Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin (Regional)

Albania, FYR Macedonia, Greece

GEF Agency: United Nations Development Programme
Executing Agencies: Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Management (Albania);
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (FYR Macedonia);
UNDP Macedonia Country Office (Transboundary)

GEF Biodiversity and International Waters Focal Areas (Multifocal)
GEF Operational Programs 2, 4, 8, 9, 12
Full-sized Project: GEF ID: 1537, UNDP PIMS: 1996
UNDP Atlas Project Numbers: 00050102 (DEX – Transboundary Component), 00051409 (NEX – Macedonia Component), 00053277 (NEX – Albania Component)

Terminal Evaluation

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Acronyms

AL	Albania
APR	Annual project review
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDR	Combined Delivery Report (of UNDP)
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHF	Swiss Franc
COBSEA	Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
COP	Conference of Parties
DEX	Direct Execution
ENR	Ezerani National Reserve
EU	European Union
FSP	Full-size Project
FYR	Former Yugoslav Republic (of Macedonia)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographical Information System
GNP	Galičica National Park
GR	Greece
ha	Hectares
IEM	Integrated Ecosystem Management
IPPC	Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control
IRBM	Integrated River Basin Management
ITA	International Technical Advisor
KfW	German Development Bank
Km	Kilometers
LEAP	Local Environmental Action Plan
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MK	FYR Macedonia
MKD	Macedonian Dinars
MoEFWA	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration (Albania)
MoEPP	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (Macedonia)
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
N/A	Not applicable
N/S	Not specified
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Products
OP	Operational Program (of the GEF)
PA	Protected area
PIR	Project implementation Review
PMIS	Project Management Information System

PMU	Project Management Unit
PNP	Prespa National Park
POC	Project Oversight Committee
PPA-GR	Prespa Protected Area - Greece
PPCC	Prespa Park Coordination Committee
PPMC	Prespa Park Management Committee
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REC	Regional Environment Centre
ROtI	Review of Outcomes to Impacts
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SCS	South China Sea (GEF project)
SDC	Swiss Development Corporation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
SPP	Society for the Protection of Prespa
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
TORs	Terms of Reference
TR	Transboundary
UA	Unable to assess
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	United States dollars
WFD	Water Framework Directive (of the EU)
WMC	Watershed Management Council
WMP	Watershed Management Plan (of FYR Macedonia)
WMWF	Water Management Working Group
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

I. Executive Summary

Table 1 Project Summary Table

Project Title:	Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin			
GEF Project ID:	1537		*At endorsement (million US$)*	*At completion (million US$)*
UNDP Project ID:	1996	GEF financing:	4.135	4.055
Country:	Albania, FYR Macedonia, Greece	IA/EA own:	0.864	0.150
Region:	ECA	Government:	1.119	0.130
Focal Area:	International Waters	Other:	6.653	7.15
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	OP 2, 4, 8, 9, 12	Total co-financing:	8.636	7.43
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Management (Albania); Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (FYR Macedonia); UNDP Macedonia Country Office (Transboundary)	Total Project Cost:	12.771 (not including 0.406 in agency fees and .376 in PDF-B funding and indeterminate amount of PDF-B co-finance)	11.485 (not including agency fees, or PDF-B financing or co-financing)
Other Partners involved:	Ministry of Environment Physical Planning and Public Works (Greece); Society for the Protection of Prespa (Greece); Municipality of Resen (Macedonia); Municipality of Prespa (Greece); Municipalities of Liqenas and Proger (Albania); various other stakeholders	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		April 17, 2006 (Macedonia and Transboundary), September 25, 2006 (Albania)
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: September 2011	Actual: March 31, 2012 (Albania), June 30, 2012 (Macedonia, Transboundary)

1. The Prespa Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM) project is classified as a Global Environment Facility (GEF) Full-sized Project (FSP), with total planned GEF support of $4.14 million (not including $0.376 in project development funding), and originally proposed co-financing is $8.64 million United States dollars (USD), for a total planned project budget of $12.77 million USD. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the GEF Agency, and the project is executed in three components, with the national Albania and Macedonia components under UNDP's National Execution (NEX) modality, and the transboundary component under the (DEX) modality.

According to the project document, the overall project goal is *"The conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biological diversity and trans-boundary water resources of the Prespa lakes Basin."* The project objective is *"To catalyse the adoption of integrated ecosystem management in the trans-boundary Prespa Lakes Basin of FYR-Macedonia, Albania, and Greece to conserve globally significant biodiversity, mitigate pollution of the trans-*

boundary lakes, and provide a sustainable basis for the Basin's further social and economic development." The project objective was to be achieve through five main outcomes:

Outcome 1: Stakeholders strengthen legal and regulatory enabling environment and establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa Lakes Basin

Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource management practices to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities within the national sectors of the Prespa Basin

Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin (PNP, GNP, ENR, and PPA-GR) fully operational

Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon ongoing trans-boundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the trans-boundary coordination mechanism and piloting trans-boundary conservation and water management

Outcome 5: Lessons learned and adaptive management of project

2. Although the project is technically structured across five outcomes, in practice the project implementation arrangements, with three separate project components (with separate project management units, budgets, workplans, etc.) meant that there were three individual sets of activities that were intended to contribute to the outcomes, rather than one set of activities for each outcome. Thus the project design represents a kind of 3x5 matrix intended to drive the project toward the overall objective. In addition, project activities were planned at local, regional, national and transboundary levels.

3. According to GEF and UNDP evaluation policies, terminal evaluations are required practice for GEF funded FSPs, and the terminal evaluation was a planned activity of the monitoring and evaluation plan of the Prespa IEM project. This terminal evaluation reviews the actual performance and progress toward results of the project against the planned project activities and outputs, based on the standard evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability. The evaluation assesses project results based on expected outcomes and objectives, as well as any unanticipated results. The evaluation identifies relevant lessons for other similar projects in the future in the Prespa region and elsewhere, and provides recommendations as appropriate. The evaluation methodology was based on a participatory mixed-methods approach, which included three primary elements: a) a desk review of project documentation and other relevant documents; b) interviews with key project participants and stakeholders; and c) field visits to relevant project sites in the Prespa region. The evaluation is based on evaluative evidence from the start of project implementation (2nd quarter 2006) through July 2012 (with project closure June 30, 2012). The desk review was begun in May 2012, and the evaluation mission was carried out from June 11 –23, 2012.

4. The challenge for this evaluation in providing ratings on the Prespa IEM project is that there were three distinct components of one overall project. The three components were executed nearly as stand-alone projects. Yet, GEF and UNDP evaluation procedures require one rating – the project was conceived, developed, and approved, and funded as one project. While an overall project rating is provided for each of the required elements below and in the following ratings table, a rating is also given (where relevant) to each of the three components.

This is in the interest of providing transparency for the overall rating, and recognizing the distinctions between the components, as appropriate.

5. Although the overall objective is not yet achieved (which is highly dependent on the transboundary aspect), under each of the project components broad and significant results were produced to support the achievement of the expected outcomes. The Albania and Macedonia national components successfully achieved a majority of expected results. The trilateral agreement between the littoral states reached on February 2, 2010 was a landmark achievement toward legally binding transboundary management of the Prespa region. Unfortunately, little has happened since that time, and the ironic and unfortunate situation is that at the end of the project there is less active cooperation on transboundary management between the three countries than there was at the beginning of the project. This is primarily due to political and global economic circumstances, though multiple project-specific factors have contributed to a less than fully satisfactory outcome. The project's **Overall Achievement and Impact** is rated ***moderately satisfactory***.

6. The rating for project **relevance** is considered ***relevant***.

7. Based on all aspects of project implementation and financial management, project **efficiency** is rated ***moderately satisfactory***. Initial delays, staff turnover, and various other issues have contributed to decreased efficiency of the transboundary component, which has been balanced somewhat by the national components. The cost-effectiveness of some results is also strongly linked to sustainability, i.e. whether many of the plans and outputs produced will be applied and implemented.

8. Project **effectiveness** is considered ***moderately satisfactory***.

9. Overall **sustainability** is considered ***moderately likely***.

10. The following are the recommendations of this evaluation report. Key lessons are also documented in the final section of the evaluation report.

11. ***Recommendation 1:*** The most urgent and significant recommendation that this evaluation can provide is that the three littoral states work together to find the political will and funding pathways to actively continue transboundary ecosystem management in the Prespa basin. Immediate priorities are the re-activation of the PPCC (in the present form of the PPMC under the 2010 agreement), implementation of the regional environmental monitoring program developed under the project, implementation of the species and habitat conservation plans, implementation of the transboundary fisheries management plan, and implementation of the transboundary tourism strategy. [Government of Albania, Government of Greece, Government of FYR of Macedonia]

12. ***Recommendation 2:***Although there is as of June 2012 no financing of transboundary activities in the region, the stakeholders involved in national activities ongoing in Albania (with KfW support), in Macedonia (with SDC support) and Greece (as supported by SPP, local government in Greek Prespa, and the Greek national government), should actively seek to communicate and collaborate on issues of common concern, building on the professional networks developed during the Prespa IEM project. [Prespa National Park – Albania, Municipality of Resen, SPP, Prespa National Park – Greece]

13. ***Recommendation 3:*** The Prespa IEM project resulted in a large number of positive and negative lessons. Other initiatives in the region, particularly the Drin Dialogue initiative currently being developed for possible future GEF funding, should carefully heed these lessons, and ensure appropriate adjustments are made to future plans in the region. UNDP, as a GEF Agency, should pay particular attention to the incorporation of the lessons from the Prespa IEM project. [UNDP, Drin Dialogue partners)

14. ***Recommendation 4:*** There remains a need in the region for significant investment in capacity development related to technical aspects of environmental management, such as environmental monitoring. This is particularly important for the staff and authorities of protected areas that are responsible for land, water, and biodiversity conservation in significant portions of the Prespa basin, which are also the most environmentally intact areas of the watershed. However, numerous other organizations would continue to benefit from capacity development, such as the Macedonian Prespa Watershed Management Council, the resource users associations (e.g. fishermen's associations), etc. In many cases, securing effective environmental management is not simply a matter of policy and behavior changes; it requires significant technical knowledge and skills to implement, which are still currently underdeveloped in the Prespa region. [UNDP, SDC, KfW, GEF, international donor community]

15. ***Recommendation 5:*** In Albania there is a need for further reform of the protected area system, to take steps, for example, to make protected area administrations independent legal entities. As a major funder of protected areas globally, the GEF may be in a position to support the Government of Albania to move in this direction over the medium-term. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat]

16. ***Recommendation 6:*** The environmental education curriculum is under development in both Albania and Macedonia, and stakeholders working on this issue from both countries have been involved in the Prespa IEM project. There is an opportunity to use the experience of integrated ecosystem management in the transboundary Prespa basin as an input and example for development of the environmental education curriculum (particularly for application in the region) and the local Albanian and Prespa stakeholders, as well as the responsible central government authorities from both countries should work together on this issue. [local Albania and Macedonia Prespa stakeholders, education authorities in Albania and Macedonia]

17. ***Recommendation 7:*** To further sustainably develop production landscapes in the Prespa basin (i.e. orchards, croplands, grazing lands) the Prespa stakeholders should prioritize the diversification of agricultural production, especially with respect to the apple orchards in Macedonian Prespa. Additional development of the agricultural sector in an environmentally responsible manner should include further exploration of organic production. To support this, the municipality of Resen, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, could consider establishing a few hectares of organic orchards as a pilot activity to test factors such as yields relative to inputs, and the cost-effectiveness of organic production methods. Numerous technical factors would have to be considered – for example locating organic test plots in areas where they would not inadvertently benefit from pesticides applied to nearby conventional orchards. Nonetheless, taking some initial steps to further develop the organic market could help catalyze a long-term shift to environmentally sustainable production in the region. Other approaches could include sponsoring a visit by representatives of the farmer's association to

organic apple orchards in other countries in the region, and conducting a market feasibility study for organic production in the region. [UNDP-SDC Macedonia project team, municipality of Resen, Macedonia Ministry of Agriculture]

18. ***Recommendation 8:***To further develop local level education and awareness activities in all three countries, while also increasing the availability of environmental monitoring data, stakeholders should work to institute a community-based water-monitoring program (e.g. waterkeeper programs, adopt-a-stream, etc.). Such programs are applied in many contexts around the world, and can contribute to a cost-effective environmental monitoring system. Such programs also help increase community awareness and can be integrated with environmental education programs. [UNDP-SDC Macedonia project team, municipality of Resen]

19. ***Recommendation 9:***The agricultural waste management practices in Macedonia initiated under the project have shown promise, but require additional resources for further implementation, institutionalization, and scaling up in the basin. The municipality of Resen and all other relevant stakeholders should prioritize support and seek additional financing for continuing and expanding agricultural waste management activities. [UNDP-SDC Macedonia project team, municipality of Resen, Macedonia government relevant authorities]

20. The summary ratings table below includes the ratings for the main evaluation criteria, and for the GEF operational principles that are included in the required ratings table. A more extensive ratings table, with all UNDP-required ratings and brief explanations is included at the end of this evaluation report.

Prespa IEM Project Terminal Evaluation Rating Summary

Project Components	Overall	TB	MK	AL
Project Formulation				
Relevance	R	R	R	R
Country-drivenness	MS	N/A	N/A	N/A
Project Implementation				
Implementation Approach (Efficiency)	MS	MU	S	S
Adaptive management	MS	MU	S	S
UNDP supervision and support	MS	MU	S	S
Monitoring and Evaluation Overall Quality	MS	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stakeholder Participation	MS	MU	HS	S
Project Results				
Overall Achievement of Objective and Outcomes (Effectiveness)	MS	MU	S	S
Objective: To catalyse the adoption of integrated ecosystem management (IEM) in the trans-boundary Prespa Lakes Basin of FYR-Macedonia, Albania, and Greece to conserve globally significant biodiversity, mitigate pollution of the trans-boundary lakes, and provide a sustainable basis for the Basin's further social and economic development.	MU	MU	S	S
Outcome 1: Stakeholders strengthen legal and regulatory enabling environment and establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa Lakes Basin	HS	N/A	HS	HS
Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource management practices to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities within the national sectors of the Prespa Basin	MS	N/A	S	MS

Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin (PNP, GNP, ENR, and PPA-GR) fully operational	MS	MS	HS	MS
Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon on-going trans-boundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the trans-boundary coordination mechanism and piloting trans-boundary conservation and water management	MS	MU	S	S
Outcome 5: Lessons learned and adaptive management of project	S	MS	S	S
Overall Outcomes	MS	MU	S	S
Impact	N	N	M	N
Sustainability				
Overall Sustainability	ML	U	ML	ML
Financial	N/A	U	L	L
Socio-political	N/A	U	L	L
Institutional framework and governance	N/A	MU	L	ML
Environmental	N/A	N/A	ML	ML
Overall Achievement and Impact	MS	MU	S	S

Note: The ratings for the main evaluation criteria are highlighted in the report text, other ratings may not be.

Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation and Execution	***Sustainability Ratings***	***Relevance Ratings***
6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings 5: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS): moderate shortcomings 3. Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings 2. Unsatisfactory (U): major problems 1. Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe problems	4. Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability 3. Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks 2. Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks 1. Unlikely (U): severe risks	2. Relevant (R) 1. Not relevant (NR) ***Impact Ratings*** 3. Significant (S): Large-scale impacts 2. Minimal (M): Site-based impacts 1. Negligible (N): Little or no impacts
Additional ratings where appropriate Not Applicable (N/A) Unable to Assess (U/A)		

II. Introduction: Evaluation Scope and Methodology

21. According to GEF and UNDP evaluation policies, terminal evaluations are required practice for GEF funded FSPs, and the terminal evaluation was a planned activity of the monitoring and evaluation plan of the Prespa IEM project. The UNDP Macedonia office initiated the terminal evaluation near the completion of the project's planned five-year implementation period. This terminal evaluation reviews the actual performance and progress toward results of the project against the planned project activities and outputs, based on the standard evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability. The evaluation assesses project results based on expected outcomes and objectives, as well as any unanticipated results. The evaluation identifies relevant lessons for future similar projects in southeastern Europe and elsewhere, and provides recommendations as necessary and appropriate.

22. In addition to assessing the main GEF evaluation criteria, the evaluation provides the required ratings on key elements of project design and implementation. Further, the evaluation will, when possible and relevant, assess the project in the context of the key GEF operational principles such as country-drivenness, and stakeholder ownership, as summarized in Annex 2.

23. The evaluation methodology was based on a participatory mixed-methods approach, which included three primary elements: a) a desk review of project documentation and other relevant documents; b) interviews with key project participants and stakeholders; and c) field visits to relevant project sites in Albania, Greece and FYR Macedonia. The evaluation is based on evaluative evidence from the start of project implementation (2nd quarter 2006) through June 30 2012, and includes an assessment of issues prior to approval, such the project development process, overall design, risk assessment and monitoring and evaluation planning. The desk review was begun in May 2012, and the evaluation mission was carried out from June 11 – June 23, 2012. The list of stakeholders interviewed is included as Annex 5 to this evaluation report, and the evaluation mission itinerary is included as Annex 6.

24. All evaluations face limitations in terms of the time and resources available to adequately collect and analyze evaluative evidence. Also, as is understandable, some documents were available only in Albanian, Greek or Macedonian language, although all key documents were available in English, and the composition of the evaluation team, with Albanian and Macedonian national consultants, ensured that language was not a barrier to the collection of evaluative evidence. Altogether the evaluation challenges were not significant, and the evaluation is believed to represent a fair and accurate assessment of the project.

25. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with UNDP and GEF monitoring and evaluation policies and procedures, and in-line with United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards.

26. The intended users of this terminal evaluation are the governments of Albanian, Greece, and FYR Macedonia, the UNDP Albania and Macedonia country office and Bratislava regional office, the GEF Evaluation Office and GEF Secretariat, and other key stakeholders such as civil society organizations. Once finalized, the terminal evaluation is expected to be made public.

III. Project Overview and Development Context

A. Development Context

i. Geological, Hydrological and Biological Overview

27. Prespa is a high-altitude basin that includes two inter-linked lakes: Macro Prespa (shared by all three countries, with the larger portion within the national boundary of the FYR Macedonia) with a surface area of 259.4 km^2, and Micro Prespa (shared by Albania and Greece, with the largest portion to Greece) with a surface area of 47.35 km^2. Micro and Macro Prespa are linked by a short controlled watercourse, which regulates the level of Micro Prespa. The Prespa lakes are situated at approximately 850 meters above sea level, surrounded by mountains rising to over 2,000m. The total Prespa area, combining the drainage basins and the lakes, is 2,519.1 km^2. The highest peak in the region is Pelister Mountain, which reaches 2,601m. There are four islands in the lakes, Aghios Achillios and Vidronissi, at the Greek part of Micro Prespa, and Mali Grad and Golem Grad in Macro Prespa in Albania and the FYR of Macedonia respectively.

28. There are four main rivers flowing into Macro Prespa: The Golema Reka, Brajcinska Reka and Kranska Reka (in FYR Macedonia) and Agios Germanos (in Greece). Inflow to Micro Prespa includes the canal diverting the Devolli River constructed in 1976 (and responsible for significant sedimentation in the Albanian part of Micro Prespa, although now the pumping system has been largely destroyed) and other small ephemeral watercourses. The outflow from Macro Prespa is believed to be to Lake Ohrid through the karstic geology as indicated through tracer experiments.

29. The following summarizes the biological resources in the basin:

- 23 species of fish (including two hybrids and nine non-native alien species)
- Presence of eels despite the lack of sea connection
- 11 amphibian species reported
- 21 reptiles
- 27 types of algae are reported
- 42 species of mammals are reported
- >1300 plant species
- 261 species of birds have been observed in last 50 years including over 90 migratory birds
- Caves of Treni are an important bat colony with nine species
- Extensive forests in the basin

ii. Socio-Economic Context

30. Approximately 28,900 people live in Prespa. Nearly 75% of the total Prespa population lives in FYR-Macedonia (17,500 persons) within the Municipality of Resen; 17% live in Albania (5,300 persons) within the Communes of Liqenas and Proger, and the remaining 8% live in Greece (1,500 persons) within the Municipality of Prespa.

31. Albania: In 2009, the 11 villages settled in this area in two communes (Liqenas and Progër) of Korça Prefecture the population was estimated at 1,410 households in the nine villages of Liqenas Macro Prespa watershed (5,800 persons) and 87 households in the three villages of Progër/Tren Micro Prespa watershed (400 persons). While there are an increasing number of households registered in Liqenas, there is a stable or decreasing number in Micro Prespa. However, in both areas, at least 30% of registered households are permanent migrants, keeping their house for holiday, festival and retirement period. Most households keep a certain amount of traditional way of life, relying on natural resources available in their territory. Some resources are used within the natural ecosystems (fishing, firewood and NTFP gathering, timber cutting, browsing and lopping, hunting, trapping, mineral extraction, water from lake, stream and ground), while other resources are exploited through a certain level of domestication and modification of ecosystem (pasture, cropping land, bee hives, aquaculture, domestication of tea and medicinal plants). The rough estimation of direct and indirect annual value of provisioning services of Prespa ecosystems used by the people is above 5.5 millions euros, with timber and fodder having the highest share in money value (85%). However, several provisioning services are not valuated yet. Only a few local, some regional and national level NGOs are active in the Prespa Park area organizing limited activities on environmental issues, eco-tourism, nature resource management and sustainable use. Only a few local and national NGOs are active in the Prespa Park area, and these groups are involved in projects or activities on agriculture, organic or traditional farming, animal protection/wildlife, biodiversity, forestry, sustainable management of communal forest and pastures, nature protection, rural development and waste issues.

32. Macedonia: The largest town in Prespa is Resen with 7,000 people, located in MK-Prespa. The population of MK-Prespa has decreased approximately 20% over the past thirty years, but population density is still over 28 persons/km^2. In MK-Prespa, the average per capita income is approximately US$ 2,000, though unemployment is high, estimated at around 30%. In MK-Prespa, pensions, government employment and employment from occasional jobs are the major source of income. In addition, many families or family members in MK-Prespa migrate to find work and many household report that as much as 30% of their income is dependent upon remittances. As a result, persons sixty-years and older make up nearly 25% of Resen's population. In the MK-Prespa, agriculture generates roughly 30% of the total income with apples being the primary crop. Price fluctuations and increased competition from outside the region have destabilised the local apple economy. In MK-Prespa, over two fifths of the total agricultural area is cultivated (orchards under conventional, not organic, production) with the remainder dedicated to livestock pasture. In Resen, about 1,150 people are employed by the industrial sector, which is represented by 11 medium size enterprises and over 100 small enterprises.

iii. Nature Conservation and Management Context

33. The Prespa National Park in Albania, created in 2001, is situated in the southeast part of the country. Out of the 24,278 ha of land in Prespa area, 1,789 ha (7%) is used for agriculture, 13,500 ha (55.6%) are covered by forests, 1,828 ha (7.5%) by pasture and meadows, 4,950 ha (20.4%) by lakes and other wetlands and 872 ha (1.7%) of others (settlement, roads, etc.). The area under National Park status and the legal framework includes different degrees of

protection: strictly protected area, managed area, developed zones, and a zone designated for priority development of tourism. The primary responsibility for conservation and resource management is with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration (MoEFWA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection. At the local level the Regional Environmental Agencies (under the MoEFWA) are responsible for implementing environmental legislation at the local level, supporting local and regional governments. The MoEFWA has limited capacity at the local / regional level.

34. Galičica National Park in FYR Macedonia was established in 1958, and covers a total area of 227 km^2 between Lake Ohrid and Macro Prespa.

35. The 'Prespa Park' was established by the Declaration of the Prime Ministers of Greece, Albania and the FYR of Macedonia on 2nd February 2000, with the aim of "*preserving the extraordinary natural and cultural values of the region, as well as the promotion of peace, friendship and co-operation between the three peoples*". The 2002 Strategic Action Plan was the first tangible output from the trilateral co-operation of the transboundary Prespa Park. The Strategic Action Plan was funded by the Greek Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works and was prepared by the Society for the Protection of Prespa with the collaboration of WWF Greece, the NGO Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania and the NGO Macedonia Alliance for Prespa. This was the first joint project by three neighboring countries with close co-operation of the NGOs and independent experts.

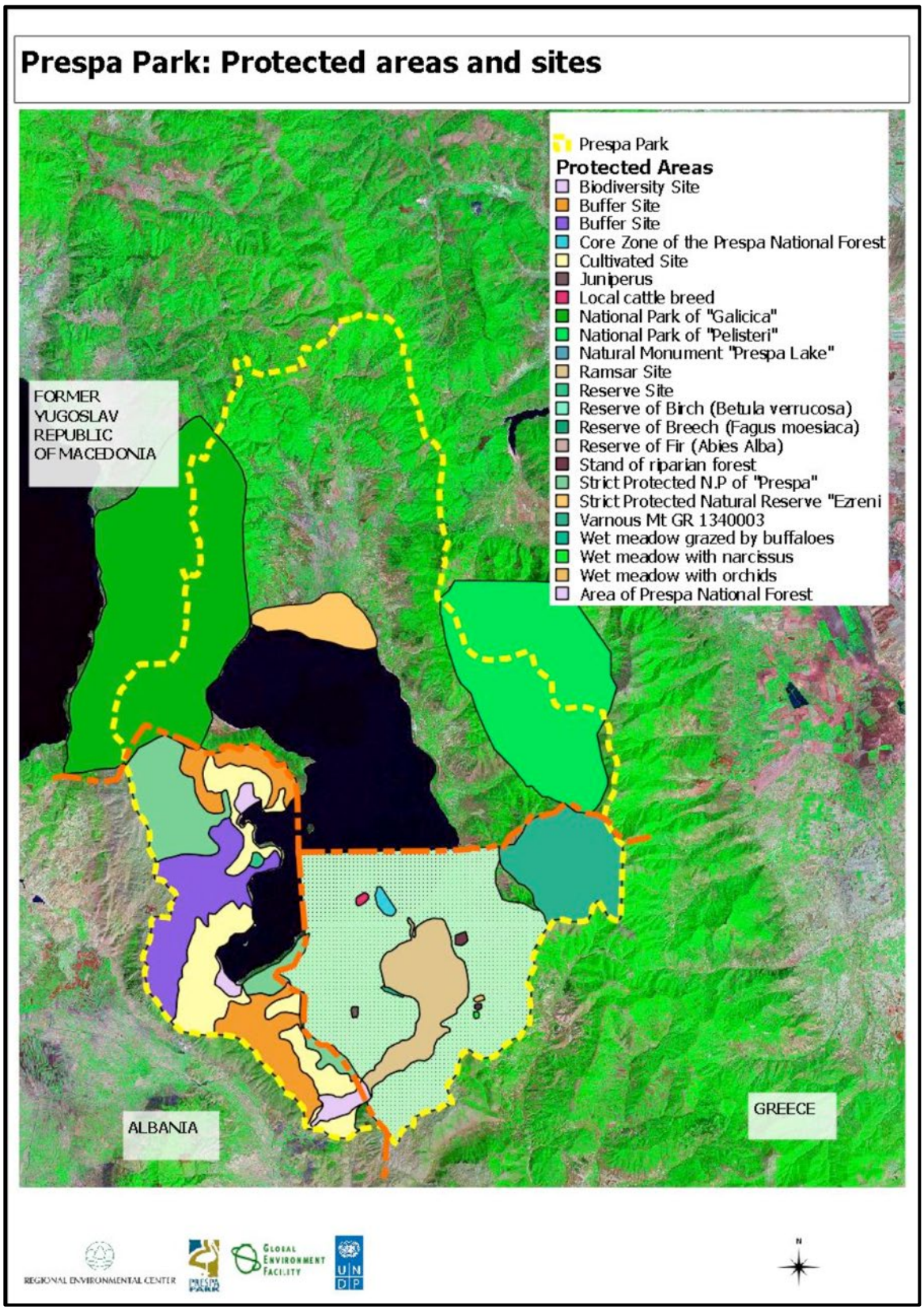
36. In February 2010 the Minister of Environment, Forests and Water Administration from Albania, the Minister of Environment and Physical Planning of the FYR Macedonia and the Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works of Greece, together with EU Commissioner for the Environment, issued a Joint Agreement recognizing the importance and value of the Prespa Park Area.

