

LAND USE CHANGES (RECORDED IN OLD MAPS) AND DELIMITATION OF THE MOST STABLE AREAS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LAND USE IN THE KAŠPERSKÉ HORY REGION

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Abstract

The paper deals with the development of cultural landscape in the area of study in the Kašperské Hory region, Czech Republic, from the 1730s to the present and documents changes in spatial structure of land use in this period. The aim of the paper is to briefly characterize main phases in land use development and identify land use changes and their trajectories. The research tries not only to identify spatial changes of land use but also to compare these changes with natural conditions and socio-economic factors. The results show a clear tendency in natural succession, typical for marginal landscapes in the whole Europe, and to some extent homogenisation of the landscape in the second half of the 20th century. The major trajectories of change concern changes between arable land and permanent grassland. About 20% of the area remains stable from the perspective of land use which is different in comparison to other similar areas in the Czech Republic. Main socio-economic driving factors that influence land use development are population dynamics, changes in agricultural practises and management policies, whereas natural conditions do not play such a significant role.