees' words. The problems while conducting the interviews in the KK Administration were of a different nature; and partly related to students inexperienced doing interviews in English. In general I suppose, having had a professional translator or being able to communicate with every interviewee in a common language could have had possibly affected the outcome of the research in some ways. Although the translations might be less than perfect the information provided can be described as accurate and correct.

A general problem which had to be overcome was distance and time to the research area and visa requirements to enter the Russian part of the Curonian Spit played roles. Even though, being situated in Klaipeda for three and half month the distance to the KN administration is more than 50 kilometers from Klaipeda and fees and transportation had to be paid. Besides, the land area of both national parks is 163 kilometers<sup>2</sup> and the visual survey was financially and time consuming. Especially in the KK interviews and the visual survey had to be carried out in a very narrow time window as a double visa for the KK was possible only for a month. Additionally, that monthly time period was shorter in reality because the Russian Parliament elections lamed the country for some days. On account of those problems it followed that the amount of collected information and interviews is limited for KK. Therefore the equal status of both national parks in the research could not be achieved and the KK had to be degraded, from an equal main part of the research into a more comparable role as one of the stakeholders of the WHS Curonian Spit. However, providing the KK with the same study and evaluation attention as the KN has been a priority.

### **3. Governance and Management Structures of the two National Parks**

#### **3.1 Administration Structures of the two National Parks**

In general both, the KN and the KK are under responsibility of the related Ministry for environmental protection issues. In Lithuania, the Protected Area Strategy Division within the Ministry of the Environment (MoE) is the highest level for protected areas. The Protected Area Strategy Division's duties are to implement laws and regulations to protect the natural heritage in Lithuania. As an agency fully responsible to the MoE is the State Service for Protected Areas (SSPA). In order to the legislation prepared by the MoE the SSPA has to put the laws into practice and to guarantee the conservation of the natural heritage (Baskyte et al. 2006, 28). The SSPA is in charge controlling and ordering protective measures and activities in the four national parks of Lithuania. Additionally, the SSPA has the responsibility to manage the protected areas and therefore is the authority in charge to assign administrations to the single areas as well as implementing the related planning documents for the areas (Baskyte et al. 2006, 28 & 29). Hence, in theory the KN manages its area by following and obeying the directions of the SSPA.

A different situation appears for the KK as Russia dissolved its Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in 1996 for the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) (Oldfield 2006, 83). The Ministry of Natural Resources formulates and implements the legislation concerning protected natural areas and nature conservation. However, as in the Lithuanian system a state service responsible to and coordinated by the ministry has the duty to manage the protected areas in the Russian Federation (MNR 2008a). The Federal Supervisory Natural Resources Management Service of the Russian Federation (NRMS) is an executive authority exercising legislation implemented by the MNR. The NRMS is responsible for organizing the management of protected areas whereby its duties are restricted to areas of federal importance (MNR 2008b) unlike the SSPA (Baskyte et al. 2006, 28).

Internal, the two national parks on the Curonian Spit WHS are both managed by an official administration consisting of a directorate and a set of departments responsible for different kind of management duties. The following two sub chapters will briefly describe the administration structures based on explanations by KN and KK personnel. It has to be mentioned that in both cases an official structural scheme of the national park administration

are missing and solely personnel lists for budgetary and employment needs were used by the personnel to explain the structures.

**3.1.1 Kursiu Nerija National Park**

The administrative structure of the KN is divided into two departments which are both headed by deputy directors and maintain the appearance of the park. Additionally, four resorts, directly responsible to the Director are building the first level of the internal governance structure (See Fig. 5). These resorts, Book-keeping and Financing, The KN’s Lawyer, Landscape Specialist and the Personal Inspectors carry out specific tasks by the needs of the directorate or the two main departments (Diksaite 2007).

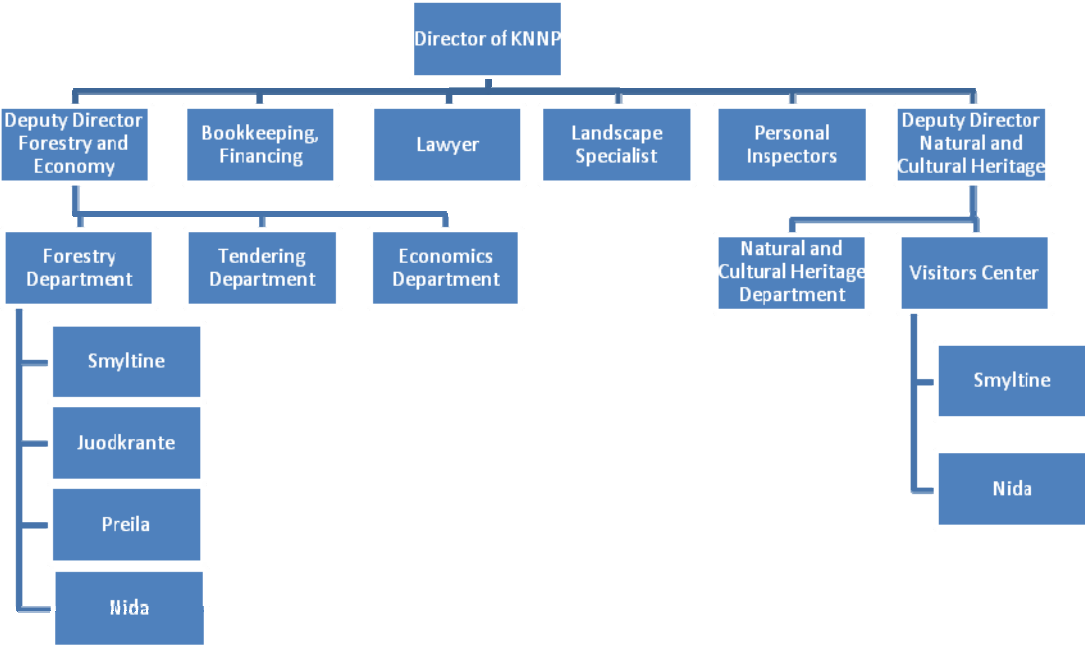


Fig. 5: Administration structure of the KN (Diksaite 2007, created by author)

The two main departments are in charge to manage the main share of the national parks duties and are therefore determining somehow the appearance of the KN. The Department of Forestry and Economics, headed by the Forest specialist Viktor Koloksanskis who worked in the area of the national park for 31 years, is responsible for all forestry related works. Furthermore, the department controls the maintenance and management of the KN property including buildings and car parks which are under the responsibility of the Tendering

Department and acquire needed material for management and maintenance of the KN. The latter is controlled by the Economics Department which additionally coordinates the vending of cut wood. The Forestry Department itself accomplishes most of the practical work and consists of four single forest districts as shown in the structural scheme (See Fig. 5). Another set of important duties performed by the Forestry Department is fire control in the area as well as the dune reinforcement on the coast (Koloksanskis 2007 & Dikshas 2007).

The Department of Natural and Cultural Heritage is responsible for the more representative management aspects. The department is headed by deputy director Lina Diksaite, a specialist on recreation and tourism which works since ten years in KN. Among its responsibilities are tourist and information related issues which are performed through the Visitors Center in Nida and Smyltine as well as issues related to the natural and cultural heritage in the KN; examples include scientific research on flora and fauna as well as preparing projects on conservation. The Department of Natural and Cultural Heritage is the department mainly involved in co-operation projects and preparation of planning documents; however co-operation projects or meetings are also the responsibility of Aurelija Stancikiene, Director of the KN administration for the past two and a half years. Duties performed by the Visitors Center are public educational events and programs as well as the guide booklets and brochures and informational data for information stands for the KN (Diksaite 2007; Varakaliene 2007; Zacharzenko 2008). Altogether, the administration of the KN has 75 employees including office personnel, forestry workers and additional staff, inspectors and service personnel. In the summertime, two additional individuals are employed to help in the Visitor's Centers of Nida and Smyltine (Zacharzenko 2008).

### **3.1.2 Kurshskaya Kosa National Park**

The administration structure of the KK is characterized by numerous vice-director posts as compared to the KN. Altogether, there are six departments lead by a vice-director and solely the Finance Department and the "Quick Reaction Group" are under the direct responsibility of the Director instead of having own vice-directors. Although, nearly every resort has an attached vice-director it is remarkable that all departments except for the Science Department have a department head as well (Korolevskaya 2008). Another difference to the KN is the split location of the administration whereby the department for Ecological Education and Tourism is situated in Kaliningrad while the other departments, including the Director of the KK are situated in Rybachy within the KK.

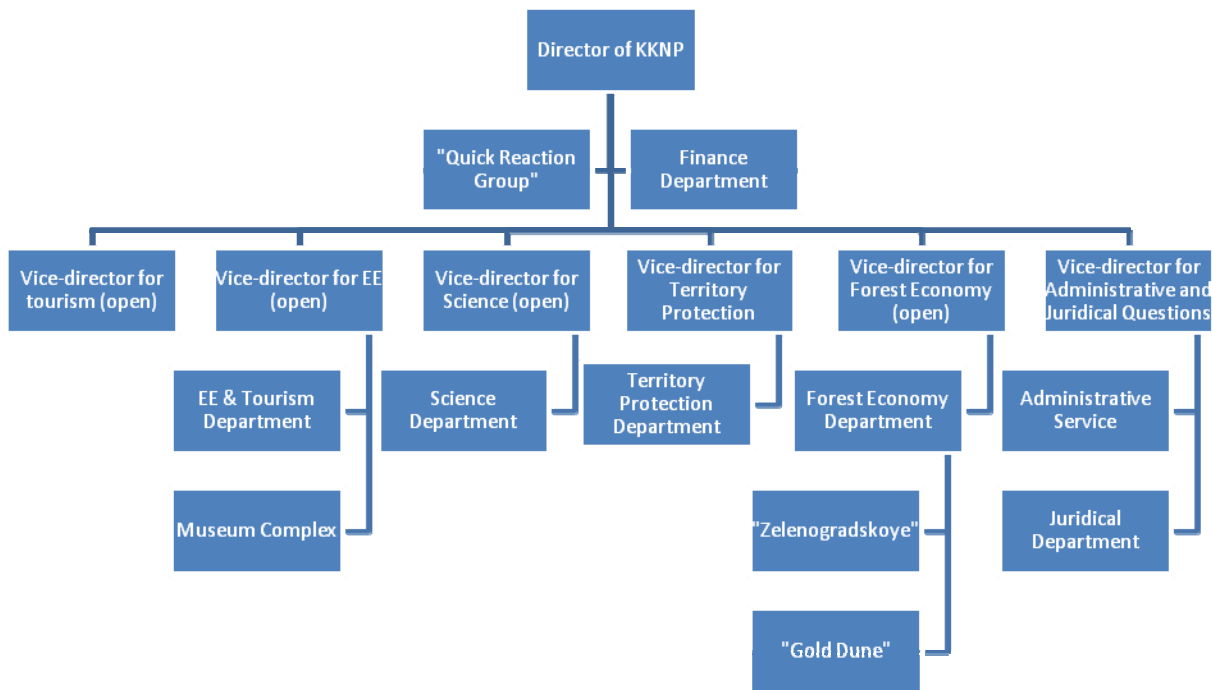


Fig. 6: Administration structure of the KK (Korolevskaya 2008, modified by author)

Important to note is that the administration structure presented in Fig. 6 displays the scheme for how the administration should be managed and organized theoretically however the recent administration presents a slightly different network of duties and responsibilities. As shown in the KK's structure (See Fig. 6) four of the six vice-director posts are currently not occupied thus the vice-directors in charge for Administrative and Juridical Questions and for Territory Protection as well as the Director, Evguenyi Snegiryov, have to add these departments to their management responsibilities. The Vice-Director for Administrative and Juridical Questions is temporary Vice-Director for the Department of Ecological Education and Tourism as well as for the Science Department. Furthermore the Director temporary carries out the duties of the vice-director for Forest Economy (Snegiryov 2007).

However, the different departments still have their responsibilities and duties concerning the management of the territory. The Finance Department, headed by the chief Book-Keeper controls the financing of the KK while the Juridical Department manages legal matters. Together with the Administrative Service they form a non-public administration part. The Department of Ecological Education and Tourism manages all issues related to cater the



informative needs of private visitors and visiting groups including school classes and travel groups. Additionally, the KK Museum Complex is managed by six employees from Kaliningrad (Semyonov 2007). The Science Department produces studies as environmental monitoring or work related expertise to support the practical work of the Forestry Economy Department. Yet another duty performed by the Forestry Departments two forestry districts is the coastal management of the territory as well as the fire control akin to the duties of the Forestry department of the KN. The control of the territory is executed by the Territory Protection Department which safeguards that rules and regulations are followed in the KK (Korolevskaya 2008; Snegiryov 2007).

### **3.2 Stakeholders Network on the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit**

The WHS Curonian Spit inherits a vast amount of stakeholders deriving from different governmental levels and including private as public institutions. The stakeholders presented in this chapter display the set of involved actors mentioned by the national park administrations personnel and outside experts as clearly visible and legal governing authorities. Private individuals and groups such as tourist and locals have their share in the stakeholder's network related to the governance of the territory. These set of actors should display the heterogenic character of stakeholders in the governance of the territory as mentioned by Hubbard et al. (2005, 175) and furthermore, are necessary to determine the modes and co-operation flows between all actors of importance as mentioned by Lipschutz (1996, 44) in his major reasons for local environmental governance. Thus, the stakeholder network can be considered as the framework wherein the governance on the area is carried out and as well as the system responsible for information and co-operation flows across boundaries as mentioned by Landres et al. (1998, 56). This displays the stakeholders' major importance to evaluate governance structures. However, the groups presented hereby may be considered as the main stakeholders hence the complete stakeholder network is very complex and would require attention beyond the needs of this report.

Among the main national stakeholders are the state institutions presented in chapter 3.1 as the MoE and the MNR, respectively their related state services the SSPA and NRMS as main institutions of legal power and decision making. National stakeholders represent the direct state control of the territory and are the institutions which implement legal actions and activities by the national park administrations. Although the four institutions contribute to the main part of influence on the administrations there exists additional stakeholders with legal decision-making powers. On the Lithuanian side these stakeholders are the Neringa and

Klaipeda Municipalities as well as Klaipeda County likewise, the Cultural-Heritage Department and the Environmental Protection Department Regional Offices situated in Klaipeda. Additionally the Klaipeda County Road Administration is responsible for traffic infrastructure in the KN. While both regional departments can be considered as mainly controlling and surveying bodies the municipalities, the County and the Road Administration is directly influenced in the active management of the territory whereby Neringa Municipality is the main actor next to the KN Administration. The County of Klaipeda itself is involved in general planning and infrastructure project related issues (Klaipeda Apskritis 2006). Additionally there are stakeholders, offices and agencies such as state forest services and state environmental inspectors however, they are of minor importance to the conducted research and are mainly involved as secondary control and advisory bodies (Diksaite 2007; Koloksanskis 2007). These state services are all responsible to the MoE and therefore included in Fig. 7.

A different situation appears for the Russian side where control bodies similar to the Lithuanian regional departments could not be found but where other authorities play an important role in the direct governing and management. Zelenogradsk Districts influence differs in its characteristics from the involvement of the Neringa Municipality on account settlements are not part of the KK; additional authorities who play an unimportant role in Lithuania become important in the management of the KK. For example an involvement of the Lithuanian Border Guard Service is nearly invisible in the KN whereby the Russian Federal Border Guard Service controls a two kilometer stripe on the Russian-Lithuanian border. Another stakeholder, even though the future has to show the outcome of its influence is the Ministry for Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation which is recently planning a large development project in the Russian territory of the WHS Curonian Spit. Anyway, concerning traffic infrastructure, the Kaliningrad Street Agency is comparable with its Lithuanian counterpart (Snegiryov 2007; Korolevskaya 2007).

