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Natural and Sociocultural Values of a Tourism Destination in the Function of Sustainable Tourism Development—An Example of a Protected Area

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Citation: Stojanović, T.; Trišić, I.; Brđanin, E.; Štetić, S.; Nechita, F.; Candrea, A.N. Natural and Sociocultural Values of a Tourism Destination in the Function of Sustainable Tourism Development—An Example of a Protected Area. *Sustainability* **2024**, *16*, 759. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16020759>

Academic Editors: Alberto Romolini, Silvia Fissi and Elena Gori

Received: 10 December 2023

Revised: 6 January 2024

Accepted: 10 January 2024

Published: 16 January 2024



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Abstract: The Special Nature Reserve “Kraljevac” (RK) is located in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, in southern Banat. This first-category reserve covers an area of 264.3 ha and represents a natural item of exceptional importance. The reserve is characterized by significant geological heritage such as loess sections and dune relief, a lake with famous floating peat islands that form the physiology of this wetland, and very rare representatives of flora and fauna. The RK is characterized by the rich cultural heritage of the population living in South Banat. The different ethnic composition of the population and multiculturalism are the main sociocultural tourist motives of this protected area. The Deliblato Sands, known in Europe for their rare geological features, flora and fauna, are located in the immediate vicinity. This significantly increases the value of the RK. Quantitative methodology was used in the paper, which included interviewing respondents as a research technique. The research was conceived according to the Prism of Sustainability (PoS) model. For this sustainable tourism research, a total of 750 respondents (470 residents and 280 visitors) were surveyed. A written and online questionnaire was used in the survey of respondents. By using a questionnaire, respondents expressed their views on certain statements that were grouped into two categories. The claims refer to the natural and sociocultural factors of tourism development in this protected area. Both categories of tourism destination factors can significantly influence sustainable tourism. In addition, we examined the impact of sociocultural and natural factors on respondents’ satisfaction with sustainable tourism. The research results indicate that there is a significant influence of these factors on the satisfaction of residents and visitors with sustainable tourism. The results of this research can provide important information when planning the development of tourism in this protected area. Also, the results can help in the evolution of tourism development at the local, national and regional levels. The forms of tourism that could be central in the RK are scientific research, sports–recreational, ecotourism, bird–watching, events, cultural, gastronomic, and other tourism forms. These forms of tourism can provide environmental, economic and social benefits for this protected area as a tourism destination.

Keywords: special nature reserve; nature-based tourism; sociocultural tourism factors; natural tourism factors

1. Introduction

The Special Nature Reserve “Kraljevac” (RK) is located in South Banat in Vojvodina (Northern Serbia). The RK covers an area of 264.3 ha. In its immediate vicinity, there are the settlements of Deliblato and Mramorak, which belong to the municipality of Kovin [1]. Important characteristics of the RK are a good geographical and traffic position, proximity to Belgrade and other cities in the country, and proximity to Romania. A special feature is an immediate proximity to the Deliblato Sands, which reinforces the basic natural values of the RK. Rare flora and fauna and geological landforms, as well as geo-heritage objects, are important features of this nature reserve. The cultural heritage of the ethnically diverse population that inhabits the area is very valuable and has elements of multiculturalism. This represents a distinct sociocultural value of the destination.

Sustainable tourism implies essential ethical changes for all participants in the tourism process, from the tourism industry as the carrier and creator of the offer to tourists as users of tourist services. Among the most important goals of the sustainable development of tourism are the provision of ecological, economic, sociocultural and institutional positive changes and benefits for all subjects in the evolution of tourism. Residents and visitors stand out as the most important subjects of tourism development. If sustainable tourism is considered from the aspect of tourist development in a protected area, the protection of nature and its elements is an important activity during the planning, development and control of tourism development [2].

Environmental sustainability refers to the establishment of important postulates in relation to all activities within the tourist destination. From the aspect of the sustainable tourism of protected areas, ecological sustainability implies the development of tourism with the improvement in all natural values [3]. The sociocultural sustainability of tourism concerns the way in which tourism affects changes in collective and individual value systems, behavioral patterns, community structures, ways and quality of life. In addition, sociocultural sustainability indicates the realization of constant interaction between residents and visitors, as well as providing benefits for the local community [4,5].

Due to the possession of exquisite natural and social values, the RK can be an integral part of the tourism offer, and these values can significantly influence the development of nature-based tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, scientific research, excursion tourism, sports–recreational tourism, events, and other forms [6].

To determine these impacts on residents and visitors, it is necessary to examine the attitudes of residents and visitors and measure their level of satisfaction with sustainable tourism [7–10]. In addition, it is requisite to define guidelines for the improvement in and development of tourism, which follow sustainable tourism and nature protection [11]. A significant problem is that sustainable tourism in the RK has not been examined so far. This prevents a comparative analysis with previously published scientific results.

When planning tourism development in the RK, the role of residents is of great importance [12]. Proper tourism development cannot be achieved without the help of the local population [13]. Sustainable tourism in protected areas is based on a series of plans and activities of legislators and managers [14], which can be implemented into tourism development in these sensitive destinations. Their main objective is to improve ecological principles [15,16], satisfy visitors and residents, and direct the development of tourism towards the preservation of nature and cultural values [17,18].

