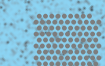
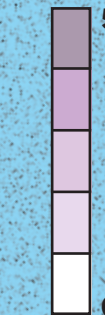


SKRIVENI GRAD 2025.

Tea Truta
i Duje Mikelić



-  harmful gases in the air
-  solid particles in the air
-  zone of highmortality in the event of oil tank explosion
-  1km²
-  Roman ruins
-  5 heavy metal concentrations in the surface layer of the sea (ppb)
0.1
-  asbestos embankment
- 1 shipyard
- 2 galvanizing plant
- 3 cargo port
- 4 grain terminal
- 5/6 old asbestos factory – crafting, sandblasting, painting and sanding of touristic ships
- 7 Kosica beach
- 9 /10 oil tanks
- 11 oil terminal
- 12/14 concrete plant
- 13 stone processing plant

18 979 inhabitants

The fact that the area of the eastern part of Kaštela Bay has had continuous settlement for over two millennia speaks to the uniqueness of this region on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. A natural harbor, which, with its enclosure, provides an ideal shelter from the sea. To its north and east, the karst massifs of Kozjak and Mosor rise, thus completing the defensive position of the narrow coastal area along the delta of the Jadro River. This small river, with only 4,328 meters in length, is the foundation of the millennia—old culture of this area. The area of the coastal impermeable flysch zone, which, in contact with carbonates, enables significant water phenomena. We can directly attribute such conditions to the value of the land used for agriculture, and later for livestock farming. The Illyrians, Greeks, Romans, Turks, and Slavs who lived here did not change the landscape and environment on a huge scale, but everything started changing at the beginning of the 20th century. The significant turning point in the development of settlements was the discovery of rich limestone deposits and the construction of the first cement factories. Thanks to the development of the cement industry, there was an influx of population from the Dalmatian hinterland to the area of the Split–Solin basin. This strengthened daily migrations and the need for the expansion of residential functions, creating the first indications of future agglomeration. The first cement factory built with Austro–Italian capital was Adriaportland in Solin (Sv. Kajo) in 1904, marking the beginning of industrialization in Dalmatia. Later, it was joined by the “10. kolovoz” factory (Majdan) in 1908 and the asbestos–cement products factory “Salonit” (Vranjic) in 1921. Former fields and vineyards were replaced by the heavy cement industry, resulting in a significant decrease in the share of agricultural population, replaced by occupations in the secondary sector. After the Second World War, the eastern part of Kaštela Bay continued to undergo rapid industrialization, this time under socialism. A railway station, steelworks, large oil tanks, shipbreaking yards, etc., were being constructed. All of this was accompanied by public infrastructure projects such as main roads and a dense network of new streets, elementary schools, kindergartens, health centers, etc. This large industrial basin in the hinterland of Split also attracted new inhabitants, which led to unplanned urban sprawl. Industrial cluttering of the mentioned space continued until the beginning of the 90s when, once again, political structures changed and everything stopped for a few years. Nowadays, the broader area of the Kaštela Bay is a combination of active industrial spaces and unrehabilitated industrial facilities. Among the numerous Yugoslav plants in that area, aside from the Split shipyard, the privatization processes were survived by the active factories of Cemex, formerly known as Dalmacijacement, and smaller facilities of Jadrankamen Kaštela, Željezara Split, and Adriacink. Additionally, it is a location of active oil storage facilities, INA's oil terminal, and a military oil depot. It is a lengthy and intricate endeavor to list all the environmental impacts caused by former shut–down factories and the repercussions of delaying their remediation after closure. The whole area has some kind of industrial contamination. The environment is polluted; health is impaired, and the landscape is damaged. It's essential to note that this industrial territory straddles the administrative boundaries of three cities: Kaštela, Solin, and Split. The only ones who are left fighting are the small local NGOs who have pinpointed a few crucial problems in the space that need to be addressed as soon as possible. Loose cargo is stored in the open just fifty meters from residential areas. Locals are constantly exposed to dust spreading throughout the bay, especially during loading. A huge amount of coal is used in factory furnaces. The complex has filters on the burning funnels, but residents complain about unpleasant, heavy odors at night and on weekends. Primarily because the furnaces are lit up at night when the smoke is less visible, and on weekends when the inspection has free days. Primary slag is a by–product from the coal burning and it is usually stored in the open in front of the factory.

INA — OIL TERMINAL (11)

Constant oil spills into the sea during tanker ships arrivals and oil transfers. It is all due to outdated infrastructure. The amount of oil leaked into the sea and river is constantly covered up.

AMEROPA — GRAIN TERMINAL (4)

The grain loading is done by crane in the open. Grain must be loaded using a conveyor belt in an enclosed loading area. More concerning is that the grain has to be sprayed with glyphosate and pesticides to control pests and germination, and that dust with a mixture of toxins spreads across the entire bay during loading.