The international stakeholders are clearly dominated by UNESCO as the institution controlling and managing the WHL and the EU on account of the numerous environmental directives and policies which have to be followed by Lithuania. The EU influences both the KN and KK whereas the influence on the former must be considered much stronger since the Lithuanian state authorities are legally bound to follow the EU directive. The EU offers a

wide variety of projects based on TACIS<sup>4</sup> and INTERREG<sup>5</sup> funding which influence management possibilities. NGO's such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) or Greenpeace work and are involved in projects or temporary works. For example, the WWF managed an information center in the KK in Lesnoye and was involved in ecotourism projects (WWF 2001). However, no sign of further involvement could be determined during interviews and fieldwork. The KK Administration has mentioned talks with Greenpeace Russia about management topics but NGO's are not considered important management partners (Snegiryov 2007).

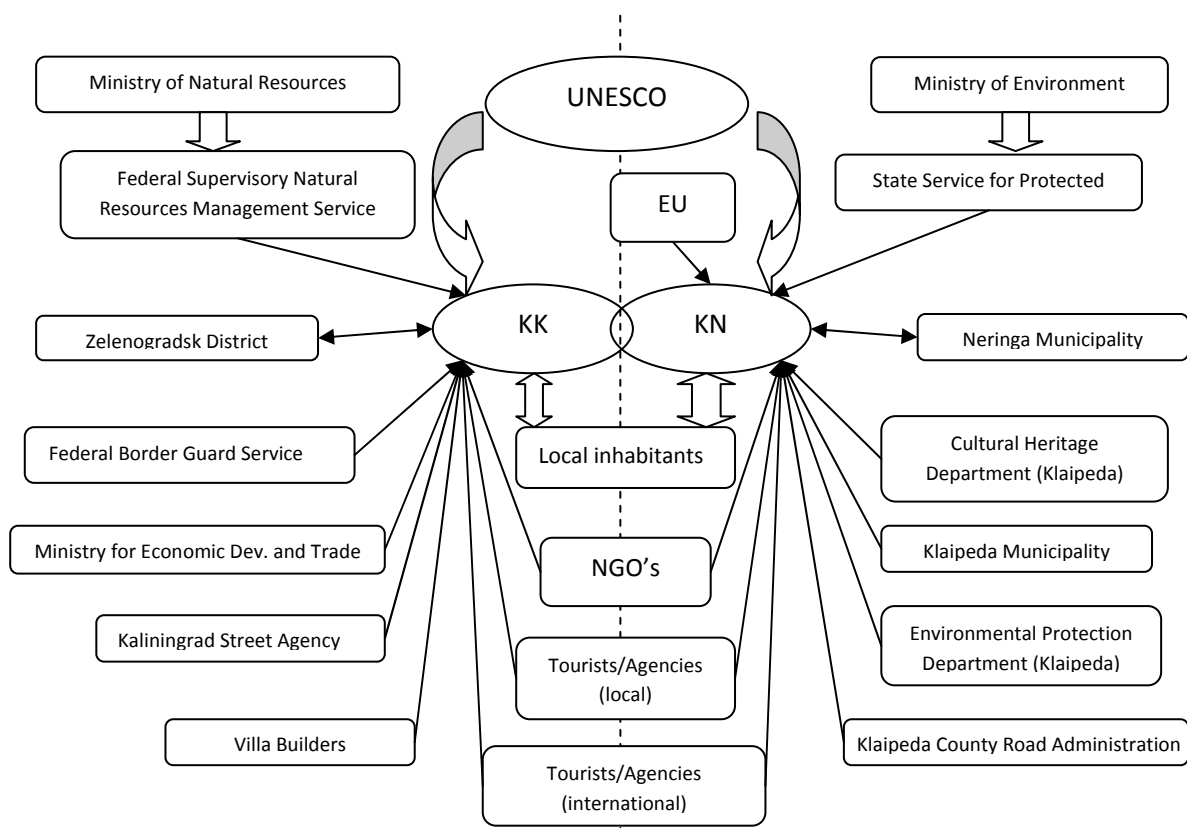


Fig. 7: Stakeholders network on the Curonian Spit WHS

Individual stakeholders are public and private organizations and individuals. However, this group has to be separated into local actors as inhabitants or local entrepreneurs and foreign actors as tourists or non-local companies performing services or business in the WHS Curonian Spit. According to different territory rights, the local population of the KK is

<sup>4</sup> TACIS program by the EU providing assistance to East European and Central Asian partner states in terms of co-operation and supports relation projects between EU states and partners in the mentioned regions (EU 2008a)

<sup>5</sup> INTERREG is a community initiative by the EU to support interregional cooperation in the EU (EU 2006)

involved and interferes in national parks management rather different than the Lithuanian population which is directly affected by the KN Administrations decisions in its every day live. However, in the national parks, the local populations are represented by their local authorities and share most of their opinions (Burksiene 2007) or at least are not organized in strong activist movements against their municipalities' politics. As for foreign tourists and companies, their stake contains mainly of having specific perceptions and standards which are expected from a WHS and therewith influence the management of the national parks administrations. On account of the different amount of foreign and local tourists and the differences between the tourist numbers in general the influence on the KN should be considered stronger than on the KK with its smaller amount of especially foreign tourists.

As the final discussed group of stakeholders, I want to mention local or national NGO's as Ecodefense in Russia or the Association of Lithuanian State Parks and Reserves (ALSPR) in Lithuania (Semyonov 2007 & ALSPR 2008). Nevertheless, as the international NGO's the influence on the management takes place solely through projects and the ALSPR was even not mentioned as a co-operation partner in the interviews by the KN staff. In general NGO involvement seems to be of minor importance in the governance of the WHS Curonian Spit at least if related to the few mentions in the conducted interviews about them.

The stakeholders are important for the following chapters hence they display the amount of stakeholders which should be at least partly involved in the decision making process in the territory. Additionally, the discussion in most parts of the report focuses on the national park administrations themselves, knowledge on the whole network, the legislative or else influencing powers behind or next to them are of importance for the understanding of governance in the territory. As the stakeholders themselves, their efforts and plans in terms of co-operation and governance over the last years prove important for the situation between the stakeholders today. Thus the next chapter provides background information on past co-operation practices or projects and presents the stakeholders of the past and today.

#### **4. Stakeholder Co-operation over the last ten Years in the Curonian Spit National Parks**

As mentioned in chapter 2.2 the amount of literature related to governance and management in the WHS of the Curonian Spit has been meager. Therefore the research had to be based on conference papers by KN personnel as well as general documents about national park management in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Lithuania. However, on behalf of the KN some pieces of independent topic related literature have been collected and utilized for the research. In general, the following information of this chapter should present an opinion about how, the national park administration or their superior authorities presented their duties and achievements to an international audience.

##### **4.1 Lithuanian Impressions on Trans-border Co-operation Efforts.**

The Lithuanian State Service for Protected Areas defines two ways of trans-boundary co-operation: general activities as ratifying international conventions or common policy making and specific activities in single protected areas. The Curonian Spit is praised as the SSPA's primary area of specific international co-operation (Baskyte 2004, 29). According to different sources the co-operation between the KN and the KK started between 1998 (Kvietkus 2005, 59) and 1997 (Baskyte 2004, 29). However, both agree on the matter that the main reason was reflected by the emerging nomination process for the common UNESCO WHS. Kvietkus (2005, 59-60), the former vice-director for natural and cultural heritage of the KN, describes four main stages of co-operation between the national park administrations for the period from 1998 to 2004.

The first stage presents itself in the Co-operation Agreement between the KN and the KK of 1<sup>st</sup> May 1998. The agreement established restrictive and protective measures to meet WHS standards for a joint action in research and natural as cultural heritage protection and the safeguarding of human made nature as dune and forests. Additionally, personnel training and visitors' information should present the image of one united territory and full stakeholder communication on all levels should be established as an aim. The second stage, "Preparation for the nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage Centre." became a joint project between 1998 and 2000 (Kvietkus 2005, 60). The third stage, INTEREG or TACIS common projects and activities, from 1999 to 2004 and at the fourth stage, a full co-operation between KN and KK administrations and its specialists according to the co-operation agreement (Kvietkus 2005, 61).

As results of these four stages, the successful nomination as WHS, different international projects and the publishing of a number of common information material are pointed out. Even Kvietkus (2005, 61) admits that the TACIS project about an integrated management plan ended in 2004 without achieving such a common document however Baskyte (2004, 29) mentions successful co-operation activities and joint action of the two national parks. Besides the efforts, both experts point out several problems and shortcomings of the co-operation including different legislation systems and definition confusion of the protective values by the two administrations (Kvietkus 2005, 62) as well as the visa regime and differences in the social life (Baskyte 2004, 29). In 2003 and 2004 opinions towards the establishment of co-operation progress seemed to be positive in the Lithuanian SSAP and the KN Administration which additionally was supported by the newest publication on the matter which highlighted the trend to stronger international co-operation (Baskyte et al. 2006, 325).

The state level for the past few years has had few agreements concerning the governance or development on the Curonian Spit even though the Lithuanian Ministry of Environment states that its primary aim for international environmental co-operation for the period 2005-2007 focuses on the Russian Federation and Belarus, not more than one agreement has been signed concerning the Curonian Spit (MoE 2005). The agreement solely covers a joint environmental impact assessment of the Russian D-6 Oil platform 22 kilometers off the Curonian Spit and does not affect the national park administrations (UNESCO 2008d).

## **4.2 The Struggle of Co-operation in the Kursiu Nerija National Park**

Stakeholder co-operation and communication in the KN and protected areas of Lithuania seems to be regarded as a matter of increasing importance; the current situation of protected areas in Lithuania is described by the director of the SSAP as follows:

The new age presents us with new opportunities that can help with the conservation of our most valuable territories. Their management is becoming less centralized, information and education is becoming publically available, and society is being given the chance to participate in the planning and decision making process. (Baskyte et al. 2006, 322)

However, recent studies lack positive description when discussing the topic of local community involvement or communication between stakeholders in protected areas. Determined problems in a joint management appear to be overlapping responsibilities due to badly defined governing structures between administrations and local authorities as well as a common policy of “nothing but restrictions” which can lead to conflicts between the protected

area administrations and the local communities (Ahokumpu et al. 2006). Anyway, the municipality has expressed will to participate in management of the KN to support the administration (Baskyte 2004, 30). To determine communication related problems, the KN took part in a research evaluating the relation between the local community represented by local entrepreneurs, inhabitants and governmental and non-governmental authorities towards the KN Administration.

The study was part of the international EU program “Coastal Sustainability as a Challenge” (CSC) and guided by Finland’s Metsähallitus<sup>6</sup> (Grönholm & Berghäll 2007). The publication compares four protected areas on the Baltic Coast on their communication and relation with local communities and vice versa. In KN, according to the presented data more than 80% of the local entrepreneurs state that there is no cooperation between them and the administration at all. Furthermore, merely 37% of other authorities and organizations experience an organized cooperation and utter that most cooperation is based on information rather than on activities however 83% of the KN personnel mention organized cooperation as well as cooperation based on information (Grönholm & Berghäll 2007, 29). It becomes visible that most entrepreneurs see no need for cooperation with the KN Administration even though according to outside stakeholder opinion, cooperation has been increasing slightly as its efficiency in the past ten years. However, the amount of stakeholders who strongly disagree with the success and amount of cooperation have increased significantly (Grönholm & Berghäll 2007, 33) especially with the restrictions imposed on them by the KN Administration and seen negative by 58% of inhabitants as well as by 88% of the local entrepreneurs (Grönholm & Berghäll 2007, 70). Additionally, the attitude of the local community towards the KN Administration has to be described as unfavorable for any kind of cooperation with 50% of the inhabitants and 64% of entrepreneurs expressing a negative opinion. As a result, authorities and NGOs are fostering a very extensive need for more cooperation with stakeholders in the future (Grönholm & Berghäll 2007, 71).

On account of these statistics the cooperation between different stakeholders is low, especially if taking into account that opinions of local stakeholders about the KN were much lower than in all other protected areas which took part in the research project (Grönholm & Berghäll 2007, 53). These figures oppose the trend of an increased support for their protected areas by the local stakeholders mentioned by Baskyte et al. (2006, 325).

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<sup>6</sup> Metsähallitus: National Board of Forestry of Finland and responsible institution for the Finnish national parks (Haapala et al. 2003).

### **4.3 World Heritage Enlistment and the Years After.**

Since the enlistment of the Curonian Spit on UNESCO's WHL a number of annual reports have been published by the World Heritage Committee (WHC) including recommendations and discussions on common issues. In the first meeting of the WHC, concerning the Curonian Spit, both parties were advised to co-operate and to carry out a risk assessment addressing the planned offshore oil-extraction of the Russian D6 oil platform (WHC 2002). It followed that Lithuania complained, accusing the Russian Federation of not sharing informations and hindering co-operation while the Russian Federation declared all necessary information available (WHC 2003, 56). As a result, the 2003 WHC meeting urged both parties on the preparation of a joint environmental assessment study and warned the Russian Federation on starting oil extraction without the requested measures (WHC 2003, 56). Although, the following management report mentioned efforts in the direct site management, the Lithuanian state had filled a request inscribing the WHS Curonian Spit onto the WHL in Danger in 2004 due to oil-extraction works and the still missing common environmental impact assessment (WHC 2004). On account of this development the WHC set an ultimatum for both state parties to sign an agreement until the WHC's next meeting in February 2005 and provide the WHC with a detailed report on the progress of co-operation (WHC 2004).

Being under international pressure the state parties managed to communicate on an environmental impact assessment concerning the oil extraction; joint measures in accident management and common monitoring projects and thus the WHS Curonian Spit remained off the WHL in Danger (WHC 2005, 91). Anyway, the WHC again requested a detailed report about the progress of cooperation between the national parks as well as joint documentation on the state of the property for its next session (WHC 2005, 91). The 2006 WHC meeting presented the efforts of both state parties according to the joint environmental impact assessment project but urged the state parties to sign the final contracts. However, the report states that the required joint environmental state of territory report has not been handed in and requested the parties to hand the report in until February 2007 (WHC 2006, 220). The 2007 meeting report is not yet available but a request at the SSAP which is responsible for the reports resulted in the end of the communication between the official person in charge and me. By mid-2006 no agreement has been signed according to remediation works for D6 oil platform (Jomantiene 2006, 29).

The reports present an image of slow co-operation on state level whereby UNESCO, respectively the WHC has to enforce agreements with international pressure. Lithuania has



urged the WHC to this step by nominating their heritage site to the WHL in Danger and thus willingness to co-operate seems to be higher from the state authorities of Lithuania than of their Russian partners, at least on matters concerning oil extraction. Anyway, Lithuania and Russia have continued bi-lateral meetings including environmental experts (WHC 2005, 91; WHC 2006, 219). The outcomes must be described as meager and not yet sufficient according to the WHC. Presenting a background for the research questions, the literature displays few hints on the recent status of co-operation and the modes of governance experienced by the local stakeholders' themselves what leads to the importance of the chapter below. There focus is on the recent, directly experienced tasks, opinions and conflicts of governance of the stakeholders.

## **5. Applied Governance and Management in the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit**

### **5.1 Managing the Territory**

The following chapter provides a detailed insight about the main priorities and directions of management in the territory of the Curonian Spit WHS as expressed by the interviewed stakeholders. Furthermore, their tools to accomplish the aims of their foci as legal documents or management projects will be discussed to present an actual state of governance and management duties as well as responsibilities of the involved stakeholders. Those directions and responsibilities of management represent the importance of different stakeholders in the management as well as regulations for governance or planning projects. In trans-boundary co-operation and mentioned by Landres et al. (1998, 40) different management philosophies may hinder or influence flows and therefore co-operation and joined governance. Thus, the directions presented by the different stakeholders or by non-human actors as management plans influence the co-operation possibilities and may lead towards different management practices and a different set of involved stakeholders. The information is mainly based on interviews whereby the main focus relates to KN, Neringa Municipality and KK and how state level influence is mainly implemented through activities carried out by the national park administrations. This chapter will summarize the priorities and management practices as well as the conflicts deriving from different perceptions of the main stakeholders.

