

## INTRODUCTION – HIGH SCARDUS TRAIL

High Scardus Trail (HST) is a transnational mountain tourism product connecting the mountain ranges in the border areas of Albania, Macedonia, and Kosovo. The name originates from the Latin name for the Shar Mountain, the biggest massive in the region, *Scardus* or colourful mountain. And colourful is what the HST is in terms of landscapes, biodiversity, people, tradition, and food!

High Scardus Trail product is presented and promoted in a small guidebook, maps and at websites: <http://www.balkanhikingadventure.com> <http://www.peaksofthebalkans.com>



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The mountain tourism product High Scardus Trail is a result of the project Future Prospects through Mountain Tourism, implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) over the course of 2017. The project's aim was to improve the employment opportunities in the tourism sector in the border region between Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania by developing and promoting existing and new regional adventure tourism offers. The development of the product included: the marking and signposting of 33 hiking trails on five mountain massifs in the cross border region of Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia; identification, selection, and inclusion of accommodation and catering facilities along the trail, as well as points of interest linked to the cultural and natural heritage of the region. In order to upgrade the existing infrastructure, the project supported the start-up and extension of existing small accommodation and catering businesses. Through a tailor-made training programme on rural tourism, over 170 representatives of the targeted communities have increased their knowledge and skills for service provision in the segments of catering, accommodation, small scale production, artisanship, and guiding. The training facilitated creation of wide networks of different potential service providers, which serve to ensure quality tourism offer leading to income generation and new employment opportunities.

## ABOUT THE TRAIL

High Scardus Trail is a transnational hiking trail with a total length of 495 km that is found on the mountains in the border areas of Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo. The trail passes through six national parks, two in the Republic of Macedonia, one in the Republic of Kosovo, and three in the Republic of Albania. If you take into account the numerous connecting trails to the main trail, which start/lead to populated areas and serve as access or exit points of the trail, the High Scardus Trail can be seen as a system of interconnected trails. This is especially important for creating a tour.

For the passage of the main trail in its entirety, from its starting point in the northeastern part of the Sharr Mountains in Macedonia to its end the Prespa region in Albania, it takes about twenty days hiking, which is two to three times longer than the duration of an average trip in adventure tourism. However, the network character of the path, that is, the existence of a main path and connection links allow the creation of tours of different lengths, durations and difficulty levels, thereby creating numerous opportunities to meet the interests and needs of different categories of hikers and visitors.

more information:



