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**Management of the Drin River Basin:
Issues, Opportunities and Ways to Move Forward**

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Lake Ohrid Watershed Committee**

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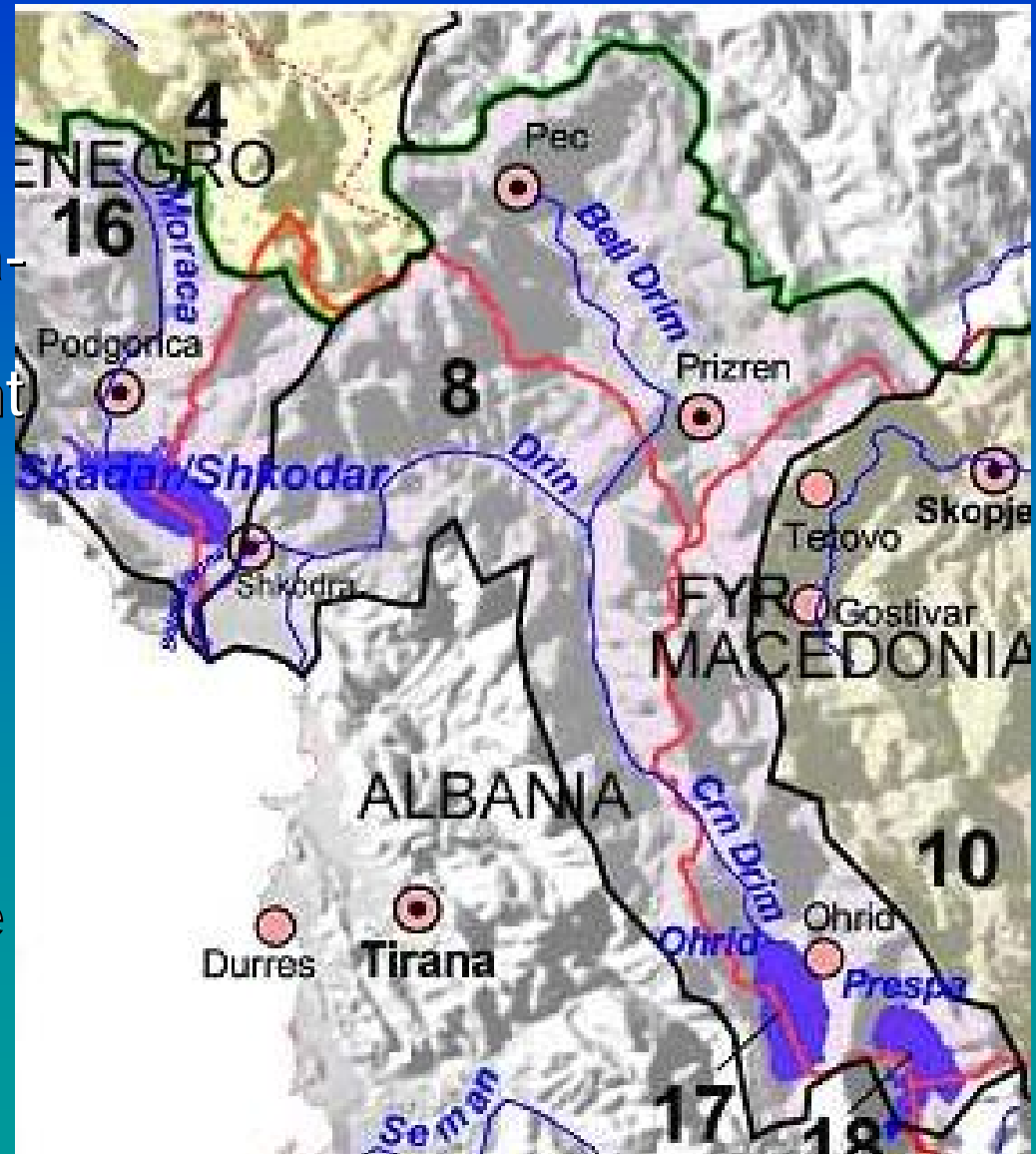
Structure