#### **5.1.1 Main Focus of Area Management**

To determine the main principles and management priorities the interviewees were asked to state their administrations or institutions direction on the matter and to describe the most important values and activities which have to be addressed in the management of the territory. The two administrations and the municipality appear to have different approaches. While it may be assumed that for both national park administrations the protection of the natural and cultural heritage according to their inscription into the WHL would be the main task it could be determined that this is solely the case for the KN. Although, saving the natural landscape is a main priority in the KK (Snegiryov 2007); it inherits less weight than stated by the KN Administration personnel.

All interviewed KN staff members stated that protection of the natural and cultural heritage is the main priority for the management whereby none of the two was rated a higher level of importance. As stated by the deputy director of the KN: “According to UNESCO it (WHS

Curonian Spit) is cultural landscape, so nature and culture together, because people influenced the nature in building the landscape of the Curonian Spit; so it's the same level" (Diksaite 2007). Besides, tourism and education are mentioned as important focuses by personnel from the Visitors Center of KN (Varkaliene 2007). The head of the Visitors Centers Diana Varkaliene (2007) described it in the way that the areas management was mainly focused on nature protection in the past decades but recently is undergoing a change due to increasing visitor numbers. There is a shift focusing more on economic and social aspects in the KN, especially related to the local inhabitants this becomes of increasing importance (Diksaite 2007).

This recent changes should be in favor of Neringa Municipality which considers itself according to the law of municipalities as representative body of the local inhabitants. On account of that, the main focus is to improve the lives of the local population (Burksiene 2007). Due to that and the fact that most revenues of the municipality are earned through tourism, the development of tourist and business by unique recreation sources is of major importance, nevertheless followed by environmental as cultural protection and infrastructure development. However, I was reminded that all of their priorities interfere with each other and that they contribute as a whole to an increased living standard of the local population. Additionally, it was stressed that local aims are strictly in accordance to legal acts and approved planning documents (Burksiene 2007).

Bringing in the KK the differences are situated as mentioned in the secondary importance of natural landscape protection and its priority on ecological tourism. Included in ecological tourism in the KK is ecological education which is a main task of the national park and especially for the Departments for Ecological Education and Tourism. This includes nature education as well as landscape education with focus on a broad audience, from international tourists to school children (Semyonov 2007). On the other hand, as the main territory of importance, the strict nature reserve on the border to Lithuania was mentioned even though tourism is prohibited there (Snegiryov 2007). Anyway, there is no mention by the KK Administration of protection of cultural heritage including traditional houses or farmsteads even though the area is listed in the WHL for its outstanding natural and cultural heritage. Referring to cultural heritage it was stated that some archaeological excavations are included in the educational topics but represent a minor share (Semyonov 2007). Still existing cultural infrastructure seems of little importance. This might be related to the separation of KK

territory and the settlements administered by the district of Zelenogradsk what results that the KK Administration has few influence on the development within these settlements.

The settlement related differences between the two national parks are as well visible in further management priority related topics. In the KN educational aims are separated for the local population and visitors (Varkaliene 2007). On the other hand, the local population has been barely mentioned and seems to be non influential and not part of KK priorities even though, the *Strategy for Russian National Parks* states that involvement of local community members in relation to non national park administered areas in the national parks is of major importance to achieve a sustainable management of the natural resources in the territory itself (BCC 2002, 10 – 13).

Summarizing the foci of the different institutions or authorities it becomes obvious, albeit their differences and variations in their aims and priorities of management that natural protection as well as ecological tourist development ranks first in all of them. It follows that if not a complete agreement exists, at least in terms of their self determined aims the administrations are aiming in the same direction.

### **5.1.2 Management Documents and Plans for the Territory of the Curonian Spit**

Following the stated aims and priorities of administration authorities the question on the legal documents which are supporting these becomes obvious. While conducting literature research about legal documents such as management plans it becomes lucid that this is problematic and complex issue. The new KN General Management Plan was already mentioned as in preparation in 2004 however afterwards information about the preparation progress seems to be unavailable (MoE 2004). For the KK only non-binding planning documents are available. Management plans are of major importance as the most important non-human actors of environmental governance, as mentioned by Hubbard et al. (2002, 194) and due to their legal status of regulation enforcement powers, the recent situation is remarkable.

The KN preparation of a new general plan started in 2004 (MoE 2004) based on the 1994 General Plan. This old plan has been designed until 2003 and should have been exchanged with a new management plan. Anyway, for a number of reasons the old plan is still in force even though it is being challenged as a legal document. In Lithuania legal documents have to be officially published before turning legal which is not the case with the old but actual KN General Plan (Burksiene 2007). The old planning document covers primary issues on development, restrictions and descriptions of different zones and their characterizations (See

Appendix 1). It focuses more on the development of settlements and the restrictions for development; renovations or rebuilding works have to be in line with definitions of the plan and new emerging elements are described in their appearance and style. Furthermore, main infrastructure regulations are related to roads and construction limits (Diksaite 2007; Piekene 2007).

The old plan is very detailed and a collection of different papers and regulations including several maps. The new General Plan will be broader and has to be used in addition to the law of protected areas in some cases. The new plan implements a set of sub-categories for the already existing five landscape categories regulated by the SSAP (See Appendix 1), however, no changes for tourist or local inhabitants will appear (Diksaite 2007). Some restrictions concerning forestry personnel will be loosened as the new plan is especially focused on zoning. For example, the new plan allows Forestry Services to carry out specific works in the strict reserve zones. Currently the forestry department carries out its work in accordance to an individual forestry work related plan. This plan prepared by the Institute of Forestry in Kaunas together with the KN Forestry Services has to follow the guideline of the general plan. The 2001 Forestry Plan might have to be changed in order to fit the new management plan of the KN to be implemented in 2008 (Koloksanskis 2007). This new General Plan is ordered by the SSAP and has to be prepared by the KN according to major pre-given directions of the SSAP (Diksaite 2007).

The KK has no general plan however a new plan is under preparation to be implemented in 2008. The preparation of the new plan came about as a competition won by the International Institute of Forest, an NGO based in Moscow (Snegiryov 2007). It follows that compared to the KN management documents it is not as regulated by the NRMS unlike the Lithuanian General Plan is by the SSAP. However, the plan has to be approved by the NRMS and additionally Immanuel-Kant University of Kaliningrad and the Russian Academy of Science which are both state institutions are taking part in the preparation process (Snegiryov 2007). Recently and in the past the KK has been managed according to major federal regulations and laws as well as annual reports on the state of environment consisting of satellite images of the territory and environmental research data. On account of that state of environment report, planning strategies as well as budget calculations are prepared for every year. Thus, the KK Administration determines the major problems in the report and plans the activities for the next period on account of financial possibilities. Additionally, a legal document concerning hazard and accident management exists as well as a basic zoning plan describing the five

different zones (See Appendix 1) and their purposes (Shaplygina 2007; Snegiryov 2007). When asked about the effects of the new management plan, the KK Director was optimistic fostering the opinion that with the new plan, regulations and zoning restrictions as well as management priorities will be defined in the plan as well as legally empowered (Snegiryov 2007).

Neringa Municipality prepares several documents and strategic plans for periods of different lengths as well as an own new general management plan for the territory. However, there is competition between Neringa Municipality and the KN Administration concerning management concepts. The strategic plans are prepared on issues concerning social life, economical development, tourism and cultural protection. A long term plan to 2013 has been approved and a shorter, three year budgetary plan is under preparation. However, these strategic plans discuss the priorities of the municipality; they take into account the protection of the cultural heritage and inherit restrictions on development and building activities (Burksiene 2007).

The KK municipality territory is not under KK management responsibility. There were no specific documents or information on the planning documents for Zelenogradsk District available to my research. I have been told that the main focus of development for the settlements is the selling of land plots instead of increasing the infrastructure quality or establishing public tourist areas (Snegiryov 2007). However, the settlements of the KK are part of an approved planning document by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in establishing a special economic zone for tourism even though nothing specific is planned yet. Recently, the application period for projects has started and private investors can create their own management and development plans (Shaplygina 2007).

Private investors and locals who want to change the appearance or usage of their properties in the KN have to prepare own planning documents in accordance to the municipalities and KN General Plan to obtain approval (Burksiene 2007). In both territories the management documents which include the settlements are focusing primarily on the development of infrastructure and its restrictions in terms of construction regulations whereby the KK annual planning schemes are mainly task based. The divided territory presents completely different needs for the content of the general management plans. Hence, the KN primary regulates the construction and development process in its territory the KK has no influence on its settlements and therefore can concentrate on the natural part of territory protection and zoning.

### **5.1.3 Responsibilities and Duties of Stakeholders in the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit**

The management plans discussed in the previous chapter nevertheless, present solely a small share of the different activities to be carried out by the different stakeholders in the territory of both national parks. Internal structures, different laws and regulations illustrate a complex picture of duties and responsibilities of the management involved stakeholders. On the international scale, the main stakeholder, UNESCO has supervisory status and defends the values of the 1972 *World Heritage Convention* however it has minor influence on the direct management practices of both national parks. As stated by all interviewed personnel, the restrictions and management practices were nearly the same before the listing. Anyway, UNESCO is demanding additional quality management for its reputation as a WHS (Diksaite 2007). This is a defending tool for their management policy for unsustainable and nature threatening development projects by state authorities or private investors (Snegiryov 2007).

The EU has brought about changes to Lithuania with restrictions on specific areas to include Natura 2000<sup>7</sup> and the EU Habitat Directive<sup>8</sup>. However, no increase in the strictness of regulations can be directly connected to these directives as was mentioned by KN as staff from the Neringa Municipality. According to Neringa Municipality, stricter and more complicated management practices are derived from the strong definitions by the SSAP, the MoE and/or other government authorities than by the EU laws and directives itself. EU projects and regulations are described as flexible compared to the Lithuanian regulations and bureaucracy systems (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007). Owing to these facts the direct influence on the management practices can be considered low except for additional EU funding which enables management projects which may not have been accomplished without the EU.

#### **5.1.3.1 Stakeholder Responsibilities and Duties in the Kursiu Nerija National Park**

KN settlements are part of the national park which is divided in two spheres of management responsibility as named by the Deputy Director of Natural and Cultural Heritage as the “city zone” and the “forest zone” (Diksaite 2007). These are not the official terms; they determine the areas “city zone” which are managed by the Neringa and Klaipeda Municipalities and the “forest zone” managed by the KN Administration. The “city zone” includes the settlements of

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<sup>7</sup> Natura 2000: is the main part of EU nature and biodiversity policy and is an EU wide network of nature protection areas (EU 2007)

<sup>8</sup> EU Habitat Directive: The main piece of EU nature conservation policy including the Natura 2000 network and the system of strict species protection (EU 2008b)

Nida, Preila, Prevalka Juodkrante and Smyltine as well as the public beaches and recreational areas (See Fig. 3) while the “forest zone” includes forested or sandy areas and the coastline including beach and protective dune (Diksaite 2007). There are strict cultural protection areas in settlements thus management responsibilities overlap in the territory. Daily routine management such as cleaning is maintained for both areas by their responsible authorities; additionally a third authority joins by as the Administration of Regional Roads from Klaipeda County is responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of public roads and parking areas outside of the settlements.

Inside the settlements the municipalities manage the daily affairs in terms of organizing all socio-economic aspects as well as maintaining and providing the technical infrastructure like electricity and water support systems (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007). Thus, the KN Administration has primary control function of the “city zone”. The management of the “forest zone” is separated among the departments and specialists. As presented in the structure of the KN (See Chapter 3.1.1.) the main physical work is carried out by the Forestry Department, respectively its four sub services. Therefore, the primary tasks of the Forestry Department is cutting, planting and clearing the “forest zone” as well as reinforcing the protective dune and performing fire control (Dikshas 2007). Additionally, the Forest Department maintains and installs nature paths, stands and signs. However, in case of the dune reinforcement a recent change in the financing changed the old modes of management. Hence, the funding comes from the Klaipeda County; there was a competition between companies and institutions to carry out the reinforcement works. Even though, the Forestry Department did not succeed in winning the competition they still manage the dunes for the winning company. Anyway, the foresters of the KN are hoping that from next year on that company will provide additional personnel as well. Additionally, the Forestry Department receives financial support for specific programs from the MoE and some funding from municipalities (Koloksanskis 2007).

In general the forestry work which they perform was described to me as classical theoretical non-economic forestry which solely cuts forest for cleaning and care taking reasons not due to economical purposes. However, large logs are sold while the branches and small logs are utilized for protective dune reinforcement. The earned money flows via the MoE back into the KN budget and can be utilized for further forestry equipment (Koloksanskis 2007 & Dikshas 2007). Forest situated in the “city zone” belongs to the responsibility of the municipalities



whereby Neringa Municipality hires a communal company of Nida to maintain it as well as collect rubbish in settlements and on recreational sites (Koloksanskis 2007).

The Natural and Cultural Heritage Department and Landscape Specialist manage the non-physical management. Additionally, the Lawyer of KN affects the actual management by defending the position of KN and helps to protect the status favored by KN Administration. The forestry staff installs tourist information stands created by the Visitor Centers while the KN Scientist which is part of the Natural and Cultural Heritage Department supports the Visitor Centers with information (Varkaliene 2007; Diksaite 2007). It follows that the information signs on nature as well as cultural heritage are primarily prepared and put up by the KN Administration even the signs in the settlements. However, the municipality supports KN on this issue with some financial funding. Anyway, specific signs on orientation are as well set up and managed by the municipalities whereby nature signs are managed by the KN (Burksiene 2007; Varkaliene 2007). The Landscape Specialist Nijole Piekene covers project preparation as well as approves construction projects created by local inhabitants or companies. Her main task is to determine if planned development is in accordance with the general management plan and to establish legal guidelines for projects (Piekene 2007). The Department of Natural and Cultural Heritage has two territory inspectors who support the Landscape Specialist in controlling projects (Karpus 2007). The task of the higher level personnel, deputy directors and director is the coordination as well as the contact and relation to higher level authorities as the SSPA and/or the MoE.

While discussing the duties and responsibilities of the two major authorities, the question arises about the term governance and its definition including all stakeholders (Commission on Global Governance 1996; Duffy 2006; Lipschutz 1996). The two main local stakeholders are not describing the local population or some community group as important for the management and governance of the KN. The municipality presents itself as the representative of the people but the KN does not consider the local population as a stakeholder responsible for management decisions of its own (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). The duty of the local population seems to consist of preparing projects to be approved by the municipality and the KN without having a major input in the decision making process. Anyway, the local population is mentioned in terms of addressing their needs to prevent conflicts and arguments on management issues by the KN administration; thereby, influencing the management indirectly via the official authorities.

### **5.1.3.2 Stakeholder Responsibilities and Duties in the Kurshskaya Kosa National Park**

The direct responsibilities of the stakeholders involved in the KK differs to a large extent towards the duties and Responsibilities in the KN on account of the separated territory between the KK Administration, the Zelenogradsk District and the Federal Boarder Guard Service responsibilities in their territories. The settlement management is performed by municipal authorities who are responsible for all duties including infrastructure maintenance as well as socio-economic development and the provision of public services. As well as in the Settlements, the two kilometer restricted border zone is beyond the KK Administration management and controlled by the Federal Border Guard Service (Snegiryov 2007). However, due to the fact that the whole area is part of the strict nature reserve area of the KK almost no direct practical management duties are necessary for this area.

