

Potential development of the right shore of Lipno Lake area – comparison of landscape and urban planning documentation with ideas of local inhabitants

Rozvojové možnosti pravého břehu Lipna – porovnání návrhu územně plánovací dokumentace s názory místních obyvatel

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Abstract

Appropriate landscape and urban planning documentation can be considered as the condition necessary for long term suitable (or adequate) development of any region. There is a question, however, whether or not, or to which degree this “theoretical vision”, given more or less from outside, matches developmental potential identified by local population as well. The right shore of Lipno Lake was used as a model area to demonstrate the above mentioned topic. By use of sociological research, ideas of local population were investigated on potential development of local agriculture, forestry, tourism and municipalities. These ideas were compared with the official visions of proposed landscape and urban planning documentation of the given territory. The comparison proved that the local population perceives the proposed documentation to represent the state (status quo) given by actually valid legislation rather than “ideal” or “desired” future vision.

Key words: regional development, landscape and urban planning documentation, Lipno lake area, agriculture, tourism, agrotourism

Introduction

One of the necessary preconditions of appropriate development of any region is the existence of landscape and urban planning documentation at an adequate level. However, such theoretical conception of regional development needn't necessarily correspond with both the conditions in the territory and the ideas of its inhabitants. It may happen that development plans elaborated at a projection office of an administrative body don't reflect local situation and therefore are not acceptable for local people who live in the area.

The study attempts to illustrate the stated problems on a model case. Since 1994 there has been the Master Plan of the right shore of Lipno Lake (VEPŘEK & al. 1994) which so far hasn't been accepted because of the disagreement of the local communities.

Description of model territory

Brief characteristic of the right shore of Lipno Lake

The model territory spreads from Nová Pec along the right bank of Lipno dam, then along the Vltava river to the motorway connecting Vyšší Brod with Studánky border crossing (see

Fig. 1). In the west this territory shares area with the Šumava National Park. The essential part of the territory belongs to the Šumava Protected Landscape Area.

History of the settlement of the territory

The territory has been marginal through most of its history thanks to its position relatively far from centres (TESITEL & al. 1999) The first settlement dates back to the Middle Ages when this area became the property of the House of Vitkovci. In the course of the colonisation in the 13th century there arose a network of settlement which lasted till our century without any considerable changes (KOVÁŘ & KOBLASA 1996).

Local population belonged almost exclusively to the German ethnic group. People were engaged in breeding cattle and growing field crops such as rye, potatoes, oats and flax. It is recorded in old annals that on the south slopes of the former village of Rychněvek it was possible to grow grapevine and some kinds of fruit trees. Weaving used to be an additional source of living for many people. Large woods provided jobs for woodcutters and other workers engaged in exploiting and transporting wood. Forestry reached its top level under the reign of the Schwarzenbergs, who took care of forests including setting up new huntsmen's lodges and hunting grounds. The famous Schwarzenberg Canal was used for transporting wood from the 19th century till the 1930s. At Želnavá it served its original purpose even in the beginning of the 1960s (REBŠTŮK 1992).

Table 1. – Number of inhabitants in individual settlements (territorial units).

Territorial unit	1880	1970	1981	1991	2000+
Nová Pec	1458*	660	591	512	700
Bližší Lhota	269	30	0**	23	50
Hutský Dvůr	526	0	0	0	10
Zvonková	804	28	63**	45	80
Pestřice	868*	0	0	0	10
Kyselov	248	0	0	0	10
Jasánky	1311*	0	0	0	10
Rychněvek	318	0	0	0	20
Svatý Tomáš	185	28	9	23	40
Pasečná	1128*	21	49	50	100
Fýdava	196	23	6	3	30
Přední Výtoň	1023*	264	221	211	300
Kapličky	251	0	0	0	150
Loučovice	217	208	139	162	250
Mnichovice	371*	0	0	0	40
Studánky	775*	122	157	142	180
Total	***	1384	1235	1171	1980

* Including allocated and secluded places

**Zvonková and Bližší Lhota formed a sole unit in 1980

***This list doesn't include all residences in the territory which existed in 1880

+ Proposal of the Master Plan

References: List of places in the Kingdom of Bohemia, Praha 1886

Population census in Czech Republic, Czech Statistical Institute Praha, 1991

Master Plan of the right shore of Lipno Lake (VEPREK & al. 1994)