- § Key Issues in the Management of the Drin River Basin
- § Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Transboundary Cooperation in the Drin River Basin
- § Ways to Move Forward

Water Resources Management Issues in the Drin River Basin

Features of the Drin River Basin

- § Single ecosystem that extends across national boundaries: shared by Albania, Macedonia, Serbia-Kosovo and Montenegro
- § 15,540 km² total catchment area
- § 1.6 million total population within the catchment (0.4 million in Macedonia, 1.1 million in Albania and 0.1 million in Kosovo)
- § 340 m³/s average annual flow near the mouth of the Drin at the Adriatic Sea, with strong seasonal variations



Features of the Drin River Basin



§ Originates in Lake Ohrid/Lake Prespa

§ Black Drin River flows out Lake Ohrid in Struga/crosses the border into Albania between Debar and Peshkopi

§ Further downstream, White Drin River enters main stem from a sub watershed located mostly in Kosovo

§ Combined flow drains Adriatic Sea south of Lake Shkoder

§ Human-made channel connects lower Drin to the Buna/Boyana River

Key Economic Activities

§ Agriculture and forestry

- Commercial agriculture in White Drin River (Kosovo) and downstream Black Drin River (Albania, near Shkodra)
- Livestock and forestry related activities mainly in upstream Black Drin River catchment area (mountainous topography), agriculture mainly for subsistence

§ Hydropower generation

- Major dams and associated power stations, 2 in Macedonia and 3 in Albania, established 1950-60s
- Albania, 3 hydropower stations account more than 85% of total electricity supply
- Plans to further develop hydropower potential in Albania

Key Economic Activities

§ Mining

- Minor mining activities within the catchment with exception of few closed-mines in Albania and operational aluminum shelter in Kosovo
 - ü No monitoring of possible leakage into the river
 - ü No monitoring wastewater

§ Gravel Extraction

- Construction industry is booming;
- Controlled gravel extraction and some uncontrolled activities
 - ü 2 license for gravel mining sites in lower Drin River near Shkodra (8 others or expected to close this year)

Although there is no apparent shortage of water, there are a number of challenges...

- § During recent years the demand for water increased substantially / regional economic development / increase electricity production, consumption, agricultural activities.
- § Unusually dry and warm climate in the southeastern Europe is causing reducing in river flow
- § Global climate change models and water projections predict an extended dry period in the Balkans
- § Several segments of river are being polluted and large pollution loads are exported to the Adriatic Sea
- § Disruption of water balance and water pollution is causing losses of unique aquatic biodiversity (Lake Ohrid, Lake Skhodra)

Progress is being made towards setting an institutional framework to respond to the challenges ...

- § Before 1990s, Drin River managed jointly by Albania and SR Yugoslavia Committee covering Drin River, Buna River, and Lake Shkodra (1956 treaty)
- § In Albania, based on the "Law on Water Resources" 1996, at the national level is established the Water Secretariat and the National Water Council, and on the regional level the Drini-Buna Basin Water Agency and the Council of Water Basin, responsible for river basin and water administration
- § While new laws have been drafted (or adopted) calling for river basin management, no institution is responsible for basin management functions in Macedonia.

Current actions towards rebuilding the institutional framework ...

- § The Prime Minister of Albania, Greece and Macedonia signed "Declaration on the creation of transboundary Prespa Park and environmental protection and sustainable development of Prespa Lakes and their surroundings" (February 2000)
- § Albanian and Macedonia signed and ratified transboundary treaty "Agreement for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Lake Ohrid and its Watershed" (June 2004)
- § Albania and Macedonia have taken initiative to re-establish Committee (May 2006)
- § Albania has embarked in implementation of river basin management and is piloting watershed management.

Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Transboundary Cooperation

Drawing lessons and conclusions to apply to entire basin ...

§ There is a need to analyze experiences gained from the three major transboundary projects on environmental management:

- Lake Ohrid Conservation Project (GEF/WB)
- Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin of Albania, Macedonia and Greece, (GEF/UNDP)
- Lake Shkodra Integrated Ecosystem Management

§ Lake Ohrid Conservation Project: Until now, first, oldest, biggest with very good results

Lessons from LOCP ...