The KK as the KN Administration can be separated into practical and theoretical parts which carry out different tasks. The Juridical Department, the Finance Department and the Administrative Service cater to the invisible needs such as bookkeeping and juridical support; the other departments contribute to the visible aspects of the management by preparing brochures and/or maintaining the forests.

Forest works and protective dune reinforcement is performed by the two forestry services Zelenogradskoye (KK southern part) and Gold Dune (KK northern part). Forestry personnel maintain litter in the forest and on the beaches. The Forestry Services are often supported by the Science Department with additional knowledge in terms of landscape management and dune protection (Snegiryov 2007). Additionally, the Science Department monitors flora and fauna as well as the landscape (Semyonov 2007). The Department of Territory Protection is considered as a visible part of the management as it performs control duties in the territory related to issues concerning locals and tourists. Due to its emergency character the “Quick Reaction Group” is a remediation service for accidents threatening the natural heritage, and is less frequently engaged in the direct management.

Visibility and presentation is addressed by the Department of Ecological Education and Tourism which produces all information material, maintains the official homepage and administers the KK Museum Complex. Additionally, the nature paths and information signs are prepared and established by this department as well as educational conferences and professional meetings (Semyonov 2007). The Science Department also provides support for the contents of information material.

Indirect management practices are performed by the Juridical Department which represents the KK Administration in law suits concerning the territory, regulations and management. The Finance Department administers financial resources, entrance fees and performs bookkeeping tasks while the Administrative Service is responsible for decisions on employment as well as KK economics (Korolevskaya 2008).

The Street Agency of Kaliningrad is an involved stakeholder that builds and maintains all public roads and signs on the roads. This agency is responsible for signage next to public roads, a strong tool to steer the visual and informational appearance (Korolevskaya 2007). However, the management of the parking lots attached to public roads, is under the responsibilities of the KK (Snegiryov 2007) even though it was not possible to find out which department is directly responsible for maintaining them. In general it has been difficult to achieve well structured explanations by the national park personnel on the different responsibilities of their own administration. According to the observed modes in terms of governance, neither the perception nor the reality in the KK territory is close to involve a broad set of different stakeholders when talking about the direct management duties and responsibilities. However, this fact is at some points in line with the KN administration whereby as well, primary the municipality was mentioned to administer its territory. However, planning duties for the settlements as in the KN are none existent in the KK.

#### **5.1.4 Applied Territory Control in the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit**

The control of the 163 kilometers<sup>2</sup> land area of the Curonian Spit WHS (180 kilometers<sup>2</sup> including Russian settlements) differs between the KN and the KK primary on account of the territorial separation fact in the KK. Hence, the KK Administration has no legislative administrative power in the settlements; the territorial control is solely performed on the KK Administered nature areas. The KN Administration performs territorial control on the whole territory due to the complete inclusion of the settlements in the KN. For that reason, the KN controls the area along two different lines, general control of visitors as locals concerning the general KN restrictions on area access and behavior in the parks territory; and regulations for constructions and infrastructure (Diksaite 2007). To control the movement and activities of visitors and locals both national park regulations contain a set of rules concerning the restricted access to some territories and allowed activities (See Appendix 1 & 2). As a mean to control these regulations and to remind visitors as locals on them, both national parks employ territorial inspectors. In the KN two territorial inspectors are a part of the Department for Natural and Cultural Heritage and are responsible for 98 kilometers<sup>2</sup> of the KN land mass.

Additionally, KN's inspectors control permits and fishing numbers for local fisherman in the Nida Harbor. During tourist season the inspectors patrolling by car due to the long distances while in off season, their work focuses mainly on direct complaints about regulation violation (Karpus 2007).

Motorized visitors and illegal parking were said to rank first in violating the KN regulations (Koloksanskis 2007). During tourist season the KN inspectors are supported by four additional inspectors sent by Environmental Protection Agencies of different towns and cities in Lithuania. Every week the additional inspectors from different parts and regional environmental agencies of Lithuania support the KN in tourist control and; furthermore, the KN employs a number of path and dune inspectors. The dune inspectors are paid by the Neringa Municipality (Diksaite 2007). These dune inspectors could be observed in May 2007 standing on the shifting dunes, observing with binoculars and being strict about straying from paths.

First violations lead to warnings and depending on visitors behavior, he or she may be fined. Illegal parking and camping entails almost always a fine (Karpus 2007). Nevertheless, there are some exceptions for local people to enter the strict nature reserves for mushroom picking season and with the control of mushroom picking in general. For example if people are picking mushrooms listed in the red book of Lithuania, due to personnel capacity and lack of expertise there are no possibilities to control these breaches (Diksaite 2007; Karpus 2007). Anyway, additional support is granted by the Forestry Department personnel which, while carrying out the forestry work can control and fine people who are breaching the rules. Anyway, most situations are attempted to be resolve without fining, but relying on explanations instead (Koloksanskis 2007). Fines are handed out by control personnel and range between 50 Litas to 150 Litas for committing a smaller breach and up to 500 Litas (~145 €) for a severe violation (Karpus 2007).

Less involved in visitors control is the Environmental Protection Agency of Neringa which belongs to the municipality. This agency controls more general environmental regulations of Lithuanian law. This can include number of wild boars free for hunting and managing wild boar damage in the KN as well as environmental pollution by individuals (Burksiene 2007; Karpus 2007).

Compared to the two KN inspectors the territorial control of the KK is accomplished by approximately 15 inspectors from the KK Territorial Protection Department. According to the

KK Director they patrol the area and control visitors and locals (Snegiryov 2007). The inspectors do not hand out fines directly rather writing a notice stating the failure to follow the regulations. Subsequent to that, the person responsible of the violation has to visit the KK Administration to explain his or her behavior. Consequently, according to the severity of the violation each individual is presented with a warning, a fine or the violation may even be forwarded to the police. The heights of the fines in the KK vary between 1000 Rubles to 2000 Rubles a maximum of ~57 €(Snegiryov 2007). Thus compared to the KN, fines are low.

Additionally, in the territory of the KK control functions are also carried out by the police and the Border Guard Service. The Lithuanian Police perform their normal duties in the KN however in the KK police presence is more visible especially with a control post in Lesnoye. Anyway, the police seem to be of little interest to safeguard the principles of the KK but more interested in some own profit or to cater the relations to some influential persons involved in the illegal building activities (Russland aktuell, 2007). However, while parking on an illegal parking spot the police which was passing by twice seemed not to be interested in handing me a fine or a warning at all.

In general, the 15 inspectors were non-visible and the amount of cars parking wherever their owner wanted presented an impression on very lush restrictive policies. Even tough, in the KK there are no exceptions if not for scientifically purposes for entering the strict nature reserves (Snegiryov 2007). Anyhow, it has to be mentioned that out of the original three strict nature reserves only one Zapovedniki<sup>9</sup> on the Lithuanian Border still exists. Lack of sufficient controlling possibilities freed up the other strict nature reserves (Korolevskaya 2007). Additionally, KK inspectors need a special permit to operate within the two kilometer border zone where most of the remaining reserve is situated in (Snegiryov 2007).

Safeguarding cultural heritage in the territory is not controlled. Hence, according to the interviewees, the KK has no legal power to control the settlements and due to the lack of legal documents containing regulations or restrictions for construction, no authority can perform controls. KK inspectors do control construction activities on or outside the settlement boundaries (Snegiryov 2007). In the KN however, the control of construction as well as the control of visitor behavior is of major importance to the inspectors. They spot check if sites are according to the documents prepared by the Landscape Specialist and if the owners have acquired permissions from the KN Administration. All construction activity including minor

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<sup>9</sup> Zapovedniki: Russian category of strict nature reserve, untouched and uninfluenced by human activities as to protect natural heritage territories (Inozemtsev 1981, 77)

reconstructions needs KN permission (Karpus 2007; Piekene 2007). Klaipeda's Cultural Heritage Department and the municipalities' Environmental Protection Agency have control of construction with special construction inspectors in the case of new buildings. They control and approve changes to be carried out according to the building regulations, taking into account the cultural heritage of the area (Diksaite 2007). In case of violations, the KN has no legal to warrant penalties; however, inspectors forward violations to the Klaipeda District's Construction Inspection and to the Cultural Heritage Department which have legal powers to decide on matters (Karpus 2007; Diksaite 2007).

KN control is characterized by a wider spectrum of involved stakeholders than management duties and provides a better insight in the modes and networks of governance. Thus, the recent management is carried out by a small set of actors, especially the KN Administration and Neringa Municipality, the control, due to a number of state authorities, is more heterogeneous and displays the structures of legal responsibility better than the direct management practices. For the KK external control bodies are represented by NRMS as the controlling authority and the Federal Environment Control Agency as an institution randomly controlling sights with assumed environmental problems. Due to lack of construction control and related laws, the set of stakeholders and involved persons is reduced to a high degree compared to the KN territory. The modes of governance in terms of control are less defined in the Russian part than on the Lithuanian side what leads to problems for the KK Administration to address management conflicts.

### **5.1.5 Stakeholder Conflicts in Area Management**

Both national parks include a small set of stakeholders actively involved in the management conflicts. In the KN these conflicting parties are the KN Administration, Neringa Municipality, local inhabitants or those representing Neringa local inhabitants. The KK Administration has different conflicts with a different set of stakeholders including authorities of three settlements and wealthy business entrepreneurs which are constructing illegal villas as well as their political connections which are supporting them (Russland aktuell 2007). Additionally, the Federal Border Guard service plays a vital role concerning management conflicts. However, in both cases a major problem is the wish of the municipality and district authorities to enlarge their territories for further construction and to increase the tourist infrastructure (Snegiryov 2007; Diksaite 2007). In Lithuania the conflicts are in a legal manner and opinions clashes with each other while the KK has to manage illegal construction

inside and outside the settlement areas and even on the protective dune (See Fig. 8) without an influence on the settlement development at all.



Fig. 8: New houses on the edge of the protective dune in Lesnoye(Albrecht 2007)

Discussing the two sides separately the problems in the KN were described by its personnel as a problem of overlapping responsibility for different areas as well as too vague definitions on the legal superiority of the different authorities. Thus, areas as specific beaches which are managed as a recreation area are administered and maintained by the municipality; however all beaches are under the responsibility of the KN in order to safeguard the protective dune. Minor discussions about who maintains dune areas and maintenance costs arise (Koloksanskis 2007). A larger problem is opinions on the settlement developments. Thus, private plans have to be approved by the municipality beforehand and according to their more on socio-economic development based aims, approval is given which is denied by the KN Administration later (Piekene 2007). On account of that, conflicts between the local population and the KN Administration arise which explain partly the results of the CSC Project (Grönholm & Berghäll 2007) mentioned in chapter 4.2.

Anyway, both sides stress that they prepare all their work in strict accordance with the legal documents, however which planning documents are superior and provide the final decision? In general the KN is the winner with an theoretically expired General Plan as all construction always has to be permitted by the KN (Burksiene 2007). Problems continue when both administrations have to agree on the new general plans which are under preparation by both

authorities and the question of legal superiority arises again. It follows that at least in Neringa Municipality the personnel is critical of the KN Administrations approval process (Burksiene 2007) and that the order of their decision power must be described as insufficient in relation to the amount of complaints on overlapping management responsibilities (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007; Koloksanskis 2007). It seemed difficult for the interviewees to describe any specific conflicts for the practical management; thus, finally everything seemed to be decided by their authorities and not a court.

In the KK conflicts due to lack of a general planning document leads to court, especially issues concerning illegal construction activities. The KK Administration can be considered as in conflict with the Zelenogradsk District Administration considering tourist infrastructure as public squares and park areas are rejected by the district administration which is said to be solely concentrated to sell land plots to the highest bidder (Snegiryov 2007). This policy harshly opposes the “Assignment of Property Rights” mentioned by Lipschutz (1996, 42) to achieve sustainable mode of environmental governance. Courts are the sole way to challenge problems for the KK. Even though, courts were yet not capable of resolving illegal construction by deconstructing illegal buildings (Snegiryov 2007). The unsatisfactory situation dominates the KK territory in terms of construction activities however the new management plan presents hope for the KK personnel that the situation will improve (Snegiryov 2007).

Anyway, the situation inside the settlements will remain a problem as long as the KK Administration has no legal power within. Conversely, an interesting statement was made by the Lithuanian Deputy Director for Economic and Forestry who stated that most of the overlapping management problems in the KN are due to the fact that the settlements are inside the national park and not taken out of its area (Koloksanskis 2007). Thus, the inclusion of the settlements is not regarded as completely positive by all sides.

Anyway, I consider the Lithuanian approach, including the settlements as more capable to include at least a larger share of stakeholders in the decision making process even though, on the Lithuanian side problems appear as well. The Russian WHS territory has as tri-partite structure with the KK Administration, the settlements and the Federal Border Guard Service which is are in charge of their own area and thus complicating matters.

It follows that in opposition to environmental governance as mentioned by Lipschutz (1996, 40-45) or Rhodes (1996, 657) whereby all stakeholders have to be included in the decision



making process, the area is separated and governed by its single owning authority. Due to that, there derive maybe less official conflicts but a common management can hardly be achieved. However, in the next chapter the related topic of stakeholder co-operation will be discussed in detail shading some more light on both, the KK as the KN modes of governance and management in relation to other involved stakeholders.

## **5.2 Stakeholder Co-operation: A Network and its Problems**

As an important means in achieving full stakeholder involvement for the governance and management of a territory a co-operation with the stakeholders may be considered as necessary. As Lipschutz (1996, 43) states that the inclusion of all stakeholders is required to safeguard the existing valuables of the area. Thus, the next three chapters are discussing and interpreting the modes of co-operation between different stakeholders of all levels in the territory of the WHS Curonian Spit with a major focus on the KN Administration perceptions and activities. Furthermore, the recent status of direct co-operation between the two national park Administrations will be presented as well as international co-operation of both administrations and further stakeholders in general to determine the actual progress in comparison to the guidelines presented by UNESCO to manage a WHS.

### **5.2.1 Kursiu Nerija National Park Administration versus Neringa Municipality**

The co-operation between the KN Administration and the municipality can be described as over shadowed by different kind of conflicts and opinions. Stakeholders and the local inhabitants are facing severe problems and fruitful co-operation seems to be strongly hindered. However, it has to be mentioned that talking about municipality related problems or co-operation all KN interviewees directly referred to Neringa Municipality and problems with Klaipeda Municipality seem to be of minor importance to the national park's management. A major point of conflict includes the management priorities of the authorities whereby Neringa Municipality has to care for the local inhabitants while KN for the natural and cultural heritage (Varkaliene 2007).

In general, as mentioned in chapter 5.1.4., the conflict is based on the problems of settlement development or different construction issues. Furthermore, the restricted access to the strict nature reserves for the local population (Burksiene 2007). However, for example the conflict about access to the strict nature reserves should not exist according to the statements of the Deputy Director of Natural and Cultural Heritage who presented the KN position that entering the strict reserves is acceptable for locals in mushroom picking season (Diksaite 2007).

Disputes were described as disagreements with planning documents in the case of Neringa Municipality, and the local populations' lack of cultural and natural understanding in the case of the KN Administration (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007). In relation to the legal planning documents the conversation seems to be unproductive, hence, the municipality approves a large share of the content in the KN new General Plan. However, the strict regulations for infrastructure development and construction restrictions are controversially to the aims of the municipality and its duty as to represent the local people. The municipality blames the KN Administration as working against local people even though the Curonian Spit is on the WHL with local inhabitants who live their normal lives here. Although, the Head specialist of the Business and Strategic Development Section stated that the people understand that settlements on the Curonian Spit have their cultural appearance, the strictness of the KN is above their understanding of cultural protection (Burksiene 2007).