In this paper, the subject of research is the analysis of the condition of sustainable tourism in the RK with the help of the natural and sociocultural values of this destination. In connection with these two groups of factors, respondents will declare themselves using a questionnaire in which the statements related to certain factors of tourism development are defined. Examining particular factors can indicate the state and possibilities of developing obvious important sustainable tourism forms in the RK.

The objective of the research is to examine the impact of sustainable tourism on the satisfaction of residents and visitors with tourism development. The results of the research on the degree of satisfaction with sustainable tourism among respondents can indicate

the importance of individual natural and social factors in the development of tourism. The specific goals of this research are to investigate the natural and social factors that enable the development of certain special forms of tourism. Considering that this is a tourist destination with a sensitive ecosystem, the specific goal is to establish potential forms of nature-based tourism. The development of specific forms of tourism can influence this protected area to be an important part of the tourism offer. The derived results of this research can indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the examined area in terms of opportunities for tourism development. This allows us to see all the potentials of tourism development, which must achieve positive ecological benefits for the protected area [19–21]. Furthermore, this study is important because it provides essential details about how this protected area may contribute to the sustainable development of tourism as an independent or supplemental attraction.

Quantitative methodology was used in this analysis, based on surveying as a research technique. The instrument used in the research was a questionnaire in written and online form. A total of 750 respondents (470 residents and 280 visitors) were surveyed using the random sampling method. SPSS v.21 software (IBM, Armonk, NY, USA) and the tabular presentation of data were used to process the collected data and display the results.

The scientific contribution of this study is to result in significant information about sustainable tourism development in the protected area, which can be used in the review of other destinations with sensitive ecosystems, and geological and biological factors. The expected research results should indicate the level of influence on sustainable tourism development in protected areas, then on possible systems and models of protection within this area, as well as the setting up of a tourism offer that should be based on the implementation of natural and sociocultural elements. Also, the scientific contribution of this research is reflected in the current global issues that, in recent decades, humanity has been intensively dealing with. Such issues are ecological issues and the improvement of the environment, the protection of living and non-living nature, ecosystems, the acquisition of ecological, economic, and sociocultural benefits through improving protection, promoting natural and sociocultural values, the impact of tourism on space, and other areas important for science. Proper tourism development based on natural and sociocultural values, nature protection, and monitoring can enable revenues from tourist consumption and direct them to the improvement in the RK as a destination. Sustainable tourism is a good model for including this protected area in the tourist offer [22].

2. Literature Review

The principle of sustainable tourism implies the planning, development, and control of various tourism forms that must encounter certain conditions in terms of positive impacts on the environment, local population, and visitors [23]. Environmental, sociocultural, economic, and institutional impacts stand out as the most significant [24,25]. Sustainable tourism development in special nature reserves creates the need for a set of activities and measures to protect these sensitive areas, with the basic objective of improving the natural and social elements of the destination [26–29]. Another important goal is the satisfaction of visitors and residents through the provision of various services and benefits in a sustainable manner [17,30]. Tourism development within protected areas is most often influenced by the endangerment of rare flora and fauna [31], the use of land for the construction of infrastructure, carrying capacity, zoning, defining the role of residents in the tourism development, sociocultural impacts, the contribution of tourism to the local economy, control of the development of receptive facilities for accommodation and food for tourists, etc. [32–40].

Natural and sociocultural factors of protected areas are significant initiators of tourism [41]. This point of view is the baseline for the research in this paper. The authors analyzed the natural factors that are present in the RK, from the aspect of the development of ecotourism and other forms based on nature. Ecotourism can represent a significant form of tourist

movement [40] because tourists are increasingly turning to tourism, which has the task of improving the natural values of the destination [41–43].

From the sustainable tourism perspective, it is important to draw attention to the intangible cultural legacy of the local population, or the tourist destination. This legacy is sold to tourists as an offer, with a primary goal to introduce them to culture, tradition, customs, folklore, events, and many other ethno-social motives to the greatest extent [44,45]. Achieving economic, ecological, and sociocultural results in tourist destinations is a prerequisite for sustainable tourism development [46]. Events and cultural tourism represent forms of tourism through which the cultural heritage of the local population can be presented to tourists in the most authentic form [47,48]. This made it easier for the authors to analyze the cultural potential of the people who live close to the protected area, to study the intangible cultural heritage, and to examine any upcoming or current events that might have a complimentary tourism element.

2.1. Natural Values

Within protected areas, special attention must be paid to the type of tourist infrastructure. Here, the infrastructure should consist of eco-resorts or eco-hotels with significant eco-certificates for ecological business operations and activities within the destination [37,49,50], restaurants with organically produced food, ecological means of traffic communication, a sufficient number of educational facilities, and visitor and info centers [51–54].