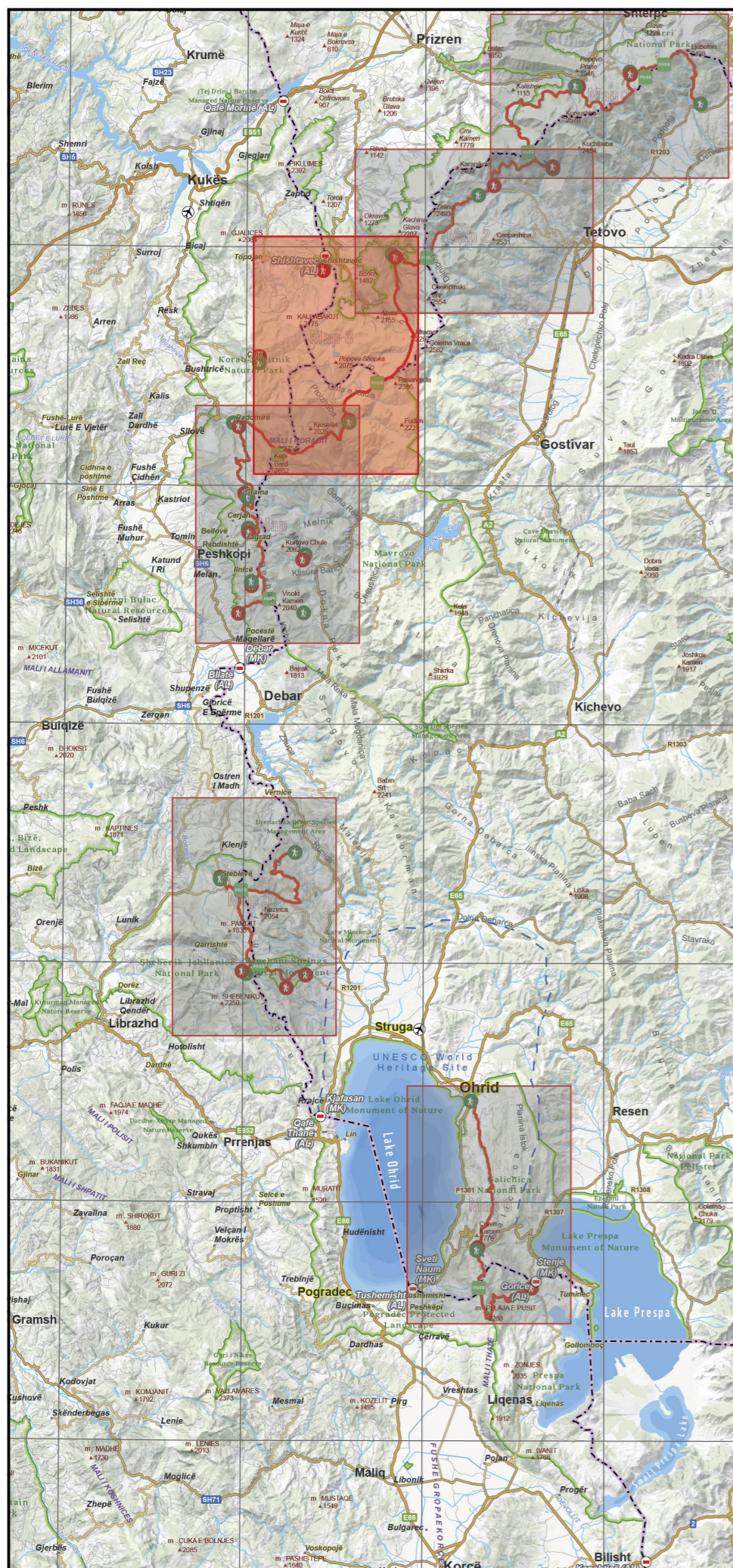
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## TIPS

- Always be well-informed and prepared for the trail that you are traversing (professional mountain guides, guidebook(s), map(s)).
- If you do not have enough mountaineering experience, hire a professional mountain guide.
- Never hike alone.
- Be informed about the weather conditions.
- Always wear appropriate hiking clothes and equipment that is suitable for the actual weather conditions.
- Always carry sufficient quantities of water and food.
- Respect the environment.
- Follow the existing signalling (markings and signposts).



## THE VILLAGE OF BROD – SKI CENTER ARXHENA – RESTELICA - RADIKA PEAK – TORBESHKI MOST

HST – 06

NAME OF THE TRAIL / ACRONYM	HST – 06
ALTITUDE OF THE STARTING POINT	The village of Brod – 1.326 masl
HIGHEST POINT	Radika green pass – 2.295 masl
ALTITUDE OF THE ENDING POINT	Torbeshki Most – 1.331 masl
ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE	964 m
DURATION OF THE HIKING TOUR	7 – 9 h
LENGTH OF THE TOUR	27 km
DIFFICULTY OF THE TOUR	●●●●○
NECESSARY FITNESS LEVEL	●●●●○

### Description of the trail

*Location – mountain: Shar Mountain (south segment) – part of the Mavrovo National Park*

From the village of Brod an asphalt road 2,5 km long leads towards Hotel Arxhena, where the hike towards the ski center starts. After climbing from an altitude of 1.931 m to an altitude of 2.222 m, the ridge of the mountain Zli – Potoke starts, which is approximately three km long and 2.286 m high. Then the trail moves southward until reaching the peak of Mramor. The trail continues to move to the south all the way to the peak Mramor. From here the trail starts to descend to a height of 2.072 m. From this point the trail moves south and passes the foothill of the peaks Mala Vraca (2.453 m) and Crna Karpa (2.404 m). From here the trail ascends to the ridge of Shar Mountain where the green pass is. On the green pass on the Radika Planina (2.295 m), the trail descends to the Cafa e Kadis (1.860 m), which is located between Bozhina Planina and Radika Planina. From here, the trail moves along the western slopes of Bozhina Planina through tall grass and a soft base, passing several sheep farms, descending to a wide unpaved road. This road to the west leads to the triangle between Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo on Lukovo Pole and on the east towards the area Srezimir and the asphalt road from Mavrovo to Debar. The path is the natural border between the mountain range Korab and the mountain range Shar Planina and is set beside the first spring of the River Radika. The trail ends at the locality "Torbeshki Most" where a farm and a dairy are located. There is water near the farm and it is possible to erect tents close to the farm.

