

Project Update: May 2007

The first part of our project was to define the best sponge population for monitoring purposes. Out of the 12 known localities we found the Šmitovo jezero to be a lake with the best population. The next step was to build a net in the size of one square surrounded by measurements in order to monitor the population's density and dynamics throughout the seasons. Two of such nets were installed in December 2006, together with 6 growing boards to measure the colonization. We have been visiting the population once a month ever since, and taking photos and measuring chemical and physical parameters. Likewise, we have been trying to find new potential localities - we have been carrying out some explorations, but we have not found any new sponge locality yet.

We have continued to work on the DNA analyses at the Ruđer Bošković Institute, and we have collected more materials from several localities for that purpose.

As far as the conservation is concerned, we have proposed one locality (Rupečica) to the State Institute for Nature Protection to be protected as a Natural Monument. We are also preparing a proposal, together with other institutions, for the protection of the entire region. Our work was covered by media, and we participated in an open lecture in the town of Ogulin - the lecture was given by Branko Jalžić.