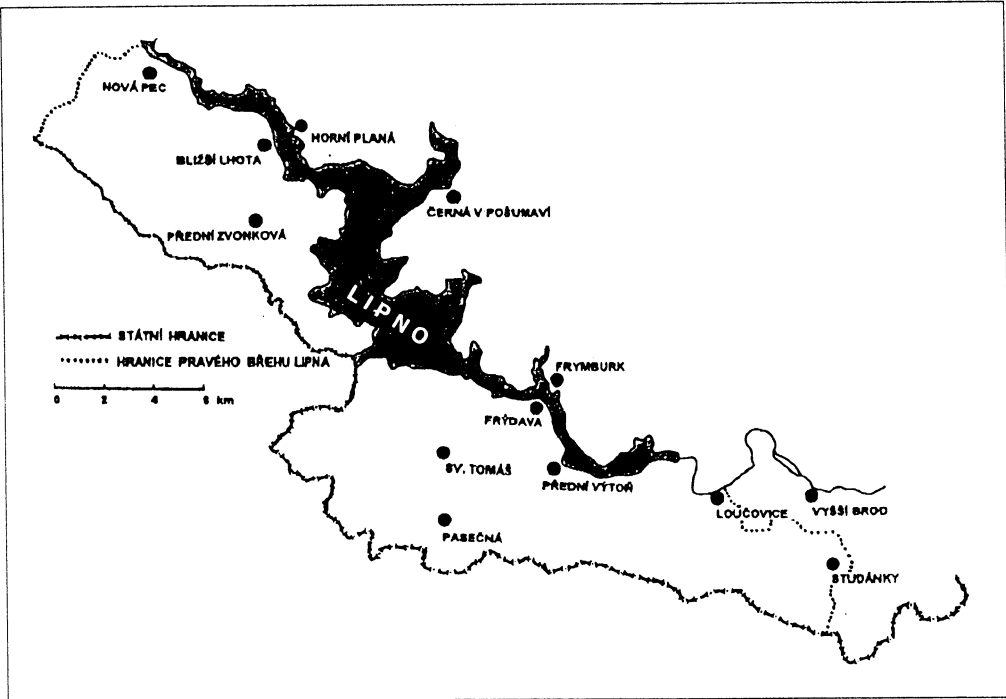
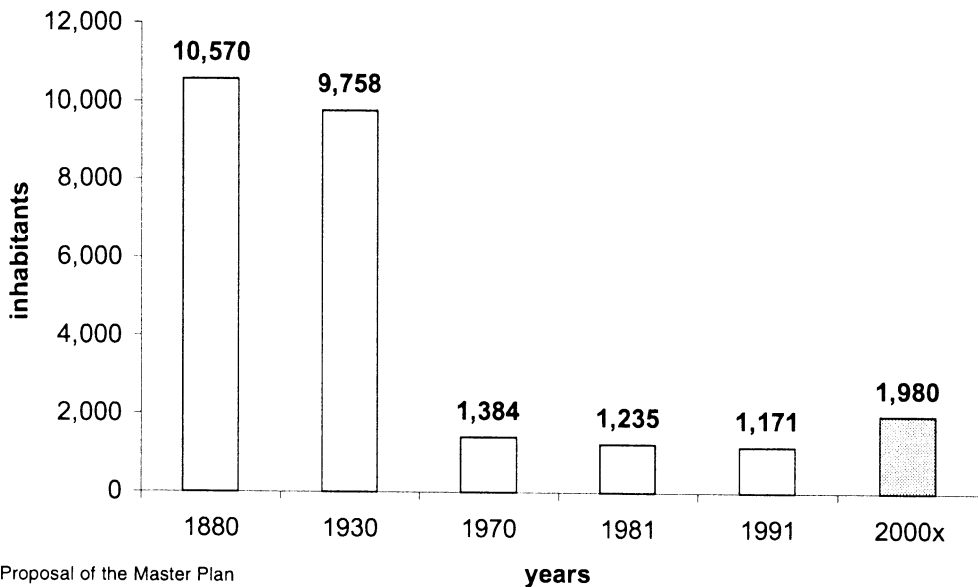


Fig. 1. – The model territory – the right shore of Lipno Lake

The past 50 years deepened marginality of the territory. During that time the area was impacted by some political decisions which considerably influenced the residential structure, number and social composition of local inhabitants. The first significant historical event in post-war development was the forced removal of the Germans from the frontier area and the arrival of new inhabitants. The second one was the filling of Lipno dam, and finally the enclosure of the territory with so called iron curtain and thus making the right shore of Lipno Lake inaccessible.