Buckley [55] examined the link between ecotourism and the environment by analyzing selected published research results that include case studies. This research aims to determine which models of protected area management can provide the most significant results through ecological, economic, and sociocultural benefits. The author emphasized the importance of developing tourism in eco-destinations with sensitive natural and sociocultural resources. It was stated that only proper tourism development based on natural and anthropogenic motives has positive ecological effects. An analytical framework was proposed that distinguishes four types of mechanisms: those that can generate positive effects; those that can reduce negative effects; those that can increase negative effects and mechanisms of contentious issues involving the scope and integration of different management establishments. The research results highlight the significance of the ecological pillar of tourism development, which is that it must not have negative effects on the environment. This can be achieved by adequate tourism development planning. The scientific contribution of this research is to point out the importance of applying ethical codes, the active role of local businesses and marketing, the potential importance of the local community, and the importance of changing new trends in life and travel, which must be directly related to ecological principles [55].

Eagles et al. [56] researched sustainable tourism in protected areas and the consequences of tourism development in certain destinations with a sensitive ecosystem. The objective was to analyze numerous written data and case studies about the impact of protected areas on sustainable tourism development. On that occasion, it was necessary to collect significant information that could help in constituting various protection measures aimed at reducing anthropogenic impacts on the environment in numerous protected areas of the world. For the research area of activity, the authors had numerous maritime ecosystems, mangrove forests, national parks, special nature reserves, mountain and hydrographic areas, wilderness areas, ecosystems adjacent to urban areas, and other protected areas where there are certain tourist activities and where various impacts on the environment are emitted [57]. In this paper, the following are singled out as the most important impacts concerning certain activities (Table 1).

Table 1. The relationship between tourism and basic environment elements.

Elements of a Destination	Risks of Tourist Activities
Ecosystem	The construction of accommodation facilities, visitor centers, infrastructure, and other services has a direct impact on the environment, through the removal of vegetation, the elimination of animal habitats, impacts on drainage, etc.; The habitat can be drastically changed (by road network, hunting grounds, farms) by all of the tourism kinds of development and use.
Terrain	Piling up soil can also occur even in well-used spaces; After removing the soil, erosion occurs, which continues even later.
Vegetation	Constant use of space around buildings harms vegetation; Transportation can have direct negative impacts on the environment (e.g., by removing vegetation, transferring weed seeds, and disturbing animals); The fire frequency can be changed due to the tourists themselves and management measures in the park.
Water	Increased need for freshwater; Disposal of wastewater or trash into rivers, lakes, or oceans; Spilling motor oil or fuel from ships or smaller vessels; Boats with propellers can injure aquatic plants and animals.
Air	Motorized transport can cause pollution by gas emission (air transport, ship, or car).
Nature	Hunting and fishing can change population dynamics; Hunters and fishermen can participate in the introduction of non-native species and increase the population of these animals; Due to returned species and transport effects, insects and smaller invertebrates are affected; Harassment can affect all species, including those less attractive to visitors; Disorders can manifest through noisy, visual, or disturbing behavior; After the contact is made, the impact lasts longer (for example, until the disturbance returns to normal, until the birds land, or until the mammals continue caring for the young or food); Marine mammals can be injured or killed by boat strikes or cuts from boat or ship propellers; The habituation of animals to people can cause a change in behavior, for example, approaching people for food.

Source: Eagles et al. [56].

Spenceley [58] identify vulnerabilities in the development of sustainable tourism by analyzing the current situation of tourism in specific protected areas. Applying qualitative methodology, the scientific knowledge was obtained that there are certain characteristics of tourism development in protected areas, which should be taken into account:

- (1) Tourism consists of many related activities, which makes it difficult to identify causes and consequences;
- (2) The long-term effects of tourism are difficult to determine;
- (3) Actual physical changes of the destination do not always have to be harmful to survival;
- (4) Measures for ecosystem recovery from various impacts are barely comprehensible.

The scientific contribution of this research is reflected in the provision of significant information that can be used when planning strategies for sustainable tourism [58]. This is based on the fact that, if the aforementioned characteristics are taken into account, it becomes clear that tourism can contribute to ecological sustainability, strengthening the natural and sociocultural values of protected areas as tourist destinations.

2.2. Sociocultural Values of a Tourism Destination

Each visitor of the protected area can benefit from tourism [59–61]. Carefully regulated and organized tourism, as is the case with small groups interested in scientific education, could help in financing research, education, and conservation. Such revenues have already directly helped establish funding for national parks and sustainable development, especially in developing countries [33]. Economic benefits are provided through tourism with

donations, entrance fees, rental and license fees, and the taxation of tourism retailers and tourism-related businesses [62,63]. It is imperative to successfully implement ecological components, protect the environment, and give priority to those products that are organized following ecological standards [64,65]. This is especially important in the implementation of marketing activities in the tourism of protected areas. Sustainable tourism represents one of the most widely accepted forms of using space because it produces positive results at the level of overall tourism development [66,67].

The natural and sociocultural values of protected areas are extremely important in attracting tourists. Geo-heritage represents an important potential for tourism success [68,69] such as scientific research, ecotourism, schools in nature, and educational tourism. Sociocultural factors of the destination directly contribute to the development of cultural tourism forms that can significantly contribute to the attractiveness of the tourist destination [70,71]. The following should be considered important sociocultural factors for tourism development: language, culture, domestic products, gastronomic specialties, cultural–historical monuments, cultural objects, art, customs and festivals, costumes, the treatment of guests, and other elements [72–74]. Properly valorizing the natural and sociocultural values of the tourist destination, significant results can be achieved regarding the development of various tourism forms that will have a sustainable character [75]. It was the aforementioned research that provided guidelines to the authors in examining sustainable tourism in the RK.