NORTH PORT (3)

The port area has two bigger problems among many smaller ones. The first one concerns outdated infrastructure. It is impossible for the port's operations to meet the high ecological standards that locals demand. That is primarily because of the inherent local governmental port authority. Nobody has invested absolutely anything in these facilities for the past fifty years, which is why it has reached this state of neglect and all of the pollution problems. Although current port concessionaires' managers are doing some small adjustments because of the requirements of the local NGOs. Separators have been installed at the berth where iron is stored, so all contaminated water and rainwater from iron no longer go into the sea, which is good. Regular watering of loose cargo and all surfaces with an emulsion is carried out to prevent the dispersion of fine dust particles and create a protective layer, reducing dust emissions. High ecological standards demand more investment; closed handling, conveyor belts, filters, dust collectors, additional warehouses without loose cargo outdoors due to the proximity to residential areas, etc. Most of it is not planned, but the authorities are trying to push annexes to the current port in the shape of RO–RO and ferry terminals. This addition would make a mess in that already unsustainable part of the bay.

KOSICA BEACH (7)

is a location of high health risk. It has been identified through the waste management strategy and plan by the Republic of Croatia, posing a threat to the environment and human health by its existence. This location was the coastal part of the Salonit factory and it's still highly contaminated with asbestos.The entire coast has been formed by the discharge of asbestos into the sea and it is marked as a black spot in most environmental publications. The worst part is that the city of Solin invites people to this location, calling it a “city beach”, builds embankments, sets up showers and cabins there. Local's are demanding prohibition of access and seting up of warning signs indicating that this location is full of asbestos and awaiting remediation, instead of inviting people to swim at the “city beach” and thereby exposing them to health hazards.

“YACHT” CLUB (6)

The new owner is continuing the long history of polluting and neglecting the space, sea, and air. Non–compliance with the MARPOL convention and refusing to invest anything in the advancement of technologies and safety measures so that ship repairs could be done to the satisfaction of the workers and surrounding residents. There are major problems with sea pollution manifested in various ways, from oil in the sea, sewage, waste, ship paints and varnishes, nylon, etc. Sandblasting, grinding, ship hull intoning, ship assembly, ship repair work are carried out without any safety measures.

SALONIT FACTORY (5)

The factory has had significant impacts on the health of local people due to its historical production processes and the materials used. One of the primary concerns has been the production of asbestos–cement products, which can pose severe health risks when asbestos fibers are released into the air and inhaled. Asbestos exposure is linked to serious respiratory conditions such as asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma. Furthermore, the factory's operations, including emissions and waste disposal, have led to environmental pollution, which can indirectly affect the health of nearby residents through air and water contamination. The release of pollutants into the air and water can contribute to respiratory issues, skin problems, and other health problems for those living in the vicinity. After the closure of the factory, chaos ensues within the business premises. Dozens of companies operate (mostly illegally) on the former site, with most of them engaged in boat production. Thus, work with

plastic, sandblasting, painting, and other activities are carried out in still unremediated asbestos factory halls. Bulky and smaller waste is visible throughout the property, often ending up in the sea.

OMLADINAC FIELD — ASBESTOS SANITATION AREA (8)

The total remediated area of 74,000 square meters, which was conducted at least questionably. The buffer was not made thick enough. The entire area was not made as an auxiliary playground with zero spectator capacity and a ban on cars, while currently, a new grandstand is being excavated, and a road is planned (on asbestos–contaminated soil). In addition to all of the above, locals, primarily considering children, are denied access.