Resettling concerned mainly Nová Pec and Přední Výtoň; some localities in the border area were partly renewed, namely Pasečná, Svatý Tomáš and Přední Zvonková. Resettlement was aided by the state, which resulted in entirely low residential stability. This phenomenon manifested itself in prevailing emigration from the territory, high rate of people living in blocks of flats, which is not typical of the countryside, and low level of education. In general the described situation could be viewed as destruction of the original residential structure. The present number of inhabitants represents only 12% of the population in 1930. A decrease by 15% of the former population took place in the last 20 years, 5% out of this in the last decade (VEPŘEK & al. 1994). Number of inhabitants in individual settlements (territorial units) is shown in Table 1 and Fig. 2. Historical development is complemented with the proposal of Master Plan.

So far the last political decision which played a significant role has been the annulment of the border zone watched by the army. That made the territory accessible and politically equal to the inland. Nevertheless, the territory has not lost its attributes of a socially and economically marginal area (BARTOŠ & al. 1999).



* Proposal of the Master Plan

Fig. 2. – Number of inhabitants in the model area (1880–1991).

Initial conditions of the Master Plan

The area of the right shore of Lipno Lake actually belongs to two Master plans. One of them is the obligatory Master Plan of the Šumava Region (COLLECTIVE 1993) which was passed in 1992 and which set very hard limits on socioeconomic development in the model territory, mainly from the viewpoint of landscape protection. The other one is the Master Plan of the right shore of Lipno Lake which have more respect to the local population needs and expresses some conditions for certain social and economic development in the area (VEPREK & al. 1994). It was prepared already in 1994 but it still exists only in the form of a proposal.

In the proposal of the Master Plan the right shore of Lipno Lake is viewed as a quiet zone where the main activities will be forestry, agriculture, tourism and, in the area of Loučovice, wood manufacturing industry. It is based on the following presumptions:

- Land use pattern in this area consists of forest land (52.0%), agricultural land (30.1%), water bodies (9.0%), built-up areas (0.3%) and other areas (8.6%).
- The number of economically active residents slightly prevails over the number of available jobs. The opportunities to get a job are mainly in forestry, only few people remain in agriculture. The share of tertiary activities is low (17%).
- Current level of public utilities corresponds with the low density of population and relative isolation of the territory. The demand created by permanent residents and visitors makes possible only the basic servicing. Better or more complex services are provided by local centres on the other bank – medical care centre, basic school, department store.
- Compared to the left shore of Lipno Lake, the number of tourists and holidaymakers is only 10%. The tourism on the right shore is only in its beginning. The momentary state of tourist facilities can be assessed as low, mainly in comparison with the left shore. Prominent role is played by the towns of Vyšší Brod, Studánky and Loučovice – the centres of so called shopping, medical and erotic tourism. Other facilities for tourists are in Nová Pec, Přední Výtoň and Bližší Lhota–Kyselov.

Methods

The basic framework method was that of comparison – the visions of future development of model territory were compared to real possibilities.

The visions were defined in the proposal of the Master Plan of the development of the right shore of Lipno Lake (VEPŘEK & al. 1994).

The assessment of real possibilities of development was based mainly on the analysis of the “local knowledge”. In 1998 this material was gathered by use of empirical qualitative sociological research aimed at the identification of the socio-economic potential of the territory relevant to proposed land use changes.

In 26 standardised interviews there were gained opinions of local key informants about the development of agriculture, forestry, tourism and communities. The set of respondents consisted of:

- all mayors of concerned communities
- the entrepreneurs in key regional branches of development, namely in agriculture, forestry, and tourism
- the representatives of the Administration of Šumava Protected Landscape Area

Results of content analysis of our previous research, local and regional press and special texts issued by the Administration of the Šumava National Park and Protected Landscape Area were used as supplementary information.

Results

The perspective of further development of forestry, agriculture and tourism can be estimated according to their compliance with local natural and socio-economic conditions. Whereas the natural conditions remain relatively stable (not considering e.g. the origin of a new lake), the socio-economic and cultural sphere underwent essential changes in the post-war period. In the course of time the intensity of development of particular spheres was also different. Forestry, agriculture and tourism in the given territory developed differently from the historical point of view and therefore their future prospects are far from being the same.