3. Research Area

The RK is located in the southern part of Banat in AP Vojvodina. It extends between the coordinates $44^{\circ}50'00''$ and $44^{\circ}52'45''$ N and from $20^{\circ}59'06''$ to $21^{\circ}02'22''$ E. The RK covers the territory of the inhabited place Deliblato, while this reserve territorially belongs to the Municipality of Kovin, with the settlement Mramorak in its immediate vicinity [1]. This nature reserve is characterized by a good geographical and traffic location, proximity to Belgrade and major cities in the country, and proximity to Romania and Hungary, as well as border and regional cities. The above represents the main dispersal zone from which potential visitors can come to the RK. The location of this reserve can be seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Study area. Source: created by the authors.

The RK covers an area of 264.3 ha. There are zones with first, second, and third degrees of protection. Tourist activities are not allowed in the first zone, while other activities are strictly controlled. According to the IUCN category, the RK belongs to the fourth category—Habitat and Species Management Area. The RK is part of the protection of birds of international importance—IBA area [1,76].

The main natural value of this protected area is the wetland and Kraljevac Lake, which are inhabited by extremely rare species of flora and fauna. Among the most important representatives of the flora are *Ceratophyllum demersum*, *Myriophyllum spicatum*, *Spirodella polyrrhiza*, *Lemna trisulca*, *Lemna minor*, *Nymphaea alba* and *Thelypteris palustris* Schott, which are on the IUCN Red List as endangered species. The special value of Kraljevac Lake is the floating peat islands, which change their position and therefore the physiognomy of this protected area with the help of the wind.

About 20 species of fish should be pointed out as representatives of the fauna, among which there are the relics of *Carassius carassius*, *Missgurnus fossilis*, and *Umbra krameri*. In addition, the territory of the RK is inhabited by the following significant representatives of ornithofauna and mammals: *Ardea cinerea*, *Ardea purpurea*, *Ardeola ralloides*, *Nycticorax nycticorax*, *Ixobrychus minutus*, *Aythya nyroca*, *Merops apiaster*, *Falco cherrug*, *Spermophilus Citellus*, *Spalax leucodon*, etc. The appearance of the Special Nature Reserve “Kraljevac” can be seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Significant values of the Special Nature Reserve “Kraljevac”. (a) Approach to Kraljevac Lake; (b) information board for visitors; (c) the loess section as the most significant representative of geo-heritage; and (d) floating peat islands. Source: Trišić I., author.

The population living near the RK is characterized by multiculturalism with special ethnic values. The local community consists of Serbs, Romanians, and Hungarians, who are the majority population. These ethnic groups are characterized by a rich cultural heritage and inheritance. Among the most significant sociocultural values of the RK, the following should be highlighted: cultural and historical heritage, language, culture, domestic handicrafts, customs, folk costumes, domestic products and crafts, local events and fairs,

gastronomic values of the national cuisines of the mentioned nations, etc. In addition to the fact that the mentioned sociocultural values can be important as independent tourist motives, by combining them with the natural factors of the RK, through a complementary function they can create a significant offer for tourists at the local, regional, national, and international levels [77–80].

4. Methodology

Regarding the previous research on sustainable tourism in the protected areas of Vojvodina, this paper is a resumption of the author's research on sustainable tourism in the protected areas of Vojvodina, and their natural and sociocultural factors, which can represent an exceptional potential for sustainable tourism. By including as many protected areas as possible in the subject of research, more reliable results can be obtained at the regional and national levels.

The research model was compiled according to the Prism of Sustainability research model [7,8,10]. The quantitative methodology was used in this research. The survey technique included a written and online questionnaire. In addition to the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents, the questionnaire contained statements related to the natural and sociocultural factors of this protected area. The questionnaire contained a total of 22 statements grouped into two categories and 4 statements that directly relate to the respondents' satisfaction. The survey was conducted using the random sample method. By filling out the questionnaire, the respondents gave their consent that the results of the survey could be used for scientific purposes and the publication of the results. The survey of residents and visitors was carried out through personal contacts and with the help of thematic social groups.

The statements that were examined through the questionnaire as an instrument concern the natural and sociocultural values of the RK. Respondents expressed their views in relation to certain statements divided into two groups. The examined natural factors relate to the position of the protected area, the construction of tourist infrastructure, the protection of flora and fauna, the existence of educational centers, ethical codes, protection zones, exploitation of resources, the existence of certain pressures on the protected area, and others. Sociocultural factors refer to the role of residents in the system of planning, the protection and promotion of tourism, the existence of local products and events in the tourist offer, the existence of interaction between visitors and residents through various educational activities, then the interest of visitors in various elements of the sociocultural tourism offer and other indicators.

In addition to the above statements, the impact of sustainable tourism on the satisfaction of respondents was determined with the help of a questionnaire. This was achieved by the fact that the questionnaire also contained 4 statements that directly concerned satisfaction with sustainable tourism. The interviewees also expressed their opinions on these claims through their measure of the impact of sustainable tourism on the satisfaction of residents and visitors; a simple regression analysis was used as part of data processing and their presentation.