— Duje Mikelić

POLLUTED AIR AND DILUTED RESPONSIBILITY

In late March this year, the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods of northern Split finally had the facts that confirmed their long–running fears: the “Preliminary report on monitoring air quality by dustfall measurement” has been published by the Split–Dalmatia County institute for public health, with measurements from stations installed in the Brda neighbourhood of Split. The report confirmed that values have been continuously exceeded, which quite simply means that air quality in this area is a risk to citizens' health. This confirmation that the pollution is real has provoked three organised protests over the last month and a half, led by the initiatives of the inhabitants of Brda and Vranjic. The goal of the initiatives is to bring about a more tangible reaction on the part of the responsible authorities, more detailed investigation into the sources of the pollution, and, above all, to have the State Inspectorate send its officials to the affected areas. The measurement results themselves aren't overly surprising to those who know the location of the neighbourhood where the measurements take place, as the Brda borders the industrial zone of the Kopilice area on the Split peninsula, while the opposite coast is occupied by the likewise notorious industrial zone of the Kaštela Bay. If it happens that I prompted you to open a map, you'll notice a tiny peninsula between the two coasts, and on it an at first sight typical Dalmatian village called Vranjic: the prime witness to, and victim of, the rise and fall of Split's industry, as well as the epicentre of disapproval over the environmental degradation of Split over the past three years. In a year that marks the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the writer Miljenko Smoje, an additional motivation to open the map and notice the position and surroundings of this place may come from the symbolic information that this site, with its dystopian surroundings, served as the main backdrop for Smoje's cult television series, “Small Town”. The organised struggle of the inhabitants of Vranjic gathered around a civic initiative called “The place that wants to live 2020” began as a reaction to the project “Reconstruction and expansion of the Northern Harbour in the Vranjic basin” of the Split Port Authority, which was drafted while Andro Krstulović Opara (Croatian Democratic Union) was mayor, and headed by a previous CDU mayoral candidate, the Port Authority director Vico Mihanović. While the Covid restrictions were in full swing, a public consultation was held in line with the standard legal procedure, on the topic of the obligatory “Environmental Impact Assessment”, which is a prerequisite for the issuing of any kind of permit to embark on the construction of such an infrastructural project. At the time, various individuals, political actors and associations filed official complaints pointing out a number of absurdities that are part and parcel of such a project in such an area: the problem of transport connections, the deposited sediments from the erstwhile sewage discharge, the method to remediate shallow waters, the impact on the environment and on sea habitats... As for the absurdities concerning air quality, these are best illustrated by the treatment of the local population, still very noticeable today. The study stated: “... an increase in polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) is also expected. Such impacts are unavoidable, as the already elevated concentrations in the Vranjic basin are considered negative, but having in mind that the role of the Northern Harbour is to unburden the Split Harbour, PAH emissions in the centre of Split will fall, which is certainly a positive impact of the intervention under consideration.”

A similar number of inhabitants live in the immediate environs of the project as do in the centre of Split, but in the authors' view, the fall in the concentration of tourists and attractions seems to be more important than the fall in air quality. The people of Vranjic logically responded to this item in the Study by advocating for defining air pollution indicators and continuous monitoring by installing measurement stations. Three years later, the Northern Harbour project is sporadically announced, having become a national strategic project and secured a location permit, while all those who put forward reasoned criticisms of the project have been labelled “obstructors of the development of Split”, as per the usual scenario. However, construction hasn't been announced yet. During those three years, the inhabitants of Vranjic, Kopilica and Brda have tirelessly highlighted that the state of their surroundings as it is is more than concerning. That is to say, the entire broader area of the Kaštela Bay and the Vranjic–Solin basin is a mix of active industrial areas and unremediated industrial facilities. Among the many Yugoslavian industrial plants in the area, the active factories of Cemex (formerly Dalmacijacement), the smaller plants of the Jadrankamen Kaštela, the Željezara Split and Adriacink have all undergone privatisation processes, as has the Split shipyard. The location also houses active oil depots, the INA oil terminal, and the military oil storage. An attempt to list all the environmental impacts of the factories that were shut, as well as the impact of the postponement of the remediation after their closing, would be rather long and complex. For instance, along the access road to Vranjic, just next to the only children's playground in the village, the partly remediated former Salonit factory – the cause of the inhabitants' decades–long struggle with asbestosis – is situated. When it comes to this kind of industrial district, it's important to note that the area is an administrative boundary of three towns: Kaštela, Solin and Split. Although in an ideal scenario, remediation and ideas for development should be viewed holistically, in reality this is the most frequent site of conflicts among specific political interests. The measurements that spurred the aforementioned protests have primarily focussed on activities in the Northern Harbour, which is managed under a concession by a firm specializing in transshipment and storage of cargo, Luka d.d. Among other things, slag is warehoused in the immediate vicinity of the Brdo neighbourhood and across from the Vranjic peninsula, and the citizens are highly skeptical regarding its proper treatment. More than a hundred reports with photographs the inhabitants sent in have prompted the State Inspectorate to conduct a field visit. Naturally, the Luke d.d. management have disavowed any responsibility for the poor air quality measurement results, stating that their operation is in line with the law. In the cacophony of passing the parcel of responsibility for the poor measurement results and the activities in the entire zone, even the protesters and citizens themselves are actually no longer sure who ought to be responsible for the analysis, inspection, and protection of their health. More than half a century of exploiting these areas at the locals' expense and averting gazes in the face of all the accompanying health problems that have plagued generation after generation have resulted in built–up frustration and absolute distrust towards institutional help. Whatever the specificities of location and culture, this story is hardly unfamiliar in other areas too; it is just another illustrative example of such terrible quality of life. Along the Adriatic coast, in the hinterlands of all our tourist postcard towns or nearby settlements, similar stories are taking place: the remnants of unremediated erstwhile industries, quarries or deposited materials, with a dose of absurd development projects and valuable real estate wheelings and dealings, are suffocating the few inhabitants that persistently strive to, as the name of the initiative has it, live in these places. In this effort, their initiatives often receive little response, and transient, sensationalist interest among the public, until it becomes clear that this is not a problem just for some folks there in Brda (which means hills in Croatian), or, as a small–town banner put it more succinctly, “the faerie cries from up the hill, get up, Split before it's late”.

— Tea Truta, Bilten, 18.05.2023