

International Roundtable

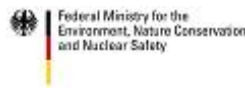
“Integrated Shared Lake Basin Management in Southeastern Europe”

Ohrid, 12 - 14 October 2006

Conclusions

Organized by
**Global Water Partnership Mediterranean and
Lake Ohrid Watershed Committee**

Within the framework of
Petersberg Process Phase II / Athens Declaration Process
and
GEF IW:LEARN, Activity D2



Ø Processes for establishing cooperation are **not linear**

Most of the initiatives were in the past of Environmental Protection nature and are gradually moving towards sustainable development.

They have been either Bottom-up or Top-down. Complementary and opportunistic activities are usually needed, and should be continued, to make them more balanced.

Ø **Broad scale cooperation and dialogue is a prerequisite in order to create the needed climate of understanding and trust. The role of NGOs, scientists and other stakeholders – particularly of local communities - is very important to this end**

Ø In the cases examined namely in Prespa, Ohrid and Shkoder the water quality and environmental conditions are much better compared to that of other lakes where similar action has been undertaken. It is important that we don't wait for a crisis, but to take a proactive preventative approach which will cost less and deliver much better results

Ø The needed scientific basis for appropriate common actions depends on the actual system and requires a minimum work and investment. However exhaustive research is not necessary to start concrete activities. A reliable monitoring is always needed for further steps at political and operational level (policies and management)

ØSecuring the necessary funding is crucial for the success of any transboundary initiative. International financing as well as that provided, eventually, by NGOs could act as a valuable catalyst. However national and local resources (traditional and innovative) must be also secured so that the operation of coordination structures and collaboration is efficient and viable.

ØInternational Conventions and EU Directives are major driving forces in designing the legal and operational framework of management on transboundary lakes

- Opportunities for financial support for the implementation of the provisions of WFD at the external EU border areas could provide valuable resources for the transboundary management, that should be further explored

Ø Sharing of experiences among the three examined sub-systems namely Prespa, Ohrid and Shkoder, is beneficial to strengthening cooperation and identifying synergies. It is important to be further encouraged and stimulated

- The existing formal and informal structures (commissions, committees etc.) should be strengthened and used in an appropriate way in order to move to the next steps, namely to institutionalize the collaboration between the riparian countries and make these structures fully operational and effective

Ø All available possibilities to gradually build a common vision as a first step towards the integrated management of the greater Drin River Basin should be explored. The Danube – Sava case can provide useful inspiration