### Panoramas and landscapes:

- View towards Albania, Kosovo, springs of the River Radika, and the springs of the River Adzhina.

### Access to the starting point:

- Highway Prishtina – Prizren, 80 km
- Local road Prizren – Dragash, 35 km
- Local road Dragash – Brod, 15 km. In the village parking is available for a limited number of vehicles.

### Access to the ending point:

- Highway Skopje – Mavrovo, 88 km
- Local road / dirt road Mavrovo – Nichpur – Torbeshki Most, 25 km. There is parking available for a large number of vehicles at the farm near the River Radika.

### Accommodation and food:

- Accommodation facility Guest houses – Kurt Husein, the village of Brod (41°59'31.01"N 20°42'29.98"E / 41.99194444, 20.70833333)
- The area offers numerous possibilities for enjoyment. Accommodation possibilities can be found in Mavrovo, Trnica (41°42'36.05"N 20°41'18.28"E / 41.71013889, 20.68833333), Zhironica (41°40'48.91"N 20°34'48.68"E / 41.68025278, 20.58027778) where guest houses and restaurants are available, or a camping site near the milk farm at Radika River.

## TORBESHKI MOST – KORAB PEAK – VILLAGE OF RADOMIRĚ

HST – 07

NAME OF THE TRAIL / ACRONYM	HST – 07
ALTITUDE OF THE STARTING POINT	Torbeshki Most – 1.331 masl
HIGHEST POINT	Korab – 2.753 masl
ALTITUDE OF THE ENDING POINT	The village of RadomirĚ – 1.265 masl
ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE	1.433 m
DURATION OF THE HIKING TOUR	8 – 10 h
LENGTH OF THE TOUR	23 km
DIFFICULTY OF THE TOUR	●●●●○
NECESSARY FITNESS LEVEL	●●●●○

### Description of the trail

*Location – mountain: Korab – (central segment) – part of Mavrovo National Park*

The trail is one of the most visited trails in the Mavrovo National Park because of the peak, Golem Korab, (2.753 m) which is the highest peak in the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Albania. This stage of the trail starts from the farm under Bozhina Planina located on the road from Srezimir towards the tripoint between Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo and continues eastward along the River Adzhina and up to the place where the path diverges right towards the border post "Karaula Pobeda" and left towards Srezimir. Following the dirt road for approximately one kilometer, turning left after passing a concrete bridge and walking up for approximately ten meters leads into the yard of the border post "Karaula Pobeda" at altitude of 1.475 m.

From here, the trail continues through beech forest until it reaches the sheep farm Beldanja at altitude of 1.750 m where the pastures begin to spread out. Above the sheep farm, at 1.860 m, there is a spring, which is the last in this part of the mountain. The next spring is in the foothill of the Golem Korab peak. The trail is visible, easy to follow and marked.

From Kobilino Pole starts a southward traverse until reaching an altitude of 2.450 m where a view towards Golem Korab, which is at 2.753 m opens up. The climb towards this point is through the north – east slopes of the peak on a visible and marked trail. The descent is made through the western slopes of the peak until reaching the village of RadomirĚ. The trail passes through pastures and a small rocky part. While descending, several glacial lakes can be seen and the trail is visible until entering the village of RadomirĚ.

### Panoramas and landscapes:

- View from Kobilino Pole (2.380 m) – a beautiful panorama of the surrounding peaks (Ribnicka skala, Kabash, Mali Korab, Dlaboka Reka, Mavrovo Lake, Stogovo, Bistra, Deshat, and Shar Mountain).
- The view from the top is unforgettable, with favourable weather conditions allowing for a view that stretches westward as far as the peaks of Rila Mountain and Pirin and eastward to the peaks of the Prokletie Mountain.
- Descending towards the village of RadomirĚ, the populated places in the foothill of Korab in Albania can be seen to the west.