37. Trilateral activities in the area initiated and carried out by NGOs are numerous, and the most significant ones are the proposals for the creation of the trilateral park and later on the development of the Strategic Action Plan till 2002. The participating NGOs are the Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP), based in Aghios Germanos, Greece, the Protection and Preservation of the Natural Environment in Albania, based in Tirana, Albania, and the Society for the Investigation and Conservation of Biodiversity and the Sustainable Development of Natural Ecosystems (BIOECO), based in Skopje, FYR Macedonia.

Source: Google Maps.


PRESPA PARK
BOUNDARIES
FYR MACEDONIA
Ohrid
Resen
Lake Ohrid
Mt. Galichitsa
Mt. Pelister
Lake Macro Prespa
Mt. Varnoutas
Lake Micro Prespa
ALBANIA
GREECE
Prespa Park Boundaries
Adapted,coutresy of the Society
for Protection of Prespa

Source: SPP



Source: Lake Prespa Draft Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (2009)

B. Concept Development and Project Description

i. Concept Background

38. The Greek NGO the Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) was established in 1990, and in the late 1990s was working to protect the Dalmatian pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*) populations and habitats of the Greek Prespa region, particularly the micro-Prespa wetlands, which are critical habitats for the Dalmatian pelican population. SPP was recognized for this work as a Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award winner at the June 1999 Ramsar Conference of Parties (COP) in San Jose, Costa Rica.[1] According to project stakeholders, based on the successful conservation work carried out in Greek Prespa, the Greek government raised the possibility of a transboundary conservation area for all of Prespa, including Macedonia and Albania. On February 2nd, 2000 - World Wetlands Day - the Prime Ministers of the three countries came together in the Greek Prespa village of Aghios Germanos to issue a joint declaration recognizing the global ecological value of the Prespa region (as well as the local social, cultural and economic value), and declaring the Prespa Lakes and surrounding watershed as "Prespa Park".

39. Based on this promise of "enhanced cooperation" the countries established the Prespa Park Coordination Committee (PPCC), which first met in Tirana in October 2000. This body met twice per year from 2001 to 2010, with ad-hoc support from the Greek government, German bilateral support, and NGOs. The PPCC Secretariat was hosted by SPP. The initial work of the PPCC was to develop a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park, which was completed in 2002, and efforts towards adoption of a formal legally binding trilateral agreement between the three countries were initiated in 2004. In the 2000-2001 timeframe the environmental conservation initiatives in the Prespa area were recognized, with UNDP support, as an opportunity for possible GEF funding, and the original concept note was submitted to the GEF in late 2001.

ii. Project Description

40. The project document includes a clear description of the environmental stresses the project is designed to address. As the project is an integrated ecosystem management project, it focuses on threats from multiple sectors, including land-use management, water management, agriculture, fishers, forest management, and waste management. The specific individual threats and stress factors related to each of these sectors are further detailed in the project document.

41. The project is classified as a GEF FSP, since the funding received from the GEF is greater than $1 million USD. Total GEF support is $4.135 million (not including $0.376 in project development funding), and originally proposed co-financing is $8.636 million USD, for a total project budget of $12.771 million (or $13.147 with project development funding). The project is executed as three components, with the transboundary component under DEX by UNDP Macedonia, and the Macedonian and Albanian national components under NEX by the

[1] http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-activities-awards-1999-ramsar-wetland-15970/main/ramsar/1-63-67-152%5E15970_4000_0__#spp.

respective ministries of environment in these countries. The project was planned for a 60-month (five year) implementation period, though the individual components actually started and were completed at slightly different times.

42. According to the project document, the overall project goal is *"The conservation and sustainable use of globally significant biological diversity and trans-boundary water resources of the Prespa lakes Basin."* The project objective is *"To catalyse the adoption of integrated ecosystem management in the trans-boundary Prespa Lakes Basin of FYR-Macedonia, Albania, and Greece to conserve globally significant biodiversity, mitigate pollution of the trans-boundary lakes, and provide a sustainable basis for the Basin's further social and economic development."*The project objective was planned to be achieved through five main outcomes:

Outcome 1: Stakeholders strengthen legal and regulatory enabling environment and establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa Lakes Basin

Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource management practices to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities within the national sectors of the Prespa Basin

Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin (PNP, GNP, ENR, and PPA-GR) fully operational

Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon ongoing trans-boundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the trans-boundary coordination mechanism and piloting trans-boundary conservation and water management

Outcome 5: Lessons learned and adaptive management of project

43. Although the project is technically structured across five outcomes, in practice the project implementation arrangements, with three separate project units (as further discussed in Section IV.C on implementation arrangements) meant that there were three individual sets of activities that were intended to contribute to the outcomes, rather than one set of activities for each outcome. Thus the project design represents a kind of 3x5 matrix (transboundary component, Albania component, Macedonia component) intended to drive the project toward the overall objective. In addition, project activities were planned at local, regional, national and transboundary levels. This expansive project design generated some headwinds for the project as a whole, as discussed at various points throughout this report.

iii. Timing and Milestones

44. The project's key milestone dates are shown in Table 2 below. The project concept was submitted October 30, 2001 (with official "pipeline entry" recognized four months later), and final GEF approval was received January 30, 2006. The development period from pipeline entry to CEO Endorsement was 50.5 months (more than four years). A portion of this time was consumed in implementing the PDF-B from late 2003 to early 2005. After GEF approval, another four months were required to reach implementation start (first disbursement) for the Macedonian component, and another 10 months for the Albanian and Transboundary components. The inception workshop for the Macedonian component was then held in Bitola, on November 9-10th, 2006 and for the Albanian component in Korce on February 2nd, 2007.For

the transboundary component, the International Technical Advisor was appointed in April 2007, and activities only began in June 2007, following approval of the transboundary component workplan at the transboundary inception workshop on June 16, 2007. Therefore, practically speaking, activities for the Macedonian and Albanian components began in early 2007, and for the transboundary component in mid-2007 - more than five years after pipeline entry.

45. Previous GEF program evaluations have determined that the average for GEF FSPs during the GEF-3 Phase (the period in which this project was developed) from PDF-B to implementation start (up to 2006) was approximately 44 months.[2] Regional projects are typically more complex, and it is perhaps not surprising that this project required six months more than average for development. At the same time, it appears the development period duration was not simply due to business as usual processing standards, but was negatively affected by bureaucratic delays in the approval process between the GEF Secretariat and UNDP – a March 2003 communication from UNDP to the GEF Secretariat highlighted the urgency of approving the PDF-B proposal that was submitted in September 2002 because of the dependency on expected co-financing (the PDF-B was eventually approved in June 2003 – taking six months longer than the average PDF-B approval process, according to data in the above referenced GEF EO evaluation). Project stakeholders involved in the development phase also noted that the project development required multiple stages, with multiple international consultants contracted to guide the project document to its final form. And even as such, stakeholders noted that the end of the project development phase was rushed, and it has been stated (for example, in the project mid-term evaluation) that the project document contains "numerous contradictions and inconsistencies", for example, related to the position of International Technical Advisor vs. PPCC Executive Secretary.

46. Operational and technical issues related to the project design are further discussed in Section IV on project design.

[2]GEF Evaluation Office.2007. "Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities," Evaluation Report No. 33. Washington, D.C.: GEF Evaluation Office.

Table 2 Project Key Milestone Dates[3]

Milestone	Expected date [A]	Actual date [B]	Months (total)
1. Concept received	Not Applicable	October 30, 2001	
2. Pipeline Entry	Not Applicable	March 5, 2002	4 (4)
3. PDF-B Approval	Not Specified	June 5, 2003	15 (19)
4. Agency PDF-B Approval	Not Specified	October 13, 2003	4 (23)
5. Work Program Inclusion	July 1, 2005	September 13, 2005	23 (46)
6. Council Notification	Not Specified	January 30, 2006	4.5 (50.5)
7. CEO Endorsement	Not Specified	January 30, 2006	0 (50.5)
8. Agency Approval	Not Specified	April 17, 2006 (MK) September 25, 2006 (AL) April 17, 2006	MK – 2.5 (52.5) AL – 8 (58.5) TR – 2.5 (52.5)
9. Implementation Start (first disbursement)	Not Specified	June 15, 2006 (MK) November 16, 2006 (TR) November 22, 2006 (AL)	MK – 2 (54.5) AL – 2 (60.5) TR – 10 (62.5)
10. Mid-term Evaluation	March 2009	May 2009 (all)	MK – 35.5 (90) AL – 29.5 (90) TR –27.5 (90)
11. Project Operational Completion	December 31, 2011	June 30, 2012 (TR and MK); March 31, 2012 (AL)	MK – 25 (115) AL – 22 (112) TR – 25 (115)
12. Terminal Evaluation	October 2011	June 2012	MK – 0 (115) AL – (-3) (115) TR – 0 (115)
13. Project Financial Closing	Not Specified	December 31, 2012	6 (121)

[3]Sources: 1.A. N/A; 1.B. GEF PMIS; 2.A. N/A; 2.B. 2010 PIR; 3.A. N/S; 3.B. GEF online project database; 4.A. N/A; 4.B. GEF PMIS; 5.A. GEF PMIS; 5.B. GEF PMIS; 6.A. N/S; 6.B. GEF PMIS; 7.A. N/S; 7.B. GEF PMIS; 8.A. N/S; 8.B. 2008 PIR; 9.A. N/S; 9.B. 2008 PIR; 10.A. 2008 PIR; 10.B. Date of MTE report; 11.A. 2008 PIR; 11.B. Project team communication; 12.A. 2010 PIR; 12.B. Date of terminal evaluation field mission; 13.A. N/S; 13.B. As per UNDP standard procedures.

IV. Project Design and Implementation

A. Key Elements of Project Design and Planning

i. Stakeholder Participation in Project Development

47. Through many years of GEF portfolio assessment, adequate stakeholder participation and input to the project design and development process has been identified as an important element for project success. Since the Prespa IEM project was developed through the PPCC mechanism it should be safe to assume that stakeholder participation was appropriate and adequate to ensure a satisfactory project design. However, anecdotal evidence collected during the terminal evaluation, and reflected in the mid-term evaluation, suggests that the project design did not adequately address the needs and priorities of all stakeholders. For example, one stakeholder noted that the outcomes that the country representatives wanted to see included in the project document were not adequately reflected. The MTE quotes one participant as describing the PDF-B process as "the worst he had ever seen." At the same time, country representatives initially wanted to include among the project outcomes activities that were not eligible for GEF funding, such as wastewater treatment infrastructure, and water supply infrastructure. It is not possible within the scope of this evaluation to comprehensively analyze the project development process, but the anecdotal evidence suggests that at the very least, stakeholder expectations were not well managed. This is also partially likely due to the inherently challenging nature of designing a project to meet the expectations of three different countries (and finding a balance of resource allocation between countries), the challenges of clearly articulating eligible activities for GEF funding, and the extended project development timeframe (also due to the extensive consultation processes required) since the practical and political context shifts over time and stakeholders lose interest and become disillusioned about the prospect of any concrete and practical assistance.

ii. Project Design Factors

48. A large number of project stakeholders have highlighted issues related to the Prespa IEM project design that led to some of the later challenges, particularly with respect to integration and synergy of the project, and the status of transboundary cooperation for IEM. Perhaps the most significant lesson with respect to project design is that a project for integrated environmental management should have an integrated design. The very basis for the justification of the project as a regional, transboundary project is the fact that resources that are shared across national boundaries should be managed in a coordinated manner. The implementation approach codified in the project design immediately undercuts this rationale however, by having the three project components implemented under different execution modalities, with three project management units. The project document even goes so far as to specify that the transboundary PMU, in Macedonia, would be located in a separate office from the Macedonia national component PMU. There is not a clear technical rationale for this implementation structure, and the external observer may conclude that there were political considerations of fairness and balance between the three countries involved, and particularly between Albanian and Macedonia as they are the GEF recipient countries and the ones with UNDP offices. Because the three components were implemented as separate discrete sets of

activities, the timing and coordination of the three sets of activities were out of sync. As highlighted in Section III.B.iii above, for various reasons the transboundary and AL components started after the MK component. This further contributed to a lower level of coordination of activities than would have been the case if the project were implemented through a single integrated mechanism.

49. Because the project had three components, the transboundary PMU was a stand-alone entity, but there was no "stand-alone" location where it could be located. It wouldn't have made sense for the transboundary PMU to be based outside the region, and thus it had to be based in either Albania or Macedonia as they had UNDP offices, and thus it was based in Macedonia. There is no major problem with this from a technical perspective, but it created some practical and bureaucratic issues. In any transboundary project activities in the other countries, UNDP MK had to treat contracts and financial transfers as "international" transactions rather than "national" transactions. For example, for any project related tenders Macedonian applicants would be considered "national" consultants while applicants from Albania or Greece would be treated as "international" consultants. Yet in most cases the project ideally would have used expertise from within the region, not "truly" international consultants from further abroad (although international tenders are open to all international applicants). The project team and both the UNDP AL and UNDP MK offices took measures to try to address these issues, but some hurdles were difficult to overcome – for example, Albanian project participants indicated they had a difficult time convincing potential Albanian contractors to apply for tenders contracted through the UNDP MK office, as potential candidates did not believe they would receive the same consideration as applicants from Macedonia, even though UNDP procurement procedures are in fact designed to be fair and transparent. In addition, project stakeholders indicated that the provision of logistical support (transportation, per diems, etc.) for Greek and Albanian participation in transboundary project activities was not smooth, although it does not appear to have been a problem for Macedonian participants.

50. The issues of PMU location and integrated project implementation speak to a larger question about where the PMUs for regional projects should be located. In reality, in the case of most multi-country GEF projects there are political sensitivities that have to be taken into consideration and accommodated, and these can be based on real and valid concerns related to balance, fairness, and appropriate access to resources. For some projects there is a legitimate challenge of deciding how a PMU should be structured, and where it should be physically located to ensure the most appropriate balance of needs between involved countries, and to avoid even the perception of the project being dominated by one country or another. This is an issue faced by many projects, and there is no standard easy solution; the optimum approach must be considered in each particular circumstance. In some regional projects there is a relevant regional multilateral or civil society organization executing the project, and it makes sense to have the PMU at the organization's offices, wherever that may be. There was no such organization involved in the Prespa IEM project. Past experience with GEF projects indicates that effectiveness and efficiency is increased when project execution is handled closer to the project site rather than further away; for the Prespa IEM project, at least having the transboundary PMU located in the region, in the municipality of Resen, was highly beneficial.

With a more integrated project design it might have been possible to have a disbursed PMU with staff in at least AL and MK working together and in direct regular contact. In addition, the mid-term evaluation for the Prespa IEM project suggested that the project international technical advisor (ITA) should have been reporting to UNDP's Bratislava Regional Centre office, rather than to UNDP-MK, although this terminal evaluation considers that this would have been impractical as the UNDP-GEF staff at the Bratislava Regional Centre do not have the available capacity to monitor projects more closely than they already do.

51. Further to the PMU design question is the issue of the level of integration between a GEF International Waters project PMU and the corresponding regional water body commission that it is intending to support; in the case of Prespa, this is the Prespa Park Management Committee (PPMC) (former PPCC). There was some confusion in the initial stages of project implementation about whether the transboundary ITA was supposed to serve as the Executive Secretary of the PPCC,[4] although it was later clarified that this was not to be the case. Commission Secretariats and PMUs do have different mandates and duties; in the case where there is already a well-functioning secretariat, (e.g. Danube Commission) it is possible for a project PMU to work successfully in parallel. In another example, in the case of the UNEP-GEF South China Sea International Waters project, the project was nominally implemented under the Secretariat of the regional body, the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), though in reality the project implementation unit had much more technical capacity than the Secretariat. For a period of time one staff member worked half time for both the project and the Secretariat, which facilitated coordination and communication between the PMU and COBSEA. The SCS project manager also reported on project implementation to the COBSEA Executive Secretary, while UNEP provided managerial oversight. At the end of the project, the COBSEA Secretariat incorporated as much of the SCS project's results and activities as was feasible and practicable, though the fact that the COBSEA Secretariat still had limited capacity negatively influenced the sustainability of carrying the project-produced SAP forward - as it has for the Prespa IEM project.

52. For the Prespa IEM project another important issue is that some aspects of the transboundary component were only budgeted for 2.5 years, with the anticipation that the participating governments would take over financing some of the transboundary activities. This included only part-time financing for the ITA in the latter part of the project, the key project staff member for the transboundary component. As the project progressed it became clear that the timing of this handover of financing was not realistic, and in fact even by the end of the project the three participating governments have not committed the financial resources necessary to continue operating the PPMC. This is an important sustainability issue relating to the project design that was recognized early on (for example in internal project discussions in February 2008) but a solution was not found other than to extend the budgeted transboundary activities to the end of the project. At the same time, the position of ITA changed three times during the course of the project (with significant gaps between individuals), and shifted from an on-site full-time senior staff member to a remotely-based senior advisor with limited time

[4] See the "Project Concept and Design" section of the mid-term evaluation for an in-depth analysis of the contradictions in the project document.

allocation. The ITA position was envisioned as an international recruitment, but a planned shift to a part-time on-site position is simply not feasible for an international staff member.

53. The approach for producing some key outputs was also a factor. To produce the SAP a tender process was undertaken – i.e. an organization was contracted to produce the SAP as an output. This contrasts with the process for SAP development in some other GEF International Waters projects, where a large number of subject-matter technical experts from each of the participating countries produced inputs to an overall document that is integrated by a sub-set of the stakeholders into a single SAP, with widely agreed priorities, recommendations, etc. In some projects that have followed the latter approach – for example, in the Caribbean and in the South China Sea - an SAP with comparatively better stakeholder ownership and buy-in has resulted. The development of the Prespa SAP did consist of a participatory process, with nine consultative workshops to discuss different stages of development, and the draft document circulated to the PPCC multiple times. Despite the participatory effort, due at least partially to the externally facilitated approach for Prespa the SAP is considered to have a low level of ownership from the key relevant stakeholders in the region (particularly the governments of the three countries). This contrasts with the approach taken by the Prespa IEM project in producing the transboundary monitoring framework, which was produced through a consultative process involving technical experts from all three countries; the transboundary monitoring framework was cited by multiple stakeholders as a useful and valuable output from the project.

54. Additionally, the project design created execution challenges because of the degree of integration with the planned KfW interventions in both Albania and Macedonia to support the protected areas in these countries within the Prespa watershed. The project design includes specific project outputs that are to be completely funded by non-GEF sources. This is a positive approach in general as it promotes donor coordination and potential synergistic benefits from combining investments from multiple donors. In another sense, this is often what is envisioned as “co-financing” for GEF projects, in contrast to the more common approach of funding that is related to a project’s objectives but not directly linked to project activities. However, this degree of integration is only useful if it is well coordinated, otherwise it can lead to challenges in implementation. This turned out to be the case for the Prespa project; the KfW support in Macedonia was implemented mostly ahead of the GEF-funded activities because of the long timeframe for the development and approval process of the GEF project, while in Albania the KfW supported activities only began in late 2011, following years of discussions on conditionality’s related to protected area governance with the Albanian government. Thus, activities that were planned as interdependent between GEF and KfW funding ended up being out of sync, and required adaptive approaches. In addition, some aspects of the Albanian component were slower to start than they could have been as the team initially tried to wait for the KfW project to start.

55. The project document includes a technically progressive assessment of the main environmental stresses faced in the Prespa basin, and a slightly less comprehensive assessment of the main barriers to effective transboundary integrated ecosystem management. At the same time, the document does not have threat matrix or other logical analysis tools showing how the project components are designed to specifically address the threats and barriers

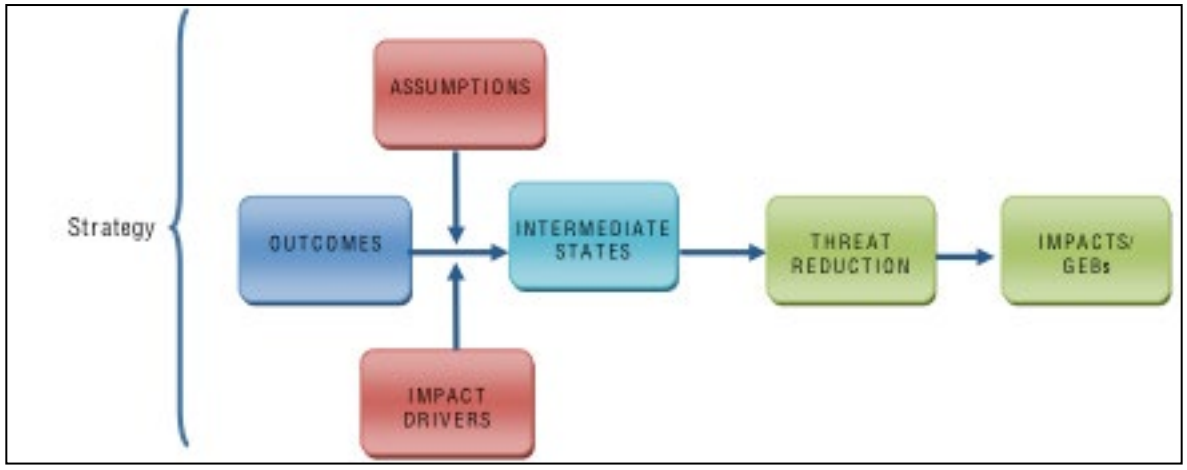
identified. A more clearly articulated theory of change related to the specific threats and barriers in the region might have facilitated a strengthened project design.

56. The project document did not include an adequate risk analysis and mitigation strategy. Had a more comprehensive approach been taken on this element some of the challenges and issues the project had to face might have been avoided, though it is generally difficult to see into the future and anticipate the full range of risks a project may face throughout implementation, especially when this stretches six or seven years from the time of project development. The project document includes a brief risk assessment section, with eight risks identified. Risk mitigation strategies are given for only three of the risks identified, and are not comprehensive. Often a project's risk analysis is updated at the inception workshop phase, but based on the three inception workshop reports for the Prespa project, it does not appear that this was carried out in any systematic or comprehensive manner in this case.

B. Project Outcomes-Impacts Theory of Change

57. A project's logical intervention approach, or theory of change, is the expression of the strategy chosen to achieve the objective. Based on the objective and strategy chosen, the project inputs and activities are designed to produce the outputs and outcomes required to eventually achieve impact level results. This "logic chain" defines the outcomes-impacts pathway. Figure 1 below indicates a generic project logic chain pathway.

Figure 1 Generic Theory of Change for Outcome-Impacts Pathways[5]



58. Articulating and understanding a project's theory of change can be a valuable step toward later assessment of the potential results. This is particularly true for a project such as the Prespa IEM project, which has an extended theory of change – that is, there are multiple steps in the process between the outcomes produced by the project and the intended results. The project is working to catalyze transboundary integrated ecosystem management in the Prespa basin, eventually leading to positive environmental benefits in the Prespa watershed. To assess the likelihood of impact, the GEF Evaluation Office applies the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) methodology.

[5] Source: GEF Evaluation Review of Outcomes to Impacts Handbook.