On the other hand, personnel from the KN state that the lack of real local people involved in the original culture. The Curonian Spit was resettled with new inhabitants after World War II and these new locals lack a real understanding of the cultural and natural heritage and values around them. Locals regard the WHS Seal and/or the regulations of the KN as an unnecessary burden instead of a possibility to utilize for sustainable increasing tourist revenue (Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). While Neringa Municipality accuses the KN Administration in acting against the local needs, the KN accuses the local inhabitants to care solely about a fast income and being careless with the traditional heritage and unsupportive towards the KN administration in establishing sustainable tourism (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007).

However, these problems mentioned by staff members fail to describe why talking to each other seem rather impossible even though a wish for constructive conservation and co-operation is expressed on both sides (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007). Observed from the position of Neringa Municipality the main person responsible for the misery seems to be the Director of the KN who has been described in a way presenting her as negative towards all negotiations with the municipality. It has also been stated that on many decisions she is the sole deciding person and that conversations and discussions on different issues seemed to be hindered by her decision making power (Burksiene 2007). The KN personnel provided no direct explanation for the lack of conversation and unfortunately I was not able to gain access to the Director to discuss with her about the accusations neither were my email requests replied.

Besides conflicts the two main management parties have to co-operate on different issues to guarantee the maintenance of the territory and to fulfill their own duties. For example, the municipality provides the KN with funding for the forest work including cutting and cleaning, furthermore the special Dune Inspectors are paid by the municipality and it participates in Natura 2000 with financial assistance (Burksiene 2007). Nevertheless, while the municipality is highlighting its supportive funding of the KN and stating that they gain nothing in return, the KN Administration accuses them of focusing on money and spending too few of the collected ecological tax on the KN work and on issues as environmental protection (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). At present situation one cannot speak about a co-operation between these two main stakeholders rather than of competing against each other for the reasons mentioned. Nevertheless, both parties seem to understand that the problems exist mainly in the heads and are additionally influenced by political decision making on state level which influences the personnel of the administrations. Furthermore, a more positive attitude towards everything which concerns the governance and the management was stated to be of great need for the future (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007).

### **5.2.2 Co-operation between the National Park Administrations**

As a TBCA and a WHS the co-operation between the two national park administrations must be determined as an important issue concerning a balanced sustainable development and management on both sides of the border and for the whole territory to safeguard the natural and cultural heritage. I long to describe and evaluate the recent state of co-operation between the administrations as well as to rank the level of it in accordance to the six levels of TBCA co-operation mentioned by Zbicz (1999, 2). Additionally, the focus of co-operation and the different opinions about the partner administration will be presented as well as the problems within co-operation.

In accordance with UNESCO principles for WHS's it is of no surprise that the personnel from the KN and KK have stated co-operation between the administrations as necessary and important (Diksaite 2007; Snegiryov 2007). However, about the kind and needs of co-operation, some disagreement or different perceptions and knowledge could be determined between the administrations. For example the KN personnel mentioned the existing Co-operation Agreement established in 1998 (See Chapter 4.1) while no hint has been mentioned in the KK and even the lack of a professional co-operation plan have been stated (Diksaite 2007; Semyonov 2007). Nevertheless, this agreement for KN staff as well as for the KK personnel seemed to be of no big influence on the co-operation activities by both

administrations. Besides the old agreement, the preparation of a new co-operation agreement has been mentioned by KN officials whereby again no information could be gathered from the Russian side (Diksaite 2007). Thus, it has to be presumed that information flows on this issue seem to be rather weak or that the KK is waiting for real activities before presenting information. Regarding the recent status of co-operation according to the levels mentioned by Zbicz (1999, 2) the co-operation between the KN and the KK has to be rated between consultative (“Level 2”) and collaborative (“Level 3”) co-operation. This conclusion has been reached while taking into account the information gathered by the conducted interviews and in comparison with the literature on the topic (See Chapter 4.1).

The main activity in co-operation which was mentioned by both administrations was the frequent exchange of information between the parks which was as well said to increase. In the words of the KK official, it was stated as well that co-operation and the exchange of information was higher three or four years ago before Lithuania joined the EU (Diksaite 2007; Semyonov 2007). Hence, in 2002 both national parks prepared and published a common tourist brochure about tourist services and sights in the whole territory and organized ethnographical excursions on both sides of the border (Semyonov 2007). Today, the administrations maintain a scientific co-operation project and co-operation meetings are increasing.

However, the direct perception of what is of major importance in terms of co-operation differs between the administrations whereby the KK focuses on a unified tourist information system whereas the KN focuses on a broader co-operation of learning from one another. For example, the KK ecological education is very good on account of KN personnel and the KN Administration would like to co-operate in a way to improve its own natural education activities, in return support the KK on issues of their interest. In general the scope of the KN was presented as much broader compared to the KK’s focus on the unified informational system, ecological science co-operation and educational tourism. Hence, the KN personnel additionally mentioned planning and protective issues to be of importance for co-operation while the KK Administration considered these as a secondary topic (Diksaite 2007; Snegiryov 2007).

Another issue addressed has been the different settings which are hindering the co-operation between the administrations. The border between the two national parks respectively between Russia and Lithuania was highlighted especially by the KN personnel. Problems covered issues from visas to state level decisions as border crossing regulations to different standards

and mentalities of area management (Diksaite 2007; Semyonov; 2007Snegiryov 2007; Varkaliene). For example the problematic and time consuming process of achieving a Russian visa and the long waiting times at the border controls were mentioned as hindering more co-operation meetings or projects between the administrations (Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). However, crossing the border four times during my field research I could not determine any time consuming obstacles even though I was not able to speak Russian nor did I possess all necessary documents to pass the border without extra paper work. From my point of view, the border post of Nida performed its duties fast and properly without stalling for time. On the other hand, the KK personnel stated the different mentalities and standards, especially since the EU membership of Lithuania as an obstacle for co-operation. Hence, Lithuania is responsible for EU environmental policy and receives funding for it; the Lithuanians and UNESCO have been awaiting the same standards from the KK as well even though no funding is granted for them (Semyonov 2007). During the interviews it became obvious that both administrations consider higher state authorities of being responsible for most obstacles of trans-border co-operation. Thus, co-operation projects such as a tourist boat line between Klaipeda and Rybachy could not be established even though EU funding was granted due to border crossing regulations of the Russian Federation concerning trans-boundary sea traffic (Varkaliene 2007). Additionally, the entrance into the Schengen Pact<sup>10</sup> by Lithuania on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December put up an even higher set of visa regulations between Russia and Lithuania.

On account of the mentioned facts the recent co-operation even though based on a positive attitude of the two national park administrations is based more on information than on projects. Projects as the tourist boat could not be achieved and the only direct co-operation projects in action are the scientific co-operation program and the planned second part of the CSC Project where the KN Administration asked for the participation of the KK. Additionally, some staff members mentioned additional projects, thus, mistaking co-operation with NGO's or Neringa Municipality with co-operation between the national parks.

In general, Zbicz (1999, 2) definition of "Level 2, Consultation" fits perfectly on the kind of project based co-operation between the two administrations as it requires an common activity on at least two common issues informative co-operation as communication and co-operation meetings. In terms of communication and information exchange the TBCA on the Curonian Spit may be determined a "Level 3, Collaboration" due to the increasing numbers of meetings

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<sup>10</sup> "The Schengen Convention abolished the checks at internal borders of the signatory States and created a single external frontier, where checks for all the Schengen signatories were to be carried out in accordance with a common set of rules (EU 2008c)".

and informal contacts (Zbicz 1999, 2). KN as KK personnel presented a slightly negative picture about the recent co-operation affectivity and displayed their concern (Diksaite 2007; Semyonov 2007). Comparing this to the demands of the WHC in their Annual Reports for a common planning scheme, it becomes interesting that none of the respondents felt pressured by UNESCO for more co-operation even though “Level 4” of Zbicz (1999, 2) leveling system should be accomplished. The territorial governance co-operation facts display important information about the influence of state level authorities in order to govern and administer the area across borders. Different opinions and interests of the involved, state level stakeholders, are hindering increased co-operation between major actors on the local level, even though, these different interests are not related to the WHS but of federal importance.

### **5.2.3 International Co-operation of “Multilevel-Governance”**

Achieving a multilevel-governance a vertical and horizontal co-operation between the stakeholders and levels is required as described by Paraskevopoulos (2006, 6). In both national park administrations the knowledge about or the interest in state level agreements concerning the Curonian Spit WHS are rather low. Even though, asking the personnel directly about issues as the bilateral agreement of Russia and Lithuania no information could be gathered. Additionally, a direct contact to influencing UNESCO agencies had not been mentioned either, except that UNESCO reports are prepared by officials from the MoE or the SSAP in the Lithuanian case (Diksaite 2007). Following that, in terms of vertical co-operation to governmental authorities the line seems to be narrowed into the order and control of tasks and duties between the national park administrations and their higher level agencies and ministries which further on maintain the co-operation with the international higher level stakeholders as the UNESCO or other Ministries of Environment.

However, EU funded projects are prepared in direct contact with different level authorities as the preparation of the missing Russian part of the bike road on the Curonian Spit. The project displays a good example of multilevel-governance in the territory thus it involves actors from several different levels and from both sides of the border. This TACIS Project worth about 224 000 € includes the KK Administration as well as three state authorities of different levels: The Ministry for Economic Development and Trade, Kaliningrad Oblast and Zelenogradsk District. Furthermore Neringa Municipality is the supporting lead partner for the EU funded project (Burksiene 2007; Semyonov 2007). Another project displaying multilevel governance in the territory is the mentioned boat line between Klaipeda and Rybachy which includes both national park administrations as well as Kaliningrad Oblast along with Zelenogradsk District

and the municipalities of Klaipeda and Neringa, whereby Klaipeda is the lead partner of the project. However, the mentioned problems related to the border challenge this INTERREG program in a way that leaves it yet unclear about the future of the EU funding for the further period (Burksiene 2007). A more secure INTERREG project is the CSC Project which intends to include a number of protected areas around the Baltic Sea under lead of Metsähallitus as well as most of their stakeholders. However, the CSC Project is more information and knowledge based and seems therefore to be confronted with fewer obstacles than infrastructure projects or projects based on personal meetings.

In addition to those projects including a multiple set of stakeholders few vertical co-operations including two stakeholders exist like the cognitive nature path for children in Smyltine (Varkaliene 2007). Therein, solely the EU as financier and the Visitors Center participated. However, multiple vertical stakeholder co-operation seem to be the more common way as most EU projects are guided by lead partners as universities, research institutes or protected area administrations with experience on the issue (Burksiene 2007).

Besides the vertical co-operation, stakeholders maintain a further net of horizontal co-operation with different authorities and organizations. Neringa Municipality co-operates on a long lasting agreement with the Zelenogradsk District to carry out different projects, as the TACIS project Eurovelo and co-operates with local entrepreneurs in terms of tourist business development (Burksiene 2007). The same can be observed for the KN Administration which co-operates with Kaliningrad based NGO Ecodefense and recently organized a school children exchange between Rybachy and Juodkrante to clean up and strengthen dunes (Semyonov 2007). Furthermore, the KN maintains contacts and co-operates with Metsähallitus to learn from the experience of Finnish Russian TBCA's as Oulanka and Paanajärvi (Diksaite 2007).

Another kind of vertical co-operation is accomplished by the single departments of the KN whereby the forest department co-operates with forestry services in Poland, Germany as well as with forestry services throughout Lithuania. These co-operations have been determined as very effective with increased technical possibilities arising. The German Forestry Service has donated a fire truck and a bus while the Lithuanian Forestry Services grow trees for the KN in order to make the reforestation of the burned areas in Smyltine possible. Furthermore, projects are carried out with the Pajuris and Nemunas Regional Park authorities which are close by protected areas on the Lithuanian Baltic Coast, respectively the Curonian eastern Lagoon Coast (Koloksanskis 2007). As the foresters, the inspectors of the KN territory attend

informative meetings with Lithuanian inspectors to discuss common problems and solutions (Karpus 2007). The KK Administration did not mention any specific co-operation except officially sanctioned ones with the KN and Neringa Municipality, nevertheless, planning and management issues are discussed and co-operative projects are carried out with other national parks in Russia and close co-operation links however mainly based on consulting, are maintained with Greenpeace Russia (Snegiryov 2007).

Regarding the additional set of stakeholders involved in the area management, no co-operation or co-operating organization could be determined by the interviews however, a number of private co-operations in the tourist business exist between local entrepreneurs and foreign investors. Anyway, in terms of governance the required network including all stakeholders via co-operation among each other lacks the full involvement of most stakeholders. Further, the responsibilities and achievements of co-operation efforts are widely influenced by state decisions which act sometimes controversial to Rhodes (1996, 657) opinion that governments should enable socio-cultural interactions to govern an area. Anyway, numerous projects and informative co-operation exist among the stakeholders even though; a fully interactive co-operation network of all actors is far from being established. As mentioned by Landres et al. (1998, 56), a lack of full stakeholder involvement may hinder co-operation and reduce the efforts of governance as is the case with the common boat line. Furthermore, information flows may not provide all stakeholders with the same amount of information on the territory due to a lack of informative exchange and co-operation. For the Curonian Spit this is further presented by the small amount of permanent co-operation and the concentration on temporary projects.

Comparing these facts with the requests by the UNESCO World Heritage Convention which fosters every state to accomplish every possible way and co-operation to preserve the territory, the attitude displayed by the state authorities cannot be considered in line with it (UNESCO 1972, Art. 4). By hindering co-operation programs, as the boat line, due to political reasons the states choose not to prevent a growing pressure on the ecosystem by establishing more sustainable and balanced methods of tourism. Respectively in our case the Russian Federation who is blocking this project. Additionally, EU as Russian visa regulations can be considered obstacles concerning the aim and the requests of the World Heritage Convention, even though the states cannot be blamed to carry those out according to their national or international needs.



## **5.3 Projects, Needs and Problems of the National Park Administrations**

Additionally to the daily management methods and tasks as responsibilities of the different stakeholders the national park administrations mentioned a number of further projects, problems and needs which are of concern. Thus, the enlistment criteria of the WHS Curonian Spit is natural and cultural heritage as well as it is a TBCA where most livelihoods are generated from tourism, I decided to discuss the three following issues in depth and present the national parks personnel opinions as desires about them. First, I long to present aims and conflicts related to the tourist development of the area whereby Neringa Municipality and Zelenogradsk District are playing a major role. Second, protection measures and problems with the natural and cultural heritage will be discussed and third; issues related to the border in between the two national parks.

### **5.3.1 Tourist Development**

The development of tourism in the territory is of importance in both national parks; however, both administrations express the wish for soft, sustainable and environmentally friendly, more educational tourism (Diksaite 2007; Snegiryov 2007). On the other hand KN and KK are challenged by increasing tourist numbers and demand for mainly accommodation or living infrastructure by their municipalities. However, these problems differ to a high degree between the two national parks on account of the separated territory administration in the KK and the different amounts of visitors and inhabitants as well as political attitudes.

In the KN needs and problems for and with tourist development were separated into two. First, problems for Neringa Municipality include settlements, nature reserves and tourist infrastructure and; second the territory of Smyltine belonging to Klaipeda. Smyltine has to be considered as close-by recreation area for the inhabitants of Klaipeda and therefore has to cope with a different kind of visitor as compared to southern parts of the KN. KK needs and problems are related to tourist development of the settlements as KK has no decision-making power on the settlement territory and tourist infrastructure. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade is to establish a special economic zone for tourist development by increasing the tourist infrastructure of the settlements.

Focusing on Smyltine it is close to recreational zone for Klaipeda inhabitants. It lacks moderate tourist infrastructure as mentioned by the KN personnel especially in order to meet the needs of the visitors. Moreover, concerns about the mentality of the visitors in Smyltine

are expressed as visitors who solely long to use the areas resources without an interest in the natural and cultural heritage. Thus in the words of a KN employee; "...we want to grow up good and polite visitors who not just go to the seaside and drink somewhere in the forest" (Varkaliene 2007). However, it was stated that plenty of good visitors already exist yet a sufficient tourist infrastructure is missing. Thus, in the Smyltine area the improvement of tourist infrastructure by the KN Administration is of primary concern.