By applying the PoS model in this research, the individual influence of natural and sociocultural factors on sustainable tourism can be examined. This makes it possible to identify weaker and stronger tourism factors, which will benefit planning measures for tourism development in the RK [8–11].

Respondents ranked their answers using a five-point Likert scale [81], where the answers were as follows: 1—completely disagree; 3—neither agree nor disagree; and 5—completely agree. In the conception of the questionnaire and research model, research on sustainable tourism function within protected areas was used [7,9,73,82–85].

The research model can be seen in Figure 3.

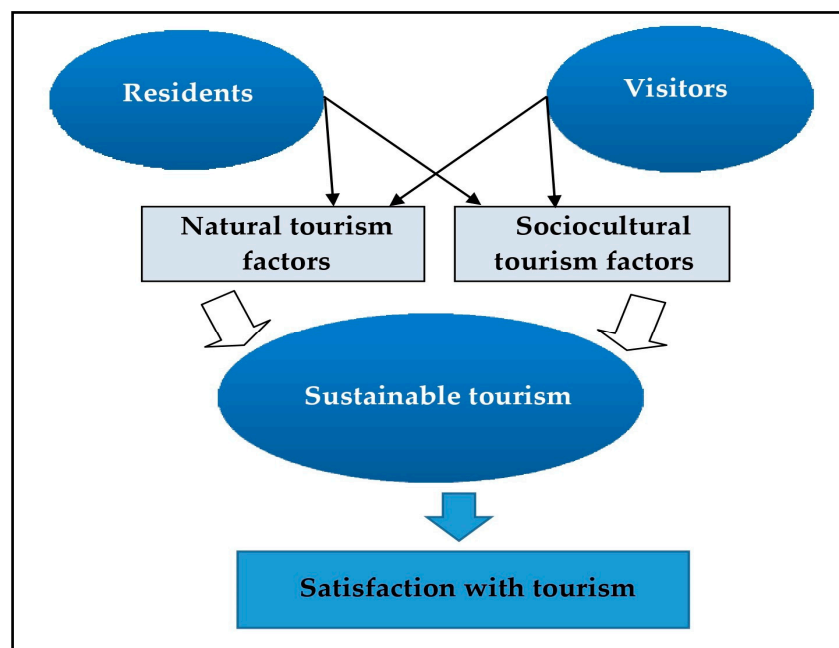


Figure 3. The conceptual model. Adapted from Trišić et al. [86].

Processing of the collected data and their presentation were conducted with SPSS v.21 software (IBM, Armonk, NY, USA). The research model in this article differs from the authors' previous ones in that the study of sustainable tourism was conceived through the study of natural and sociocultural factors of tourism development within this protected area. By identifying single values of the investigated factors, it is possible to influence the planning and creating strategies of tourism development and its control in the RK [86–88].

The validity of the completed questionnaires was ensured by their control, while Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used for the validity of the given responses as part of the statistical analysis of the obtained data.

The examination was carried out in the periods from June to September 2022 and from May to October 2023.

5. Results

By checking the completed questionnaires, it can be concluded that all of them are valid for analysis because they are correctly filled in. A total of 750 respondents were surveyed (470 residents and 280 visitors). A total of 150 residents and 90 visitors (32% of respondents) were interviewed in personal contact. Residents are inhabitants of Deliblato settlement with a total of 47%, Mramorak 31%, and Kovin 22%. Of the total number of surveyed visitors in this protected area, 77% were domestic visitors. The countries which foreign visitors come from (23%) are Romania, Montenegro, Croatia, Hungary, Switzerland, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and others with a smaller share in the final number.

The majority of respondents (both groups) were male (61%). Their average age was 29 (from 18 to 79). Out of the total number of respondents (for both groups), most of them had secondary education, 70%, a total of 9% completed primary education, 17% graduated from colleges or faculties, and 4% had a master's or doctorate.

The statistical analysis of the data was subjected to the verification of the reliability of the variables with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient [86]. Table 2 shows the values obtained by surveying residents and visitors for both groups of factors.

Table 2. Residents' and visitors' perceptions of sustainable tourism ($n = 750$).

Sustainable Tourism Tourism Factors/Values	Residents ($n = 470$)		Visitors ($n = 280$)	
	α	Mean	α	Mean
Natural tourism factors	0.718	3.75	0.811	3.68
The reserve has good traffic connections with other cities		4.03		4.17
There are rare forms of relief in the reserve (elevations, depressions, cliffs, dunes)		4.88		4.15
Rare plant and animal species are protected in the reserve		4.16		3.88
There are facilities in the reserve that do not harm the environment		3.87		3.39
There is no waste or wastewater in the reserve		3.59		3.89
There is a visitor/info center in the reserve		4.01		3.56
There are marked eco trails in the reserve		2.09		3.01
There is no exploitation of resources (wood, water, animals) in the reserve.		3.77		3.13
There is a threat from agricultural land in the reserve		4.12		4.33
There are no major pollutants in the vicinity of the reserve		3.01		3.24
Sociocultural tourism factors/values	0.844	3.62	0.705	3.66
There is interaction between residents and visitors		3.22		3.59
Local products are available to visitors		4.02		3.32
Visitors buy local homemade products		3.54		4.02
Residents educate visitors about the importance of protecting this area		2.55		3.01
Cultural institutions and historical sites are available to visitors		4.17		4.03
Visitors visit cultural institutions and cultural monuments		3.22		3.96
Visitors have ethical codes related to activities in the protected area at their disposal		4.01		4.22
Visitors can learn about the history of the population		4.06		3.69
Residents are employed in the protected area		2.56		3.01
There are tourist activities in the reserve		3.96		4.01
There are local events that visitors can visit in the reserve		4.22		3.96
Visitors are participants in local events		3.96		3.11