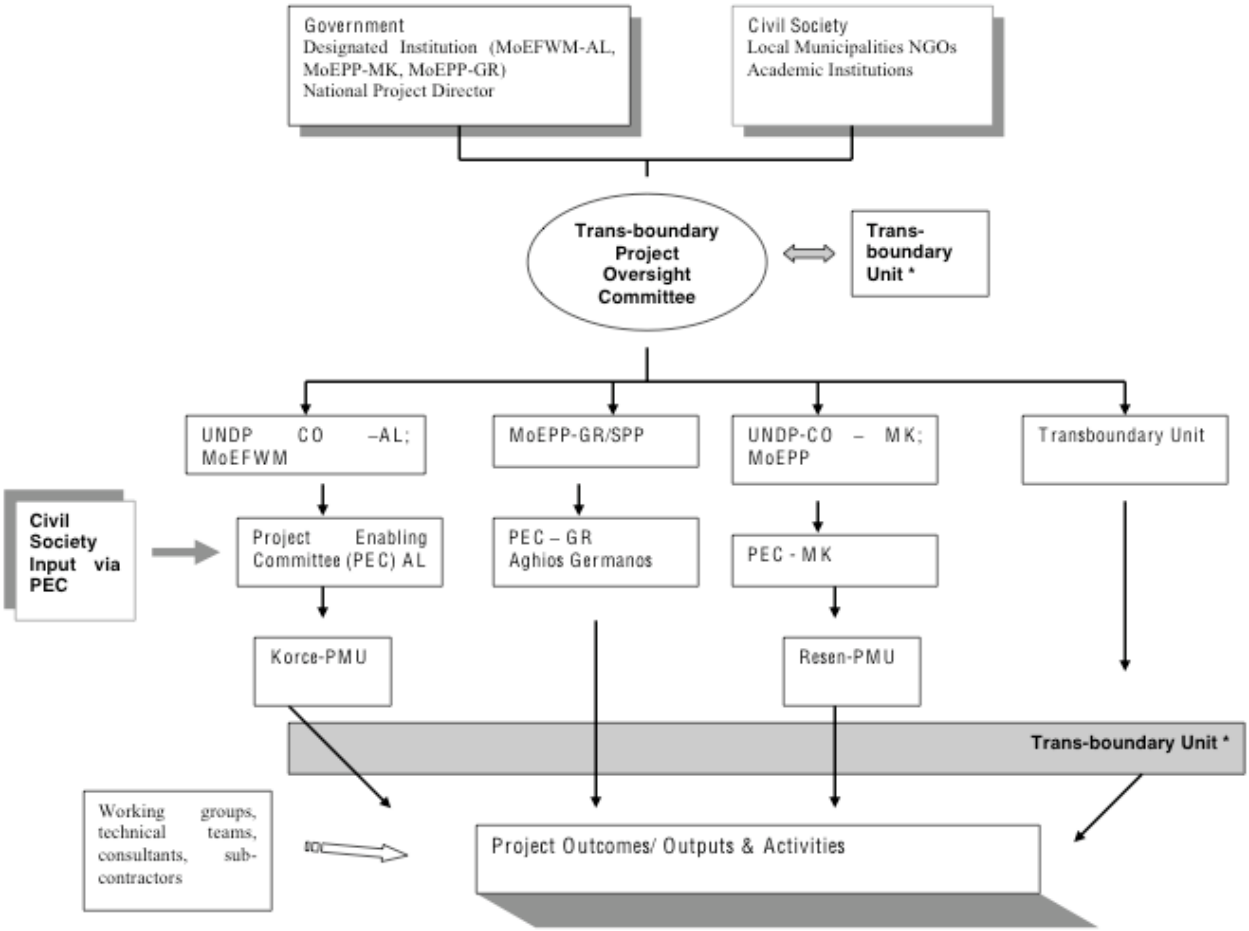
59. The ROtI methodology acknowledges and recognizes that time is required following completion of most GEF projects for sustained execution of the conditions processes leading to eventual changes in threats to or improved management of environmental resources. This is particularly true in the case of ecosystem-focused projects, as ecological conditions and species populations take time to respond to project interventions to the extent that changes in environmental status can be identified and documented.

60. For the Prespa IEM project it was expected that during the project lifetime there would be progress toward implementation of integrated ecosystem management in the region. Though it was anticipated that some impact-level results might be produced through the demonstration activities planned in each of the three countries, large-scale ecosystem or watershed level impacts due to project contributions would not be expected in such a large system within five years of project implementation start, considering the time necessary to actually undertake activities. In fact, in the Macedonia national component, the project contributed to the ***development*** of the watershed management plan for Macedonian Prespa, and that plan is now being ***implemented*** in the follow-up project supported by the Swiss Development Corporation.

C. Prespa IEM Project Implementation Approach

61. The project was implemented under both the UNDP NEX and DEX approach, with the MK and AL national components implemented under the NEX approach, and the transboundary component implemented under the DEX approach. A diagram of the execution arrangements is shown in Figure 2 below. In AL the national executing agency was the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration; in MK the national executing agency was the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. As with many NEX projects, the government agencies involved were not the ones actually carrying out the project activities. In Albania a project office with staff contracted through UNDP was based in an office in Tirana separate from both the UNDP and government offices. The project team included a project liaison officer based in Korça, outside but only a short drive from the AL Prespa region; there are only small villages within the AL Prespa region. In MK, the project team was also contracted by UNDP, and the project office was located in the municipal offices of the Macedonian town of Resen, the largest population center within the full Prespa watershed. The MK component also had at least one full-time staff member based at the project offices of the MoEPP in Skopje for a portion of the project implementation period, and the UNDP-MK communications specialist supporting the MK and transboundary project activities was also based on Skopje. The UNDP-AL communication staff in Tirana supported the project activities in Albania. The transboundary project team consisted of the ITA (when there was one in place) and a project assistant; the transboundary team shared offices with the Macedonian national component in the Resen municipal building. There was no project team or implementation unit in Greece that was comparable to those of the national components in AL and MK, but the NGO SPP continued to play an active role, and the Greek Prespa National Park served as the government's project focal point in the region, while the Greek Ministry of Environment was the national counterpart.

Figure 2Prespa IEM Project Implementation Arrangements



Source: Project Document

62. As outlined in the project document and the project inception report, the transboundary component was overseen by a Project Oversight Committee (POC), a function which was fulfilled in actuality by the already-standing PPCC. The POC's detailed TORs were outlined in the project document, and, according to the transboundary inception report, the POC was to meet annually[6] and had three main responsibilities:

1) The POC will serve as a forum for stakeholder input and discussion;
2) The POC will oversee project implementation and meet on a semi-annual basis to review project progress, and provide input to the finalization of annual project work plans;
3) POC members will facilitate the implementation of project activities in their respective organizations, ensure that cooperative activities are implemented in a timely manner, and facilitate the integration of project-inspired activities into existing programs and practices.

[6] POC meetings were specified as semi-annually in the project document, but after further discussion annual meetings were deemed sufficient.

63. There were a number of practical implications for the PPCC based on the TORs provided in the project document however, and many administrative issues requiring clarification were outlined in Annex 6 of the transboundary inception report. UNDP and the ITA clarified the issues and functioning of the PPCC as the POC at the second ("1st Regular") POC meeting on March 7th, 2008, where a revised TOR for the POC was approved. The PPCC membership consisted of 15 nominated individuals from each of the three countries. POC meetings were held annually, although on multiple occasions the attending members were limited to six to nine representatives from a few key stakeholder organizations (i.e. not the full 15 person PPCC delegation from each of the countries), with additional participation from the Prespa project staff (including national component staff), UNDP program staff and observers. The POC functioned well in its oversight and decision-making responsibilities, but the limited participation did not facilitate the building of stakeholder ownership as originally envisioned and intended.

64. Both the AL and MK national components also had Project Boards made up of national representatives overseeing their activities and supporting project implementation decision-making.

65. Table 3 below highlights the organizations and institutions participating in the respective POC and project board meetings.

Table 3 Prespa Project Oversight Bodies

Transboundary Project Oversight Committee	**Albania Project Board**	**Macedonia Project Board**
• Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration (Albania) • Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (Macedonia) • Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning, and Public Works (Greece) • Society for the Protection of Prespa • NGO Coalition for Prosperous Prespa • MedWet • UNDP Albania Country Office • UNDP Macedonia Country Office • Municipality of Resen • Municipality of Lemos (Greek Prespa) • Municipality of Liqenas (Albania) • Albanian Institute of Nature Protection	• National Project Director, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration • Albania Prespa Park Director • Head of Liqenas Commune • Head of Proger Commune • UNDP Albania Country Office	• National Project Director, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning • Mayor of Resen Municipality • UNDP Macedonia Country Office

D. Prespa IEM Project Relevance

66. Based on the assessment of project relevance to local and national priorities and policies, priorities related to relevant international conventions, and to the GEF's strategic priorities and objectives, overall the project is considered to be ***relevant***.

i. Relevance at Local and National Levels

67. The Prespa project is clearly relevant at both the local and national levels in each of the three participating countries. This is first and foremost indicated by the Prespa Park agreement signed by all three countries in 2000, which was the catalyst for this project. Within each of the three countries there is a legislative and policy foundation for environmental protection and management that is supported through this project. At the time of project approval relevant national laws and policies in Albania included the *Law on the Protection of Trans-boundary Lakes (2003)*, the *Law on Water Resources (1996)*, the *Law on Fishing and Aquatic Life (1995 and 2002 amendment)*, the *Law on Forest Management*, and the *Law on Protected Areas (2002)*. The Prespa project is relevant to national legislation in Macedonia including the *Law on Spatial and Urban Planning (1996)*, the *Law on Waters (1998)*, the *Law on Fisheries (1993)*, the *Law on Environment and Nature Protection and Promotion (rev. 2000)*, and the *Nature Protection Act (2004)*. Although Greece is not a GEF recipient country, the project was relevant to multiple aspects of Greece's environmental obligations as a European Union member, including the Waters and Habitats Directives.

68. At the local level in each of the three countries there are important sustainable development issues for the local communities that the project helped address. The project's work on reducing the application of agricultural inputs was among the most frequently cited benefits for the Prespa communities in both Albania and Macedonia, but many of the other project activities were relevant to local needs and priorities as well, such as the work on developing tourism, improving fisheries management, and contributing to waste management. The relevance and the value of the project were confirmed during the terminal evaluation mission by the municipal heads in each country's Prespa region.

ii. Relevance to Multilateral Environmental Agreements

69. At the time of project development and approval there was no legally binding regional multilateral environmental agreement relating specifically to the Prespa basin, as there is in the targeted regions in many other GEF-supported International Waters projects. The project clearly contributed to the signing of the 2010 agreement between all three countries, which is still going through national ratification processes.

70. The three countries are parties to multiple global-level MEAs to which the project was relevant. These include the Convention on Biological Diversity, for which the GEF is a financial mechanism). For the CBD the project is relevant to the following articles: Article 6 (General measures for conservation and sustainable use); Article 7 (Identification and monitoring); Article 8 (In-situ conservation); Article 10 (Sustainable use of components of biological diversity); Article 11 (Incentive measures); Article 12 (Research and training); Article 13 (Education and awareness); and Article 17 (Exchange of information). The project also supports the objectives of other MEAs such as the Ramsar Convention and Convention on Migratory Species.

iii. Relevance to GEF Strategies, Priorities and Principles

71. The Prespa IEM project is a multi-focal area project, bringing together the biodiversity and international waters focal areas. The project was classified as an Operational Program 12

(OP 12) project, with the relevant biodiversity operational programs as OP 2 (Coastal, marine, and freshwater ecosystems (including wetlands)) and OP 4 (Mountain ecosystems), and the relevant international waters focal areas as OP 8 (Water body-based program) and OP 9 (Integrated land and water multiple focal area). The GEF operational programs have been superseded by the focal area strategic priorities and results frameworks.

72. The GEF strategic priorities for each of its thematic focal areas (biodiversity, international waters, etc.) have evolved from one GEF phase to the next, but have overall remained roughly focused on the same broad areas of intervention. The project was primarily developed under GEF-3 (July 2002-June 2006), and implemented under strategic priorities for both GEF-4 (July 2006 – June 2010)[7] and for GEF-5 (July 2010 – June 2014).[8]

73. It appears that during development and approval the project was not specifically associated with biodiversity and international waters strategic priorities for GEF-3 or GEF-4, but it can be retrospectively defined this way. In the biodiversity focal area the project supports the first two strategic objectives: Objective 1: Improve the sustainability of protected area systems; and Objective 2: Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes, seascapes and sectors. Under objective 1, the project contributed to strengthening the management effectiveness of the protected areas in the Prespa basin, but especially Prespa National Park in Albania, and Ezerani protected area in Macedonia. Galicia and Pelister National Parks in Macedonia also benefited, as did Prespa National Park in Greece. Prespa National Park in Albania and Galičica National Park in Macedonia were direct recipients of the project's KfW co-financing. Under objective 2, the project contributed to increased sustainability of production landscapes, and measures for conserving biodiversity. According to the project document, there are approximately 15,000 ha of cropland in MK-Prespa (5,000 of apple orchards alone), 2,000 ha in AL-Prespa, and 2,500 ha in GR-Prespa. This may have shifted somewhat since the project development timeframe. Also practiced in the Prespa basin are forestry, non-timber forest production, livestock, and fisheries – all of which the project positively influenced in some way (e.g. the conservation plan for mountain tea, which is a non-timber forest product harvested by local people in the region).

74. For the international waters focal area, the project supports the following strategic objectives:

- Objective 1: Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change
- Objective 3: Support foundational capacity building, portfolio learning, and targeted research needs for joint, ecosystem-based management of transboundary water systems

E. Project Management and Cost Effectiveness (Efficiency)

75. Overall the **efficiency** of the project is rated ***moderately satisfactory***.

[7] For the focal area strategic approach for GEF-4, see GEF Council document GEF/C.31/1, "Focal Area Strategic and Strategic Programming for GEF-4," July 16, 2007.

[8] For the focal area strategic priorities for GEF-5, see GEF Council document GEF/R.5/31, "GEF-5 Programming Document," May 3, 2010.

76. The Prespa IEM project faced a number of factors that slowed implementation and created challenges, but fortunately overall project management has been a strength that kept each of the three components on track to make as much progress as possible. The project management team for the Albania component had previous experience with UNDP-GEF projects, which meant that they were able to handle the standard UNDP financial and reporting procedures with no significant problems. The Macedonia component also had a capable team in place that effectively managed elements such as project work planning, financial management, and reporting. As one example, the workplans for the transboundary component were structured by results framework indicators and targets, rather than by activities specified in the project document, which strengthens a results-based approach to implementation (as long as results framework indicators and targets are well-designed). In addition, within the Albania and Macedonia national components there were good working relationships and partnerships between the project team and the other partners – for example, in Macedonia with the municipality of Resen, and with the Prespa National Park (Albania) and the communes of Liqenas and Proger in Albanian Prespa.

77. Additional specific aspects of project management that relate to efficiency are discussed in sub-headings, below. These include financial management, adaptive management, co-financing, and UNDP oversight.

78. As highlighted in the sections above on project design and implementation arrangements, there were multiple factors that had a negative influence on the efficiency of the project. All three components of the project faced some initial delays, with the transboundary component and the Albania component having more significant delays. For the transboundary component, turnover in the position of International Technical Advisor was a significant issue. The initial ITA was in place from April 1st 2007 – March 31st 2009. The second ITA was in place from June 5th, 2010 to March 1st, 2011. Thus there was a gap of 15+ months where there was no ITA. The final ITA, who was remotely based and had a contracted level of effort of 25 days, took up the position in May 2011 and continued through project completion. The ITA issue was partly baked into the project design, with phase-out of the project budget for this activity in years four and five of the project: It was planned for a complete cessation of transboundary component funding under Outcome 3, and an overall drop off in annual funding for the transboundary component from an average of ~$450,000/year in years 1-3, to an average of $136,000/year in years 4 and 5. In the periods where there was no ITA, the transboundary component did not move ahead as quickly, and then activities had to get back up to speed once the ITA position was again filled. The Macedonia component also experienced turnover in the project manager position in the early part of the project, with the first project manager in place from May 2006 – October 2007, and the second manager in place from May 2008 (a gap of seven months) through completion.

79. The cost-effectiveness of some project results is also partially contingent on sustainability – i.e. whether the plans and outputs produced will be implemented and have further relevance. As discussed in Section VI.A, the sustainability of some results is uncertain, particularly for the transboundary component. Therefore, for example, if outputs such as the species conservation plans, the transboundary monitoring system, and Strategic Action Plan are

not implemented, the money spent to produce these outputs (reaching into the hundreds of thousands of dollars) will not have been an efficient use of resources.

80. The design of the project as three components instead of one has been previously commented on, but this structure also hindered efficiency, as there was inconsistent coordination and communication between the three components. The project teams from the three components held quarterly meetings, but this is not the same as if there had been a single project management unit responsible for activities in all three countries. In addition, the project required a six month (Albania) to nine month (Macedonia and transboundary) extension, which reflects negatively on cost-effectiveness – even if a longer implementation period can be useful for achieving greater results – because it means management costs increase as a share of the total project budget. The overall political context of the region also appears to have created a drag on the overall implementation process rather than strengthening it, although at the technical level experts from each of the three countries collaborated well in the relevant working groups.

i. Prespa IEM Project Financial Planning and Implementation

81. The project was divided into three separate components with three separate budgets, from the total GEF allocation of $4.135 million USD. The Albania component was budgeted for $1.05 million USD (25.4%), the Macedonia component was budgeted for $1.48 million USD (35.7%), and the transboundary component was budgeted for $1.61 million USD (38.9%). The Albanian component also had co-financing that was to be directly implemented by UNDP - $0.12 million from the Government of Albania, and $0.15 million from UNDP TRAC funding,[9]which equates to a total Albania direct implementation budget of $1.32 million USD.

82. Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6 below provide an overview of planned and actual expenditures by component by outcome. The financial data in these tables is based on the available financial documentation (i.e. CDRs) at the time of the terminal evaluation, and may not completely reflect project expenditures in 2012. According to project-provided data in the 2012 PIR which should fully reflect financial data through June 30, 2012 (the end of all operational activities of the project), delivery for Albania was 99.65% (98.0% according to the data in Table 4), delivery for Macedonia was 99.64% (99.7% according to the data in Table 5), and delivery for the transboundary component was 95.6% (96.32% according to the data in Table 6). The combined delivery rates equate to an overall project delivery rate of approximately 98.1% (97.7% based on the CDR data in the tables below), with a leftover available budget balance of approximately $80,000 USD ($97,000 USD based on data from available CDRs) out of the total project budget of $4.135 million USD.

[9] UNDP TRAC funding is allocated from UNDP's global core budget; TRAC stands for "target resource assignment from the core".

Table 4 Albania Component (NEX) Planned Budget and Actual Expenditure Through March 31, 2012 (USD)

	GEF amount planned	% of GEF amount planned	GEF amount actual	$ Difference	% of GEF amount actual	% Difference	Planned Co-financing Implemented by UNDP
Outcome 1: Land and Water / Nature Resource Management	0.19	18.1%	0.22	0.03	21.1%	3.0%	0.12 (Government of Albania)
Outcome 2: Productive Sector Improvement	0.33	31.0%	0.34	0.02	33.1%	2.1%	0.15 (UNDP TRAC)
Outcome 3: Protected Areas Strengthening / Biodiversity Conservation	0.07	6.7%	0.04	(0.03)	4.2%	(2.5)%	
Outcome 4: Transboundary Cooperation	0.26	24.3%	0.06	(0.19)	6.1%	(18.2)%	
Outcome 5: Lessons Learned and Adaptive Management	0.21	20.0%	0.37	0.16	35.4%	15.4%	
Monitoring and evaluation*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Project coordination and management‡	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A	
Total	1.05		1.03	0.02			0.27

Sources: Planned amounts: Project Document Annual Workplans; Actual amounts: Albania Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs).
**There was one single M&E budget for the entire project, and not an additional M&E fund amount, beyond what is included under Outcome 5.*
***‡**There was not a separate "Project Management" budget line shown in the planned project budget included in the Project Document. Project managements expenditures were drawn from all outcomes, but particularly Outcome 5. However, not all of Outcome 5 can be considered project management, as demonstrated by the fact that it was planned at 20% of the GEF expenditure, well above the stated threshold of 10%.*

Table 5 Macedonia Component (NEX) Planned Budget and Actual Expenditure Through May 31, 2012*(USD)

	GEF amount planned	% of GEF amount planned	GEF amount actual	$ Difference	% of GEF amount actual	% Difference
Inception Phase	0.04	2.4%	0.03	(0.00)	2.4%	(0.0%)
Outcome 1: Land and Water / Nature Resource Management	0.38	25.4%	0.37	(0.00)	25.3%	(0.1%)
Outcome 2: Productive Sector Improvement	0.34	23.0%	0.34	(0.00)	23.1%	(0.1)%
Outcome 3: Protected Areas Strengthening / Biodiversity Conservation	0.25	16.7%	0.22	(0.02)	15.3%	(1.4%)
Outcome 4: Transboundary Cooperation	0.25	16.3%	0.23	(0.01)	15.6%	(0.7%)
Outcome 5: Lessons Learned and Adaptive Management	0.24	16.2%	0.27	0.03	18.4%	2.2%
Monitoring and evaluation**	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Project coordination and management‡	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A
Total	1.48		1.47	0.01		

Sources: Planned amounts: Project Document Annual Workplans; Actual amounts: Macedonia Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs).
**The Macedonia Component was not completed until June 30, 2012, and thus the total expenditures shown here do not include the full final project expenditure by component.*
***There was one single M&E budget for the entire project, and not an additional M&E fund amount, beyond what is included under Outcome 5.*

‡There was not a separate "Project Management" budget line shown in the planned project budget included in the Project Document. Project managements expenditures were drawn from all outcomes, but particularly Outcome 5. However, not all of Outcome 5 can be considered project management, as demonstrated by the fact that it was planned at 16.2% of the GEF expenditure, well above the stated threshold of 10%.

Table 6 Transboundary (DEX) Component Planned Budget and Actual Expenditure Through May 31, 2012 (USD)

	GEF amount planned	% of GEF amount planned	GEF amount actual	$ Difference	% of GEF amount actual	% Difference
Outcome 1: Land and Water / Nature Resource Management	0.00	0.0%	0.00	N/A	0.0%	N/A
Outcome 2: Productive Sector Improvement	0.00	0.0%	0.00	N/A	0.0%	N/A
Outcome 3: Protected Areas Strengthening / Biodiversity Conservation	0.39	24.2%	0.32	(0.07)	20.7%	(3.5%)
Outcome 4: Transboundary Cooperation	0.65	40.6%	0.62	(0.03)	40.1%	(0.5%)
Outcome 5: Lessons Learned and Adaptive Management	0.57	35.2%	0.55	(0.02)	35.1%	(0.1%)
Monitoring and evaluation*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Project coordination and management‡	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A
Total	1.61		1.55	0.06		

Sources: Sources: Planned amounts: Project Document Annual Workplans; Actual amounts: Transboundary Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs).
**The Transboundary Component was not completed until June 30, 2012, and thus the total expenditures shown here do not include the full final project expenditure by component.*
***There was one single M&E budget for the entire project, and not an additional M&E fund amount, beyond what is included under Outcome 5.*
‡There was not a separate "Project Management" budget line shown in the planned project budget included in the Project Document. Project managements expenditures were drawn from all outcomes, but particularly Outcome 5. However, not all of Outcome 5 can be considered project management, as demonstrated by the fact that it was planned at 35.2% of the GEF expenditure, well above the stated threshold of 10%.

83. Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5 show the actual project delivery by year of implementation, compared to planned delivery. It should be noted that the first disbursement for each of the components occurred only in mid or late 2006, so it would not have been practical to meet the full "year 1" delivery planned in the project document. The most notable conclusion from the figures below is that after initially slow implementation in 2006 and 2007, the components made up for lost time in the remaining years, though the six to nine month extension was still required to reach full delivery.

Figure 3 Albania Component Actual vs. Planned Delivery (USD)

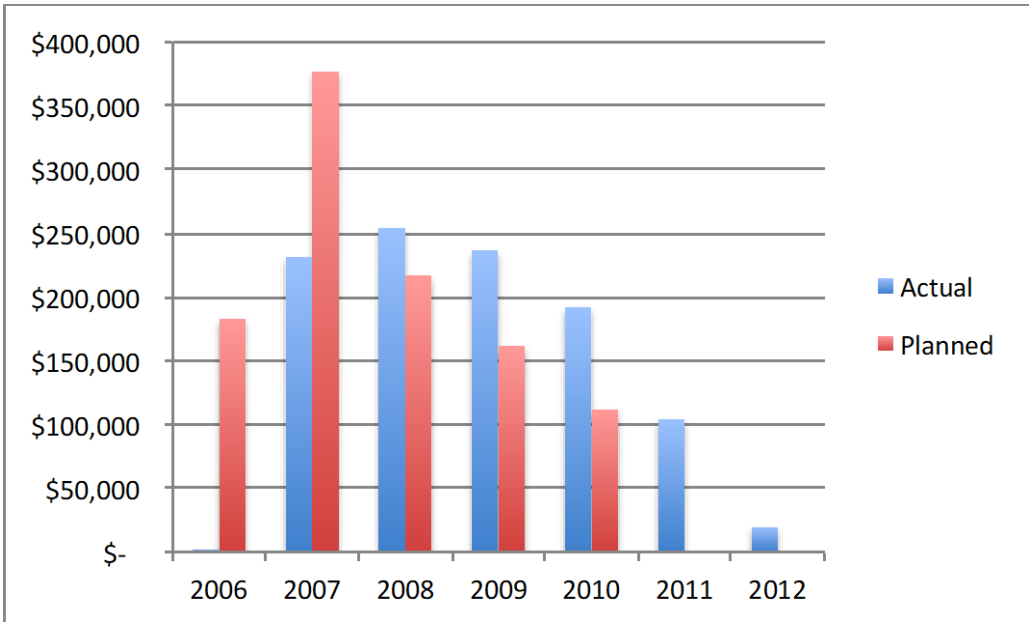


Figure 4 Macedonia Component Actual vs. Planned Delivery (USD)

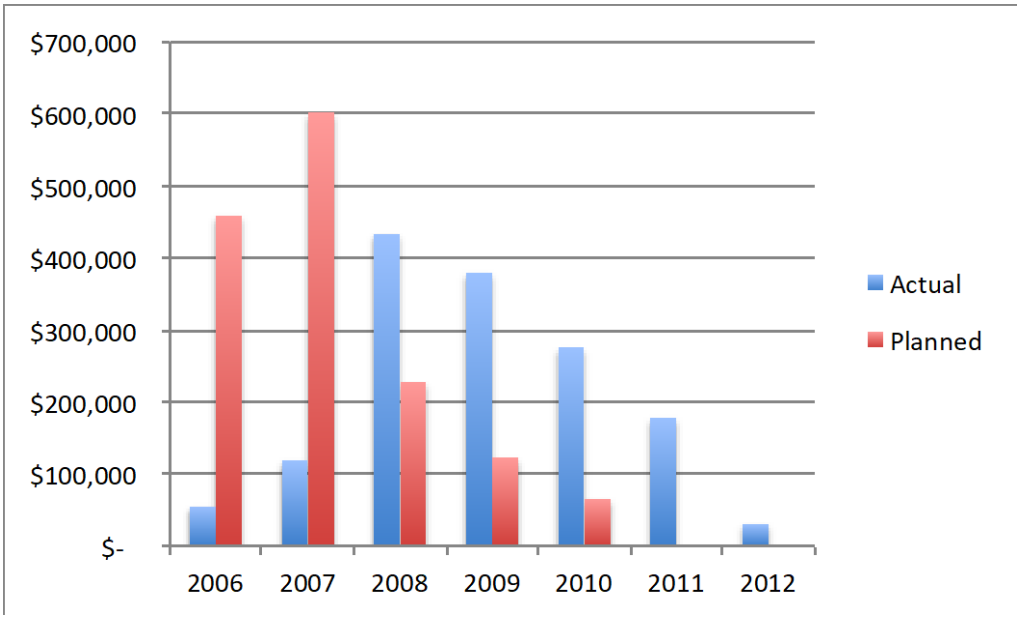
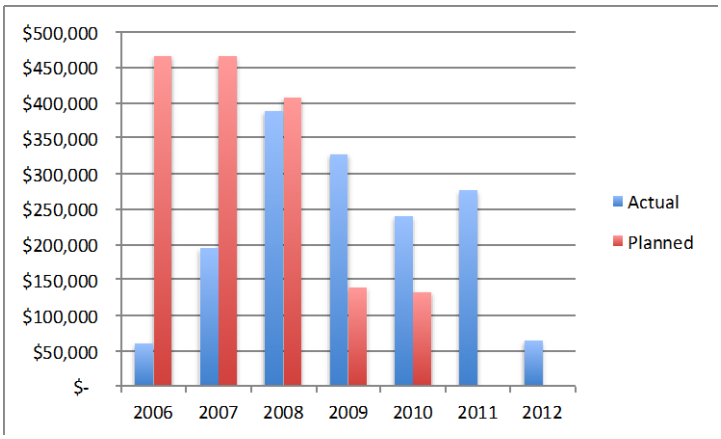


Figure 5 Transboundary Component Actual vs. Planned Delivery (USD)



84. While the project delivered nearly full implementation of the planned budget by the end of the extension period, within the Albania and transboundary components there was some significant variation by outcome compared to what had been envisioned in the project document. The Macedonia component's per-outcome budget was remarkably close to what was originally planned. Shifting budget between project activities is not inherently positive or negative, as it can reflect either adaptive management approaches or unexpected or poorly managed costs in certain areas. Figure 6 and Figure 7 below show the planned and actual expenditures by outcome for the Albania component, while Figure 8 and Figure 9 show this for the Macedonia component, and Figure 10 and Figure 11 show this for the transboundary component.