### Access to the starting point:

- Highway Skopje – Mavrovo, 88 km.
- Local road Mavrovo – Nichpur – Torbeshki Most, 25 km. There is parking available for a large number of vehicles in the farm near the River Radika on Torbeshki Most.

### Access to the ending point:

- Highway Tirana – KukĚs, 145 km.
- Local road KukĚs – RadomirĚ, 45 km. There is parking available for a large number of vehicles in the village of RadomirĚ.

### Accommodation and food:

- The area offers numerous possibilities for enjoyment. Accommodation possibilities can be found in Mavrovo, Trnica (41°42'36.05"N 20°41'18.28"E / 41.71013889, 20.68833333), Zhironica (41°40'48.91"N 20°34'48.68"E / 41.68025278, 20.58027778) where guest houses and restaurants are available, or a camping site near the milk farm at Radika River.
- Multiple options for accommodation in the village of RadomirĚ (41°48'58.00"N 20°29'6.03"E / 41.81611111, 20.48500000).

## KORAB

Korab is a mountain located in the border areas of the Republic of Macedonia (KopaĚ) and the Republic of Albania (Mali Korabit). The mountain massif extends in the direction North – South. The north is separated from the massif of Shar Planina with the valley of the first spring of the river Radika and the valley of Lukovo Pole and continues to the south in the longitudinally laid massifs of the Deshat and Krchin mountains that extend to Debarsko Pole, where today there is an artificial lake.

The highest point is the peak Golem Korab at 2.764 m, which is the highest peak in the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Albania. The peak is sharp, rocky, bare, and offers fantastic panoramic views.

Due to the natural and unique value of the landscape, in 1952 the mountain part of the Macedonian side was declared a protected area that is part of the Mavrovo National Park.

The mountain range has more than 20 peaks higher than 2.000 meters. The massif has alpine characteristics, with steep and high sides rising above the valleys in which rivers flow. Vegetation in the higher mountain zones is typically alpine. The massif has several natural crossings that in the past were used as important communication lines between populated places located on both sides of the border.

The mountain massif is rich in rivers and creeks that, after leaving the mountainous areas, flow into the rivers Radika and Drim. The mountain rivers are fast flowing, alternately placed in canyons and valleys and in many places, they form rapids and waterfalls. On the mountain is the highest waterfall in the Balkans - the Korab waterfall of Dlaboka River, which is 136 meters high and springs from the eastern side of the peak of Mali Korab in the Republic of Macedonia.

On the mountain there are many glacial lakes lying at an altitude of 1.300 to 2.500 meters. The largest lake is Lake Grama, which is located on the territory of the Republic of Albania, and the highest is the Great Korab Lake, which is at an altitude of 2.500 meters and represents the highest glacial lake in the Republic of Macedonia.

In the area of Korab mountain the High Scardus Trail starts from the locality Mlekara in the valley between Bozhina Mountain (Shar Planina) and the Korab massif in the Republic of Macedonia, climbing to the highest peak of Golem Korab, and then descending to the village of RadomirĚ in the Republic of Albania.

PRE PRINT VERSION PRE PRINT VERSION



## SHAR MOUNTAIN & KORAB MOUNTAIN

SOUTHWESTERN SEGMENT OF THE SHAR MOUNTAIN  
AND THE NORTHEASTERN SEGMENT OF KORAB MOUNTAIN  
MACEDONIA – KOSOVO – ALBANIA

HIKING MAP  
1 : 50 000



Trails:

HST – 06

HST – 06/1

HST – 06/2

HST – 06/3

HST – 07

HST – 07/1

Colourful trekking adventure in the heart of the Balkans



ISBN 978-608-4536-15-0



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Graphic design & prepress: Bobi Kjosov  
GIZ project: Future prospects through mountain tourism  
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Marking and signposting of trails: MC Ljuboten Tetovo, MC Bistra Dosvar, AC Paogonia Ohrid, MC Cent Kamen Vechari, MC Shari Prizren, Tourism association of Southern region of Kosovo, Regional development Agency Z Tirana...