Items measured on a 5-point Likert agreement scale α —Cronbach Alpha Reliability.

Table 3 shows the average values of satisfaction with tourism development for both groups of respondents.

Table 3. Scale items for the satisfaction index.

Index	Residents ($n = 470$)		Visitors ($n = 280$)	
	α	Mean	α	Mean
	0.763	4.07	0.833	4.11
I am satisfied that tourism in the protected area brings different benefits for me		3.96		4.03
I am satisfied because tourism contributes to increasing the attractiveness of this protected area		4.32		4.17
I am satisfied that there is an opportunity for the development of tourism in this area		4.25		4.09
I am satisfied with the state of tourism in this protected area		3.77		4.13

Regression analysis can be used to examine how tourist development factors affect the growth of sustainable tourism and how sustainable development affects respondents' satisfaction [6,7,9]. The assumption was supported by all factor scores as significant predictors of satisfaction with tourism, accounting for 34% (residents) and 38% (visitors) of the variances explained ($R_1^2 = 0.339$; $R_2^2 = 0.376$) (Table 4).

Table 4. Regression analysis of satisfactions ($n = 750$).

Satisfaction with Tourism Items	Residents		Visitors	
	β^1	p -Value	β^1	p -Value
Natural tourism values	0.277	0.056	0.394	0.103
Sociocultural tourism values	0.305	0.115	0.396	0.289

¹ Standardized β value used $R_1^2 = 0.339$; $R_2^2 = 0.376$.

6. Discussion

6.1. Theoretical Implications

The presented results indicate the relative sameness of the responses given by both residents and visitors. The reliability of the variables was statistically tested with Cronbach Alpha (Table 2). Natural tourism factors (10 items) had values of 0.72 and 0.81, while sociocultural tourism factors (12 items) had values of 0.84 and 0.71. Cottrell et al. [74] and Trišić et al. [86] pointed out that an “ α ” of 0.60 and above can be accepted as reliable for analysis. Sociocultural tourism factors have slightly lower average values (3.62 and 3.66) compared to natural tourism factors (3.75 and 3.68). Residents rated the statements related to sociocultural factors the lowest, namely that residents educate visitors about the importance of protecting this reserve (2.55) and residents are employed in the RK (2.56). Other factors have average and higher values. As the least-rated sociocultural factors, the visitors singled out exactly those factors pointed out by the residents (3.01 and 3.01). Other factors had higher values.

Residents rated the claim that local events, cultural institutions, and historical sites (4.17) are available to visitors with the highest rating (4.22). In addition, the factors that had significant values were the possibility of educating about the history of the population (4.06), the availability of local products (4.02), and the availability of ethical codes (4.01). The visitors assigned the highest scores to the following sociocultural factors: availability of ethical codes (4.22), availability of cultural institutions and historical sites (4.03), and availability of domestic products (4.02). Other factors were rated somewhat lower but with ratings higher than average.

Natural tourism factors had slightly higher average values for both groups of respondents (3.75 and 3.68). Residents rated the lowest statements related to factors that eco-paths are marked in the reserve (2.09) and that there are no significant pollutants in the reserve vicinity (3.01). For visitors, the lowest rated were the claims that there are eco-trails (3.01) and that there is no exploitation of resources in the reserve (3.13). Other factors had significantly higher values.

If the survey results of the residents’ and visitors’ satisfaction with sustainable tourism are analyzed, relatively similar values can be noticed (Table 3). The total mean satisfaction with sustainable tourism development for residents and visitors was 4.07 and 4.11. By testing the reliability of the variables using Cronbach Alpha, the values 0.76 and 0.83 were obtained, which points to the reliability of the residents’ and visitors’ responses regarding their satisfaction with sustainable tourism.

After applying the regression analysis, it can be determined that both groups of factors contribute to sustainable tourism and that sustainable tourism has a significant impact on the satisfaction of residents and visitors. It can be concluded that sustainable tourism, with the help of the natural and sociocultural values of the RK, affects the satisfaction of both residents and visitors.

6.2. Managerial Implications

The results of the research indicate that on the occasion of planning and development of tourism in the RK, it is necessary to intensify the role of the local population, primarily in educating visitors about the importance of protecting this area and developing sustainable tourism forms. That can be achieved through the implementation of workshops and educational centers [6]. Also, schools in nature can play an important role [10]. By expanding

the different spectrum of such activities and involving residents, greater local employment could be ensured. Financing these activities can be provided from different funds.