85. The figures for each component are on comparable y-axis scales, so it is possible to get a sense of which outcomes received relatively more or less funding than planned; this data is provided in detail in the financing tables above. For the Albania component, the largest deviations where for Outcome 4 ($0.19 million less than planned) and Outcome 5 ($0.16 million more than planned). For the Macedonia component there were not significant deviations, though all of the outcomes received less expenditure than planned, except Outcome 5 ($0.03 million more than planned). For the transboundary component there were also not significant deviations, though as the transboundary component was under-delivered on the whole, less funding was spent on each of the three outcomes than planned.

86. Based on the figures of spending by outcome below, it is also possible to see the timing of delivery of respective outcomes – for example, it is possible to see that Outcome 3 of the transboundary component (primarily work on the species conservation plans) was delivered at the end of the project instead of at the beginning as planned.

Figure 6 Albania Planned by Outcome[10]

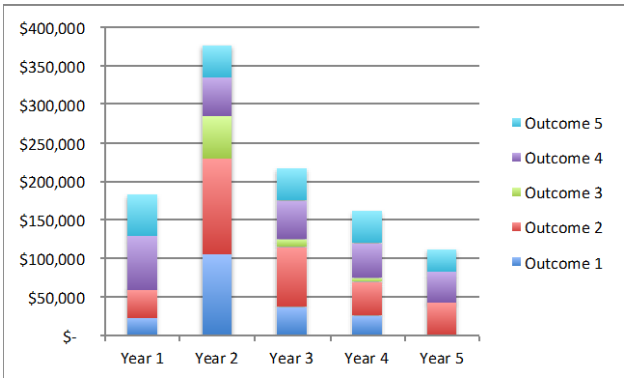


Figure 7 Albania Actual by Outcome

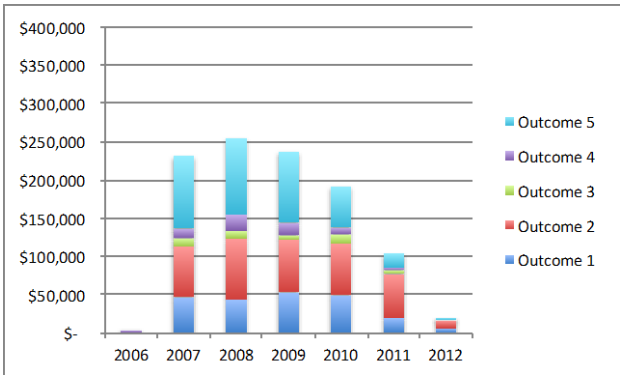


Figure 8 Macedonia Planned by Outcome

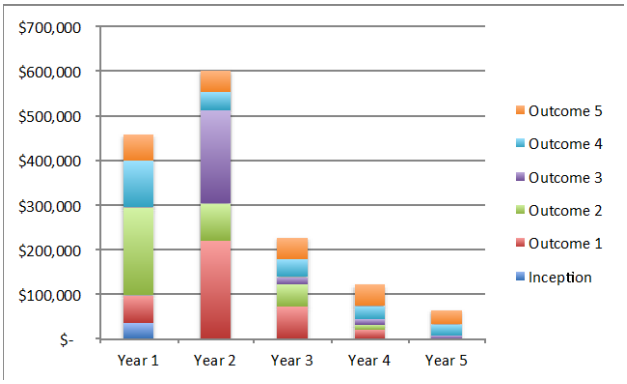


Figure 9 Macedonia Actual by Outcome

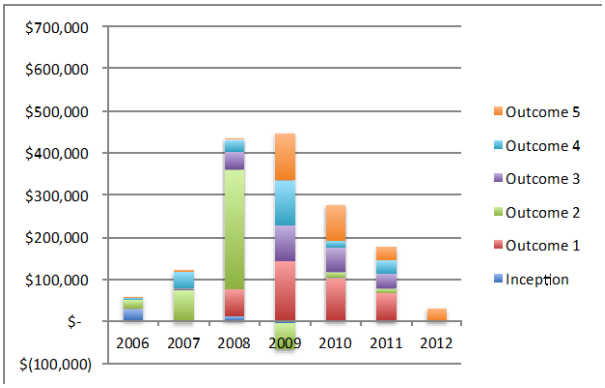


Figure 10 Transboundary Planned by Outcome

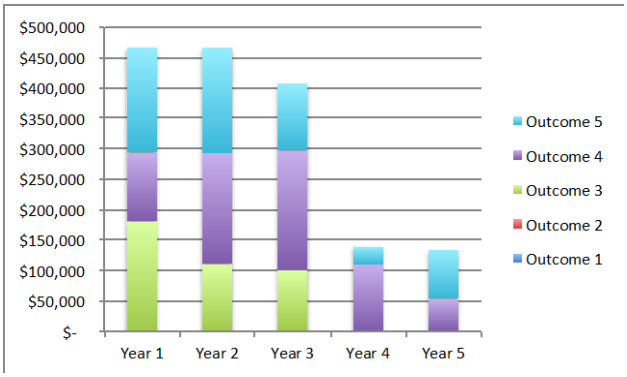
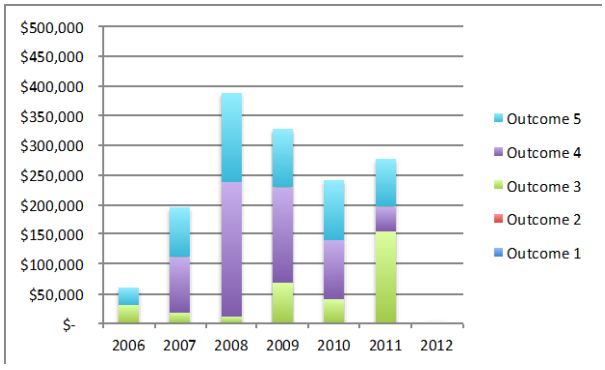


Figure 11 Transboundary Actual by Outcome



[10] For reference, the outcomes can be considered in shorthand as: Outcome 1 – Land and Water / Natural Resource Management; Outcome 2 – Improvement of the Productive Sector; Outcome 3 – PA Strengthening / Biodiversity Conservation; Outcome 4 – Transboundary Cooperation; Outcome 5 – Lessons Learned and Adaptive Management.

87. The project management costs for each component, and for the project as a whole, cannot be accurately calculated because the GEF has not clearly and explicitly defined which expenditures should or should not be considered management costs. In addition, the budget lines in the UNDP ATLAS financial management system do not clearly breakdown what UNDP considers "management" costs compared to costs related to technical work. In some cases UNDP provides guidelines to project managers regarding the approximate percentage of their time that should be spent on "management" related items. In virtually all projects, a share of project staff time is spent on technical activities, in addition to management activities – so it is not possible to simply equate budget lines related to salaries and office expenses as "project management costs." The structure of the Prespa IEM project did not include a separate component specifically dedicated to project management – management costs were spread among the five outcomes for each of the three components. Therefore it is not clear what the planned management costs were, but the GEF's stated threshold is 10% of the total budget.

88. Based on the information available, it is likely that management costs for the Prespa IEM project exceeded the planned costs. For one, the project was implemented over a longer period than planned, so management costs as a share of the total budget were likely higher. In addition, the largest share of management costs were slated under Outcome 5 (Lessons Learned and Adaptive Management) and the expenditure for this outcome was higher than planned for both the Albania and Macedonia components, while it was lower for the Transboundary component but only because the component under-delivered as a whole. For this evaluation the transboundary component provided internal calculations of management costs, calculated to 20.3% of expenditure under the transboundary component. Under the Albania component, as highlighted above, the expenditure for Outcome 5 increased from a planned 20% of GEF resources to more than 35%, but it should be kept in mind that Outcome 5 does not correspond directly to management costs, as it includes additional items. According to information in the project mid-term evaluation, the discrepancy of planned vs. actual Outcome 5 costs between the Albania and Macedonia component can partly be explained by differing approaches by project managers in each country regarding which budget line items such as salaries, rent, utilities, and transportation were charged to.

89. The project monitoring and evaluation budget was also not broken out separately from among the five outcomes and three components, and there was one M&E budget for the entire project specified in the project document: $150,000, which is adequate for a project of this size. This primarily reflects the costs of mid-term and final evaluations, audits, and the inception workshop. The UNDP Macedonia Country Office was responsible for organizing the mid-term and final evaluations, and a separate "inception" budget line was included in the Macedonia national component ATLAS budget.

90. Both the Albania and Macedonia components were implemented in a NEX modality and occasional external audits were performed. The Albania component was audited in 2007 and 2009, with no major problems noted. The Transboundary component is implemented in a DEX modality and hence no external audit was performed. The project was included in a wider internal UNDP report in 2008. The Macedonia component was audited in 2010 for the period covering 2006 – 2010, and no major issues were found.

ii. Prespa IEM Project Co-financing

91. There are discrepancies about the amount of expected co-financing for the project, as different sources provide different co-financing figures. The planned and the actual co-financing of the project discerned by this evaluation are shown in Table 7 below, using the planned co-financing amount of $8.636. In addition, the specific sources of co-financing as foreseen in the project document are shown in Table 8. The project document "Incremental Cost Matrix" shows the expected co-financing for each outcome by source, and the sum of these figures results in a total co-financing figure of $8.636 million USD. This is also the amount recorded in the GEF public online project database, and it is the figure applied by this evaluation. At the same time, the project document "Signature page" for the three components (beginning on page 131 of the project document) provide a summary of financing for each component, include GEF financing and co-financing, and summing the figures provided gives a total co-financing amount of $9.65 million USD. UNDP's PIR format also provides an opportunity to review co-financing, including the amount promised at approval. The 2008 PIR gives a total co-financing figure of $8.81 million USD, while the 2010 PIR provides a figure of $4.636 million, but also gives a figure of $6.433 USD co-financing expected by project end.

92. In addition, there is not clear information about whether co-financing was expected as in-kind or cash, other than the $0.27 million in direct contributions from the Government of Albania and UNDP TRAC that were implemented by UNDP in the Albania component. Other sources of co-financing were implemented separately, and some of these may be considered as either cash or in-kind. For example, KfW provided funding in Albania to support the Prespa National Park (Albania) and Galičica National Park (Macedonia), and the SDC provided funding in Macedonia for the actual technical work of restoration of the Golema Reka tributary. Based on the confirmed amounts of co-financing provided (as outlined in the 2012 PIR), the total estimated amount of co-financing received is $7.43 million, or 86.0% of the expected co-financing, and a GEF to co-financing ratio of 1:1.8. However, this figure does not include co-financing from activities in Greek Prespa, where there undoubtedly was some support provided, at the very least in terms of in-kind support from SPP and Greek Prespa municipality. While the confirmed actual co-financing appears to be below what was expected, there was also likely additional co-financing from various sources – for example, the time of the many national experts that participated in the transboundary working groups (e.g. the environmental monitoring working group) was not compensated, only their travel, meals and accommodations were usually reimbursed. Considering the technical and geographic breadth of the project, almost any activity in the past six years in the Prespa basin that has supported sustainable development could be considering co-financing, or at least "associated" financing.[11]

[11] As per the GEF Council decision C.20.6 (November 2002) on co-financing, associated financing is "finance for other activities that are related to the project or to similar commitments but which is not essential for the project's successful implementation." Historically, many GEF projects have counted funding strictly defined as "associated financing" as actual project co-financing, thus it would not be unjustified to say that some other activities carried out in the Prespa basin could be considered co-financing.

93. The project also leveraged additional resources. According to UNDP Macedonia, leveraged resources totaled $9.93 million USD, all from the SDC.[12] Notably this includes the implementation of the watershed management plan follow-up project in Macedonia with 5 million Swiss francs ($5.36 million USD) (see Section VI.A.i on financial sustainability). In addition, $2.07 million USD went for further restoration of the Golema Reka tributary, and $0.79 million USD for construction of the organic waste composting facility (for which the project funded the feasibility study). There were also other efforts in the region, including the work initiated by various stakeholders on the potential for designating the Prespa basin as a transboundary UNESCO biosphere reserve.

[12] The leveraged additional resources from SDC that were managed by UNDP Macedonia are $9,927,700 USD (using UN rate of exchange for Nov 2012): Extension of the Solid Waste Management Service in the Rural Communities of Prespa - 472,000 CHF; Restoration of Golema Reka (Phase I and II) - 3,000,000 CHF; Pilot Project on Biodegradable Waste Management in the Prespa Region – 760,000 CHF; Restoration of Prespa Lake Ecosystem (Implementation of the Prespa Lake Watershed Management Plan) – 5,000,000 CHF.

Table 7 Project Planned and Actual Co-financing Through June 30, 2012 (USD)

Co-financing (Type/Source)	UN Agency		Central Government		NGOs		Other Sources*		Total Co-financing		Percent of Expected co-financing
	Proposed	Actual	Proposed	Actual	Proposed	Actual	Proposed	Actual	Proposed	Actual	Actual share of proposed
Grant	0.15	0.15	0.12	0.13					0.27	0.28	103.7%
Credits											
Loans											
Equity											
In-kind	0.71	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.656	U/A	6.00	7.15	8.37	7.15	85.4%
Non-grant instruments											
Other types											
Total	0.86	0.15	1.12	0.13	0.656	U/A	6.00	7.15	8.64	7.43	86.0%

Sources: Planned Amounts: Project Document Incremental Cost Matrix. Actual Amounts for UN and Government grant amounts: Albania component CDRs. Actual amounts for all other amounts: 2012 PIR.

**Financing from other sources may be split between grant and in-kind sources, but was partner-implemented rather than directly implemented through UNDP. "Other sources" include SDC, the Municipality of Resen, NATO, and KfW.*

Table 8 Planned Co-financing by Source, by Outcome *($ millions USD)*

Outcome 1	Regional Environmental Center (AL)	0.16	**Outcome 3**	KfW (AL)	1.25	**Outcome 5**	Not specified	0.10
	UNDP (AL)	0.01		KfW (MK)	1.88		***Total Outcome 5***	0.10
	MoEPP (MK)	0.13		SDC (MK)	0.45			
	SPP (GR)	0.20		MoEPP (GR)	0.44		***Total All***	***8.64***
	Total Outcome 1	0.50		***Total Outcome 3***	4.01			
Outcome 2	KfW (AL)	1.88	**Outcome 4**	UNDP (AL)	0.02			
	Office of Fisheries Management (AL)	0.14		SPP (GR)	0.38			
	SGP (AL)	0.04		SPP/WWF (GR)	0.08			
	UNDP (AL)	0.23		MFA/SPP (GR)	0.20			
	UNDP (MK)	0.60		NATO	0.25			
	MoR (MK)	0.07		***Total Outcome 4***	0.93			
	Prefecture of Florina (GR)	0.15						
	Total Outcome 2	3.10						

Source: Project Document Incremental Cost Matrix.

iii. Flexibility and Adaptive Management

94. Flexibility is one of the GEF's ten operational principles, and all projects must be implemented in a flexible manner to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, and to ensure results-based, rather than output-based approach. Thus, during project implementation adaptive management must be applied to adjust to changing circumstances.

95. Overall, in the two national components adaptive management was effectively implemented to adjust to changes in circumstances or assumptions, as necessary. In the transboundary component, the inconsistent presence of senior management staff (e.g. the ITA) made responding to challenges and changing circumstances more difficult, and some of the issues faced such as poor internal communication, the non-functioning water management working group, and the sustainability of the transboundary results.

96. At the inception workshop for the transboundary component there was identified a need for revision of the logframe indicators and targets, and additions to be made to include the results in Greek Prespa, funded through Greek sources. The logframe was revised, and the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor approved the revised version November 12, 2007. This is the version of the logframe used throughout implementation in the PIRs and for guiding the project's results-based implementation approach.

97. Multiple factors contributed to the need to adjust project workplanning from the beginning of implementation. The delay in start-up of the transboundary component affected not only this component, but the level of coordination between all three components. In the Albania component, the delay in the KfW activities meant that the Albania PMU had to adjust project activities that had been dependent on simultaneous implementation of the KfW project. In Macedonia the PMU was slow to deliver in the initial period of the project, and once a new project manager was in place it was necessary to catch-up on the first 12-24 months of activities, and budget revisions were processed and approved each year during implementation.

98. Following the mid-term evaluation (which included numerous recommendations) some adjustments were made, including the hiring of a communications specialist, the inclusion of Strategic Environmental Assessment in the development of the Macedonia Prespa watershed management plan, and a rigorous system of computer back-up was instituted.

iv. UNDP Oversight of the Prespa IEM Project

99. UNDP is the responsible GEF Agency for the project, and carried general backstopping and oversight responsibilities, as well as handling the financial accounts. As described in the project document, *"the MK and AL UNDP Country Offices will be responsible for: a) overseeing project budgets and expenditures, including reviewing and approving annual workplans, with the input and advice of the POC; b) recruiting and contracting project personnel and consultant services; c) procuring equipment; d) project evaluation and reporting, result-based project monitoring, and organizing independent audits to ensure the proper use of UNDP/GEF funds; and e) overseeing project staff within the PMUs in cooperation with the two [Designated Institutions], the [Project Enabling Committees] and the [Project Oversight Committee]."*The UNDP-GEF regional office in Bratislava also provides direct oversight and support to the country

offices. As the GEF Agency, UNDP is also partially responsible for the project development and design phase. In addition, the transboundary component was carried out through the Direct Execution modality, which meant that the UNDP Macedonia country office was directly responsible for execution and management of activities under this component.

100. On the whole, UNDP's oversight and support for the Prespa IEM project has been adequate, with strong support provided to the project management units to facilitate their implementation of the project. There was frequent informal communication between the UNDP country offices in Macedonia and Albania and the respective PMUs. The project faced multiple challenging factors (see Sections IV.A and V.A), and these were partially overcome or addressed to the extent possible. In addition, UNDP has helped facilitate the SDC-funded follow-up project in Macedonia, which is a significant contribution to financial sustainability of the project activities in Macedonia. UNDP has also ensured comprehensive project reporting.

101. One area for improvement and strengthening in future projects is the speed with which project staff members are recruited or replaced when necessary. There were significant initial delays in composing the project teams for all three components, and when it was necessary to find new staff for the transboundary and Macedonian components, there were gaps of 15 and 7 months, respectively (see Section IV.E above), with tender processes repeated multiple times. It is clear that in some instances the pool of human resources for particular technical or managerial expertise is limited, but there is no reason this should be more the case in the Prespa countries than any other country where UNDP-GEF projects are implemented. While UNDP has important procedures for hiring project staff to ensure transparency, for successful (and timely) hiring it can be helpful to at least have a preliminary idea of where suitable candidates may be found who could be encouraged to apply. Having quality project staff in place within three months of project start-up is critical for project success, and having long gaps in implementation where staff are not in place is detrimental.

102. The mid-term evaluation identified opportunities for improvement of both internal and external communication, and a communications expert was brought on in the latter part of the project, which greatly improved external communications for the project. While communication between UNDP and the PMUs was strong, internal project communication among project stakeholders in all three littoral states remained a weakness of the project throughout implementation. This is further discussed throughout Section V.

103. As has been discussed previously, the development process for the Prespa IEM project was not fully adequate in terms of aligning stakeholder expectations with the realities of GEF funding, and in terms of the actual project design. One of the significant lessons from this project has been that the three-component approach created some challenges for implementation of a single project. The project concept is drawn from multiple sources, and the project design is a product of many inputs, but as the GEF Agency, UNDP has primary responsibility for ensuring an adequate project design is generated. The details of the project design process are far enough in the past that it is not possible to specifically identify approaches or processes that could have been improved in the Prespa IEM project, but hopefully the lessons generated from this experience will contribute to improving future projects. Lessons are highlighted in Section VII.A of this terminal evaluation.

104. All UNDP-GEF projects are faced with working within the confines of the UN and UNDP system, which necessitates some level of bureaucracy to ensure transparency and accountability; procurement is often cited by many projects as a challenging issue within the UN system, at least until all parties involved are fully familiar with the process. There is a constant trade-off between accountability and efficiency – requirements and procedures have been developed and put in place to ensure that funds managed by UNDP are not misused, intentionally or unintentionally, but meeting such requirements takes up the time and resources of project staff, thereby reducing efficiency. Citing multiple examples, the mid-term evaluation identified opportunities in the Prespa IEM for improvement with respect to the application of UNDP policies and procedures, particularly related to financial management, and the degree of rigidity and detail required. In addition, the fact that the transboundary component was managed in one UNDP country office and needed to support activities in at least one other country presented some issues. The most commonly cited problem was in the efficiency of handling per diem reimbursements and meeting transportation for stakeholders outside Macedonia, particularly in the case where the project required Albanian local resource users to open bank accounts to receive transfers for reimbursement, when the cost of opening an account would have exceeded the amount to be reimbursed. Although handling of per diem reimbursements may seem like a trivial issue, in projects where building stakeholder trust, participation, and buy-in is paramount (i.e. regional projects in countries without a long history of strong collaboration), projects must take caution to avoid any disincentives for participation and erosion of trust. Feedback from stakeholders collected during the terminal evaluation indicated that there had been a significant improvement in the efficiency of management procedures in the second half of the project, except that stakeholders continued to note issues in transactions occurring between countries, e.g. for per diems, etc. from the transboundary component to stakeholders in Albania.

V. Prespa IEM Project Performance and Results (Effectiveness)

105. The challenge of the present exercise in evaluating the Prespa IEM project is to consider what *might* have been, when in the real world there is no such thing as a control sample at the scale of a regional watershed. Results must be assessed based on the project's results framework indicator targets, even if this design has shortcomings. It is however also important to objectively view the current situation and analyze how circumstances could be different.

A. Key Factors Affecting Project Implementation

106. Multiple factors influenced project implementation, both positively and negatively. Many of these issues are discussed at various points throughout this evaluation report, but the key issues are summarized here as reference for the discussion of results that follows.

107. *Varying and inconsistent levels of political commitment and political will among the three littoral states:* Stakeholders frequently cited this as one key issue, and from an objective and deductive point of view, it is clearly an actual issue. The inconsistent levels of support is understandable, and may be for multiple reasons; some possible factors contributing to varying levels of political priority between the three littoral states are cited in Table 9 below, such as the relative political and economic significance of the region for the respective countries. As can be seen in the table, the Prespa basin is likely to have the greatest significance for the

Macedonian central government, less so for the Albanian central government, and even less so for the Greek central government. In addition, Greece is not a GEF-recipient country, and has no UNDP office, and must also abide by EU policies. In this light it is not surprising that the three countries have exhibited varying levels of political commitment to transboundary ecosystem management in the Prespa basin. It should be mentioned, however, that the Prespa region is important for all three countries with respect to international cooperation – hence the political agreements of 2000 and 2010. It is also not possible to quickly quantitatively assess the environmental significance of the region to each of the countries in terms of factors such as biodiversity, water supply, and other ecosystem services.

Table 9 Potential Factors Influencing Political Priority for the Prespa Region[13]

	Macedonia	Albania	Greece
Population (% of National Population)	17,500 (0.88%)	5,300 (0.21%)	1,500 (0.01%
Per Capita Income Relative to National Average[14]	70%	14%	34%
Relative Contribution of Prespa Region to national GDP[15]	Most	~1/10th that of Macedonia	~1/45th that of Macedonia
Share of Prespa Basin Area	62% (1,000 sq km)	17% (263 sq km)	21% (330 sq km)
Prespa Basin as a Share of National Territory	3.9%	0.9%	0.3%
Number of Major Tributaries to Prespa Basin	3	0	1
Number of Other Major National Waterbodies	One (Lake Ohrid)	Multiple, including Adriatic and Ionian Seas	Multiple, including Aegean and Ionian Seas
Driving Distance from Capital	~2.5 hours	~4 hours	~7 hours

108. While the Greek central government may not have been as engaged in the project as those from Albania and Macedonia, the local government in Greek Prespa has demonstrated a strong commitment to transboundary cooperation. In addition, on the Greek side the NGO Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) is extremely active in the region. However, multiple stakeholders stated that one of the challenges for securing political commitment regarding transboundary management was that in meetings, workshops, and other communications the primary Greek representation was from SPP, and it is not possible to have government positions represented by an NGO.

109. *Regional political context:* Without going into an in-depth discussion of the history of relations between Macedonia and Greece, it can be said that the warm/cold relations between

[13] Data from the project document, unless otherwise noted, except for information on distance from capital, which is based on Google Maps and personal experience of the evaluator.

[14] Calculated based on data provided in the project document, and data available online through multiple sources. For Macedonia and Albania, this is calculated based on per capita GDP for 2005, approximately when the data in the project was provided. For Greece this is calculated based on pre-crisis 2009 income.

[15] Just for illustrative purposes, this is a very "back of the napkin" calculation as such: Population x per capita GDP / total GDP. For Macedonia this works out as 0.22% of GDP.

the two countries during the course of the project was a negative influence on project implementation in multiple ways.