Press: Vincent Grafica, Macedonia  
Copies: 500  
Published by: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GIZ  
A GIZ catalogue record for this publication is available from the National and University Library "St. Clement of Ohrid" – Macedonia  
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## SHAR MOUNTAIN

Shar Mountain is situated in the northwestern part of the Republic of Macedonia (Шар Планина), south part of Kosovo (Melet e Sharrit) and northeastern part of Albania (Melet e Sharrit or Sharr).

The massif extends from the northeast to the southwest for 80 km with a total surface area of around 1.600 km<sup>2</sup> (56,25% of that area is in the Republic of Macedonia, 43,12% in Kosovo, and 0,63% in Albania) making it one of the largest massifs in the Balkans.

Shar Mountain can be divided into three segments (though heterogeneous), according to its geological composition and its common geographical characteristics:

- Northeastern segment;
- Northwestern or central segment;
- Southern segment.

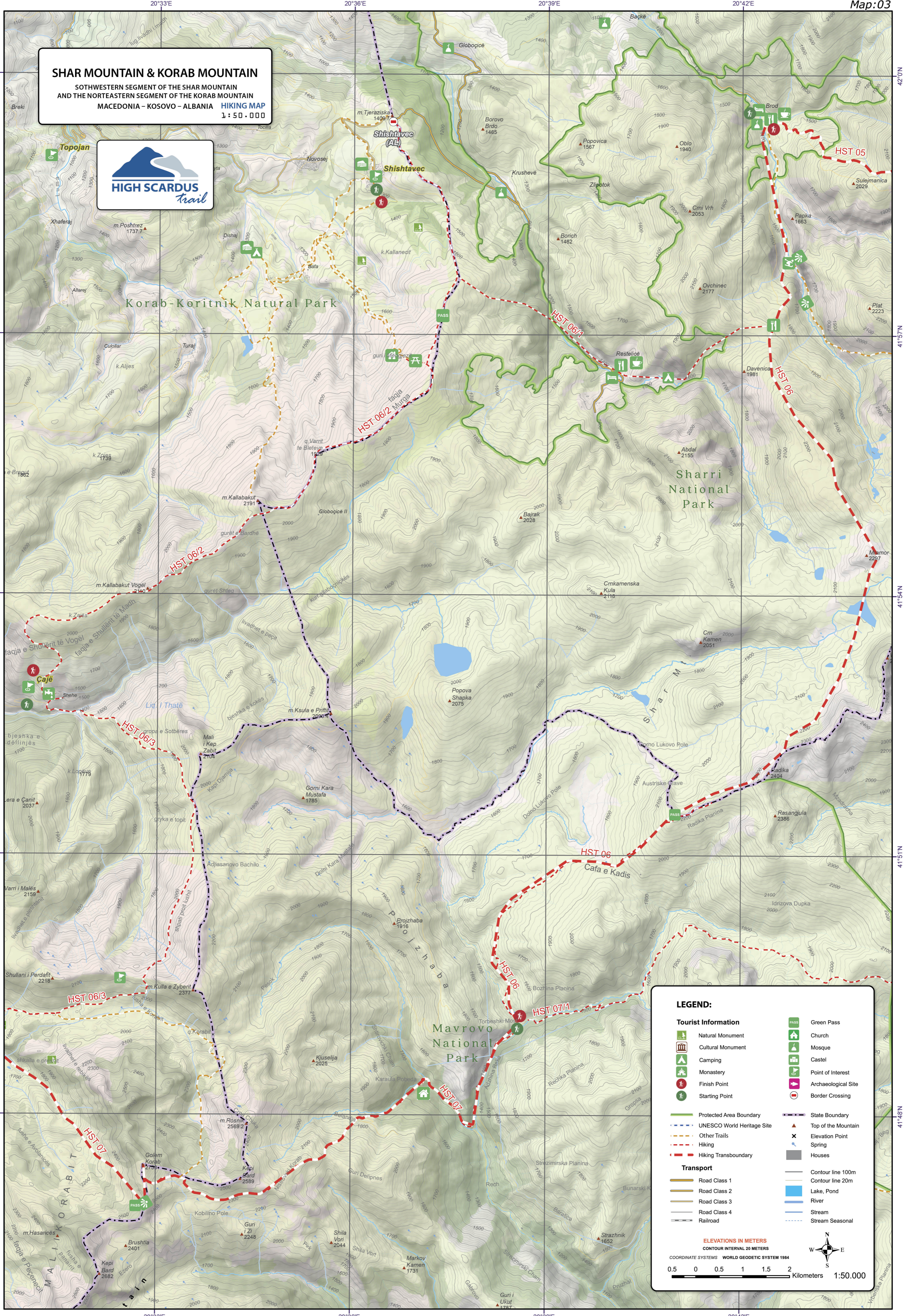
The approximate height of the mountain range is 2.200 m with Titov Vrv being the highest peak (2.747 m). It begins with the River Lepeneq and with the peak of Ljuboten, 2.499 m. It ends with Morava summit, 2.147 m, and Lake Mavrovo. Shara Mountain massif belongs to a group of young mountain chains and is characterized by a mountainous climate with cold winters and pleasant summers. At an elevation of 1.300 m the snow averages a depth of 1m and usually lasts for four months. The Eyes of Shar Mountain, as its glacial lakes are popularly known, are its special characteristic. There are 25 lakes that are constant, over 150 occasional lakes and as many smaller ponds. The water potential of this massif is huge and it has 200 springs of pure water. Among others, the mineral richness is represented by manganese, iron, chrome, molybdenum, and copper.