A main problem in Smyltine is the state of the KN owned museums. Visitors come to the Smyltine area by ferry primary to visit the beaches, Sea Museum and the Delfinarium whereby the two latter are not connected with the KN and its duties. A small visitors train bypasses the KN Museums on its way from the ferry to these visitor attractions. School children from Klaipeda were said not to know about the KN Museums (Diksaite 2007). Anyway, it has to be mentioned that the museum is rarely signed out and not very visible to outsiders as well as its inside equipment dates back to soviet times and cannot be considered as to attractive presented although the content of the exhibition is of good quality (See Fig. 13). Another issue in the area is the need to improve outdoor facilities to motivate visitors to feel the nature instead of solely utilizing it. Ideas about an additional cognitive path extra to the children's path are in mind as well as reconstruction of the old and destroyed fitness path to attract healthy and more nature loving visitors (Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). The problem preventing the KN Administration achieve these aims is the lack of financial resources. As a solution, private investors have been mentioned as donators in order to establish and maintain these paths or sponsor the Museum reconstruction. To accomplish this better co-operation with the local stakeholders is necessary (Diksaite 2007).

Concentrating on the territory of Neringa Municipality several projects, needs and problems have been mentioned by the interviewees whereby the conflicts with Neringa Municipality are displayed. Starting with the settlements, the KN opposes local population desires of attracting more tourists every high season by arguing for a more balanced tourist flow throughout the year. Thereby, reasoning their strict handling of construction regulations on traditional houses and on settlement development in general (Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). Even though, these regulations sometimes hinder the establishment of important infrastructure projects as the private part of the Nida Harbor and its attached buildings. According to the municipality the strict regulation on these matters scares investors and leads to a loss of tourist revenues (Burksiene 2007). The KN administration points out the importance of a balanced tourism

throughout all the year wherefore the amount of tourist infrastructure is sufficient, although quality standards can be increased (Varkaliene 2007).

KN personnel presented the impression that more sustainable forms of tourism should be developed for the national park which is based on off-season attraction such as bird watching or ice-fishing. Additionally, problems of overcrowded settlements in the summer season have to be addressed; nevertheless, on that issue the municipality and the KN administration share their opinion. For example from summer 2008 on, a small tourist train will replace the large number of tourist buses driving up to Parnidis Dune. Thus, the train is a project supported by both parties, although carried out by the municipality, as it addresses the needs and wishes of both administrations (Burksiene 2007; Varkaliene 2007). However, the reasons for it might be different on both sides whereby the KN welcomes the reduction of buses and Neringa Municipality might be interested in being able to cater more tourists with this offer. The KN Administration has expressed the wishes of less individual cars hence, most problems and breaches are created by this tourist group (Koloksanskis 2007). However, Neringa Municipality collects the ecological tax at its border which prevents any influence of the KN Administration to establish higher fees for visitor regulations. In the KN the question on establishing an entrance fee, payable when leaving the ferry was presented as controversial whereby the Head of the Visitor Center argued against it while the Deputy Director of Natural and Cultural Heritage was in favor (Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). Anyway, regardless of these discussions it was clearly stated that matters on this issue are decided on highest state level and will not change in the near future (Diksaite 2007).

Another issue, pressure on the natural habitats and landscapes created by tourists is a reason for the KN to reduce tourists in high season and it presents a dilemma for the municipality. These endangered places are a tourist attraction; thus they generate revenue for the local population. However, the municipality is well aware of the environmental problems which appear with more visitors and decrease the attractiveness of these sights; however no solution has been presented yet (Budrekaite 2007). The KN administration as well could not present direct plans on how to reduce tourist numbers or improve the quality without mentioning problems which have to be addressed by Neringa Municipality (Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). Regarding this conflict in terms of governance including a full exchange of communication and co-operation of the stakeholders management, problems become obvious due to these arguments (Lipschutz 1996, 44). As mentioned by Duffy (2006, 95) the local communities in TBCA's are the most important actors for a sustainable management and

governance. The competitive behavior of the KN Administration and Neringa Municipality is the obstacle to hinder sustainable tourist development.

Of recent discussion is the airport in Nida which has been renovated 10 years ago and is currently not operating as the municipality would like to use it for special purposes or emergency situations while the KN Administration opposed to open flight traffic at all and favors a use for specific services as fire or medical centers (Burksiene 2007; Koloksanskis 2007). The municipality accuses the KN Administration of wasting the 11 million Litass, (~3.18 mln. €) which were already invested in the Airport, for some birds' nests, while the KN accuses the municipality of renovating an airport for millionaires and their summer houses (Burksiene 2007; Koloksanskis 2007). This example displays the problems of communication between the two main stakeholders of the territory and again, explains problems in the modes of governance and sustainable management.

Concentrating on the tourist development in the KK, one project and problem dominates: the establishment of the Special Economic Zone for Tourist Development on the Russian territory of the Curonian Spit, respectively in its' settlements. Construction is forbidden in the KK (Snegiryov 2007) however the project for the settlements has been ratified and could be felt as a major concern in the KK Administration. However, no one really wanted to judge it yet according to the fact that nothing will be build until 2012 and no specific plans have been prepared yet(Snegiryov 2007; Semyonov 2007). The application period for private investors has been launched recently and discussions about the maximum size of hotel and tourist complexes are under discussion. Rumors include 20-storey hotels as there is no legal regulation for buildings (Shaplygina 2007). In general, the main directions of the development are focusing on water tourism as seaside resorts and educational tourism whereby the former is the main development objective (Shaplygina 2007). The personal opinion of the KK Director expresses disagreement with this development as he thinks that "...only by my [his] opinion, the most objects as hotels and restaurants should rather be put outside of the national park" (Snegiryov 2007).

Another problem, including the settlements again is illegal or semi legal building activity inside the parks territory or on the border between settlements and the KK. This problem is not related to large tourist flows, nevertheless, the disrespect of the institutions and individuals supporting this activity are a problem especially as some buildings are on the edge of the protective dune (See Fig. 8). These buildings increase the risk in natural hazards such as storm damage and lead to further destruction of the landscape beyond it. Additionally, most

of these illegal buildings are situated on the narrowest part of the Curonian Spit in Lesnoye (Russland aktuell 2007). Due to political and territorial reasons there seems to be no solution at present.

Interestingly the KK personnel mentioned no major problems of overcrowding or of too many visitors. The KK collects an entrance fee for the park and can therewith regulate the visitor flows by financial limits. However the KK has an insufficient structure to cater the informational needs of its tourists. For that reason, the Visitor's Center and the KK Museum are under construction to improve the situation (Korolevskaya 2007). Both national parks face conflicts with their municipalities or related district; however, the KN has the possibility to influence decisions while the KK seems quite powerless against the decision making which has to be regarded as a negative impact considering mentioned above modes of governance as stakeholder involvement as well a consent driven solution of problems and conflicts in the area.

### **5.3.2 Natural and Cultural Heritage**

Talking about the natural and cultural heritage one has to keep in mind the directions and priority differences of the national parks. However problems of natural heritage exist, with dune erosion being mentioned on both sides. The KK states that the problem is of minor importance and that their specialists are on top of it (Snegiryov 2007); while the KN expresses concern and knowledge about different dune related problems which have to be addressed, especially natural succession of grey dunes and coastal erosion by the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Lagoon. For example the lack of accumulating sand on the grey dunes due to a decreasing amount of new sand from the seaside (Diksaite 2007; Koloksanskis 2007). Compared to the KK the Lithuanian park Administration sees no final solution of this problem but states it a matter of time until the grey dunes will be gone. However, they consider a good management to be able to preserve the status quo as long as possible (Varkaliene 2007).

Additional to the impacts of natural powers on the Landscape, the negative impact of tourist has been mentioned several times and displayed with importance by the KN personnel. Obviously, the much higher number of visitors in the KN compared to the KK might be a reason for that (KK 2007 & KN 2007a). Furthermore, the pressure by tourists is displayed by the concern for forest fires which may be started by a discarded cigarette or illegal campfire. Coniferous forests dry out in summertime and the risk of fires are strongly highlighted by KN

personnel as by personnel from Neringa Municipality (Budrekaite 2007; Dikshas 2007). Especially in regard with the big fire in 2006 which burned 230 hectares of forest and bush land (See Fig. 9). In the KK Administration fire seems to be considered as well a minor problem, hence, no official or related person stated it as a problem.

Positive aspects of the 2006 fire are seen with co-operation and environmental research. The fire led to support and co-operation of Lithuanian Forestry Services to control the fire and manage a replanting project. The KN Forestry Services do not have space to grow new trees however other forestry services are planting those for them. Direct co-operation between the KN and the KK has been realized when the KK supported the fire fighting with their equipment and further the burned down area provides perfect possibilities for monitoring and for environmental research purposes. 67 hectares will be reforested while the rest will be used for research and to increase the area of grey, sandy dunes (Koloksanskis 2007).

Wild boars cause problems as well, however, on the Lithuanian side the damage is mainly the destruction of greens while on the Russian side locals and their potato plantings have had problems (Burksiene 2007; Snegiryov 2007). On the Russian part the hunting is completely forbidden while in Lithuania specific numbers of wild boars are free to be hunted (Burksiene 2007). Anyway, both sides were not able to solve the problem up to now, however, on account of the minor damages and on the fact that wild boars belong to nature it can be considered a minor problem for the natural heritage. The same problem is valid for the rapidly growing Cormorants community near Juodkrante. Birds make their homes in the surrounding trees producing severe damage and compete with the local fisherman in the lagoon. Due to their high protective status hunting is forbidden and there are currently no alternatives to manage the wildlife population (Strakauskaite 2007).

Natural problems are the same on both sides; however problems with cultural heritage seem non-existent on the Russian side according to the interviews conducted. Most cultural heritage such as traditional farmsteads have been destroyed and/or restored in a non traditional manner (See Fig. 10). Lack of cultural heritage in the KK has been expressed by KN personnel also highlighting the destruction and low value of the remaining cultural heritage (Koloksanskis 2007; Varkaliene 2007). While conducting my fieldwork in the KK the impression presented to me proofed the KN personnel opinions correct. Traditional buildings are in poor condition or restored in a nontraditional manner (See Fig. 10). Nowadays one can hardly speak of an existing cultural heritage in the KK except for the human made landscape anymore.



Fig. 9: Bike trail in the burned area of Smyltine (Albrecht 2007)



Fig. 10: "Renovated" house in Lesnoje (Albrecht 2007)

The KN territory has strict regulations on traditional houses and presents a more or less authentic atmosphere even though critics mention that most so called traditional houses are copies rarely considered as traditional (Burksiene 2007; Vaiciene 2007). Copy or original, protection and preservation of the cultural heritage is considered a major issue for the KN Administration as well as a reason for a large share of conflicts between Neringa inhabitants and the KN Administration due to strict construction regulations and lack of local understanding (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). No special projects or plans have been mentioned concerning cultural heritage besides needs for more restoration by private owners and of houses owned by the state (Burksiene 2007, Varkaliene).

Considering the lack of cultural awareness on the Russian side, the lack of notice by the UNESCO about that fact and the lack of a single reference towards the problem in the WHC reports is astonishing and are questioning the control and authoritative function of the UNESCO. However, it has to be mentioned that the cultural heritage was in a bad shape before the enlistment as well.

### **5.3.3 The State Border**

The border between Lithuania and The Russian Federation, respectively the Kaliningrad Oblast is an external EU border and therefore requires a visa for both, Lithuanians, Russians as foreign tourists and others. As mentioned by Landres et al. (1998, 56) borders may block specific flows across it and allow other flows. The KN personnel stated that border related issues as difficult visa procedures is a main problem of the border and, furthermore, accused these procedures to reduce the possibilities of stakeholder co-operation. However, both national park administrations state the border has no direct influence on the management practices on their sides (Snegiryov 2007; Koloksanskis 2007).

While the interviewees expressed no problems for the direct management, all mentioned problems for tourism on the Curonian Spit which emerged due to the visa and custom regime. Additionally in the KK the restricted border zone could be determined as a problem for tourists. The Department of Ecological Education and Tourism in Kaliningrad described the zone as seven kilometers while the main Administration gave me the information that the restricted zone is the last two kilometers to the border; it is possible change in the regulations had just taken place (Semyonov 2007; Snegiryov 2007). When visiting the border areas the latter description seem to be more fitting to me, however, no one could really tell me what area is restricted. A sign determines the entrance to the guarded two kilometer zone while no other restriction signs could be spotted.

Specific problems with the boat line were stated as custom regulation problems with the Russian Federation even though Lithuania had already built a custom office in the port of Nida. Border regulations are also seen as an obstacle for the bicycle tourism on the Curonian Spit which is also part of the bicycle route around the Baltic Sea (Burksiene 2007). Though the Russian side will prepare for Eurovelo TACIS project there are doubts if this bike road will be successful in attracting tourists due to the visa requirements.

Besides that, direct effects for the management were denied by the respondents, it was mentioned at least that the border has an effect on the appearance of both sides. Hence, on



account of the different sets of laws and regulations as well as of mentalities presented. The area today is not as homogenous as it used to be before the separation (Diksaite 2007). The lack of regulations protecting or preserving the cultural heritage has led to a difference in quality between the two national parks (Varkaliene 2007). On the other hand, less inhabitants and less visitors has allowed more natural state of nature on the Russian side including species as the Sea Eagle or Deer. However Rabies has been imported from Russia and is rampant unlike in EU Environmental Policy, which has vaccinations and controls for disease. Every year some cases of Rabies can be observed in the area which were said to come from Russia (Budrekaite 2007).

Concerning the border and nature, most officials from the national parks and Neringa Municipality stated that nature has no borders and no serious problem derive from it. As the only person the KN Deputy Director of the Forestry and Economic Department mentioned the border fence on the Russian side. Unfortunately, it could not be determined if that fence crosses the whole Spit as the KN personnel was not informed and the KK personnel explained it as a personnel information which they were not meant to talk about. Anyway, in case the fence would completely cross the Spit, problems with migration routes of Elks and other animals could arise (Koloksanskis 2007). Nevertheless, this topic seem to be of less interest or guided by wrong information on the Lithuanian side, though, I was told several time by private inhabitants that no border fence exists in the territory.

Regarding the role of the border as a semi permeable membrane the statements of the interviewees express a number of flows which are blocked or hindered by restrictions and regulations deriving from legal acts and federal institutions as pointed out by Meidinger (1998, 87). Additionally, the mentioned natural and cultural heritage differences support the statement of Duffy (2006, 92) describing the stakeholders as the “producers of nature” and therefore, anticipating the fact that differences appear due to a lack of common co-operation and governance effort across the borders. Legal structures prevent the local administrations from having power to change situations and obstacles created by the state authorities (Varkaliene 2007).

While the administrations lack the legal power to influence the border regulations they are capable to influence the flows inside their territories by amount and content of information they provide for visitors. For that reason, the next chapter presents infrastructure and information materials of the national park administrations which not solely represent their directions of management and tourist attractions but may be considered as guiding tools and

therefore influence the governance and management of the territory. Furthermore, this last chapter provides information from the fieldwork discusses a topic under complete control of the administrations themselves only influenced by monetary resources or tourist needs however not by additional authorities as is the case in border or tourist development related issues.

## **6. Visual Survey: Non-Human Actors and Representations of Governance**

### **6.1 The National Parks Visibility in the Landscape**

Signs, information stands or further objects directly present the national park administrations origin. Standing, open air objects were utilized in this comparison while the printed information will be further discussed. In general, the observation focused on the amount and positioning of signs, marked with the crests of the two administrations and clearly linked to the national park administrations for the visitors' eye.