110. *Global economic crisis:* The issue of co-financing from the Greek government has been raised by multiple parties as a problematic area, either in the sense that Greece did not provide the funds that were committed at the project development stage, or that Greece has fully met its co-financing obligations yet continues to receive distrust from other parties. It is not possible within the scope of this evaluation to fully explore this issue, which would require extensive time examining Greek government budget documentation; at the very least it is clear that there was not adequate communication about Greek funding between Greek stakeholders and the execution teams in Macedonia and Albania. There are two important factors that can be identified related to this issue. First, there was confusion about the extent to which GEF resources could be used to support Greek participation in the transboundary project activities, apparently because Greek participation was at least partially supported in the PDF-B phase. GEF policies preclude GEF funds from supporting non-GEF recipient countries' participation in GEF projects, though it should be said the interpretation and application of this rule varies significantly around the world (there are certainly instances where the participation in GEF project activities of individuals from non-GEF recipient countries has been funded).

111. Second is the issue of the global economic crisis, which started in 2008, but reached acute levels in Greece in late 2009 and early 2010, when the Greek government began implementing austerity measures. The Prespa IEM project mid-term evaluation in May 2009 patently asked "Where is the Greek Government money?" – a question much of the world has gone on to ask in the time since. Thus, even in the case that Greece has met its financial commitments promised at project approval, it has not been in a position to provide resources above and beyond these commitments that could have supported the ongoing transboundary process – for example, the original intention that the PPCC would be fully government-financed by the end of the Prespa IEM project. Even the Prespa protected area on the Greek side has suffered budget cuts. The signing of the February 2010 trilateral agreement was a significant project achievement, but some stakeholders have attributed the fact that nothing happened in the two-plus subsequent years to the timing of the Greek economic crisis, although there are certainly other factors as well.

112. *Project design:* As discussed in Section IV.A, the project design of three components executed separately was not supportive of strong coordination, communication and collaboration within the overall project.

113. *Staff turnover:* Other than the lack of integration resulting from the project design, the Albanian and Macedonian national components were generally well-executed and achieved a number of important results, despite some challenges in the early going. The transboundary component also managed to produce most of the expected outputs, but the effectiveness and sustainability of these outputs is more questionable, and the transboundary activities were faced with consistent challenges of stakeholder participation, communication, and execution. This is significantly due to the inconsistent presence of a senior level staff member, the ITA, with the mandate to actively engage all stakeholders and draw the transboundary activities together in a comprehensive strategic body of work. The transboundary activities did not get underway until a year after project approval due to challenges in recruiting a suitable ITA,

perhaps partially due to the fact that the project document only budgeted for the ITA position for 50% (2.5 years) of the planned project implementation period. After two years the initial ITA departed, and there was a gap of 15 months before a replacement was installed. During the entire project the transboundary component was staffed by a project assistant, which is a key reason a majority of the transboundary component activities were completed. At the same time, regional stakeholders noted that when there was a full-time ITA in place the project had a much more cohesive presence and stronger communication between all relevant parties. Although the Macedonia national component can be considered successful overall, it also was slowed by turnover at the project manager position in the first year of the project (also see Section IV.E of this evaluation report).

114. *Bureaucracy:* All UNDP-GEF projects face some level of bureaucracy in conforming with UN and UNDP operational and procedural requirements; in the Prespa IEM project there were indications that the UNDP bureaucracy also presented some challenges. Multiple stakeholders cited a lack of flexibility and overzealousness in application of bureaucratic requirements, especially in the first half of the project. However, at least for the national components, these issues appear to have been satisfactorily resolved once the initial intense period of procurement had passed (also see discussion in Section IV.E.iv, above).

115. *Lack of a unifying transboundary identity:* As discussed under Output 4.3 below, the project never adequately established a unifying collaborative transboundary identify for the participating stakeholders, organizations, and countries. The various activities of the project were functioning as separate processes. This is likely partially due to the inconsistent presence of an ITA for the transboundary component. The PPCC partially served this purpose, but it only met once or twice per year, and activity stopped in the last two years of the project, instead of increasing. The project used the IW:Learn website to store project outputs for external reference, but there is little evidence that stakeholders from the region actively used this English-based resource. There was a Prespa Park website, www.prespapark.org, but it is no longer functional.

116. *Coordination with other donors:* The project should be commended for attempting to directly link with the activities of other donors in an integrated way, but unfortunately the project experience demonstrated some of the risks of such linkages as well. Particularly in Albania, it was expected that the project would be able to produce synergistic results in coordination with the KfW funded support for the Prespa National Park in Albania. However, the KfW support was delayed, and activities did not start until October 2011. The Albanian component of the Prespa IEM project was still able to produce valuable results, but not in the timeframe or manner originally expected. On the whole, the fact that the project was working in an area where there has been and continues to be broad donor support was valuable, as the project (intentionally or not) made up a part of a kind of an overall "programmatic approach" ongoing in the Prespa basin, with the support of many donors, which has greatly improved the sustainability of project results.

117. *Strong local stakeholder support:* Without the strong support from local level government and resource users the project would not have been able to produce nearly as many positive results. In Albania, the municipal governments in the Prespa region have been key partners, as well as organizations such as the fisherman's association and the Prespa

National Park administration. In Macedonia, the municipality of Resen has been a critical partner. In Greece, all three of the main local stakeholder organizations have been important partners – the municipal government, SPP, and the Prespa park administration. Implementation of project activities wasn't completely without local level conflicts, but any issues were resolved constructively over time.

118. *Capable project teams:* All three project components benefited from effective project teams, although the transboundary component was lacking its full complement of staff for a significant portion of time. The PMUs in both Albania and Macedonia overcame numerous challenges, and implemented the project in a results-based approach. The project teams have demonstrated their effectiveness on numerous levels throughout the project.

B. Progress Toward Achievement of Anticipated Outcomes

119. As described further below, the project adequately reached the project objective, and based on achievement of expected outcomes, **effectiveness** is rated ***moderately satisfactory***. The two project national components were more effective than the transboundary component, although significant work was undertaken under the transboundary component and the majority of outputs were produced. Effectiveness for the two national components is considered satisfactory, and effectiveness for the transboundary component is moderately unsatisfactory, primarily due to the current low level of central government ownership of the Prespa Park process, which has limited available pathways for carrying forward the transboundary work, and has made the 2010 international agreement and PPMC currently not implemented. By and large this is due to political and economic factors outside the control of the project. However, shortcomings in the project design, turnover in the position of ITA, significant delays in a number of activities, and an inadequate approach to internal communication left the project with less progress toward the overall objective than should have been possible.

120. Each of the project outcomes was implemented through a series of outputs and specific actions, as outlined in the annual project workplans. Under each of the outcomes below, the primary outputs are listed, and key results highlighted. The project logframe includes indicators and targets for each of the outcomes, included in Annex 3 with further review of the measureable logframe indicators and targets.

121. Not all three components were planned to include activities from all five project outcomes. Table 10 below shows the planned level of resources by component by outcome, as planned inputs can serve as one rough indicator of the level of activity expected under each outcome in each component. Notably, the transboundary component did not have any activities planned under Outcome 1 or 2.

Table 10 Planned Inputs by Component per Outcome[16]*(millions USD)*

Component	TR	AL	MK
Outcome 1: Stakeholders strengthen legal and regulatory enabling environment and establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa Lakes Basin	0.00	0.20	0.38

[16] Source: Project document budgeted component workplans.

Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource management practices to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities within the national sectors of the Prespa Basin	0.00	0.45	0.34
Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin (PNP, GNP, ENR, and PPA-GR) fully operational	0.39	0.07	0.25
Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon ongoing trans-boundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the trans-boundary coordination mechanism and piloting trans-boundary conservation and water management	0.65	0.28	0.24
Outcome 5: Lessons learned and adaptive management of project	0.57	0.21	0.24

122. From the transboundary component and two national components the project spanned a large number of activities and areas of focus. Some of the key results are highlighted below.

123. Transboundary:

- A 2010 tri-lateral Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area, which has been ratified by Albanian, Macedonia, and the EU Parliament
- Production of a proposal for a transboundary monitoring system for Prespa basin, with some pilot monitoring carried out
- Production of five priority species and habitat conservation action plans for 2012-2016
- Tri-lateral sustainable tourism development strategy for 2012-2016 that has been endorsed by the relevant municipalities in all three countries
- A transboundary fisheries management plan
- Production of numerous external communication materials highlighting the project activities and importance of strengthening transboundary integrated ecosystem management in the Prespa basin

124. Albania:

- Establishment of the Prespa National Park Management Committee
- Implementation of Local Environmental Action Plans in Liqenas and Proger communes
- Numerous activities at the community level supporting increased education and awareness, capacity development, and pilot ecosystem management activities
- Establishment and capacity development of local resource users associations
- Improved agricultural practices to reduce agricultural inputs (though baseline levels were low to begin with)

125. Macedonia:

- Development of a Macedonian Prespa Watershed Management Plan, which established a model for water basin management in Macedonia in line with the EU Water Framework Directive, with implementation initiated with significant additional donor support
- Restoration of a portion of the Golema Reka tributary to Prespa Lake

- Re-establishment and improved management of the Ezerani protected area
- Initiation of a system to reduce agricultural inputs, and appropriately dispose of agricultural waste
- Establishment of a "Natural Capital Resource Center" to support community engagement in sustainable development for Prespa
- Introduction of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control permitting
- Establishment and capacity development of local resource users associations

i. Outcome 1: Stakeholders strengthen legal and regulatory enabling environment and establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa Lakes Basin

126. Outcome 1 was successfully achieved, and completion is rated ***highly satisfactory*.**

127. ***Output 1.1****Integrated land-use (spatial plan) plan for MK-Prespa and LEAP for AL-Prespa*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	Since its start, the project work focused on the preparation of the LEAPs for Liqenas and Proger communes that are now endorsed upon decisions of the respective commune's councils in December 2007 by the respective authorities, with clear references on need for spatial planning assessment and master planning. The Assessment of spatial plan in Prespa was accomplished in 2010and the ToR for general master plan are prepared. The process is accomplished under the guidance of the Regional Environmental Center (REC) and with full participation of the local community and authorities. During the plans' development stage several activities have been carried out as trainings, publication of materials that contributed in the comprehensive participation.
FYR Macedonia	The project established a new methodology and criteria for participatory preparation of spatial planning documents incorporating ecosystem conservation objectives. Following a thorough and systematic review of the spatial planning system in the country, a new spatial planning methodology and Terms of Reference for a new spatial (land-use) plan for Prespa have been developed through direct involvement of all key actors in the spatial planning sector. However, the adoption of the new Law on Waters in the country brought in some changes in the water and land-use system, which also changed the project baseline. Namely, the EU Water Framework Directive-based Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) concept introduced by the law combined the water and land-use management aspects in the newly required river basin/watershed management plans. Because of the high degree of overlapping of the spatial plans and the watershed (river basin) management plans, but also considering the size of the investment for developing the suggested spatial plan for Prespa according to the newly developed methodology, the idea was proposed of combining the Water-use Management Plan (as initially planned) and the spatial plan into a single Watershed Management Plan. Such a cost-effective approach was considered to be far more acceptable for the project than preparation of two separate plans pursuing similar objectives, particularly having in mind the budgetary constraints. The resulting Watershed Management Plan for the Macedonian Prespa is further discussed under Output 1.3 below.

Box 1 FYR Macedonia Prespa Lake Watershed Management Plan

The Prespa Lakes WMP is the first watershed management plan prepared fully in accordance with the Macedonian Law on Waters of 2008, which itself is founded on the EU WFD and IRBM principles. Thus, the WMP preparation process, as well as the document itself, have established the basic guiding principles for development of other such plans and represent invaluable accomplishments for the country as a whole.

The Prespa Lakes Basin Watershed belongs to the larger Crni Drim River basin; the Law on Waters of 2008 stipulates that watershed (sub-basin) management plans should be included within the major river basin plans to which these sub-basins belong. Being the first watershed management plan under the Law on Waters of 2008, the Prespa Lake watershed management plan will be included in the Crni Drim river basin management plan.

The activities and results of this pilot initiative are summarized below:

- Initial 12-month comprehensive surveillance and monitoring of water quality and ecological status has been conducted for all the basin water bodies, based on which reference conditions have been established.
- The pressures on water bodies from both natural and anthropogenic origins have been identified and extensively analyzed. These pressures include the input of pollutants (e.g. nutrients and hazardous substances) and physical pressures on the water bodies (e.g. agriculture in the river corridor, drainage, watercourse maintenance, etc.).
- Existing monitoring activities have been analyzed and assessed for their compliance with the requirements of the Law on Waters of 2008 and other relevant national environmental laws and regulations. The absence of monitoring and data, the existing monitoring capacity and the organizational and financial aspects of required monitoring have also been analyzed in depth.
- As a result of the monitoring activities the status of all the water bodies in the Macedonian part of the Prespa basin has been determined. Environmental objectives and respective indicators, both for the general environment and for the individual water bodies in terms of their progress towards achieving good water status for all water bodies, have been identified.
- The economic use of water has also been analyzed, whereas the analysis has revealed significant problems regarding institutional setup and capacity, overall management deficiencies, deterioration of infrastructure, low- or no-cost recovery, and dire prospects for investment in the water sector.
- Based on problem analysis, a comprehensive Programme of Measures for achieving the set objectives has been developed. This consists of 45 measures aimed primarily at resolving technical and environmental issues and problems in the region.
- Three implementation strategies have been determined: Alternative 0 - Business as Usual Strategy; Alternative 2 - Water Framework Directive Implementation Strategy; and Alternative 1 - Realistic Implementation Strategy.
- Based on the assessments, it is recommended that the WMP processes be initiated with measures at local level as the priority for the first six-year period.
- An economic analysis has been made of the proposed Programme of Measures. Based on the previous analyses, an Implementation Schedule for the Prespa Watershed Management Plan has been proposed.

The comprehensiveness and the inclusive character of the WMP preparation process, along with successful promotion activities, have secured consequent funding that will be provided by the SDC for continuation of the 'GEF Programme agenda' in the following 6-year period (starting from July 2012).

128. ***Output 1.2*** *Ecosystem health priorities mainstreamed into productive sector law and regulatory instruments.*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	Four sectoral reports are produced incorporating ecosystem health priorities into Water, Agriculture, Forest, and Fishery law[17]. Coordination with MoEFWA on new water law (as per WFD and aquis communitaire). A complex set of activities have been carried out throughout implementation of the project focused on mainstreaming ecosystem health priorities into the forestry, water and wastewater management, fishery, and agriculture sectors as well as in strengthening the sectoral policy and regulatory instruments in these productive sectors. Species and habitats conservation plan is finalized and is under implementation. The monitoring system is developed and implemented through pilot monitoring activities. Further national monitoring activities implemented through local NGO during 2010-2011. The Monitoring report is delivered to Park administration and ministry.
FYR Macedonia	With the continuous efforts for harmonization of the national with the EU legislation, major parts of the state-of-the-art approaches and principles of integrated ecosystem management have been transposed to the modified legal acts. The Prespa IEM project has supported the dissemination of such principles through piloting and scaling-up of some particular activities; details of such activities are given further. A complex set of activities have been carried out throughout implementation of the project focused on mainstreaming ecosystem health priorities into the forestry, water and wastewater management, fishery, and agriculture sectors as well as in strengthening the sectoral policy and regulatory instruments in these productive sectors. The project's support to the forestry sector has been designed around the concept of sustainable, ecosystem-oriented forest management at the lake basin scale. Water ecosystem issues have been incorporated within the Watershed Management Plan (described further) and training has been organized during the drafting process, mainly focused on the new watershed management approach, public participation during the public hearings, and capacity building on Strategic Environmental Assessment. Well-organized and effective training on Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) has been carried out. Furthermore, modern agrochemical laboratory has been established; pests and diseases monitoring system has been introduced; pilot projects on applying water saving irrigation techniques have been implemented, etc. More detailed information is provided further in the report.

129. ***Output 1.3*** *Pilot ecosystem-oriented water management at local scale.*

Transboundary	N/A

[17]They include analyses of the existing regulatory and institutional framework with relevance to site productive sectors (water, forest, agriculture. and fishery), identification of the cross-cutting issues thereof with the need for maintenance and conservation of ecosystem health, provisions for the future watershed management perspective, insight and recommendations for the human and financial resources with implications on enforcement and control.

Albania	According to the project document, activities in Albania under Output 1.3 were focused on water management issues in Micro Prespa Lake, with respect to the inflow of the Devolli River canal,[18]and the possible rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure to use Micro Prespa water to irrigate part of the Devolli River valley. From January 205 to July 2006 SPP implemented a project with a local Albanian partner, funded by Greek sources, to evaluate the interaction of the water systems of the Devolli River and Micro Prespa, to formulate principles for water management in the Albanian side, and proposals for meeting irrigation needs in the wider Devolli area. According to project documents, the Micro Prespa Fishermen's Association initiated a project with Prespa IEM project support to close the Devolli canal; no information is available on the results of this scheme. Through its own small grants program (projects ≤ US$ 10,000), the project supported small-scale pilot activities for ecosystem management. Thirty-three applicants were assisted with the principles of grant applications, and from these, six NGOs implemented pilot demonstrations of small-scale projects addressing improvements in forest ecosystem management; information and public awareness; improvements in the fishery sector; and clean-up and waste management improvements.
FYR Macedonia	The project has supported the preparation of the initial Prespa Lake Watershed Management Plan (WMP) in accordance to the latest Law on Waters, founded on the principles of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the IRBM concept. The process has contributed greatly to the identification of the main surface and groundwater bodies in the watershed, assessment/quantification of the major anthropogenic impacts on the water resources, as well as in establishing the watershed's environmental objectives. Based on these findings the WMP defined a comprehensive program of measures aiming at achieving the environmental objectives. Considering the pioneering character of the whole process, and in order to strengthen its replication potential at national level, the project has supported drafting of Guidelines for preparation of integrated river basin management plans in accordance to the WFD, but adapted to the national context. The Guidelines, together with the WMP, have also been submitted to the MoEPP for further consideration. Furthermore, in partnership with the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment the project has also financed preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the WMP, in accordance with the existing regulations and the EU best practices. The WMP has been selected by the MoEPP and the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment as a model for demonstration of SEA of river basin management plans. A small grants program was implemented in 2008. Nine NGOs implemented projects to a total value of MKD 1,785,302 (c. $US 40,000)

130. ***Output 1.4.*** *Capacity for water and watershed management built at municipal and commune level in FYR-Macedonia, Albania and Greece respectively.*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	Lake ecosystem management activities have started through implementation of

[18]The Devolli canal was constructed in 1976 for irrigation in the summer; during the winter the Devolli water was allowed to run into Micro Prespa, which led to heavy siltation from the Albanian side.

	actions for cleaning both Macro/Micro Prespas from old nets systems and metallic structures/traps for eel and fish, construction of the dam in Gryka e Ujkut for cutting the connection of Small Prespa to Devolli system and preventing the water flow off the basin and the pilot monitoring activities re water quality/quantity. ToR for Water Management Working Group (WMWG) are already completed and nomination of WMWG members will commence when governments decides to do so. The Prespa Park Management Plan is being developed by the KfW project. All the reports and documents prepared by UNDP project are being taken into consideration and serve as useful and important documents The best practice watershed management manual for Prespa National Park (Prespa basin) with case studies from the Balkan countries completed and distributed to stakeholder and partners. Practical guidelines have been prepared through SG pilot project and are to be considered by the management committee.
FYR Macedonia	The entire watershed management planning process (WMP and SEA) has been conducted in parallel with efforts for establishing watershed management capacity at local level. With support of the project, and in accordance to the latest legislation harmonized with the EU directives, the MoEPP has established an innovative cross-sectoral watershed management mechanism – Watershed Management Council. The Prespa Watershed Management Council (WMC) comprises over 20 stakeholders representing different sectors (institutions, organizations, etc.)[19]. The capacity development efforts focused on WMC have been conducted as part of the planning exercise. Namely, the WMC members have actively participated in all stakeholder events (workshops, meetings) throughout the entire plan preparation process. During all these events they had the possibility to learn about the integrated watershed management principles, resolving water-related issues in a multi-stakeholder environment, and similar. In addition, the project has organized a study visit for the Council members to the Czech Republic (hosted by the ministries of environment and agriculture) where they had the possibility to learn about the experience and challenges in the implementation of the WFD, especially the preparation and implementation of IRBM plans.

131. ***Output 1.5*** *Piloting flexible, phased pollution reduction techniques and the use of incentives strengthens enforcement of and compliance with environmental laws protecting ecosystem health*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	According to baseline assessment (estimated annual application of pesticides at 720 kg) pesticide use is almost insignificant so there was no room for reduction (further verification is current for the KfW study). In AL it has been proposed to replace this with "# of farmers producing certified organic products".

[19]The WMC includes representatives of: the MoEPP, Municipality of Resen, Forest Enterprise, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Farmers Association, Environmental NGO representatives, Protected Area Managers, Fishermen's Association, Public Utility Enterprise (water supply, wastewater and solid waste), Ministry of Transport and Communications, and Ministry of Internal Affairs, Scientific/Research Institutions (Hydrobiological Institute, Public Health Institute), Irrigation management (irrigation company and water-user groups), installations' operators (main polluters) and other. It is chaired by the MoEPP.

FYR Macedonia	Overall, the project supported the Municipality of Resen in complying with legal requirements on issuing Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) B type permit for various industries in the region. The project has provided capacity building support to authorized municipal personnel responsible for reviewing IPPC applications, issuing IPPC type B permits, and controlling compliance with the permit's pollution prevention and control measures. For a total of 3 installations under the jurisdiction of the Municipality of Resen (B-installations according to the national legislation), the project has provided expert support in reviewing the applications submitted, providing comments and requesting revisions where necessary. Finally the project supported the drafting of the integrated environmental permits.

ii. Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource management practices to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities within the national sectors of the Prespa Basin

132. The achievement of Outcome 2 is considered ***moderately satisfactory***

133. ***Output 2.1.*** *Reduced environmental impacts of agriculture in the AL and MK Prespa*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	WWF-GR has funded an activity for establishing a tri-lateral protocol for recognition of Prespa Park products. Complete for beans in GR, but applicability to MK and AL extremely limited both legally and practically. The farmers are organized in associations and assisted with grants for improvement; by 2011 there are four new associations with 25-30 each Training of 30-45 farmers on prognosis and early warning in the agriculture sector is accomplished; agromet stations set-up and operational. Close cooperation with the Directory of Agriculture of Korça region. The experience of agromet stations is being expanded in other sites of Korça region. Several activities are organized for exchange of experience among farmers' associations, agricultural extension agencies, universities, etc. (study tour in MK and GR, training visits in MK on use of agromet stations). Networking of agriculture stakeholders encouraged through joint event exchange (e.g. Apple Festival)
FYR Macedonia	The Prespa IEM project activities in the agriculture sector have been part of a longer-term activity for introduction of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in apple production, implemented by the UNDP. Besides the GEF, complementary funds to address the environmental impacts of agriculture in the Prespa Lakes Basin have also been provided by the UNDP through the Reducing Environmental Impacts of Agriculture in the Prespa Region project and the SDC through its Restoration of Golema Reka project and the Pilot Project on Biodegradable Waste Management in the Prespa Region. (1) The UNDP-funded Reducing Environmental Impacts of Agriculture in the Prespa Region project has resulted in the following key achievements: ▪ Established fully functional agrochemical laboratory ▪ Introduced pests and diseases monitoring system, i.e. an agro-meteorological monitoring system helping farmers to control the pesticide use in apple

	production, including information dissemination system ▪ Successfully implemented pilot projects on applying water saving irrigation techniques ▪ Strengthened capacity of agricultural associations ▪ Training of farmers ▪ Published, promoted and distributed several manuals/guidelines for farmers (2 manuals on GAP, manual on 'fertilization', manual on agro-ecological measures in apple production and alike) ▪ Provided support in raising additional funds from the GEF Small Grants Programme for complementary projects implemented by local NGOs. (2) Apart from introduction of GAP, series of project activities are being implemented by UNDP for which, besides the GEF, considerable funds have been secured by the SDC focused on establishment of an agricultural waste management system. Namely, a pesticide and fertilizer hazardous packaging waste management system has been introduced through a combined effort of the SDC (Golema Reka), GEF Prespa and GEF Small Grants Programme. The activity included construction of local collection sites in priority areas in Prespa, construction of a central hazardous waste disposal site, purchasing of waste collection vehicles, and community awareness campaign. While the GEF project supported the conceptualization and feasibility assessment of the system, the SDC funds were used to cover the capital investment costs. (3) The introduction of the organic waste management system (see Box 2) has been supported by a separate SDC-funded project. The project aimed at piloting centralized organic waste management system within the Golema Reka basin. It included construction of local collection sites, central composting facility (see Photo 1), and other technical support to the Municipality of Resen and its public enterprise responsible for waste management.

Photo 1 Ongoing Construction of Organic Waste Composting Facility

Box 2 Biodegradable Waste Management in Macedonian Prespa

For an extended period of time, the Prespa Lakes Basin faced a serious waste management problem related to lack of a solution for adequate disposal and/or treatment of biodegradable wastes (BW) which are result of agriculture, industrial production and forest management activities. The problem has been specifically relevant for the Macedonian part of the Basin where agriculture is among the main economic/income generation sectors, with apples being the primary crop.

In 2009/2010 the SDC-funded Restoration of Golema Reka (Phase 2) project financed the preparation of a comprehensive Feasibility Study on Biodegradable Waste Management in Prespa. The Study analyzed the overall feasibility for establishment of a centralized system for BW management in the Municipality of Resen. Most important analyzed concern were the massive quantities of BW from agriculture activities, estimated to range between 8,000 to 20,000 tons/year, and specifically the volume of waste apples that made roughly 80% of this amount (7,000 to 18,000 tons/year). Additional source of BW generated in the region are wood residues (wastes) resulting from orchard pruning and post-harvest wood residues from commercial forest exploitation, estimated to range altogether from 15,000 to 20,000 m3/year.

Based on comparative analysis, it has been concluded that establishing a central composting plant (compared to anaerobic digestion) for treatment of BW from agriculture activities and industrial production is the most practical and feasible solution to the stated problem. Recommended composting plant would convert the agriculture and industrial BW into compost using the open windrow method. The open windrow composting method is a low-tech and low-cost solution, yet enabling production of organic fertilizer – compost – that can be straightforwardly placed (sold) on the local market, thus securing operating cost recovery and consequently a long-term sustainability of the system. The plant would have a total capacity for production of 8,000 to 10,000 tons of matured comport annually. Furthermore, based on comparative analysis of several possible solutions and optimization of the planned BW transport and logistics system on several levels, it has been concluded that collection of the BW from agricultural activities should be made on a total of 26 waste collection stations located in vicinity of the settlements in Resen Municipality. The total investment costs of the system have been estimated at approximately €2.5 million.