In the territory, the forest exists as a natural ecosystem which needs no external inputs of additional energy. Forestry has had a long tradition in the area and is still profitable. Its development is considered to be a long-term priority as the branch is relatively free of problems and the conception corresponds with real possibilities.

Intensive large-area agriculture was maintained as a trend pursued by the former political regime despite the high inputs of additional energy (BARTOŠ & al. 1992). Political and economic changes after the year 1990 led to the decline of intensive agriculture in the territory. It is not profitable any longer. The agricultural cultivation declines, fields are turned into grassland or left to spontaneous succession (e.g. LIPSKÝ & al. 1999). The current attempt to transform agriculture should focus mainly on the non-productive and landscape-forming functions. Unlike both the above-mentioned branches, the current form of tourism represents a new type of land use for which the territory is not sufficiently prepared.

The most serious discrepancies between the conceptions of the plan and real possibilities of the model territory lie thus within the spheres of agriculture and tourism. Therefore they are dealt with in the following text.

Agriculture

According to the Master Plan, the perspectives lie in “establishing family farms combined with the services aimed at promoting agrotourism and travelling in a broader sense, similarly to the Austrian and Bavarian neighbouring areas (low intensive production of milk, meat, fo-

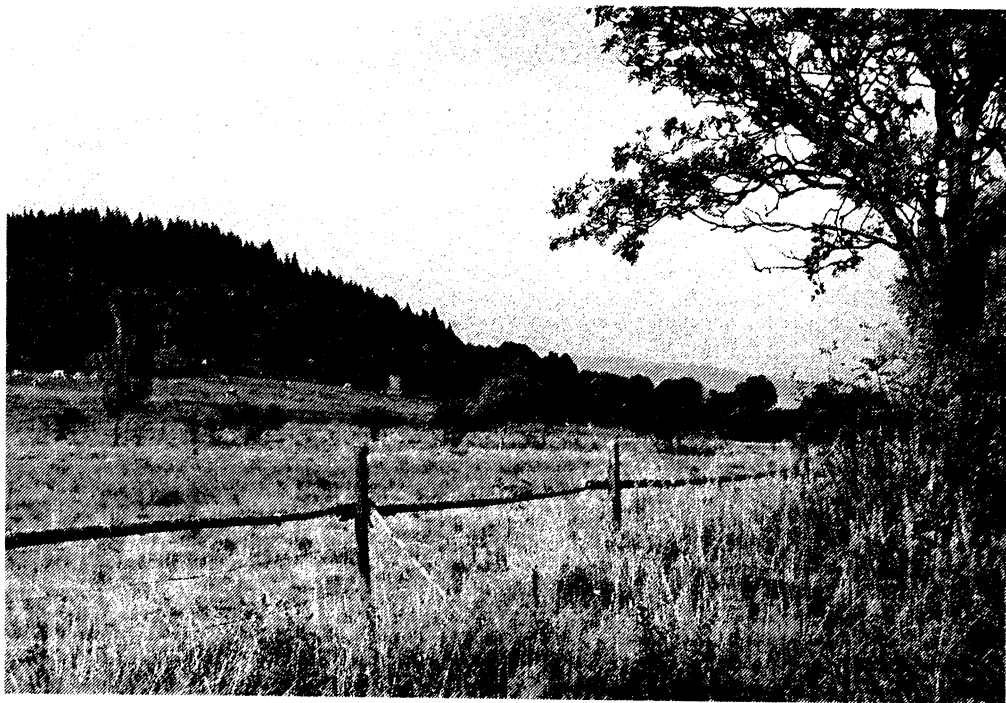


Fig. 3. – Agriculture land can be utilised mainly in the form of permanent grass cover for breeding mountain cattle

rage, fodder grains and stock for breeding)”. Arable fields are planned only in the vicinity of Přední Výtoň and Nová Pec; the aims pursued in other parts of the territory are mainly afforestation or meadows and pastures renewal (see Fig. 3). Agricultural land should be utilised mainly in the form of permanent grass cover for breeding mountain cattle. Intensive utilisation for growing crops on arable land should be rather exceptional, mainly for supplying the farms with straw, oats for feeding horses etc. The increase in breeding sheep and fur animals could be expected as well as more intensive picking and processing forest berries, keeping fish and bees, breeding horses, planting and picking herbs.