The massif is very rich with flora and fauna. It has an abundance of high-mountain pasture of about 45.000 hectares and high-trunk conifer woods. Fir and juniper trees are most common, and in the lower parts beech and chestnut forests are plentiful. Shar Mountain is a large massif that features a variety of habitats, home to around 2.000 different plant species. The total number of vascular plants in Macedonia is around 3.700 species; therefore Shar holds two-thirds of the national plant diversity. Additionally, with nearly 200 endemic and sub endemic plant taxa, this mountain is an important Balkan and European centre for floral endemism.

The flora of Shar Mountain is very diverse and interesting. Here, you can see species from arctic and sub-Mediterranean regions. The arctic species are unique, in that they originated from a former geological epoch – and are known as glacial relicts. Shar Mountain is a perfect home for some of these glacial relicts that adapted to survive in harsh weather conditions such as cold winds and snow throughout most of the year.

The fauna of Shar Mountain has over 44 species of wild animals, which are present on this mountain including the critically endangered Balkan lynx, bear, wolf and the Balkan chamois. Eagles, falcons, and hawks are also common on Shar Mountain. Although not as numerous as in the 1950s, the mountain pastures are still grazed by domestic breed of sheep. They are guarded by the widely known Sharplaninec, a shepherd dog which is a symbol of this mountain and is named after it.

**SHAR MOUNTAIN & KORAB MOUNTAIN**  
 SOUTHWESTERN SEGMENT OF THE SHAR MOUNTAIN  
 AND THE NORTHEASTERN SEGMENT OF THE KORAB MOUNTAIN  
 MACEDONIA - KOSOVO - ALBANIA **HIKING MAP**  
 1 : 50 000



**LEGEND:**

	Natural Monument		Green Pass
	Cultural Monument		Church
	Camping		Mosque
	Monastery		Castel
	Finish Point		Point of Interest
	Starting Point		Archaeological Site
	Protected Area Boundary		Border Crossing
	UNESCO World Heritage Site		Slate Boundary
	Other Trails		Top of the Mountain
	Hiking		Elevation Point
	Hiking Transboundary		Spring
	Road Class 1		Houses
	Road Class 2		Contour line 100m
	Road Class 3		Contour line 20m
	Road Class 4		Lake, Pond
	Railroad		River
			Stream
			Stream Seasonal

**ELEVATIONS IN METERS**  
 CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 METERS

COORDINATE SYSTEMS: WORLD GEODETIC SYSTEM 1984

0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Kilometers 1:50.000