Following the recommendations from the Study, in 2011 the SDC had decided to fully finance the development and construction of a centralized *pilot* composting facility with an annual capacity of 1,600 m^3 ready made compost, and fourBW collection stations that will cover the area around the town of Resen and Jankovec village. Main objective of this pilot activity is to field-test all the numerous assumptions based on which the feasibility of BW treatment for the entire Prespa region has been assessed, such as the quantities of generated BW, the efficiency of proposed transport and logistics system for inflow of BW into a centralized facility, the market prices for sale of produced compost in the wider region, etc. In addition, the pilot composting plant should in a way introduce in the Prespa region the use of compost as a fertilizer for agriculture production on a larger – than own-yard-based composting – scale. The pilot facility is expected to be fully operational in the second half of 2012.

Certainly, for the Prespa region as a whole, these BW management activities represent an innovative, market-based solution to a long-lasting environmental problem. Furthermore, these activities are expected to produce among the Programme's most tangible results and be replicated in other parts of the Prespa Lakes Basin (e.g. Albania) in the future.

134. ***Output 2.2*** *Forest managed for native species composition and forest stand heterogeneity in AL and MK Prespa*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	Biodiversity-oriented management of forests was introduced with KfW project (since mid-2011), which is also preparing the management plan for Prespa National Park, and the UNDP project is contributing with collected expertise. Study tour organized in Durmitor and Mljet National Parks for Prespa National Park, LG and NGOs for exchanging experience on protected area management and related issues.
FYR Macedonia	Project's support to the forestry sector has been designed around the concept of sustainable, ecosystem-oriented forest management at the lake basin scale. At the early stages the project provided expert input in the process of preparation of a forest management plan for one forest management unit in Prespa, in accordance to international best practices and models. In order to increase the productivity of the existing nursery owned by the Forest PE "Makedonski Sumi", the project has provided the basic machinery/equipment. The modernized nursery has doubled the number of seedlings of native tree species produced each year. These seedlings are used for the ongoing afforestation efforts. The improvement of the forest management practices has been supported through provision of basic monitoring and other equipment (e.g. GPS devices, hypsometers, and etc.), which are currently being used by the PE "Makedonski Sumi". In addition, the capacities of the forest management authorities have been continuously developed through their involvement in various national and trans-boundary level activities, such as: participation in the Watershed Management Council, trans-boundary monitoring system, work on Ezerani protected area, and other.

135. ***Output 2.3*** *Restoration/reforestation of degraded forest in Albanian Prespa National Park (KfW)*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	In actuality little was done on this Output before the end of the project, as it was to be financed by the KfW activities in Prespa National Park in Albanian, which only commenced in October 2011, approximately six months before the end of the GEF-funded Albanian component of the Prespa IEM project. 4500 ha of forest and 300 ha of pastures are under communal management, which is about40% of the total forest cover of Prespa National Park. This fulfills about 40% of the population needs for fodder and fuel wood in Prespa area.
FYR Macedonia	N/A

136. ***Output 2.4*** *Appropriate small-scale wastewater treatment facilities measurably reduce eutrophying inputs to Lakes Prespa*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	No village near lakes is large enough to take a wastewater plant. However, solid waste disposal in tributary streams provides eutrophying inputs to lake. An important activity

	is the improvement of existing wastewater system in Proger through REC grant. Additionally, 30% solid waste reduction (weight) was achieved due to improved management system in Liqenas and Proger communes. Due to the delays on the implementation of the Regional Waste Treatment Scheme which will provide a permanent solution for Prespa as well, currently solid waste is only dumped in three different sites located in Zaroshka, Liqenas and Gorica e Vogel. Still the situation is significantly improved due to the provision of two collection trucks and the technical assistance for the construction of dumpsites provided by SIDA funds and facilitated by UNDP/GEF project. NGOs have also taken actions to clean the tributary streams beds from waste. Constructed wetland facility was thought as an alternative solution in Gorica/ Liqenas, in cooperation with UNDP ArtGold programme and government structure, but not done due to lack of budget.
FYR Macedonia	The construction of the wastewater management system in the village of Nakolec is considered to be one of the most important, but also complex and financially demanding project activities. This activity has been planned to be implemented in partnership between the MoEPP, UNDP, Municipality of Resen and the local community of Nakolec. For that purpose a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) had been signed by all four parties, whereas the UNDP has been responsible for the construction of the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), the MoEPP and the local community of Nakolec have taken on the responsibility for building the wastewater collection system (WWCS), and the Resen Municipality has been responsible for pursuing the administrative procedures, permitting and licensing. Although the actual construction of the WWTP has been completed by May 2009, the whole system has not been made operational, as the construction of the WWCS has been considerably delayed. Namely, significant co-financing for construction of the WWCS has been initially provided by the local community of Nakolec. However, the MoEPP has requested the MoU to be amended so that the responsibilities of the local community could have been taken on by the Ministry itself. Further on the UNDP has committed to allocating additional funds for completion of the WWCS, conditioned on: (1) signed annex to the contract between the MoEPP and the contractor responsible for construction of the WWCS, and (2) demonstration of progress in the construction of the WWCS. Although the annex was signed, no progress in the construction works had occurred. The issue of the Nakolec WWTP had been raised in discussions between the UNDP and the MoEPP at highest level and at several occasions. It is expected that the WWCS will be completed and the entire system will be fully functional by the end of 2012.

137. ***Output 2.5*** *Strengthened civil society partners for ecosystem-oriented fishery management in AL and MK Prespa*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	A Fishermen's Association is formed by the Project. Together with strengthening of the existing OFM this led to improved fisheries data. Available information shared within sector within country; trans-boundary Fisheries Management Plan prepared and addressed by the three countries in a TB workshop late 2011. However, there is no limit on fish catch yet. Actual annual catch is 200-250 tons of fish in both Prespa lakes.

	The cooperation is actually limited to determining close-season for various species. Cooperation is expected to improve with the implementation of the Fisheries Plan(s). Priority species are defined and three states are working focusing on fish conservation priorities. Both fishermen associations in Albania are very well organized and work together with State Inspectorate for establishing a management regime which reflects the ecosystem objectives but these efforts remain local and are not yet coordinated in three states. Banning of fishing during spawning season is not TB coordinated but regulated on country bases during the last three years and that's mainly due to the political disputes between Greece and Macedonia. Endemic fish species are known and the threats to them are well understood among fishermen groups and rest of community. No alien or predatory fish species introduced in Albania. The only fingerlings supplying source, Zvezda fish farm is under management by Fishery Inspectorate. For more, fishermen are encouraged to catch and trade more alien species thus contributing in decreasing their population on the lake.
FYR Macedonia	In its efforts to instigate more proactive participation of the local civil society organizations in the fish and fisheries management at national and trans-boundary level, the project supported the establishment of the first association of professional fishermen from Prespa. Approximately 80 fishermen from seven villages situated along the Macedonian shoreline of the Macro Prespa Lake for which fisheries are the principal source of income are members of the Association. Their focus is on proactive participation in the overall fisheries management system in the region, especially given the circumstances imposed by the newly enacted Law on Fisheries and the other accompanying regulations. The Association has been recognized by the project as an excellent partner in the introduction of a more sustainable, ecosystem-oriented fisheries management in Prespa. Therefore, the project has provided continuous support in the strengthening the Association's capacity. As part of the capacity development support to the newly established Association, the project facilitated the involvement of the Association in all relevant activities, such as: trans-boundary fish and fisheries management planning process; national consultations for fisheries management plan; trans-boundary monitoring of fish; Watershed Management Council's work on Ezerani protected area, and similar. The project also provided support in renovating and office space for the Association and purchasing necessary equipment.

138. ***Output 2.6.*** *A marketplace to foster the knowledge, goods and services of a conservation economy*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	Project newsletter issued monthly; several environmental celebrations, branding materials for Prespa as well as wine day, agro–fairs, etc. Local media broadcasts programs on Prespa area; 4th issue of IUCN SE Europe e-bulletin published information on the progress of project and events related to nature conservation[20]; capacity and

[20]Three articles related to Prespa Park project: 1) Forest biodiversity assessment prepared by Mehmet Meta and Stavri Pllaha; 2) Supporting local environmental planning for the communities around Prespa lakes; 3) Transboundary component of GEF UNDP Prespa Park Project launched.

	material support to the information centers in Zagradec and Gorica; educational programs, brochures, newspaper articles and school books. Project is very popular among citizens and stakeholder due to the wide involvement of farmers, users groups and NGOs into project activities. Further contributing to this is the establishment of ILIC in Gorica, which offers a range of communication and exchange opportunities for civil society and stakeholders.
FYR Macedonia	To provide possibility for permanent improvement of the knowledge and awareness on ecosystem management among the main stakeholders, as well as to provide access to discussions, seminars and relevant reference materials, the Programme has supported the establishment of a Natural Capital Resource Center (NCRC). The NCRC serves as a hub for information dissemination, as well as organization of seminars and workshops. In addition, it serves as a visitor information center. For the needs of NCRC valuable space has been provided by the Municipality of Resen and the relevant national institutions in the House of Culture in Resen. The NCRC is currently operating with the support provided by both the UNDP projects, and the Municipality of Resen, but in due time it will be fully integrated into the municipal structures. The new SDC funded project on Prespa foresees active role of NCRC in its implementation, including its upgrade (with other personnel with the necessary qualifications).

iii. Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin (PNP, GNP, ENR, and PPA-GR) fully operational

139. Overall, achievement of Outcome 3 is rated ***moderately satisfactory***.

140. ***Output 3.1****Monitoring of ecosystem health (biotic and abiotic) parameters strengthens information baseline for adaptive management in all three littoral states*

Transboundary	As highlighted at the beginning of the results section, the process for agreeing on and designing a Prespa basin-wide monitoring system, and the resulting outputs, are one of the highlights of the project results. Multiple stakeholders interviewed in all three countries during the terminal evaluation mentioned the monitoring system as an important achievement resulting from the project. An environmental monitoring system for the full Prespa basin was recognized in the 2001 PPCC-produced Strategic Action Plan as critical for informed decision-making for the protection, development and management of the basin. There is no question that with support of the project a significant amount of hard work and technical expertise were employed to develop and design the proposed comprehensive monitoring system. This complex activity was implemented cooperatively between SPP (with financial support from WWF-Greece) and the Prespa IEM project. A transboundary Monitoring and Conservation Working Group (MCWG) was established in October 2007 based on nominations from the Ministries of Environment in the respective countries, and this group was instrumental in the development and establishment of the system, as well as the development of the conservation plans. With support from the Tour du Valat biological station (from France) the project coordinated a series of meetings of technical experts from all three countries, with working groups established for seven thematic areas (water, aquatic vegetation, forests and terrestrial habitats, fish and fisheries, birds and other biodiversity, socio-economy, and land-use). The development of the monitoring

	system was planned with six steps: 1. Preparatory stage; 2. Expert study on the transboundary monitoring system; 3. Purchase and installation of equipment; 4. Pilot application of the transboundary monitoring system; 5. Adjustment of the system; 6 Final approval of the system (by the PPCC). The feasibility assessment stage of the process was followed by piloting the monitoring system in the seven thematic areas; the pilot phase ended in December 2010. The transboundary component provided equipment for institutions in MK and AL to support the pilot phase of the monitoring system. Following the pilot phase, reports were produced including data collected in each thematic area during the pilot phase, and a proposal for revision of the system was prepared, including subjecting the system to a reality check, and considering questions of its manageability and cost-effectiveness. Although the respective stakeholders in the three countries (particularly the protected area authorities in Albania and Greece) continue carrying out some monitoring activities, there is no coordinated approach or system in place, including no centralized database with information accessible by environmental managers in all three countries. The project document and workplan only envisioned that the Prespa IEM project would get the monitoring system through the pilot and adjustment phase, and not to actual implementation of the full system – but the proposed system needs to be implementable. While the work to develop the monitoring system under this output is critically important, there is now a question of resources available for implementation of such an ambitious monitoring system. This is further highlighted in Section VI.A.i on financial sustainability. Without additional substantive meetings of the PPMC (formerly PPCC) there has not been additional high level support or decisions taken regarding the monitoring system.
Albania	National monitoring activities are implemented through local NGO during 2010-2011 and Park Administration and local community has been fully involved. The monitoring report is delivered to Park administration and ministry; The expert study on assessment of terrestrial & aquatic habitats for priority bird and mammal species is prepared and system is under pilot monitoring. Monitoring process has been associated with training sessions Several training organized and accomplished for the local stakeholder and resource users (ECAT + USFS + RCRD and TB /TDA) The KfW project will follow up the monitoring scheme implemented in Albania by UNDP project Several monitoring report are prepared and made available to project partners. 108 species of trees/bushes identified and catalogued through project SGP, and deposited with Prespa National Park Administration, but no info on distribution, abundance, or condition. Species action plans are developed and preparing for implementing Priority bat colonies are protected and monitored at Treni (there are 4,000-5,000 individuals under protection in Treni Cave, 90% of which are Schreibers's long-fingered bat (*Minioptrus schreibersi*) and Spille caves. Due to the potential risk by villagers and shepherds, the entrance of Treni cave is secured by a gate of iron bars that allows bats in and out. Spille cave is naturally protected due to its almost unreachable location but is still under the attention of PNP rangers. A new considerable colony is discovered recently in Golemgrad Island (Macedonia) and smaller one in Maligrad (Albania). Wetlands vegetation are managed through the 'llovizhda' project in Great Prespa and

	two projects in Small Prespa, one implemented by the fishermen organization and the other by the Women Association of Zagradec (supported by GEF/SGP). 150 ha of wet meadows and shoreline habitat managed in Small Prespa through a project facilitated by GEF SGP. KfW is also working on using reed for production of pellets for wider use.
FYR Macedonia	The national input for Macedonia and Albania has been provided through the Trans-boundary component via working groups and workshops. The MK national component of the Programme has provided continuous support to the activity, starting from the feasibility assessment stages, through the entire pilot stage by ensuring adequate participation and input of many relevant national stakeholders through organizing meetings, participation in trans-boundary consultations/workshops, communication of the comments by the national experts, support in implementation of the field work, etc.

141. ***Output 3.2*** *Landscape-scale conservation planning and action across tri-national Prespa Basin*

Transboundary	Based on the planned activities for Output 3.2 as outlined in the project document, this output was not produced as originally envisioned, but multiple project activities contributed to broad results for landscape scale conservation planning. Specifically, the species and habitat conservation plans produced (see Output 4.4) could be considered tri-national conservation planning. The SAP produced is also envisioned to be the basic landscape scale conservation planning tool for the Prespa basin. The integrated watershed management plan being implemented in Macedonian Prespa also contributes to this overarching goal.
Albania	In Albania, by end of the project the number of hectares of forest under improved management reached 320 ha. By end of 2011, the surface of lake under biodiversity oriented management was extended to about 170 ha in Macro Prespa consisting on the removal of the remaining of netting and trapping system, and approximately 150 ha in Micro Prespa, mainly due to the biodiversity oriented management of shoreline habitats and wet meadows.
FYR Macedonia	This output was primarily a transboundary activity, but the integrated watershed management plan developed and now being implemented in Macedonian Prespa contributes to this overarching goal.

142. ***Output 3.3*** *Restoration of the Golema Reka (tributary in Macedonian Prespa)*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	N/A
FYR Macedonia	Considerable river restoration works have been completed in Prespa through the SDC-funded "Restoration of Golema Reka" project. Both urban and non-urban sections of Golema Reka, the largest and most degraded tributary of Prespa, have been restored (see Photo 2), which involved construction of wastewater collection systems in industrial and residential areas located along the river. The SDC funds have also been used for improvement of the hydrological and meteorological monitoring of environmental parameters of Golema Reka. The support of the GEF project to this initiative was mainly in providing technical and

	community outreach support, but also access to the latest ecosystem-based river restoration concepts and approaches. Based on the experience from the implementation of the Restoration of Golema Reka project, and the best international river restoration practices, the project supported preparation of a River Restoration Manual. The manual was published, successfully promoted and widely distributed amongst the target audience including experts, engineers, designers and practitioners, and relevant authorities. In addition, the manual is being used as a student textbook at the Faculty of Civil Engineering in Skopje, for the newly introduced course on river restoration.

Photo 2 Restored Industrial Portion of Golema Reka Tributary, Resen, Macedonia

143. ***Output 3.4*** *Prespa National Park (AL) and Galičica National Park (MK) management capacity are strengthened and the parks fully operational (to be funded by KfW)*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	The KfW project originally envisioned to integrate with GEF-funded activities in Albanian Prespa did not get underway until October 2011. The project faced significant difficulties in progressing this activity due to delays from the MoEFWA in setting up the PNP-MC, and the delay in the commencement of the KfW project. However, the project team lobbied hard at the central, regional, and local levels for the need for a Prespa National Park Management Committee (PNP-MC) as a crucial institution to improve the overall management of Prespa National Park and the watershed. At least three dedicated training workshops have taken place with staff from the Prespa National Park (overall 37 persons from Prespa National Park and Forestry Directorate)

	– two in Korça and one overseas (two representatives from the Prespa National Park). The Prespa National Park Management Committee is now established and functioning, with regular meetings of all involved stakeholders. The project provided significant logistic and equipment support to the Prespa National Park Administration. The Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool is used annually to assess management effectiveness of Prespa National Park in Albania. The baseline METT score established in 2007 was 31. In 2011 the METT was completed by KfW, with the METT score for Prespa National Park in Albania increasing from 31 in August 2007 to 37 in July 2011. Actual enforcement and control activities of the park administration are assisted also through the KfW project. The Management Plan is under development by KfW project. All reports and documents of UNDP project are being considered as the baseline.
FYR Macedonia	Since early 2008 KfW has implemented project activities focused on introduction of integrated sustainable management and administrative capacity building of the Galičica National Park (the same program also supported by KfW was launched in 2011 to support Prespa National Park in Albania). Throughout the period, the Prespa IEM project has maintained continuous communication and co-operation with KfW, rather than co-financing part of activities as initially intended.

144. ***Output 3.5*** *Ezerani Nature Reserve (MK) is strengthened and fully operational*

Transboundary	N/A
Albania	N/A
FYR Macedonia	The project provided support to the national and local authorities in the process of re-designation and operationalization of the Ezerani protected area. The process was initiated by preparation of a 'Reserve' re-valorization study, which besides assessment of the natural values involved recommendations on the future management of the area. Through a highly participatory process an expert study proposed the following changes in the previous management practice: (1) introducing more flexible classification, so as to allow for certain economic activities within the protected area (shift from Category I – Strict Nature Reserve to Category IV – Nature Park); (2) modification of the protected area's boundaries to exclude, to the extent possible, privately-owned land to be part of it, thus avoid former conflicts between conservation efforts and interests of the local community; and (3) improving the management arrangements (e.g. through involvement of the Municipality of Resen). The project supported preparation of a Management plan for the Ezerani protected area in accordance with national regulations, the primary management objectives, and the category type proposed in the revalorization study. The management plan was handed over to the future management authority (Municipality of Resen as per the Law on Ezerani) for submission to the MoEPP. The Management plan will be used as the main document guiding the area's operation. The process has been conducted in a highly participatory environment through various formal and informal communication mechanisms, such as the stakeholder advisory body called Ezerani Council, which has been established for the purpose[21].

[21]Composition of the Ezerani council: MoEPP (nature sector), Municipality of Resen, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, local communities of Ezerani, Perovo and Asamati, agricultural associations, public

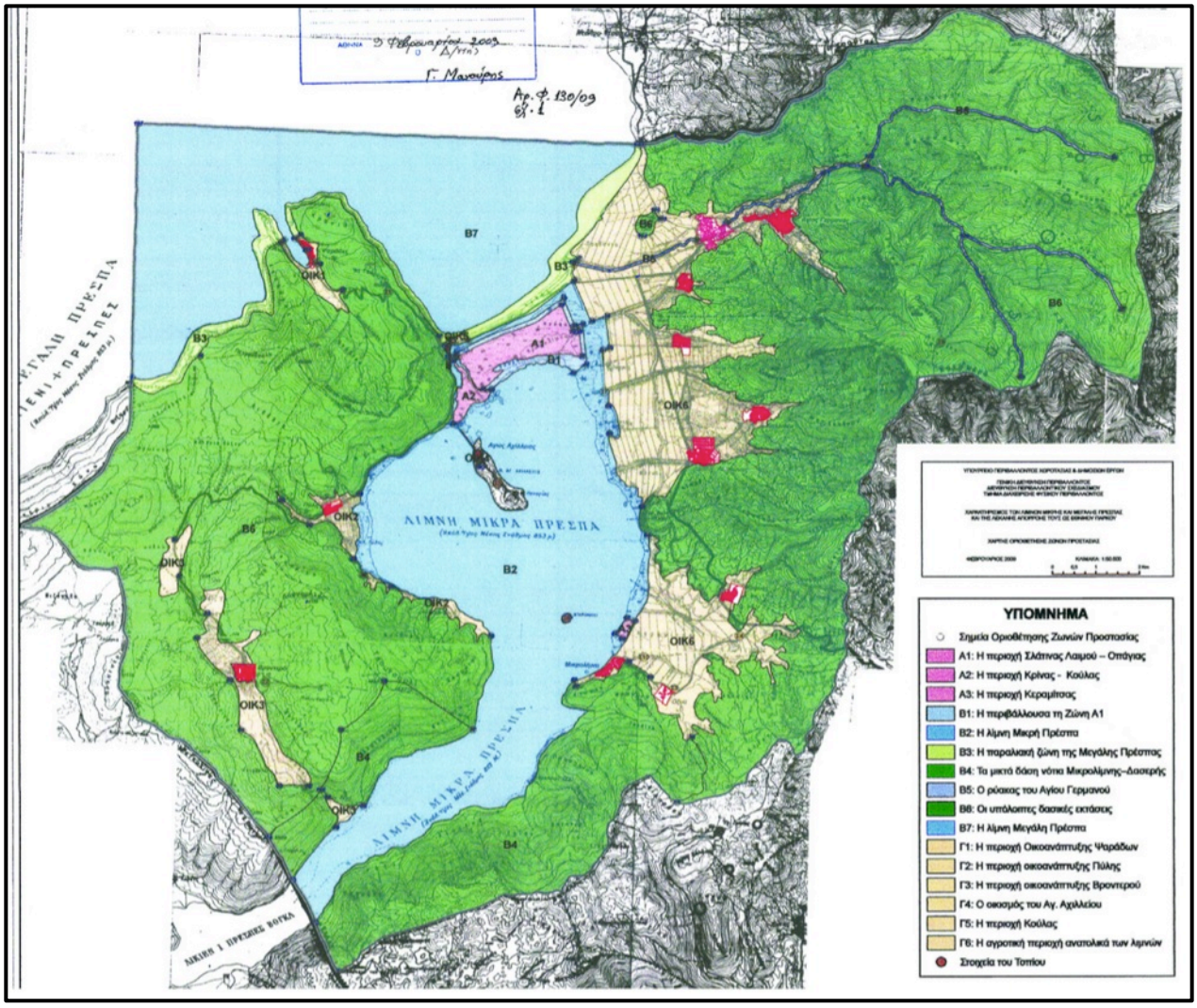
	Finally, one of the originally identified obstacles to the efficient operation of the Ezerani protected area is the limited understanding of the value of multitude of goods and services that the protected ecosystem generates. Hence, with the ecosystem being undervalued, no financial allocations have been made for its protection, which also led to the progressive loss of the area's natural values. For that reason, and in parallel to the management planning process, the project has supported the preparation of an Economic Valuation Report aiming at: (1) raising the awareness of the economic values of effective conservation; (2) evaluating the costs and benefits of specific habitat management actions to inform conservation and public funding decisions; (3) identifying financial opportunities for the protected area and neighboring communities associated with the provision of ecosystem services and with specific management actions; and (4) generating participation and training opportunities for conservation managers and decision-makers in economic valuation for integrated ecosystem management.

145. ***Output 3.6*** *Prespa Protected Area - GR fully operationalized (MoEPP-GR)*

146. This output was to be implemented entirely on the Greek side, with Greek funding. The PA in Greek Prespa was "founded" in 2002 and "established" in 2003 through Joint Ministerial Decisions from the Greek government; it was declared as a national park July 23, 2009. The PA headquarters are in the village of Agios Germanos. The PA has a management board of nine members: Technical Expert Scientist (Chair), Ministry of Environment; Ministry for Development, Competitiveness and Shipping; Ministry of Rural Development and Food; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Association of Farmers and Fishermen; Municipality of Prespa; District of Western Macedonia; Society for the Protection of Prespa. The PA management includes 10 persons, with two technical experts (environmental expert, forester), four rangers, and information center staff and administrative staff. The PA covers the entire area of Greek Prespa, and is managed according to three zones (see Figure 12): In Zone A (strict nature protection) no human activity is allowed, besides scientific research; in Zone B (nature protection), depending on the area there are activities that are allowed like fishing with special license, wet meadows management, grazing stock, hunting, daily visits in the areas, and scientific research. In Zone C (sustainable development and areas of protected natural formations) most of the activities are permitted, and also building using traditional architecture. In the Areas of Protected Natural Formations in general no human activities are allowed, besides daily visits through certain footpaths, scientific research and in some areas grazing stock is allowed.

forest enterprise, public utility management enterprise, Natural Capital Resource Center, Hydrobiological Institute, Ohrid, Community Support Center (NGO), Directorate for Rescue and Protection, water management.

Figure 12 Management Zones of Greek Prespa National Park



iv. Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon ongoing trans-boundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the trans-boundary coordination mechanism and piloting trans-boundary conservation and water management

147. Achievement of Outcome 4 is considered ***moderately satisfactory***.

148. The Macedonian national component of the Prespa Programme has been deeply involved in all trans-boundary level activities, which have been a primary responsibility of the trans-boundary project component. In general the national project component has provided input in conceptualizing and designing various activities, but also providing support in their implementation mainly by ensuring adequate participation of the national level stakeholders in the trans-boundary processes as well as providing technical support. The Albanian national component has also been directly involved in all transboundary activities from the Albanian

side, to secure the engagement of Albanian experts and local resource users in transboundary activities, and to provide technical inputs.