When entering both national parks big signs next to the street welcoming the visitor to the specific national parks however they are written in the native language. Especially when entering the KK from the mainland, the toll house where the entrance fee is collected clearly represents the KK Administration and shows the visitors that they are entering the national park. On the northern Lithuanian side the two entrance possibilities are by pedestrian ferry and car ferry whereby solely next to the pedestrian port a big map of the area with all sights, zones and information is displayed. There is no KN entrance portal and visitors tend to miss the fact that the whole Lithuanian territory of the Curonian Spit is included to the KN with regard to the Ecological Tax collecting point as the thought off entrance to the KN (Varkaliene 2007). Thus, the lack of an entrance portal and the merely on street signs relying assignation in the KN may confuse visitors. Anyway, for most visitors it should be visible that they enter a national park and the crests of the national parks are also displayed on the big information maps of both national parks.

Entering both parks by crossing the border station in Nida another picture is displayed. While there is a great information map and a street sign on the Lithuanian side the first sign on the Russian side appears after approximately two kilometers. No other informational map or sign can be seen. Thus the Ecological tax has to be paid at the border the effects of the extra checkpoints for entering the national parks demises. On the Russian side no brochure was handed out as on the southern entrance point to the KK or as by the Neringa Municipality when entering their premises.

Further differences occur while passing through the area of the two national parks whereby the KN has to be named the area better branded by KN objects and signs than the KK. The KN and the KK' territory is separated into three different tourist functional zones (See Fig. 3 & 4) and in the KN the visitor is informed of every zone entering or leaving by designated

signs on every main road and bike paths. The strict nature reserve is the only functional zone marked by a sign in the KK. However, it has to be mentioned whereby the KN zoning signs are in Lithuanian, the one for the strict nature reserve is written in Russian as well as in English and German. The KK administration is planning new signs for the different zones this year (Korolevskaya 2007).

The KN has a network of information boards throughout the area displaying maps, regulations and information on the area. Most of the information stands are constructed in the same design making them easy to recognize (See Fig. 12). Information stands on the cognitive paths of the Parnidis Dune and the Dendrological Path in Juodkrante are of same design and well signed and all include big maps and general information about the area. English information was kept rather short on the cognitive paths. On the Russian side, the lack of a common design has been mentioned by the department of ecological education and tourism as a problem. However all nature paths are signed with common signs as well as all information stands on the paths (See Fig. 11) are with the same design and marked with the UNESCO and KK Crest (Semyonov 2007). The information stands are solely in Russian and, in opposite to the informational network throughout the KN the KK information stands are solely situated on the nature paths and on few parking lots.

Another difference concerning the visibility is related to restriction signs. The KN has numerous signs displaying the restrictions about official paths in the strict nature reserves and dunes, very few could be determined in the KK. The signs on the Lithuanian side display regulations in English as well as Russian with the exception of the entrance sign to the strict nature reserve the general visitor regulations in the KN are displayed mainly on information stands. There are numerous, self painted restriction displaying stands next to the nature paths but not in other areas in the Russian national park (See Fig. 11).

In general, the visibility in the KN is much higher, because of better information networks in the whole territory and settlements. Different styles and self painted information signs present some informational or direction signs of the KK Administration in the same way some tourist companies are advertising their hotels in the territory. The lack of additional languages on different signs is an obstacle in representing the KK to foreign visitors. Nature and cognitive paths have no foreign language signs on the Russian side however for locals information is good. On the other hand, the KN is indirectly supported by signs put up by the municipality marked with the UNESCO symbol which may be regarded as KN official infrastructure as well.

The KN described the amount of tourist information as almost enough whereas the KK highlighted the opposite for information related to nature (Diksaite 2007; Semyonov 2007). The lack of information for foreigners has been mentioned in the KK whereby the KN personnel displayed more concern about the quality of information as in Smyltine (Snegiryov 2007; Varkaliene 2007).



Fig. 11: KK Information Stands on the nature path "Dancing Forest"; Painted regulation stand in the background (Albrecht 2007)



Fig. 12: KN Information Stands (Albrecht 2007)

## **6.2 Quality and Quantity of Tourist Infrastructure Provided by the National Park Administrations**

In regard to the infrastructure provided by the two national parks, museums and nature paths have to be mentioned first. Both national parks maintain one museum complex however the amount of cognitive and nature paths differs. The KN includes three nature trails and one small cognitive path for children the KK has four nature trails which are longer as well. Additionally, the amount of information on the KK nature paths seems to be more detailed, however solely in Russian. The KK has equipped every parking lot next to the nature path with recreational facilities such as picnic pavilions and fire places. The parking places next to the KN nature paths are equipped more for the basic needs including a few benches and trash bins. Thus, probably displaying the different needs of the visitors whereby many people visiting the Russian part could be observed eating in these pavilions at lunch and in the evenings whereas the visitors on the nature paths in Lithuania mainly seemed to be interested in the nature.

Interestingly, none of the nature paths possessed a trash bin on the path but all parking areas were equipped with bins. Although, the missing trash bins, all nature paths in the territory were presented in a clean state even though two illegal fire places could be observed on the Russian side. Some information stands on the Parnidis Dune are rather old and washed out by the weather and some in the Russian national park are covered by graffiti.

Focusing on the built infrastructure as wooden paths on the dunes furthermore no real differences could be determined on the nature paths. However, the infrastructure on the beaches, outlook platforms and stairs over the protective dunes are of much lower quality in the KK than on the Lithuanian side. Most trails to the Russian beaches were in poor condition and the amount of litter was higher in the KK, however KN recreational beach infrastructure is maintained by the municipalities. Anyway the impression of most beach areas in the KK is poor. Additionally, the number of trampling paths to the beaches is much higher in the KK, threatening the protective dune. Few of these paths could be observed on the Lithuanian side where the beach recreational infrastructure is more developed, newer and cleaner. On the other side, the signed parking areas and roads are cleaner in the KK. The KK territory feels cleaner while passing it on the main road however the nature itself and the landscape seem much more ordered and managed on the Lithuanian side.





Fig. 13: Inside view of the KN main Museum exhibition (Albrecht 2007)



Fig. 14: Inside view of the KK Museum exhibition (Albrecht 2007)



Fig. 15: KN Visitors Center in Smyltine (Albrecht 2007)



Fig. 16: KK Administration building in Rybachy (Albrecht 2007)

Another infrastructure provided by the administrations is their own administration buildings, their Visitor Centers and their Museums. The KN Museum buildings, contents and presentation styles are quite old fashioned while the KK museum is more modern (See Fig. 13 & 14). However, both present very good information in several languages. The KN Museum is situated in three old villas in Smyltine which are in need for restoration while the KK Museum is a Soviet style bloc which requires renovation as well. The KK Administration has started to renovate and reconstruct their Museum Complex while the KN Administration is still stuck in the planning phase of their rebuilding process (Korolevskaya 2007; Zacharzenko 2007). The KN Museums structure has to be described as not sufficient whereas the Museum of the KK was in a good state already before the start of the renovation and renewing works. However, the recent renovation processes will probably change the museum situation completely during the next years.

The KN is already equipped with two Visitors Centers in Nida and Smyltine; the Russian Visitor Center is situated in the Museum Complex however, it is not sufficient and therefore an enlargement is included into the renovation plan (Korolevskaya 2007). The recent provision of tourist information offices is rather meager in the KK even though the Visitors Center will be enlarged. Additionally, the complete separation of the Administration in Rybachy and the Kaliningrad administered Visitors Center in the Museum Complex close to Lesnoye has to be stated. The Visitors Center in Nida shares a renovated traditional house with the KN Administration and the Visitors Center in Smyltine is situated in an old villa while the KK administration building in Rybachy is of less the representative style (See Fig. 15 & 16).



The KN represents itself better than the KK with the exception of the Museums Complex. The administration building in Nida has to be presented as a good example for cultural protection because of its situation in the strict protected urban area of Nida while the KK administration, as situated in a settlement, hitherto out of the direct KK territory, has no need to represent itself in order to defend values. Both national parks realize these problems as can be observed by the recent measures to overcome such problems. Anyway, the all time problem stated by both administrations is lack of time and money for addressing extra infrastructure problems in addition to the already carried out maintenance (Diksaite 2007; Snegiryov 2007; Varkaliene 2007).

### **6.3 The National Parks Printed and Digital Information Material**

A fact all information materials share is their indirect guidance of tourist flows and their potential to attract different kind of tourists who require different management practices. Thus, as all information by the national park administrations they add up to the set of non-human actors mentioned by Hubbard et al. (2005, 194) and therefore are a piece of the governance network in the territory which should be explained in this report. First, I will discuss the printed information material in terms of quantity, topics and offered languages. Second, I long to compare the national park administrations web sites in short, related as well to the offered topics and languages.

Having a short look in the Visitor Centers of the two national parks it instantly becomes obvious that the KN provides an offer of tourist brochures, books and further information material several times the amount of the material offered by the KK. While the KK offers visitors three free brochures, whereby one is available in English and German and one larger booklet for sale; the KN offers more than 20 different free brochures, leaflets and booklets (See Fig. 17). Additionally, more than ten books, maps, photo albums as well as information CD's are available for sale. The KK offers three different videos mainly based on historical landscape shaping which were available in German and English. There are more than ten free brochures and leaflets of the KN available either completely or at least partly in English, German and Lithuanian as well as a few in Russian. Furthermore, some of the purchasable publications are offered in several languages too.



Fig. 17: KN information brochures (left), KK information brochures (right) not all included (Albrecht 2008)

The translated KK brochure, which every visitor receives when entering the Russian national park, includes a basic map and short information on the nature trails in the territory. Additionally, contact addresses and phone numbers of the KK Administration and related services are listed as well as the visitor rules and regulations of the Russian national park. The next, solely in Russian, brochure describes the eight major sights of the KK including the nature trails in more detail and includes some basic information on the Curonian Spit. The last free brochure can be considered as a guide to the nature trail *Efa's Height* explaining the structural landscape of the Curonian Spit in detail and in relation to viewpoints on the trail while the purchasable booklet is filled with landscape pictures and touches on topics of the landscape itself, the national parks nature and tourist related issues.

The KN Administration provides brochures in at least three languages on its nature paths and bird colonies of Cormorants and Grey Herons as well as leaflets on the settlements of Nida and Juodkrante including history, sights and museums. Furthermore, the purchasable maps include information texts in German and English. Additionally, the KN provides brochures on forest fire issues, its Museum Complex and Natura 2000 as well as on the flora and fauna of the area. Furthermore leaflets concerning accommodation, dining and boat rental services are offered to the visitors. The KN produces a brochure on Smyltine including several sights not managed and in direct concurrence with their own museum as the Delfinarium or the

Ethnographical farmstead. Continuing the list KN provides brochures and leaflets on history and culture of the territory as well as multilingual leaflets and small cards noting visitor rules and regulations. Besides, the purchasable information material includes a set of academic and popular publications on various topics as history, practical landscape management and the environment in general.

Turning the attention towards the information provided via the internet by both national parks, the situation, especially in regard of multilingualism, presents itself almost equal to the situation on the printed and visual materials. Hence, KK website, *www.kurshskayakosa.ru* is in Russian and may be considered as a major obstacle for foreign visitors. The KN, *www.nerija.lt*, presents itself in English, Lithuanian and Russian and only news differs among translations (Zacharzenko 2007). However, regarding the content of the websites both of them include about the same amount of information on a number of topics as history, nature and landscape construction as well as flora and fauna of the Curonian Spit. Furthermore, information on the territory zoning and areas as well as on visitor regulations and possibilities in the territory are described.

Information material of the KN has to be described as on a much higher level as in the KK in terms of multilingualism and in the choice and depth of the presented topics. Additionally, the presentation of the website is more professional in the KN and the information displayed on it is more accurate on management structures. After presenting some information gathered on the website to KK personnel I was told that this information was not up to date anymore (Mansurov 2007). However the KK is currently publishing a new volume on the KK and its territory and furthermore, plans to shoot a documentary on the construction of the new bike road (See Chapter 5.2.3.) to increase its amount of informational material. Anyway, a lack of sufficient information material especially for foreign tourist was mentioned on the Russian side (Snegiryov 2007). In regard of the KN it has to be stated that the amount of brochures is overwhelming and may be confusing with all kinds of visitors interests. The KN obtains further support by brochures published by Neringa Municipality in several languages and on multiple topics while only a single booklet, published by a German tourist management company supports the KK information materials (BTE 2005). However, in terms of souvenirs the KK seemed to be ahead in offering T-shirts, baseball caps, bags and pins with its logo on it while in the KN none of these gadgets could be found. Nevertheless, these utility materials may not be considered as information material.

## **7. Outlooks and Conclusions for the Governance of the World Heritage Site Curonian Spit**

Before drawing my conclusions on the modes of governance I will slightly present the national parks and Neringa Municipality personnel outlooks and wishes for the future of their territory. KN wishes differed to some extent but an increasing co-operation with the important stakeholders has been expressed as a major concern. Thus the arguments between Neringa Municipality, including the local population, and the KN have been described as a major obstacle to a sustainable management as the lack of full time co-operation with the KK (Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). Increased co-operation with a better relation towards the local population and other stakeholders is desired. Hence, additional co-operation agreements and friendly relations with the local population should provide a basis to increase the recent status of co-operative management and work in the KN (Diksaite 2007). For this reason it is hoped that the KN Administration may concentrate stronger on issues as the establishment of sustainable tourism and its further development (Varkaliene 2007).

However Personnel doubted a rapid change of the situation, hence, most of the recent arguments and discussions were said to be as well related to different minds and political opinions and are rather hard to change. The recent conflict between the KN and Neringa Municipality is recognized, and wishes to overcome it by increasing co-operation are a positive sign (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007). Anyway, some staff members also stated their wish for an increasing budget of the KN (Koloksanskis 2007).

This relates to the KK wherein one of the biggest problems and a major wish of the personnel are in an increasing budget (Snegiryov 2007; Mansurov 2007). Specific wishes were not stated by the interviewed personnel also on account of the large scale tourist project what seemed to sway as a Damocles Sword above the future development wishes of the KK itself. The hopes of the staff members for the near future include a solution of the illegal building problem as well as a more controlled management in the territory and further co-operation with Lithuanian partners (Snegiryov 2007). Thus the former two hopes should be achieved by the new management plan which is under preparation while for the latter no direct solution could be provided.

In general, both administrations personnel mentioned wishes to increase co-operation and to stabilize a sustainable management of the territory for the future, thus, indirectly referring to an improvement of modes and networks of governance. The need for additional finance

possibilities seems to be of importance for the near future too, hence, it is related to better management possibilities as well. In the case of the management plan related hopes on the Russian side it may be compared to the hope for more co-operation, between the KN and Neringa Municipality, being both dependent on a better understanding among each other to approve their planning documents without further conflicts. However, the future may present answers to these hopes and wishes.

In the above chapters a large amount of information about the governance and management structures related to the Curonian Spit WHS is presented as well as the perceptions and opinions of the main stakeholders, namely the national park administrations of KN and KK and the Neringa Municipality towards it. Additionally, major conflicts and problems between the different actors are displayed and possible reasons for them presented. On account of that, the empirical data gathered in the interviews will be compared to the scientific approaches of local environmental governance, cross-border governance as well as international guidelines for the WHS Curonian Spit.

First the internal governance and management structures of the two national parks will be discussed in terms of their stakeholder involvement and co-operation issues, while concentrating on the local environmental governance approach. Second, the co-operation and common management attempts including both national parks plus the additional stakeholders are discussed, focusing on the modes of cross-border governance and agreement related guidelines for co-operation and last; the relation between the different presentations of the two national parks and their networks of stakeholders involved into the management. However, I will present problems or failures from all main stakeholders I do not long to judge any of the parties involved in the governance of being the bad or the good partner in this co-operational territory.