Nevertheless the current conditions in the territory do not represent an ideal base for implementing a vision like this. It was confirmed in the interviews and it is possible to say that in the stated context the transformation of agriculture, if compared to forestry transformation, was rather a failure.

According to the respondents, agriculture has almost finished in the territory. Former employees in agriculture live in blocks of flats, agricultural firms are approaching exhaustion and the zone is subjected to substitutional restitutions.

Particular plots of land are owned by the Land Registry and rented to firms which use them as pastures. Such firms are suspected of pursuing the only aim – to acquire the right of pre-emption.

This hypothesis corresponds with the way how these people run their firms – they do not invest in them and only exploit the resources. Such attitude can't be considered a long-term strategy.

Part of the territory (about 10%) is blocked by the Land Registry to arrange for substitutional restitutions. The entitled restitutes are descendants of the first post-war immigrants, there are only few and they do not work on their land themselves – they usually rent it.

The key problems interfering with further development of the territory are connected with confusing, ambiguous legal regulations related to private property, and with the absence of the act on selling land owned by the state.

The concept of family farms oriented on agrotourism is one of the key visions contained in the Master plan. It presumes that the right bank of Lipno Lake remains a “quiet zone” – but not entirely free from any economic activities. Small family farms should be straggled about the territory as a base for tourism.

Most respondents agreed on the advantages of this kind of utilisation. Unfortunately, the terms “family farm” or “agrotourism” seem to be mere clichés without definite meaning which could be clearly interpreted by those who use them. Therefore respondents were not able to specify the concrete conditions under which the idea could be carried out

Neither the Austrian alternative, so commonly used in this situation as an example, is fully acceptable. In Austria the tradition of small family farms has never been interrupted and agrotourism became just another farming activity improving the family budget. Under the conditions which determine farming in our country the farmer has become a mere employee. Apart from the loss of his close relation to land, plants and animals he has lost his instinct for enterprising and his initiative (e.g. BARTOŠ & al. 1993, LAPKA & al. 1996). Such status ensues from both the general social climate and local population “quality”. But there is another important aspect that makes it impossible for the Czechs to establish and successfully run “family farms” – it is the style of living itself, not just the economic factors. “It is possible in Austria. The Czechs are different. The style of living is not acceptable here – people are not willing to work so hard and be tied to the cattle.”

The situation can be viewed as a vicious circle – establishing family agrotourist farms needs initial capital, which is not possessed by those who are interested in enterprising in agrotourism and are willing to devote their time and energy to it. Those who possess the necessary money are not interested in agriculture and invest it in more profitable branches.

“We cannot simply imitate the Austrian ways. Their system of subsidies is different. Even in Austria, an agricultural firm cannot provide the complete living for a family. In some cases this activity is not the main source of living – one of the partners is employed elsewhere, e.g. in a factory, or there are additional productive activities of the family”. But in the model territory the possibility of finding a job is very limited, almost none.

Though the situation is complicated, under certain conditions the conception of family farming can be realised even in the model territory, as in the case of SIDO firm. The German partner invested his own capital in the enterprise. SIDO runs tourist services, maintains roads and takes care of woods. Their activities are accepted as a model how to provide environmentally safe farming and maintenance. The owner makes decisions on the basis of economic principles and wants the firm to contribute to the renewal of cultural landscape. He shows interest and motivation whereas the thinking of neighbouring farmers resembles the former ideology of socialism – they want to be subsidised, otherwise they won’t carry on, or they will speculate in land property.

Tourism

The Master Plan promotes the concept of the right shore of Lipno Lake as a “quiet zone” – in contrast to the left shore, which is intensively utilised for tourism. The development of further facilities for tourism should be planned in relation to the present residential structure.