149. ***Output 4.1*** *The Prespa Park Coordination Committee (PPCC) becomes a formal, international trilateral institution under international law*

Transboundary	The Prespa Park Coordination Committee was the original trilateral governance mechanism for instituting transboundary integrated ecosystem management in the Prespa Basin, and the existence of this body was among the main justifications for the development of the GEF-funded Prespa IEM project. At the end of the project, oddly, this body has reached a more advanced formal status (through the 2010 agreement highlighted below), but in practical terms has regressed as the level of activity of the body has decreased, for various reasons. Perhaps the single most important development in the trans-boundary cooperation is the signing of the "Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area" by the three littoral states and the European Commission on February 2, 2010 (see Box 3). Most importantly, the agreement defines: (1) the principles of co-operation between the three countries, including obligations, environmental standards and criteria, exchange of information, co-operation with international organizations, etc.; and (2) the mechanisms of co-operation, including establishing the Prespa Park Management Committee, secretariat, working groups, and financing mechanisms. However, since the three countries issued the agreement, little further practical action has occurred due to the national and international ratifications required. Because Greece is an EU member state, the EU is required to ratify the 2010 Prespa Park Agreement as it is an international legal mandate. This ratification process took ~1.5 years, with the final approval by the EU Council of Ministers published in the Official Journal of the European Union on October 4th, 2011. The Greek national government also has to ratify the document, which was impossible during the Greek political turmoil through the first half of 2012 (and is likely to be a low priority for some time). Albania and Macedonia have both ratified the agreement. Since the 2010 agreement, there has been only one trilateral meeting – the first Prespa Park Management Committee meeting in late June 2012, which was an informal meeting since the agreement was still to be ratified by Greece and Macedonia (Macedonia has since ratified). In contrast, the former PPCC met approximately once or twice per year from 2001 to 2010. The lack of activity since 2010 is likely due to several factors. To start, since 2010 the global economic crisis has diverted the focus and available resources of the three littoral states. The governments have also apparently been reluctant to take concrete action under the 2010 agreement until the national ratifications have been achieved. As stated by SPP at the time of the EU approval, "20 months later the agreement remains inoperative due to the labyrinthine bureaucracy that has presided over its approval process."[22] However, perhaps the most significant reason for the lack of meetings over the past two years is related to funding availability. For its first 10 years the PPCC was financially supported by bilateral and NGO funding secured by SPP, with SPP acting as

[22] SPP, 2011. "With a seal of approval from the European Union, the International Agreement for the Prespa Park is now in the hands of the three states that share the Prespa Basin," October 6, 2011. http://www.spp.gr.

	the PPCC secretariat. At the November 2008 regular meeting of the PPCC, SPP introduced options for securing future funding of the PPCC, and indicated that donor funding of the PPCC would cease in June 2010. The Prespa IEM project mid-term evaluation saw this declaration as "a risky but brave strategy to force the issue" of stakeholder ownership for the Prespa Park process. It is true that greater stakeholder buy-in is required as well as a sustainable source of funding for the PPCC; however, combined with the global economic crisis, it seems that the cessation of donor funding has contributed to the hibernation of the PPCC.
Albania	The 2010 trilateral agreement establishing the Prespa Park Management Committee has been ratified at the national level in Albania.
FYR Macedonia	The 2010 trilateral agreement establishing the Prespa Park Management Committee was ratified by the Macedonian parliament on July 23rd, 2012.

Box 3 The International Prespa Park Agreement of 2010

In February 2010 the Ministers of Environment from Albania, Macedonia and Greece, together with EU Commissioner for the Environment, issued a Joint Agreement*recognizing the importance and value of the Prespa Park Area. The Agreement includes the following Joint Statement:

"The Ministers for the Environment of the three States sharing the Prespa Lakes Area and the European Commissioner for the Environment salute the conclusion of the negotiation of the Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area. This is the best way to celebrate today the 10th anniversary of the creation of the Prespa Park and the World Wetlands Day.

The Agreement initialed today lays the ground for an effective conservation of the Prespa ecosystem as a basis for the sustainable development of the Area. The Prespa Park is the first trans-boundary protected area in south-eastern Europe and will foster environment cooperation in the region thereby contributing to its stability and prosperity".

*Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area, February 2, 2010, Pyli, Greece

150. ***Output 4.2*** *Prespa Working Group on Water Management (PWGWM) established by the PPCC*

Transboundary	The Prespa IEM project document foresaw under this output the creation of the first working group created under the PPCC that would "appropriately enough be concerned with water." This turned out not to be the case, as the monitoring working group previously discussed was established, while this water management working group was not. According to the project document, the agenda of the water management working group would be based on the principles of integrated river basin management contained in the EU Water Framework Directive. An international water management specialist was contracted to conduct a rapid situational analysis of the current state of water management practices, the status of the enabling environment and develop a plan of implementation. The international expert prepared a rapid assessment and situational analysis on the 'state-of-play' in terms of current water management practices in the Prespa Lakes Basin both at national and trans-boundary levels, and outlined a detailed implementation plan and terms of reference for the

	future Trans-boundary Water Management Working Group, and an international expert to support the work of the group. However, despite multiple efforts and approaches the project was not successful in establishing the group either independently or as part of the existing bodies (PPCC, PPMC). At the time of project start-up Prespa lake was facing near record low water levels, which were seriously threatening various aspects of the ecosystem, and creating higher concentrations of pollutants (by significantly reducing the volume of water into which pollutants were disbursed). However, by the end of the Prespa IEM project the water levels had risen again somewhat, and the immediacy of addressing water management in the basin had perhaps been blunted somewhat. Some stakeholders highlighted the technical challenges associated with water management in the region, because there is not a clear (or even murky) understanding of the hydrological system that flows through the karst geology. It is known that water from Prespa lake flows into the neighboring Lake Ohrid basin, but the timing of this flow changes over time, ranging from a few hours or less, to days.
Albania	In Albania, the report of the international water management expert was endorsed and the PMU assisted the MoEFWA to review new transboundary institutional arrangements with a focus on water management policies, and a new draft Law on Water. In the national context, water management issues are addressed within the Prespa National Park Management Committee and Prespa National Park management plan. However, at the national level water management in Albania is considered to be a problematic sector with low technical capacity and political priority. Albania is considered a "little Switzerland" in terms of its abundant water resources, but poor water management and infrastructure leads to shortages in various regions.
FYR Macedonia	The MK national project component organized several meetings at which recommendations for future trans-boundary water management in the Prespa Lakes watershed have been discussed. The meetings were attended by representatives from the main sectors influencing and/or governing water management: MoEPP, MAFWE, Hydro-meteorological Institute, etc. As a result, consolidated input was provided to the initiative for establishing the Trans-boundary Water Management Working Group. In the national context, water management is addressed in Macedonian Prespa through the Prespa Watershed Management Plan (see Output 1.1). The long process for adoption of the Law on Waters (in 2008, enforced starting January 2011) created some initial delays in the development of the Macedonian Prespa Watershed Management Plan.

151. ***Output 4.3*** *Communication activities catalyse stakeholder involvement and create new standard for transparency and openness for project implementation*

Transboundary	On one hand, the Prespa IEM project has been successful in developing useful public awareness materials and conducting community-level awareness-raising activities (with inputs from all three project components), including at the international level. At the same time, a major lacking element of transboundary cooperation in the Prespa IEM project was a single unifying communication channel to engage technical and political decision-makers involved in the project, build stakeholder buy-in, and lend ongoing strength and stability to the communal vision of environmental conservation

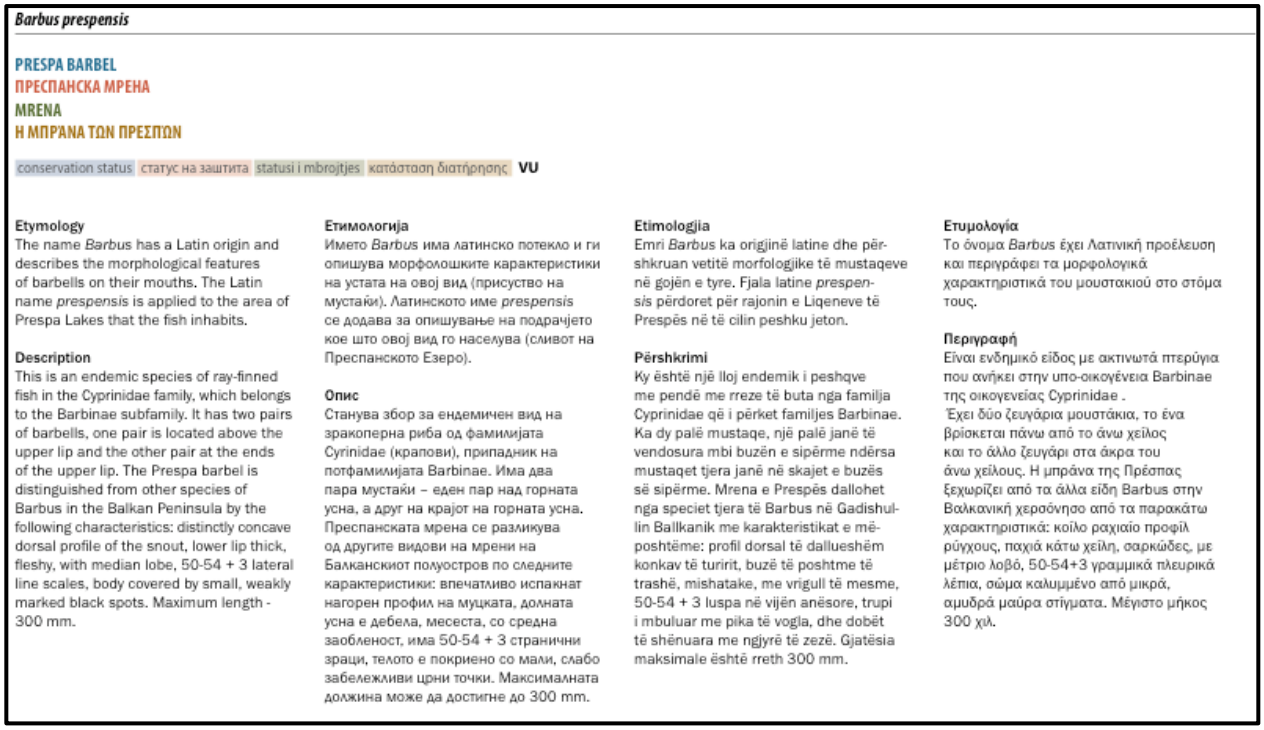
	and sustainable development in the Prespa basin. Initially the project contracted a communications expert to produce a Communication, Education and Public Awareness Strategy. The draft strategy was presented for comments in August 2008, completed in October 2008, and the final detailed and comprehensive version was endorsed officially by the PPCC at the 11th meeting (November 2008) along with the proposed detailed activities and budget needed for its implementation. The final communication plan was published in March 2009. The communications strategy was high quality, but was more comprehensive and detailed than proved necessary. The strategy may be a useful reference for on-going Prespa-related communications in all three countries in the region, but the project's communications successes have come more directly as a result of the engagement of a part-time communications specialist by the UNDP Macedonia Country Office, who has taken advantage of various ad-hoc opportunities to promote the project activities and results, including securing a story on Prespa lakes in the regional edition of National Geographic magazine. For example, from October 2009 – June 2010 there were more than 100 national and local news reports on the project and its activities. The project was also recently highlighted in a UNDP publication from the region entitled "Empowering Live, Building Resilience".[23] The project has also produced a number of easily digestible brochures and publications covering the thematic areas of agriculture, biodiversity, fisheries, forests, governance, tourism, and water. A high quality book, the Fish of Prespa, was also produced in a quadrilingual publication (English, Albanian, Greek, Macedonian), the first such regional publication describing all of the fish species in Prespa Lakes (see Figure 13). Other communication activities included, for example, the organization of the celebration event for World Wetlands Day (2nd of February 2009) with a children's painting competition in each country organized by local NGOs. The most significant transboundary communications shortcoming was related to internal communication, with the lack of a unifying project website to serve as a focal point to bring together all stakeholders, provide updates on activities, and to serve as a repository for project outputs. In fact, the project sought to leverage the IW:LEARN website infrastructure for these purposes (http://prespa.iwlearn.org), as many International Waters projects do, but it does not appear that this resource was effectively used by project stakeholders. The project did actually launch an initial stand-alone website in 2008 - www.prespapark.org - to act as the official PPCC/Prespa Park website, but this was later abandoned is not currently operational. Some projects are hesitant to establish project specific websites due to concerns about sustainability post-project, but in the case of regional projects involving stakeholders from multiple countries and covering a wide range of activities, such websites can be extremely helpful in forging a unifying communication channel, purpose, and identity for the common objective of all involved – one example of this was in the UNEP-GEF international waters project targeting the South China Sea.[24]Such a mechanism helps to build trust and buy-in amongst stakeholders, elements that do not yet appear to be fully in place with respect to transboundary cooperation for integrated ecosystem management of the Prespa basin. The fact that the Prespa region includes three different languages also presented

[23] Available at http://europeandcis.undp.org/news/show/72DC6188-F203-1EE9-B343816E216B1384.

[24] See http://www.unepscs.org/, available as of September 2012.

	consistent challenges in effective transboundary communication, although the project team and stakeholders were regularly cognizant of this issue.
Albania	The project contributed to strengthening collaboration among PPCC members: it has developed and maintained the websites for the two targeted communes (Liqenas and Proger); organized weekly meetings with local NGOs to exchange experiences and practices, and a part-time local expert was contracted to implement communication, education, and public awareness activities. The project also trained eight teachers in the use of environmental information and education tools in cooperation with Green Pack program of the REC. The small grants disbursed through the project also supported strengthening of education and awareness of integrated ecosystem management issues. It is planned that the newly renovated headquarters building of Prespa National Park (completed with funding from KfW) will serve as a community information and education center in Albanian Prespa (see Photo 3).
FYR Macedonia	Although this was designed primarily as an output under the transboundary component, the Macedonian national component also conducted activities that supported this output. Numerous public education and outreach activities were supported, but perhaps most significantly for the sustainability of the project results is the establishment of the "Natural Capital Resource Center" in the town of Resen. This is a renovated space in building provided by the municipality that serves as an information dissemination point for materials related to integrated ecosystem management in the Prespa basin, but also as a general community resource center supporting sustainable development (see Photo 4).

Figure 13 Excerpt from the quadrilingual book "Fish of Prespa"



Barbus prespensis

PRESPA BARBEL
ПРЕСПАНСКА МРЕНА
MRENA
Η ΜΠΡΆΝΑ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΕΣΠΩΝ

conservation status | статус на заштита | statusi i mbrojtjes | κατάσταση διατήρησης **VU**

Etymology
The name *Barbus* has a Latin origin and describes the morphological features of barbells on their mouths. The Latin name *prespensis* is applied to the area of Prespa Lakes that the fish inhabits.

Description
This is an endemic species of ray-finned fish in the Cyprinidae family, which belongs to the Barbinae subfamily. It has two pairs of barbells, one pair is located above the upper lip and the other pair at the ends of the upper lip. The Prespa barbel is distinguished from other species of Barbus in the Balkan Peninsula by the following characteristics: distinctly concave dorsal profile of the snout, lower lip thick, fleshy, with median lobe, 50-54 + 3 lateral line scales, body covered by small, weakly marked black spots. Maximum length - 300 mm.

Етимологија
Името *Barbus* има латинско потекло и ги опишува морфолошките карактеристики на устата на овој вид (присуство на мустаќи). Латинското име *prespensis* се додава за опишување на подрачјето кое што овој вид го населува (сливот на Преспанското Езеро).

Опис
Станува збор за ендемичен вид на зракоперна риба од фамилијата Cyrinidae (крапови), припадник на потфамилијата Barbinae. Има два пара мустаќи – еден пар над горната усна, а друг на крајот на горната усна. Преспанската мрена се разликува од другите видови на мрени на Балканскиот полуостров по следните карактеристики: впечатливо испакнат нагорен профил на муцката, долната усна е дебела, месеста, со средна заобленост, има 50-54 + 3 странични зраци, телото е покриено со мали, слабо забележливи црни точки. Максималната должина може да достигне до 300 mm.

Etimologjia
Emri *Barbus* ka origjinë latine dhe përshkruan vetitë morfologjike të mustaqeve në gojën e tyre. Fjala latine *prespensis* përdoret për rajonin e Liqeneve të Prespës në të cilin peshku jeton.

Përshkrimi
Ky është një lloj endemik i peshqve me pendë me rreze të buta nga familja Cyprinidae që i përket familjes Barbinae. Ka dy palë mustaqe, një palë janë të vendosura mbi buzën e sipërme ndërsa mustaqet tjera janë në skajet e buzës së sipërme. Mrena e Prespës dallohet nga speciet tjera të Barbus në Gadishullin Ballkanik me karakteristikat e mëposhtëme: profil dorsal të dallueshëm konkav të turirit, buzë të poshtme të trashë, mishatake, me vrigull të mesme, 50-54 + 3 luspa në vijën anësore, trupi i mbuluar me pika të vogla, dhe dobët të shënuara me ngjyrë të zezë. Gjatësia maksimale është rreth 300 mm.

Ετυμολογία
Το όνομα *Barbus* έχει Λατινική προέλευση και περιγράφει τα μορφολογικά χαρακτηριστικά του μουστακιού στο στόμα τους.

Περιγραφή
Είναι ενδημικό είδος με ακτινωτά πτερύγια που ανήκει στην υπο-οικογένεια Barbinae της οικογενείας Cyprinidae .
Έχει δύο ζευγάρια μουστάκια, το ένα βρίσκεται πάνω από το άνω χείλος και το άλλο ζευγάρι στα άκρα του άνω χείλους. Η μπράνα της Πρέσπας ξεχωρίζει από τα άλλα είδη Barbus στην Βαλκανική χερσόνησο από τα παρακάτω χαρακτηριστικά: κοίλο ραχιαίο προφίλ ρύγχους, παχιά κάτω χείλη, σαρκώδες, με μέτριο λοβό, 50-54+3 γραμμικά πλευρικά λέπια, σώμα καλυμμένο από μικρά, αμυδρά μαύρα στίγματα. Μέγιστο μήκος 300 χιλ.

Photo 3 Prespa National Park (Albania) Headquarters

Photo 4 Natural Capital Resource Center, Resen, Macedonia

152. ***Output 4.4*** *Pilot species and habitat conservation initiatives under implementation*

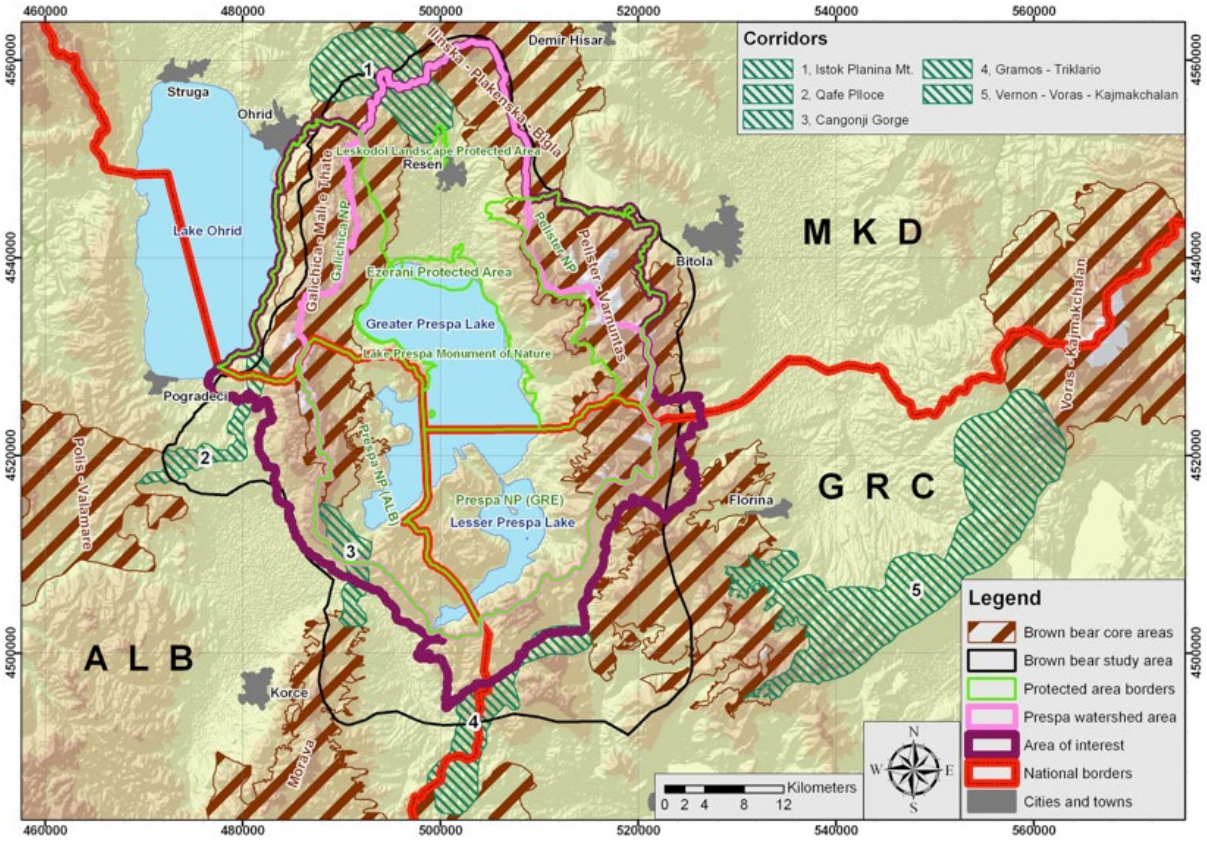
Transboundary	The species and habitat conservation action plans were key outputs of the transboundary component, and were to contribute to the achievement of multiple project goals. Initiation of this activity was planned for 2007, but the plans were to be developed through a contracted third party, and due procurement related issues, the plans were essentially delayed for two years.[25] Work to develop the plans only began in late 2009, and was completed in late 2011/early 2012, which precluded any opportunity to move toward implementation of the plans. The priority actions defined in the plans were to make up a significant portion of the concrete biodiversity conservation activities of the project; a reading of the project logframe indicators and targets demonstrates how integral these plans were expected to be for project results. Nonetheless, with extensive work the plans have been produced for six priority species and habitats: brown bears (*Ursus arctos*), Grecian juniper (*Juniperus excelsa),* mountain tea *(Sideritis raeseri),* caves and bats, and reedbeds.[26]Conservation actions for the Prespa barbel (*Barbus prespensis)* were defined within the transboundary fisheries management plan. The work was supported by a Macedonia-based firm, and was carried out in two phases, involving 22 experts drawn from all three countries. The process included the selection of the priority species and habitats through specific criteria covering aspects such as species' Red List status. Further steps included: • Analysis of existing studies and project reports • Field trips (covering approximately 40 days) • GIS maps prepared regarding species distribution • Collection of data about current conservation and protection status • Preparation of thematic reports, such as human-bear conflict, forest fire

[25]See discussions under Output 3.2 and Output 4.4 in the mid-term evaluation for further commentary on the timing of the completion of the conservation plans.

[26] The plans are available in English at http://prespa.iwlearn.org/species-and-habitats-conservation-and-action-plans.

	prevention, and research of selected caves • Development of draft action plans based on identified threats • Development of consensus at an expert workshop (November 24-25, 2011) • Broad stakeholder consultation process • Detailed elaboration of three to five priority actions over five years. The plans are detailed, with in-depth information in a standardized outline covering species information, conservation status, socio-economic role and importance, and conservation issues and recommended actions (including threats analysis). The conservation plans include GIS-based data and analysis, such as the brown bear corridor map shown in Figure 14. The species and habitat conservation and action plans have been shared with and approved by Prespa stakeholders (in December 2011), and distilled to informative trilingual brochures for public distribution. The next step, and ultimate goal, will be implementation of the conservation action plans in the three countries. The respective environmental managers in the countries will be responsible for implementing the plans – the Prespa National Park authority in Albania, the Prespa National Park authority in Greece, and Resen municipality along with Galičica and Pelister National Parks authorities in Macedonia. Had the conservation action plans been completed with more time remaining before the end of the project it might have been possible for them to be moved closer to implementation. However, all of the transboundary component outputs face challenges in collaborative tri-national implementation as long as the three littoral state governments are not actively moving cooperation forward.
Albania	Work with the Albanian Association of Mammals and Birds has established protection of a colony of 4,000-5,000 bats in Treni Cave, 90% of which are Schreibers's long-fingered bat (*Minioptrusschreibersi*). A report by the national NGO Transboundary Nature indicates the presence of at least 108 species of woody plants in Prespa National Park. The Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score for Prespa National Park was 37 in 2011, up from 31 scored in the baseline assessment in 2007.
FYR Macedonia	The Macedonian national Programme component supported the pioneering species and habitats conservation trans-boundary activity by: (1) support in conceptualizing the work for preparation of 5 species/habitats conservation action plans; (2) ensuring active participation of the Macedonian stakeholders in the trans-boundary consultations regarding the conservation actions; (3) providing support in organizing meetings, workshops; and (4) reviewing and commenting on the expert work (reports, draft conservation action plans).