By analyzing the obtained values of sociocultural factors for sustainable tourism development, it can be concluded that the role of the local population is of crucial importance for different tourism forms. In addition to visiting the RK and learning about the nature of the reserve, the visitors expressed their views that they were interested in the cultural heritage and ethno-social values of the local population. These factors can form significant complementary tourist motives; together with natural motives, they can influence the RK to become a destination for the development of various tourism forms.

When planning tourism development, the views of visitors expressed in this way may point to certain needs for improving the infrastructure in the RK [85]. Eco-trails can be extremely important for the development of educational and scientific research tourism, bird-watching, excursions, and sport–recreational tourism [3,4]. According to visitors' assessments, exploitation of resources is present in the RK to a certain extent. The assumption is that exploitation refers to controlled fishing on Kraljevac Lake and the use of the surrounding land for agricultural production. This is also confirmed by residents' and visitors' assessments that there is agricultural land around the reserve (4.12 and 4.33) which is a threat to the protected area. The reason is present in the fact that agricultural land is treated with chemical agents that can easily reach the core of this protected area via watercourses or soil. Additionally, residents and visitors gave relatively high marks to the claims that the RK has a good geographical location and good traffic connections, that there are rare landforms in the protected area, that flora and fauna are protected in a certain way, and that there is no wastewater and landfills that can directly pollute this nature reserve. The values obtained in this way indicate that the RK possesses important natural factors that are a significant prerequisite for the development of nature-based tourism forms. By properly valorizing these natural values, the RK can be an integral part of the tourist offer.

6.3. Sociocultural Implications

The development of tourism in this protected area is equally important for both groups of respondents. Both residents and visitors benefit from tourism development. When planning and developing certain nature-based and cultural forms of tourism, it is important to strengthen mutual interaction between residents and visitors [89]. The promotion of culture, local products, and brands is an important activity for the local population [90]. This will provide benefits to both, residents and visitors.

The socio-cultural impacts of sustainable tourism are related to strengthening the importance of the role of residents in planning, growth, development control and promotion of this protected area as a tourist destination.

The analysis of the obtained data established that sustainable tourism affects the satisfaction of respondents to a significant extent. This impact was achieved with the help of the natural and sociocultural values of the RK. The data, in this way, play a very important role in defining the individual roles of all subjects in the development of tourism in the RK. In addition to the importance of nature conservation, it is very important to develop the significant role of residents and visitors. Representatives of the local community can include in the tourist offer their local domestic products, acquaintance with local crafts, culture, tradition, events, gastronomy, etc. Also, the sociocultural impacts of sustainable development are based on the interaction of residents and visitors, the development of education programs on protection and managed and guided services [91].

6.4. The Policies and Suggestions

If the results of this research are compared with the author's previous research [7,86] and the research that served to design this research model [8,10], the following policies and suggestions can be formulated:

- In all studied protected areas, there is an awareness of respondents about the importance of protecting nature and all its elements. This is the primary goal of sustainable

tourism. With the help of residents' and visitors' positive awareness of the importance of nature protection, certain activities can be planned to include the RK in the tourist offer.

- Natural factors are the primary resources for the development of tourism. All forms of tourism in the RK must comply with ecological postulates. In addition to these factors, the sociocultural values of RK are of a complementary type.
- Improperly built infrastructure, the exploitation of resources, and unprotected representatives of flora and fauna negatively contribute to sustainable tourism. During the development of tourism in the RK, the special attention of managers must be focused on preventing the exploitation of resources, protecting the ecosystem, building eco-facilities, educational centers and trails, zoning, applying ethical codes and establishing the limits of acceptable changes [76,85].
- Strengthening the role of residents in tourism development and development control is extremely important.
- Sociocultural sustainability must be based on developing interaction between visitors and residents, the exchange of experiences, education, and a joint role in tourist activities.
- The forms of nature-based and cultural tourism can significantly impact the sustainable development of tourism in the protected areas.

7. Conclusions

The concluding considerations of the research carried out should also be part of the creation of new opportunities for the development of protected areas. This research indicates the importance of the obtained results for the implementation of tourism for the growth of destination development.

Examining factors for tourism development within protected areas is important from the aspect of sustainable tourism. Unexploited potentials can be identified, valorized [92,93], and used as motives for tourist visits on that occasion. In destinations with a sensitive ecosystem, such as the RK, nature is the primary resource for the development of various tourism forms. Therefore, those activities that take into account the biological, geological, spatial, and ecosystem characteristics of protected areas are important. Supporting positive and limiting negative impacts of tourism on the environment, the valorization of natural and sociocultural values, and their monitoring are especially important in tourist destinations such as protected areas [94]. In addition, analysis of the state and perspectives of tourism development is an integral part of management processes where ecosystem protection is a primary management function. The role of residents in the development of tourism in the RK is particularly important. Representatives of the local population can promote local culture and the significance of nature protection in the RK in the best way. In addition, residents should be active agents of management and controllers of tourism development, thus strengthening institutional sustainability [95]. A system of values set in this way and the defined role of all actors can contribute to tourism development to have a sustainable character.