According to the plan the territory is suitable for cycling, trekking in the mountains, swim-

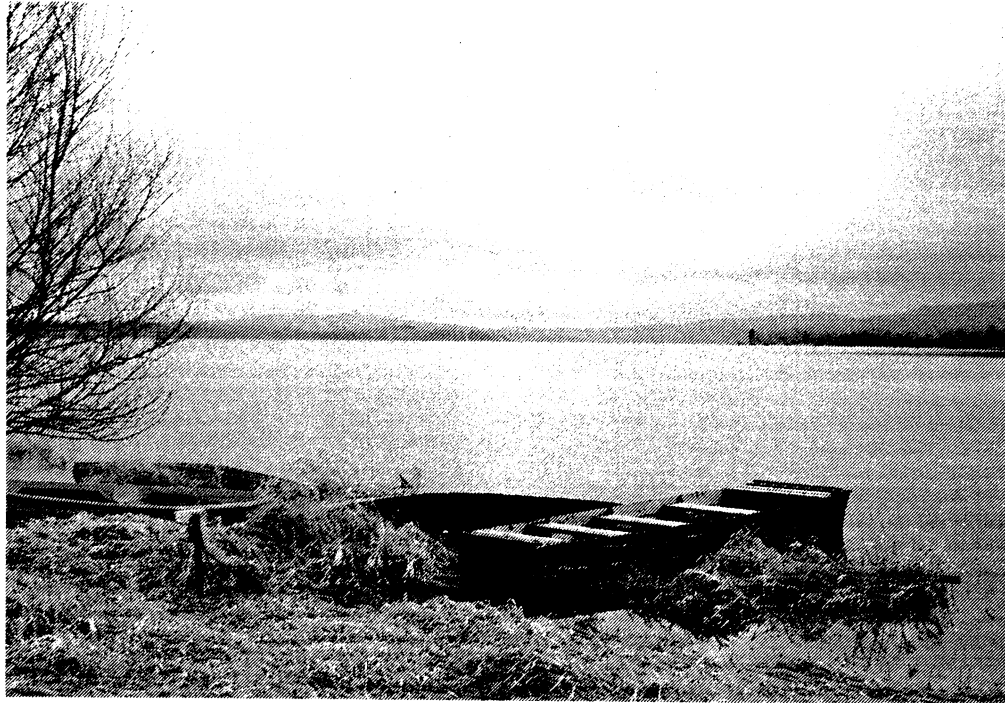


Fig. 4. – The territory is suitable for fishing, hunting, cycling, trekking in the mountains and swimming as well as aquatic and winter sports.

ming, fishing and hunting as well as aquatic and winter sports (see Fig 4). Basic equipment is provided by hotels, boarding houses or lodging houses concentrated mainly in so called starting places – Nová Pec, Přední Výtoň and Frýdava. The services in areas with low density of population should be provided by agrotourist farms.

The interviews with respondents revealed the fact that recreational utilisation of the territory including related activities is considered to be the most advantageous development strategy for short-term planning. Building convalescent homes and spas is viewed as “desirable future” from the long-term perspective (TEŠITEL & al. 1999). This applies to the whole area of the Šumava Mountains and, more or less, also to the right shore of Lipno Lake.

The problems of recreation can be roughly classified as follows: the types of visitors, general strategy of recreational facilities development, accessibility of the territory, and enhancing the attractiveness of the territory.

In terms of visitors’ demand, the right shore of Lipno Lake should remain a “quiet zone” but not entirely empty. It should offer accommodation, refreshment, bicycle repair service and waste disposal. It is necessary to meet visitors’ needs by creating appropriate facilities network, considering the fact that average “attending” distance is about 10 km, which should influence the distribution of tourist facilities within the territory.

As to the type of tourism, it should be so called “aware” type – but again, like “agrotourism”, it seems to be difficult to define. It probably includes hiking and cycling.

When talking about spatial location, the respondents preferred several “starting” places equipped with the necessary facilities and servicing. These “gates” are Nová Pec, Bližší Lho-

ta, Frýdava and Přední Výtoň. At present the offer of services prevails over demand both in lodging and boarding capacities. The situation in other parts of the model territory is different and the offer should be completed so that the tourists can feel fully secured.

The utilisation of former army barracks is rather controversial. Owing to their location resembling a chain along the state border they might be potential bases for hiking and cycling. As it still remains unclear to whom they belong, the buildings go shabby and are often damaged by thieves. The idea to use them as lodging houses and bases for tourists failed.

Prosperous enterprising in the branch of tourism requires stable and well-off clients. Currently it is not the matter of nationality. "There is no difference between foreign and Czech visitors any more." Like in other spheres of social life, even here considerable changes have occurred. According to a respondent's opinion, "the longer recreational stays had ended with the departure of tourists from East Germany". Today, the right shore of Lipno Lake is a destination for one- or two-day trips. It is difficult to say whether it is just a momentary trend or if it is caused by the lack of further attractors which could keep the tourists in the territory longer. Maybe it is because the territory is so easy of access. "It is more convenient for people to come in the morning and get back to České Budějovice in the evening than to stay at a hotel overnight."