- § Top-down and bottom-up activities under LOCP contributed to developing a strong political process for establishing a mechanism for sustainable management of natural resources in a transboundary setting
- § Cooperation in the protection of natural resources having environment as a vehicle is the easiest way to establish political cooperation in transboundary basins

Ways to Move Forward



Need to capitalize on the success story of LOCP by ...

§ Exploring ways to build from there for transboundary environmental management for the Drin River Basin

- River basin management is the central concept of the EU Water Framework Directive
- Transboundary management is in line with the Athens Declaration and the Petersburg Process

§ Identifying and agreeing on priority investments relating to environment that will attract GEF, bilateral and other donor financing

Effective transboundary environmental/water resources management requires a combination of measures ...

§ Top-down Measures:

- To identify the necessary changes at the local, national, and international levels and across sectors to effect transboundary environmental governance
- To foster the development of local sub-watershed organizations to participate in the management and development of the entire river basin from the bottom-up, and to identify and prioritize demonstration projects
- To contribute to the Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses

Effective transboundary environmental/water resources management requires a combination of measures ...

§ Bottom-up Measures:

- To support investments in scientific and technical data collection, monitoring, and modeling focused on management issues that cross boundaries;
- To implement actions on the ground through pilot projects executed by NGOs with local communities;
- To build public participation, stakeholder involvement and environmental awareness

Framing a potential GEF-funded Project to assist in ...

§ Institutional strengthening to support transboundary management in the Prespa, Ohrid and Drin River watersheds

(Establishing the institution(s) for the cooperative management - to include capacity building for transboundary environmental management and Supporting public participation, stakeholder involvement and awareness building)

§ Mitigation of water pollution and biodiversity protection in the Drin watershed

(Piloting priority action projects - derived from a TDA and SAP and issued on a small competitive grant basis to local stakeholders)

§ Developing the essential and fundamental technical information necessary to support transboundary integrated watershed management

(Building data and knowledge management - for establishing harmonized data information and monitoring systems and exchange of information)

Framing a potential GEF-funded Project to assist in ...

- § Supporting the full implementation of the “Agreement for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Lake Ohrid and its Watershed”
- § Creating a formal structure for coordination between the Prespa, Ohrid and Shkodra GEF Projects
- § Developing a multilateral Drin Watershed Committee/Commission
- § Promoting public participation and stakeholder involvement throughout the Drin River watershed

Framing a potential GEF-funded Project to assist in ...

- § Implementation of demonstration projects to mitigate water pollution and to protect biodiversity in the Ohrid watershed – implement priorities of the Lake Ohrid Action Plan
- § Developing a series of targeted investments in the Drin River watershed, focused on mitigating water pollution and restoring and remediating damages in the river bed.

Above activities will contribute to:

SAP MED commitments

(improvement of the quality of the marine environment by better shared-management of the land-based pollution; facilitation of the implementation by the Contracting Parties of the LBS Protocol)

SAP BIO commitments

(Protecting species and habitats; Improving knowledge of marine and coastal biodiversity; Reducing negative impacts on biological diversity; Promoting sector-based policies that encourage biodiversity (tourism, agriculture); Adopting institutional and legal measures; Coordinating the biodiversity activities of the MAP centres)

The potential GEF-funded Project would be linked with...

- § Mediterranean Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis through the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for Drin River Basin and Drin River Basin Strategic Action Plan, including a baseline analysis of the current status of the environment and natural resources, as well as the social and economic situation
- § Petersberg/Athens Process

Questions ...

- § How other initiatives in Lake Prespa and Lake Skhodra will support the overall management of the Drin Basin (Projects are at different phases)?
- § How the Petersberg/Athens Process can be involved in future joint actions in the Drin Basin?

A scenic landscape featuring a paved road that curves through a lush, green valley. In the background, a large body of water, likely a reservoir or lake, is nestled between rolling green hills and mountains. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The text "Thank you!" is overlaid in the center of the image in a bold, yellow font with a black outline.

Thank you!