The RK has significant potential for tourism growth. In addition to a favorable geographical and traffic location, this protected area has rare geological forms, wetlands, rare flora and fauna, the cultural heritage of the population living near the protected area, and other values. In addition to natural features, the social values of the population are of great importance for tourism growth. In the examination of the natural and sociocultural factors of the RK that can condition tourism development, significant results were obtained using the technique of surveying residents and visitors. Unlike the previous research, this research included visitors to the protected area as respondents. The research model made it possible to identify stronger and weaker natural and sociocultural factors of tourism development in the RK. After analyzing the results of the research, it can be concluded that the RK possesses significant factors for the development of nature-based and cultural tourism forms. Certain potentials of this protected area have not been used to a sufficient extent, and some values have not been valorized.

The conception of sustainable tourism requires essential ethical changes with all participants of the tourism process, from the tourism industry as the carrier and creator of the offer to tourists as users of tourist services [96]. Sustainable tourism can generate positive economic benefits for stakeholders in tourism development. Carefully planned, organized, and controlled tourism could encourage funding for research, education, and conservation, which is not often the case with destinations having nature as a primary resource.

The researched sociocultural factors are an indication that it is necessary to strengthen the education of visitors, the professional guide service, the control of the use of resources, management processes, and marketing in the RK. In addition, this research aimed to examine whether sustainable tourism affects the satisfaction of residents and visitors. By analyzing the obtained data, it can be concluded that sustainable tourism affects the satisfaction of respondents to a significant extent.

Two basic principles of the management of protected areas are currently buried in Serbia. These are the concepts of conservation and inclusive protection. The concept of inclusive protection also implies sustainable development of the destination. The connection between the management of the protected area and the policy of the sustainable development of local communities in this territory is currently not overshadowed. That is why it is necessary to define the way of including local communities in the management process of area protection.

In order to preserve natural assets and include them in the tourism development of a destination, region or country, it is extremely important to create specific evolution and protection policies. Bearing this in mind, and analyzing and comparing the existing and potential factors, the RK is a special nature reserve that possesses the necessary attractiveness for the development of various specific tourism forms. First, there is primary nature-based tourism, educational tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism, bird-watching, scientific-research tourism, rural tourism, sports, fishing, etc. These special tourism forms can directly affect sociocultural, ecological, economic, and institutional benefits as prerequisites for sustainable development.

Some proposals could be the introduction of mechanisms in the management plans of protected areas and financial benefits for local communities. In addition, it is necessary to involve the public and local communities in decision making and management processes. Given the importance of these assumptions, the authors have carried out extensive research, which they will write about in the next paper.

Limitation and Future Research

During this research, there were obstacles that were overcome by a well-designed survey questionnaire as well as pre-arranged visits. Field research is always a challenge for researchers, given the impossibility of predicting the different situations in which they may find themselves. This means the impossibility of predicting the number of respondents, their structure and willingness to answer in advance. In addition, weather plays a very important role in the number of visitors to protected natural assets. When the weather is nice, without precipitation, the number of visitors is higher. Also, during the warmer part of the year, the number of visitors to these destinations increases.

According to this, these investigations had their ups and downs and took a little longer than expected. The researchers returned to RK several times with the desire to directly survey as many visitors as possible. In addition, the limitations were questionnaires that had a large number of questions, which represented a problem for respondents because their attention span did not last long. Therefore, interviewers must possess, in addition to good interviewing techniques, a great knowledge of the field in which they work as well as personal charm and a way to interest the respondents.

The obtained scientific results will serve the authors in their future research on sustainable tourism in other protected areas of Vojvodina. Expanding the sample and research subjects can result in more reliable results. The results obtained in this way can be of importance for the preparation of various case studies, protection studies, and action plans

for tourism development and tourist offers at the local, regional, and national levels. In addition to the above-mentioned, the authors plan to compare the obtained research results with the results of sustainable tourism research in protected areas from the region or the world. This will help to constitute certain management measures and activities, which have contributed to other protected areas and destinations with different results of tourism development. Therefore, these results may have international significance in examining the opportunities for sustainable tourism development in protected areas as important tourism destinations.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, T.S., I.T., E.B., S.Š. and F.N.; methodology, T.S., I.T., E.B., F.N. and A.N.C.; software I.T., E.B., S.Š. and A.N.C.; validation I.T., E.B., S.Š., F.N. and A.N.C.; formal analysis, T.S., E.B., S.Š. and F.N.; investigation, T.S., I.T., E.B., S.Š. F.N. and A.N.C.; resources, T.S., I.T., E.B. and F.N.; data curation, I.T., E.B., S.Š. and A.N.C.; writing—original draft preparation, T.S., I.T., E.B., S.Š., F.N. and A.N.C.; writing—review and editing, I.T., E.B., S.Š., F.N. and A.N.C.; visualization, I.T., E.B., S.Š. F.N. and A.N.C.; supervision, T.S., I.T., E.B., S.Š. and F.N.; project administration, T.S., E.B., S.Š. F.N. and A.N.C.; funding acquisition, I.T., E.B., S.Š. and F.N. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: The data that support the findings of this study are available upon reasonable request from the authors.

Conflicts of Interest: Author Snežana Štetić was employed by the International Research Academy of Science and Art and Balkan Network of Tourism Experts. The remaining authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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