The boom of tourism from the beginning of the 1990s is over. "The situation is not the same any more. Most German and Austrian tourists used to come 4 or 5 years ago. Today there are very few tourists generally, even the Czechs. The Austrians don't come here, they go to Studánky border crossing and usually get stuck in the sweet shop in Vyšší Brod or they go straight to České Budějovice via Dvořišě."

Though the right shore of Lipno Lake is designed for hiking and cycling, there are also signs of two other types of utilisation for recreation. The first one is the attempt of MANE firm to build holiday apartments in Frýdava. The other type is based on the above-mentioned shopping and medical tourism of the Austrians. Medical services seem to be very profitable in this area owing to the fact that it is possible to provide treatment for Austrian citizens, and Austrian health insurance agencies also gain their profit from compensating the expenses. In this context it is necessary to mention Austrian pensioners for whom cheap shopping and services mean a chance how to double their income. In the same category rates the effort to build a sanatorium aimed at "regeneration of psychic and physical strength of man" in the former village of Kapličky – though the project hasn't been successful.

Conclusion

The comparison which was carried out showed that the ideas proposed by the Master Plan do not always correspond with real possibilities of model territory. The idea of family firms devoted both to agriculture and tourism and so important from the viewpoint of the right shore of Lipno Lake development is a marked proof of this conclusion. In the opinions of local people the proposed Master Plan doesn't represent an "ideal" way of further development – it is rather the current status determined by current legislation.

In the course of preparation and discussions on the Master Plan, the ministry cooperated mainly with the representatives of nature protection, i.e. with only one of the participants in the process of passing the material. Respondents expressed the situation in terms of "the lack of contact with communities", which results in cutting off the plan from reality. Thus the plan itself accentuates nature protection. Unfortunately the restrictions caused by such standpoint are not compensated with appropriate economic activities providing further socio-economic and cultural development in the territory. In this context of implementing the conception of "territory for people", a prominent role is played by the Association of Lipno Communities.

The Master Plan proposes the future which will be achievable only after fulfilling a number of preconditions. The representatives of communities mentioned e.g. a bridge over Lipno Lake, opening a year-round border crossing for motor vehicles in Zvonková and building a ski area in Smrčina. All three demands, however, do not fit to the nature protection strategy of National Park Administration. They have thus become neuralgic points causing that the discussion as regards passing the Master Plan can be hardly reconciled. The other preconditions are more general, mostly related to economic and legislative milieu in the sense of desirable changes – unfortunately the solutions are beyond the scope of influence of local representatives. Still there is one common factor – the absence of regional strategies that would perceive the territory as a whole.

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Souhrn

Udržitelný a přiměřený rozvoj každého regionu předpokládá existenci územně plánovacího dokumentu odpovídající úrovně. Je ovšem otázkou, zda tato „teoretická představa“ rozvoje regionu odpovídá i reálným možnostem daného území a představám lidí, kteří v něm žijí.

Obsahem příspěvku je demonstrace naznačené problematiky na příkladu modelové oblasti pravého břehu Lipna. Od roku 1994 existuje zpracovaný územní plán pro toto území, který však dosud nebyl pro odpor obcí přijat.

V roce 1998 byl proveden sociologický výzkum, zaměřený na identifikaci socioekonomického potenciálu modelového území k možným změnám ve využívání krajiny. Názory respondentů byly konfrontovány s vizemi rozvoje obsaženými v návrhu územního plánu.

Provedená komparace ukázala, že pro obyvatele regionu navržený územní plán nepředstavuje „ideální vizi“ budoucího rozvoje. Reprezentuje spíše status quo daný současně platnými zákony. Územní plán nekoresponduje ani s možnostmi modelového území, ani s představami místní populace. Praktická nerealizovatelnost myšlenky rodinných agroturistických farem je toho markantním příkladem.

Održení plánu od reality bylo mj. způsobeno nedostatečným kontaktem jeho zpracovatelů s obcemi dotčeného území. Výsledkem je pak návrh územního plánu, který akcentuje hlediska ochrany přírody. Omezení vyplývající z tohoto titulu však nejsou kompenzována realističtější nabídkou ekonomických aktivit, na kterých by mohl být založen další sociálně ekonomický a kulturní rozvoj daného území.

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