The fact that both national parks are discussed in this conclusion separately at first already presents the fact that they differ to a large degree in their internal management and governance practices and that the internal and common management. Considering the influence of the state level both national parks share a number of governance structures. In general, it could be observed that from the legal system, both national parks, are governed in a way related to the traditional definition given by Johnston et al. et al. (2000, 317) that governance is the act of the governing process carried out by state authorities. Hence, the major stakeholders in terms of regulations and rules are the Ministries and their subservices responsible for protected areas, namely the MoE with the SSPA in Lithuania and the MNR

with the NRMS in the Russian Federation. As discussed in chapter 5.1.2, chapter 5.1.3 as well as in chapter 5.1.3.1 and 5.1.3.2 main decision making is related to these authorities.

Focusing on the KN, the SSPA presents the guidelines for management documents which have to be established by the KN administration. Thus, direct influence on the most important document, the general management plan, is primarily implemented by a state authority. Additionally, on account of the fact that the KN itself is a state authority and due to the lack of direct public stakeholder involvement the modes of governance are opposing the requirements for a sustainable local environmental governance by Lipschutz (1996, 44) which is fostering the inclusion of all stakeholders to safeguard the system. Although, the KN administration may interpret the directions of the SSPA in a way more suitable towards the needs of the local inhabitants to avoid conflicts, the KN modes of governance seem not in line with the findings of Duffy (2006, 95) that the local communities are the most important stakeholders in the sustainable management of protected areas and negative impacts of that can be observed in the ongoing conflict between the stakeholders. Furthermore, the role of the municipality as a stakeholder in planning terms but controlled and often overruled by the KN administration could not be determined in improving the situation much for the local inhabitants and other public stakeholders. Additionally, even though local, the municipalities as well are working according to pre-given laws and regulations from above (Burksiene 2007). It follows, in terms of planning and the related management priorities the traditional definition presented by Johnston et al. (2000, 317) of governance through governing state authorities overwhelms more modern definitions on the modes of governance by Lipschutz (1996), Rhodes (1996) or Paraskevopoulos (2006) including all stakeholders to a specific degree in the KN.

In terms of the direct management practices however, due to the complex set of stakeholders in or related to the KN a more positive picture is presented. The practical management and tasks are separated between the KN Administration, Neringa and Klaipeda municipalities as well as private companies responsible for forest work in the settlements and the County Road Administration. Additionally, the large set of control bodies presented in chapter 5.1.4 on state, regional and local level are representing increasing stakeholder involvement as required by Lipschutz (1996, 44). Furthermore, the local inhabitants can be considered as included to a specific amount as well, since they can prepare planning documents for their property as well, nevertheless, in line with the pre-given definitions of the state authorities. However, that may be considered as normal in local governance as Paraskevopoulos et al. (2006, 6) mentions the

remaining legitimizing power of the state in most governance structures. Even though, the state authorities establishes those basic planning documents all stakeholder in the KN territory are able to act and to influence the management of the territory as long as their projects are following the major rules. It follows that all stakeholders are at least granted the right to prepare plans for development or management purposes; however, the public sphere has few or no influence in the legislative framework established for their area. This fact has to be considered important in regard that most conflicts concern this legal framework and the lack to influence it by the locals.

Another issue, stressing the involvement and the discussion among all sets of stakeholders in the KN is the ongoing conflict with the municipality of Neringa, hence, affecting the direct management in arguments on overlapping territorial responsibilities, as well as the planning and directive management due to the different positions of the two parties. While observing the modes of co-operation and informational exchange the lack of the latter became obvious between the conflicting parties. Related to the five major reasons for the necessity of local environmental governance by Lipschutz (1996, 40-45) most were indirectly mentioned by the interviewees as the *Assignment of property rights*, the *Availability and location of social knowledge* as well as the *Sensitivity towards feedback*. While the first two were said to be missing in the so called local population by the KN personnel, the latter was mentioned to be missing inside the KN administration (Burksiene 2007; Diksaite 2007; Varkaliene 2007). Thus, the institutions even know the major obstacles for a more inclusive and less conflict framed governance; however, due to personal and political reasons an improvement seemed to be uncertain to appear without major changes in the personnel structure or the political structure on state level.

Evaluating the modes of governance in the KK territory on the Russian side, a completely different picture is presented. Even though, the directions for management and planning of the national park is established as in the KN on state level by the MNR respectively the NRMS, due to the missing general plan the national park has to perform its planning less restricted. On the other side, the territorial separation in three different administrative zones of the Russian territory with the settlements and restricted border area split a common area in territories related to authorities with major differences in their planning directions. On account of that, the KK administration is solely responsible to manage an area which has no direct inhabitants, thus they cannot perform any control of the local inhabitants in the settlements itself, nor on the municipal authorities. The same counts for the restricted border area wherein

the KK administration has few to no influence. What follows is a far more simple governance structure whereby every authority controls and manages its own area according to its own set of regulations. On account of that the territory is managed against the terms of local environmental governance including all stakeholders of a common ecosystem as mentioned by Lipschutz (1996, 44) and is endangering the sustainable management of the same due to the lack of local community co-operation with the national park administration (Duffy 2006, 95).

The direct management practices in the territory of the KK are displaying a similar picture with merely the Road Agency of Kaliningrad performing their tasks in all areas. However, few projects are involving private or public actors as clean up works organized by the NGO Ecodefense or territory control by additional state authorities mentioned in chapter 5.1.4 . In general, the KK administration presented an impression of close to no positive communication with the settlement authorities; hence, the courts are the most common place to discuss conflicts with locals and the Zelenogradsk district authorities. On account of the missing legislation documents and the exclusion of the settlements from the protected area the locals as well as rich newcomers seem to have little interest in protection measurements. This presents an important difference between the KN and the KK administrations directions of ecological education whereby the KN addresses both, visitors and locals, while the KK solely focuses on visitors even though a split focus as in the KN could solve some problems. However, as mentioned by KK personnel the main problems are primary with rich villa constructors than with the normal local inhabitants what questions the positive aspect of local ecological education to solve those illegal constructing problems.

In general the KK administration has to be considered as weaker in implementing their management direction due to the missing management plan and the corruption lead illegal construction activities which are backed by local politicians and even the police (Russland aktuell 2007). However, in regard to the new general plan which is in preparation now the personnel is optimistic to improve their governing and decision power. It has to be mentioned that in comparison to the KN the KK plan will be prepared primary by NGO's; however, including an additional set of state related stakeholders. On account of that, the inclusion of external stakeholders for the management documents and therefore the most important non-human actor as mentioned by Hubbard et al. (2002, 194) will involve a wider set than in the KN. However, the KK hardly threatens the common definitions of local environmental governance by its tri-partite separation of legislation and territory.



Focusing on the management of the whole WHS Curonian Spit as a TBCA the pictures presented seems to be still distanced from required UNESCO standards as mentioned in chapter 5.2.3 as they rank between “Level 2, communication” and “Level 3, collaboration” presented by Zbizc (1999, 2) of the co-operation levels between administrations of TBCA’s. In regard of that and the lack of real measures taken by the UNESCO in order to improve that situation, the statement of Jänicke (1992, 57) describing international policy as a negotiable tool due to missing legal status becomes obvious. However, in the case of the Curonian Spit WHS the single national park authorities could be determined as being motivated supporters of more co-operation but were simply struggling by overcoming a set of specific obstacles recently.

The main problem, even though not directly mentioned by both national park administrations are higher state authorities guiding the filter functions of the border mentioned by Ratti (1993, 244). Especially, the Russian custom regime already stopped one of the most important co-operation projects involving a large set of local as well as international stakeholders. On the other hand, the EU besides its positively perceived funding of co-operation projects threatens co-operation as well with the recent enlargement of the Schengen Convention territory and the accompanying stricter border regulations. These negative impacts are as well supported by the decreasing numbers of border crossings on the Nida border station since 2002 (KN 2007a) displaying the more or less problematic role of state borders as semi permeable membranes mentioned by Landres et al. (1998, 56) and their capacity to prevent specific flows of passing the border or being hindered of passing. On account of that, the border prevents or hinders in several cases a co-operation free of obstacles by favoring national state level priorities above the local problems as well as by not taking the local level in account at all. However, it has to be mentioned that most problems described by the interviewees, especially the serious ones, were hindered by Russian legislation whereby the Lithuanian state was primary mentioned to act according to the EU legislation and not on its own. Anyway, co-operation obstacles implied by the EU are related to visa restrictions whereby the Russian Federation imposed different problems for co-operation. It follows, as stated by Meidinger (1998, 87) that federal institutions can widely influence trans-border management and in the case of the Curonian Spit WHS this influence are unfortunately often of negative character.

Taking into account that all UNESCO related communication is primary performed by the SSPA and the NRMS the lack of motivation especially from the Russian side, as observed in the WHC reports (WHC 2003; WHC 2004; WHC 2005) and mentioned above in chapter 4.3

is the major obstacle to establish common management documents or agreements. Following that, the local stakeholders concerned about trans-border co-operation projects are missing the important positive backup even though solely one side is lacking the motivation for more co-operations. It follows that the governments, especially the Russian fails to fulfill its duty to motivate and enable socio-cultural co-operation among all involved stakeholders as mentioned by Rhodes (1996, 657). Taking these negative aspects into account the motivation of the national park administrations on both sides becomes more visible even though the actual level of co-operation cannot be considered as sufficient. On the other hand, accusing the state level of hindering co-operation may be used as an accuse of the national park administrations for not being more active on own initiative and establish some kind of a *laissez-faire* mentality in relation to the state authorities instead of criticizing problems and obstacles.

Another determined problem is the lack in trans-border multilevel governance whereby the governance structures of the two national parks play a major role. The administrations are seldom co-operating with a higher level partner except for their higher level state authorities and the EU as most of the co-operation is performed among horizontal power structures. Thus, the KN as the KK administrations are hardly dependent on their higher level authorities in terms of co-operation from a legislative point of view. The EU presents one of the few possibilities for them to accomplish co-operation projects of internal as external importance with a higher level international stakeholder. However, all projects on the Russian territory have to be permitted by the Russian federal level again while the Lithuanian Government has to obtain the EU environmental policy therefore these projects are independent from state level authorities to a higher degree.

Regarding the problems inside the national park administrations the different perceptions and philosophies of the administrations are of importance as well. As pointed out by Landres et al. (1998, 40) different perceptions may influence or hinder the co-operation as well as mentioned by Brunson (1998, 72) who states the importance of the awareness of these differences among the involved stakeholders. For the Curonian Spit WHS the different directions discussed in chapter 5.1.1 and the different perceptions on the modes of co-operation (See Chapter 5.2.2) should be considered such an obstacle. Especially, as could be observed the parties are missing a founded knowledge about their partners' wishes and priorities of co-operation. Furthermore the opinion of all interviewees that co-operation has no direct effect on the practical management may be raised as a concern and decrease the

motivation for full co-operation as could be seen of some departments having no co-operation with their counterpart at all. In general, it can be stated that co-operation is increasing; however, the main influencing factor are the state levels and the inclusion of a broader set of stakeholders. Hence, additional stakeholders as NGO's are underrepresented as well as the local population in terms of trans-border co-operation which might threaten the sustainable management in the long run as displayed by Duffy (2006, 95).

The differences in the presentation of the two territories have to be considered due to several reasons. One of the reasons stated by several interviewees was the lack of money to represent the national park better and to offer a wider range of possibilities for the stakeholders (Snegiryov 2007; Varkaliene 2007). However, in both national parks the lack of money mainly reduced the possibilities for visitor attractions than for local inhabitants, although, they were mentioned as important but yet missing investors. Another difference between the national park appearances are the different directions which are as well related to the separation of the Russian territory and are represented in the lack of nice traditional buildings on the Russian side. In terms of regulation and restriction signs the KN has established a denser network than the KK which presents the territory more controlled and ordered. In general, the differences are imposed by better funding and a management scheme including the whole territory as is the case in the KN and the different orientation of the KK towards remaining resources of protection.

Finalizing my thoughts, the modes of governance and management differ to the above mentioned extends between the KN and the KK whereby the involved stakeholders are more numerous in the KN and the legal structures as well in accordance to EU legislation are favoring stakeholder involvement to a higher degree than in the KK. However, outside, none state stakeholders are still challenging large obstacles if they long to get fully involved in the governance of the territory or are even not possible to participate at all. Hence, primary high state level authorities are maintaining a strong set of regulations, therefore leaving few places for flexibility. To finish it in the own words and opinion of the deputy director for Natural and Cultural Heritage in the KN, Lina Diksaite; however it would fit to the institutions in the whole territory: "I think that the national park administration should be more flexible in some things, some time (Diksaite 2007)", thus to solve problems more easy instead of creating new ones or wasting energy on unnecessary conflicts which could be solved by more communication among all stakeholders.

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## 9. Appendices

### Appendix I

#### Planning Zones of KN and KK

##### KN:

1. Conservation Zone: Includes the strict nature reserves (Nagliu & Grobstas), the managed nature reserves as well as cultural protected urban reserves. The strict nature reserves are prohibited to enter outside of special marked paths and trails.
2. Protection Zone: Water resource protection area near Nida and Smyltine.
3. Recreation Zone: Includes the forest of the “city zone” as well as out of the reserves, seaside dunes and beaches.
4. Residential Zone: Consists out of the five settlements of Nida, Preila, Prevalka, Juodkrante , Alksnyne and Smyltine.
5. Economic Zone: Includes public utility zones and their possible extensions in all settlements except Smyltine.

##### KK:

1. Conservation Area: Includes the strict nature reserve and the managed nature reserves. The strict nature reserves are prohibited for visitors.
2. Protective Dune Embankment: Includes the complete protective dune on the Baltic Sea coast and is considered a zone of special conservation.
3. Nature Memorials: Includes landscape monuments as the two main lakes, two dune tops as well as the heron colony and a swamp area.
4. Controlled Protection Zone (buffer zone): Consists of a one kilometer wide zone around the national park protected territory.
5. Recreational Zone: Includes the 3 settlements and the Duny holiday resort.

(UNESCO 2000b, 28 & 29)

For visitor purposes as information material these categories are presented by solely three zones: Strict nature reserves, managed reserves, including nature Memorials and the Protection zone, and recreational zones which include the settlements and the economical zone (See Fig. 3 & 4). The Conservation Area/Zone is separated for tourist purposes.

## Appendix II

### Visitor Regulations in the WHS Curonian Spit

In the territory of the KN it is forbidden:

1. To drive motorized vehicles of the asphalt roads (forests, beaches, dunes) and to park out of signed places as well as to keep campers and caravans anywhere than in the camping place area.
2. To visit the strict nature reservations except on the bicycle trace and the cognitive foot-path.
3. To put up tents or camp in not equipped places and to stay overnight in the forest, the beaches or the dunes.
4. To climb up or down the dunes.
5. To make fire in undesignated places
6. To damage flora and collect plants enlisted in the red book of Lithuania
7. To pollute the environment (littering) and to damage information signs and other facilities
8. To make noise and disturb the birds during migration or breeding periods or destroy their nests
9. To fish without a license
10. To organize touristic trips, public events, research and other activities without the approval of the KN and municipalities administrations.

(KN 2007b)

In the territory of the KK it is forbidden:

1. To put up tents
2. To make fire in undesignated places
3. To park motorized vehicles in undesignated places
4. To walk on the dunes out of the prepared paths
5. To destroy the dune reinforcements
6. To pick medical plants
7. To perform commercial berry or mushroom picking
8. To take out dogs without leach
9. To perform any activities which could be harmful to nature or could influence or decrease the aesthetic value of the Landscape of the Curonian Spit (e.g. destroying birds' nests, cutting wood, catching animals, littering)

(KK 2008a)