Figure 14 Identified Corridors for Brown Bear in Prespa Region[27]



153. ***Output 4.5*** *Tri-national ecotourism and visitation strategy and management plan designed and approved by stakeholders*

Transboundary	The five year regional tourism strategy is another positive result of the transboundary component, and is one that has found resonance with local stakeholders. Production of the tourism strategy through a consultative process that has garnered support from local government in all three countries is a significant achievement. An even bigger effort may be required to ensure that the strategy in fact acts as a reference in the coming years for development in the region. This activity was carried out in collaboration with the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), building on a tourism action plan developed by SNV for Prespa National Park in Albania in 2007-2008. A stakeholder consultation on the development of a tourism strategy was held in October 24th, 2008, following which an initial consultant report was produced on the situation analysis and proposal for preparation of a trilateral tourism strategy and action plan for the Prespa region. The final Trilateral Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for the Prespa Lakes Basin (2012-2016) was produced in December 2011, following consultations with stakeholders in September-October 2011. The mayors of the three

[27] Source: Stojanov, A., et al. 2012. "Brown Bear Conservation Action Plan for the Prespa Lakes Watershed," Final Report, January 2012.

	municipal districts in the three littoral states adopted the strategy in June 2012. Ecotourism is frequently cited a panacea for sustainable development, though in many cases tangible results are yet to be fully realized. There is clearly a potential for increased tourism in the Prespa region, as neighboring Ohrid is perhaps the most significant tourist destination in Macedonia, though the vision for Prespa is not necessarily to emulate the experience of Ohrid. The tourism strategy cites the vision for tourism development in the region as follows: *"The Prespa lakes basin will be developed as a model of sustainable and responsible tourism development, building on its superb natural and cultural features. It will have high quality attractions and activities for both domestic and international visitors in a stunning landscape protected by National Parks. It will continue to develop as a model of cross-border cooperation to the economic and socio-cultural benefit of its inhabitants. It will be managed as a trans-boundary Biosphere Reserve and achieve World Heritage Site enlisting."* Now that the strategy has been produced, actual implementation over time will be a much bigger task. With no further transboundary activity planned with respect to tourism development, and the PPMC not yet fully operational, it is not clear who will take responsibility for ensuring the strategy is followed over time. The strategy itself sees an important role for the PPMC as the way forward for the strategy: "*The PPMC is an ideal vehicle for taking forward the establishment of a Prespa Park Biosphere Reserve, as it includes both environmental and local community interests. It should also play a strong role in seeking funding for the flagship projects tourism projects recommended in this strategy, and ensuring their quality delivery and quality delivery of training. PPMC, being made up mostly of government bodies (including national parks) has an obvious strategic guiding role. In this strategic role, commissioning market research and feasibility studies for flagship projects can also be usefully undertaken. PPMC also should have a strong monitoring role.*" At present, the municipalities in Albania, Greece and Macedonia will have to take it upon themselves to actually apply the strategy and use it as a reference in decision-making related to economic development. There has been discussion about the possible designation of Prespa as a UNESCO Man and Biosphere reserve, which could be another pathway for future transboundary cooperation. A regional conference on Prespa as a possible biosphere reserve was held February 17th – 18th, 2011 in Ohrid with 60 attendees. The trans-boundary Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan was produced under the following process: (1) review of existing and relevant strategies/plans/studies pertaining to the Prespa region; (2) in-depth assessment and evaluation of the current status of the Tourism sector in the Prespa region; (3) review and analysis of existing institutional structures for tourism at national, regional and local level, and existing tourism industry organization arrangements including relevant associations, networks, personnel, tourism stakeholders, etc.; (4) preparation of detailed inventory of all cultural, natural, historic, religious, ecotourism, adventure tourism, spa, rural tourism, and special interest tourist resources in the Prespa Lakes basin; (5) assessment of tourism supply in the Prespa lakes basin in the three countries; (6) assessment of tourism demand and development of market projections; (7) evaluation of all aspects of the cultural and natural heritage in Prespa with recommendations for their enhancement as tourist attractions; (8) evaluation of tourism product (s) for the Prespa region; (9) formulation of a vision for tourism development; (10) development

	of destination network; (11) development of tourism awareness programme to mitigate negative impacts of tourism; (12) strategic marketing analysis; (13) qualitative and quantitative assessment of human resources in tourism needs to be undertaken and a human resource development plan; and (14) preparation of Tourism Action Plan (2010 – 2015).
Albania FYR Macedonia	Local government leaders in Albania and Macedonia Prespa (as well as in Greek Prespa) endorsed the tri-lateral ecotourism strategy at the informal first meeting of the PPMC in June 2012, highlighting its importance for the future sustainable economic development of the region. The municipalities are using the document as a basis for future fundraising (donor and investment), and this is one of the key areas for likely strong future transboundary cooperation at the local level.

154. ***Output 4.6*** *Supplementary trans-boundary diagnostic analysis fills gaps in existing analysis of environmental stress, related socio-economic consequences and trans-boundary coordination requirements*

Transboundary	The project document foresaw two main activities under this output: 1.) Development of a preliminary water balance model, to be completed as part of a regional project funded by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). 2.) Analysis of impacts of environmental stress and the assessment of socio-economic consequences. These two activities were to build on and fill gaps in the work done on updating the TDA during the PDF-B phase (although the revised and updated TDA wasn't completed until 2009; see Output 4.7 below). The second activity was to focus on water quality monitoring in Golema Reka stream in Macedonia, and associated effects such as impacts on fish larvae, total economic impacts associated with environmental degradation, and contribute to capacity development for cost-benefits analysis of ecosystem management and habitat restoration. The NATO project was completed (in 2007-2008), but it appears this was carried out more as an activity of "associated" financing rather than an activity that was well integrated with the project workplan; little information is available about the results of this work, other than that the minimum water level observed in 2007 was 844.17 meters above sea level, which was below previous minimum levels reached in 2002 (844.39), 1996 (845.46) and 1978 (848.91); the water level dropped even further in 2008. Some water quality monitoring of Golema Reka is taking place, but it is not clear that other activities directly supporting Output 4.6.2 have been carried out other than any activities under other outputs that may be relevant. This may be because the project team took a results-based approach of focusing on activities with specific indicators and targets in the project results framework, rather than attempting to strictly follow the project document. The project's work on transboundary fisheries management was also classified under this output. The activities on fisheries were restarted in mid-2010, with the development of draft Terms of Reference for a fisheries working group under the PPCC, and a tri-lateral expert meeting was organized in December 2010. A group of approximately 13 experts from Albania and Macedonia on various aspects of fisheries produced the first Transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan for the Prespa Lake Basin, 2012 – 2016. The management plan is organized into four medium term

	objectives: (i) a programme, and supporting actions to strengthen the administrative structures; (ii) a programme to strengthen the organizational structures; (iii) actions supporting the operational policies; (iv) enhancing information and public awareness. The management plan proposes a ban on catch of the Prespa barbel for six years, and a ban on catch of Prespa trout in all Prespa tributaries for three years. In contrast to some of the other transboundary activities, there is a more consistent level of transboundary cooperation on fisheries at the technical and basin-level, although there is not a well-established transboundary management framework. For example, SPP organized a transboundary meeting on May 4th 2012 at the Greek Prespa National Park information center on Fish and Fisheries, under the auspices of the Life+ programme: "Information and Communication – Fish, Fisheries and European Policy in the Prespa Basin. "At the same time, without the overarching umbrella of the PPMC, it is hard to see significant progress on this issue in the near-term.
Albania	Albanian national contributions to this process followed the steps outlined below for Macedonia.
FYR Macedonia	The work on the national component in this process involved: (1) conceptualization of the work and drafting of TOR; (2) ensuring active participation of the Macedonian stakeholders in the trans-boundary consultations; (3) support in organizing meetings, workshops, etc.; (4) review and commenting on the expert work (reports, draft management plan, fish publication, training material and other); and (5) support in the implementation of the field work (fish stock assessment in the lake and its tributaries and similar).

155. ***Output 4.7*** *Strategic Action Program for Prespa Lakes Basin developed and negotiated and committed to by highest levels of Government in Albania, Greece and Macedonia*

Transboundary	The original TDA/SAP was completed in 2002 under the auspices of the PPCC. The project sought to updated the TDA/SAP and adapt it to an integrated ecosystem management approach, where land, water, and biodiversity were considered equally. The project document also noted "A GEF SAP must be endorsed at the highest levels of all three governments." This has thus far not been the case for the revised Prespa SAP. Although there are likely many contributing factors to this, one factor may be the approach of contracting an external third party (the Regional Environment Centre) to facilitate production of the SAP document, as previously discussed in Section IV.A.ii of this evaluation report. Stakeholders have also noted that the SAP was directly adapted from another SAP in the region (for the Black Sea); this provided a framework based on a previous positive experience, but this has influenced the Prespa SAP's utility and somewhat reduced its direct relevance for the Prespa basin. The political buy-in and stakeholder ownership of the SAP is relatively lower in Greece, and some stakeholders questioned whether the Technical Task Team responsible for compiling the national report actually visited and interviewed stakeholders in the Greek Prespa region; the terminal evaluation team was not able to confirm this, but the Greek national report does contain detailed data on the environmental aspects of Greek Prespa. The TDA and SAP were prepared with input from a Technical Task Team (within the contract of the Regional Environment Centre) with representation from all three countries. The SAP was developed following the TDA/SAP methodology, with the final trilateral consultation in October 2010, and the document being finalized in November

	2010. See Box 4 below for additional detailed information on the SAP. The initiation workshop for the SAP was held November 26th 2008, and the first stakeholder workshop was held February 3-5th 2009 with more than 40 participants from all three countries. The Technical Task Team held "extensive" discussions with national stakeholders through nine workshops to further refine the initial five priority transboundary concerns identified in the TDA. Based on the research, analysis, data collection and stakeholders consultations, national preparatory reports for all three countries were produced in early 2009, which served as the primary inputs to the full regional SAP. Preparation of the TDA and SAP included: (1) preparation of a technical report containing information regarding significant ecosystem management or other related initiatives, current Strategic Action Plan for the Prespa Park, gap assessment, etc.; (2) presentation of the report and the findings at multi-stakeholder forum; (3) development of draft and final TDA; (4) development of draft and final SAP.
Albania	The Albanian central government has not made any official formal affirmations or approvals of the TDA/SAP for Prespa.
FYR Macedonia	The MK government has not officially endorsed the Prespa SAP, although the government has adopted and is implementing the Prespa Watershed Management plan in Macedonian Prespa. The MK national project component has contributed to the TDA/SAP process by supporting the national level consultations with all relevant stakeholders. Besides the trans-boundary workshops, the national component has been organizing national workshops and meetings to facilitate the process of reaching agreement on the Ecosystem Quality Objectives for the basin, but also the future trans-boundary actions to achieve them. Upon its endorsement by the three states, the SAP will replace the old Strategic Action Plan whose validity has expired.

Box 4 The Prespa Lakes Basin Strategic Action Programme (2010)

The Prespa Lakes Basin Strategic Action Programme (SAP) established a framework on agreed management actions that address the key trans-boundary concerns shared between the three Prespa Lakes Basin countries – Albania, Macedonia and Greece. The main objective of the SAP is to preserve the ecosystem values outlined in the Trans-boundary Diagnostic Analysis that was discussed at a tri-lateral stakeholder meeting in November 2009.

The SAP has been developed by a Technical Task Team in discussion with national and regional stakeholders. The SAP builds on the work of the PPCC activities in preparing a Strategic Action Plan in 2002. This SAP is also fully supportive of the Joint Agreement signed by the three countries in 2010 (Box 6), to manage and protect the Prespa Park Area as well as other activities implemented earlier by the three countries.

The SAP adheres to two key environmental management principles: (1) Ecosystem Based Management Approach, and (2) integrated River Basin Management, based on which coordinated actions that will be implemented by 2025 have been identified and scheduled.

To achieve the vision for the Prespa Lakes Basin, four Environmental Quality Objectives have been designed by the SAP that address the identified key trans-boundary concerns. These Objectives include:

- Preservation of ecological values of surface and ground water resources
- Strengthening land-use management and planning
- Conservation of Prespa Lakes Basin's biodiversity and habitats
- Improvement of livelihoods of the local communities by ensuring sustainable forestry, agriculture and fisheries.

The SAP also recognized the challenges of raising finances for its implementation. Overall, it is acknowledged that the sustainability of the SAP interventions will be highly dependent on national sources of all three Prespa Lakes Basin countries; however, it is also expected that the countries will need considerable assistance from multi- and bi-lateral donors active in the region to enable the process of SAP implementation to proceed.

v. Outcome 5: Lessons learned and adaptive management of project

156. Although a significant amount of the project budget was planned for this outcome ($1.02 million or 25% of the GEF funding), it is difficult to distinguish specific activities planned and carried out under Outcome 5 as distinct from the other four outcomes. In fact, the activities under Outcome 5, including efficient and effective project management, should support each of the other activities. Results framework indicators for this outcome included the project's delivery rate and the positive evaluations from the independent external mid-term and final evaluations. As discussed in Section IV.E.i on financial management, the Albanian component achieved 100% financial delivery, the Macedonian component reached 99.64%, and the transboundary component reached 95.6%.

157. ***Output 5.1*** *Monitoring and evaluation enables lessons to be elaborated, learned and shared worldwide and project management to be adaptive*

158. Monitoring and evaluation are discussed in Section VI.C of this evaluation report.

159. ***Output 5.2.*** *Lessons learned are shared and replicated nationally and internationally*

160. Outputs 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4 relate to specific aspects of project management, while Output 5.2 focuses on knowledge sharing. It is unclear what specific activities were funded under this outcome. The 2011 project workplan for the Albania component, for example, states for Output 5.3: "*Continue with communication and exchanges between stakeholders in both countries (best practices, visits, resource materials, etc.) + regular staff meetings*." This is a reasonable approach, allowing the project to opportunistically take advantage of knowledge sharing opportunities, but it would be helpful to have a better understanding of how resources budgeted under this output were utilized to support sharing of lessons and knowledge management. The project produced multiple publications and public awareness and communications materials, and it may be that the project team utilized Outcome 5 resources for these outputs. The 2010 workplan for the transboundary component states for Outcome 5, "*Operational Costs (phone costs, petty cash, advertisements, salaries, travel costs…); Regular project staff coordination meetings to ensure coordination between national and TB components; Continue collaboration with GEF IW-LEARN and GWP-MED for joint initiatives*." Clearly elements of project management were budgeted under Outcome 5. Cost-effectiveness of project management is discussed in the previous Section IV.E.

161. There are some project results that have contributed to sharing of lessons learned, and potential replication at the national and international levels. For example, the River Basin Management manual produced under the Macedonian component that is now in used in a course on this topic in Macedonia at the university level. Additional information on catalytic results is included in Section VI.B below. Also, for example, the project was recently included as a success story in the regional UNDP publication "Empowering Lives, Building Resilience: Development Stories from Europe and Central Asia." This is in addition to the various national and local level information sharing activities, such as participation in local community events, publication of brochures, etc.

162. ***Output 5.3*** *Adaptive management at national levels* and ***Output 5.4*** *Adaptive management at trans-boundary level*

163. Adaptive management is discussed in Section 107of this evaluation report, and project management generally is discussed in Section IV.E.

C. Stakeholder Participation and Partnerships During Implementation

164. Various elements related to stakeholder participation have been mentioned throughout this evaluation report, in particular in Sections IV.A.ii on project design and Section V.A on factors affecting implementation, as well as throughout the results section covering each of the five outcomes. To summarize, stakeholder involvement – though generally strong – varied between the three components, and between the local and national levels. In both the Macedonian and Albanian national components there was good participation from local level stakeholders; in both countries the project involved local government, local resource users, environmental managers, and teachers and schoolchildren. The Macedonian component's partnership with the Municipality of Resen is a good practice example that should be emulated in other projects with similar contexts. Although the project did not fund activities in Greek Prespa, there is also strong support for the project's objective at the local government level. The national level governments have not demonstrated as strong a commitment, particularly

with respect to the transboundary governance aspect, in relation to the PPMC. In other transboundary activities multiple stakeholders interviewed for the terminal evaluation cited irregular participation from the Greek side. As one project participant noted, "In a way, [the project] aimed too high, aiming for international agreements when we should have been aiming for tri-lateral municipal strategies. At the local level they can see the possibilities."

VI. Key GEF Performance Parameters

A. Sustainability

165. While a sustainability rating is provided here as required, sustainability is a temporal and dynamic state that is influenced by a broad range of constantly shifting factors. It should be kept in mind that the important aspect of sustainability of GEF projects is the sustainability of results, not necessarily the sustainability of activities that produced results. In the context of GEF projects there is no clearly defined timeframe for which results should be sustained, although it is implied that they should be sustained indefinitely. When evaluating sustainability, the greater the time horizon, the lower the degree of certainty possible.

166. Based on GEF evaluation policies and procedures, the overall rating for sustainability cannot be higher than the lowest rating for any of the individual components. This presents challenges in the case of the Prespa IEM project, as there are varying levels of sustainability for the national versus transboundary component, and the results of the three components are not interdependent. In this case, the sustainability rating for one aspect of one of the components may not necessarily be the lowest common denominator for the overall sustainability rating. This evaluation has refrained from giving an aggregate rating for the four components of sustainability, but recognizes that a single overall sustainability rating for the project is required. Given that the national components make-up around 2/3rds of the project investment, the fact that sustainability for the results from these activities is considered moderately likely justifies an overall **sustainability** rating for the Prespa IEM project of ***moderately likely*****. Table 11** summarizes the sustainability ratings for the three components across each of the four aspects of sustainability.

Table 11 Sustainability Ratings by Component

	Overall	TB	MK	AL
Overall Sustainability	ML	U	ML	ML
Financial	N/A	U	L	L
Socio-political	N/A	U	L	L
Institutional framework and governance	N/A	MU	L	ML
Environmental	N/A	N/A	ML	ML

i. Financial Risks to Sustainability

167. It is rare to encounter a project where there is a clear and fully adequate financial commitment to follow-up on project results immediately following completion of GEF funding. This is in fact the case for both the Albania and Macedonia national components of the Prespa IEM project. In Macedonia the Swiss Development Corporation is funding implementation of the watershed management plan developed under the Prespa IEM project, for Macedonian Prespa. This is a commitment of 5 million Swiss francs ($5.36 million USD) over six years, with

the Municipality of Resen assuming full responsibility for watershed management at year four. Table 12 shows the structure of the planned follow-up project. The Swiss ambassador signed the SDC project contract in June during the terminal evaluation mission of the Prespa IEM project. The GEF-funded Macedonian component was completed on June 30th, 2012 and the SDC project began July 1st, 2012.

Table 12 Summary of the Planned SDC-Funded Follow-up to the Macedonian Component

Objective	*Contribution to the improvement of the Prespa Lake's Ecological State and its Resilience*
OUTCOME 1: Water and soil quality in the Prespa Lake watershed are improved	**Output 1.1** A solid basis for long-term active management of the Lake's eutrophication processes established at local level
	Output 1.2 Erosion processes controlled and sediment load in the Lake reduced.
	Output 1.3 Adverse impacts of apple farming reduced
	Output 1.4 Flood control, retention and filtering of polluted tributaries ensured and existing wastewater treatment technology for enhanced nutrient removal upgraded.
	Output 1.5 Agricultural waste management systems for reduction of organic load and prevention of input of pesticide residues to the Lake and its tributaries are upgraded.
OUTCOME 2: Performance of authorities at national and local level for integrated watershed management is improved	**Output 2.1** Sustainable monitoring and management capacities at local level are created
	Output 2.2 Long-term watershed management capacities of the municipal administration and of the Watershed Management Council are strengthened
	Output 2.3 Lessons learnt and best practices are shared and replicated at national and international level.
OUTCOME 3: Watershed restoration and protection processes are further improved	**Output 3.1** Erosion control works are upgraded and sediment load further reduced.
	Output 3.2 Apple production area under agro-ecological farming practices is extended
	Output 3.3 Nature-based solutions (wetlands, river corridors, buffers) at watershed level are implemented
	Output 3.4 Agricultural waste management systems for reduction of organic load and prevention of input of pesticide residues to the Lake and its tributaries are further upgraded.
	Output 3.5 Early warning system for harmful algal blooms is introduced

168. In Albanian Prespa, the 3 million euro ($3.89 million USD) KfW-funded project supporting capacity development of the Prespa National Park (in Albania) (originally expected to be implemented in parallel with the GEF Albania component) began implementation in October 2011,[28] and will continue for five years. The project is moving ahead with some of the activities planned for earlier implementation with the GEF project, such as the development of a management plan for Prespa National Park.

169. The project results under the transboundary component have a less clear financial future, as there is currently no active mechanism or vehicle for future transboundary cooperation. The first informal meeting of the PPMC was held at the end of June 2012 (the last possible moment for this meeting to be held with support from the GEF transboundary project), but the 2010 agreement has yet to be ratified by the Greek parliament. Even once the agreement is ratified, there is no identified source of funding to continue supporting the PPMC, as the Greek NGO SPP has, in absence of a clear national commitment from the three littoral states, stopped soliciting donors funds to support the process. The SDC and KfW supported

[28] Although under consideration when the GEF project was under development, according to project stakeholders the KfW assistance for Albanian Prespa was delayed by a hesitancy of the Albanian government to revise the institutional and legal status of the Prespa National Park to facilitate it's independent legal status, rather than continuing to be an entity dependent on the forestry division of the MoEFWA. This issue was never resolved and KfW decided to proceed with this bilateral support anyway, after a delay of a number of years.

projects highlighted above have limited transboundary elements, although stakeholders in both Albania and Macedonia have indicated they are available for future transboundary cooperation. In 2010 and 2011 there was some activity to catalyze a process to establish the Prespa region as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (see Output 4.5 in Section V.B.iv), which could provide an avenue for future donor funding, but there are not yet concrete results from this process.

170. Lacking a functional PPMC, the further implementation of the products produced under the transboundary component is in question, such as the transboundary monitoring system for the Prespa basin, in which significant project resources were invested for development. Parts of the environmental monitoring system are being implemented in each of the respective countries, but there is no coordinated, centralized, transboundary data management or information sharing. Significant additional investment would be required to fully operationalize the monitoring system as envisioned. The species conservation and action plans face a similar issue, while the trilateral tourism strategy and transboundary fisheries management plans have at least received support from the local level for implementation, although capacity to do so remains limited. The potential for the updated TDA/SAP to catalyze additional donor funding appears extremely limited, particularly when lacking a dynamic transboundary governance process.

171. The initiative for transboundary management of the Prespa basin goes back at least 12 years, and it is likely that the three littoral states will, at some point, continue active cooperation. The question is, when this happens, how relevant will the main transboundary products of the GEF-funded Prespa IEM project still be? These outputs contain five year action plans, and will need to be updated if they are not implemented until years from now. At the same time, current donor support in the Prespa region appears to be moving in the direction of nationally-based activities rather than a transboundary approach.

ii. Sociopolitical Risks to Sustainability

172. With the current non-functionality of the PPMC, there is no mechanism or vehicle for continued transboundary cooperation above the local level. This seems to be due to a lack of political will, combined with a lack of financial resources, which is related to the effects of the global economic crisis in the region. In other words, there is not currently adequate stakeholder ownership at the central level to continue moving things forward. This contrasts with the local level, where there has been semi-regular contact among the municipalities in the region on issues related to tourism and other aspects. It is anticipated that the municipalities will maintain interest in transboundary cooperation, but there are limits to what can be achieved without support from the central government. By virtue of this shared resource, the three countries are obligated to continue cooperation for transboundary integrated ecosystem management at some point, even if activities are currently in a holding pattern. There has recently (i.e. 2011) been discussion about the possible designation of Prespa as a UNESCO transboundary biosphere reserve. This appears to be one of the few current threads of discussion on future transboundary ecosystem management in the Prespa region, but it is also not clear that this discussion will lead down a productive path.

173. For both the national components there is good stakeholder support at the local level, as highlighted at various points in this evaluation report. In Macedonia the Municipality of

Resen is working to assume greater responsibility for watershed management in Macedonian Prespa, with financial support from the SDC project, and with political support from the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. In Albania, local support for integrated ecosystem management is generally good – for example, representatives of Proger commune indicated that they are considering updating their Local Environmental Action Plan (on their own), since the original one developed under the project is now a few years old. The recently operationalized management committee for the Albanian Prespa National Park is also an effective mechanism to maintain stakeholder buy-in for environmentally responsible development. According to multiple stakeholders in Albania, the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Water Management is also generally supportive, but decision-makers have not put the human or financial resources in place to facilitate significant positive steps toward integrated ecosystem management in Prespa basin.

iii. Institutional Framework and Governance Risks to Sustainability

174. One of the most significant results from the project was the tri-lateral signing of the 2010 "Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area." Following the initial agreement however, little has taken place to actually implement the agreement, as discussed in Section V.B.iv under Output 4.1. This landmark agreement will remain a foundational element of the institutional framework for transboundary governance of the Prespa basin (when, or if, it is ratified by all three countries), but until there is political will and adequate resources to support the PPMC and implement the agreement, this aspect of sustainability can only be considered moderately unlikely.

175. At the national level, in Macedonia all key institutional frameworks are in place. The national park administrations for Galičica and Pelister National Parks are well established, and continuing to build capacity for effective management. As Resen Municipality assumes management of the Ezerani protected area this will be an interesting model to document and to draw lessons from for future reference in Macedonia.

176. Considering that Albania's entire Prespa watershed is included within Prespa National Park, there has been important progress with the establishment of the Prespa National Park Management Committee as a multi-stakeholder consultative body to strengthen communication and coordination between the national park administration and other stakeholders. Yet there remain multiple "authorities" in the region, as the municipalities in Albanian Prespa also have a major role in decision-making related to resource use and development. The institutional status of the national park at the national level could also be strengthened.

iv. Environmental Risks to Sustainability

177. The major threats to the Prespa basin land, water, and biodiversity resources remain pertinent, though the project has made numerous positive contributions to threat reduction, as described throughout this evaluation report. There are no new or acute environmental risks to the results of the national components in Albania and Macedonia, but ongoing and continued efforts are required to maintain and strengthen the path to sustainable development. Environmental risks are not applicable for the main results of the transboundary component.

B. Catalytic Role: Replication and Scaling-up

178. While some elements of the project have been more successful than others, there are at least a few notable results that may have catalytic effects within the respective countries, if not among all involved countries or the wider Balkan region. Perhaps most significant is the Watershed Management Plan in Macedonia, which was designed to comply with the EU Water Framework directive (the first in the country to do so), and which has been adopted by the Macedonian government as a model for future river basin management in Macedonia. The country is moving to next implement the model for the Bregalnitsa River.

179. Another interesting result from the Macedonia component was that the project-produced manual on ecosystem-based river restoration – related to the activity on restoring a section of the Golema Reka stream – is now being used as a student textbook at the Faculty of Civil Engineering in Skopje, for the newly introduced course on river restoration. The project-produced manual is the only Macedonian language resource on river restoration.

180. Multiple other results could potentially be replicated in any of the three countries, or in other relevant international contexts. For example, the Natural Capital Resource Center established in Resen is a valuable resource for the community that could be replicated in other municipalities. The community resource user associations established have replication value. However, other than publishing information about the project activities and generating media attention, the project did not undertake a pro-active replication strategy to catalyze replication of these results.

C. Monitoring and Evaluation

i. Project Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation

181. Part IV of the Prespa IEM project document includes a full description of the project M&E plan and activities, including the table-form summarized budgeted M&E plan, as per the standard UNDP approach. The summary table includes the planned M&E activities, responsible parties, budget, and expected timeframe. The M&E plan conforms to standard UNDP and GEF M&E procedures, standards and norms. Foreseen M&E activities include the inception workshop and report, APR/PIR, Annual Tripartite Review, Project Steering Committee meetings, external independent mid-term and terminal evaluations, terminal report, lessons learned, and audit. The total indicative M&E budget is given as $150,000 (~3.6% of GEF resources) – excluding project team staff time - which is fully adequate for a project of this size. This summarized M&E plan includes the key M&E activities for UNDP-GEF projects, but the version in the project document appears to be a generic standardized project M&E plan, rather than a plan adapted to the particular design of the Prespa IEM project, with the project design covering three different execution components. Therefore at the inception workshop for the transboundary component the project M&E plan was outlined in greater detail, with specific information provided on the roles and responsibilities for M&E activities between the three project components, and the specific timing of each activity (section 6 of the transboundary inception workshop report).

182. Overall, the M&E plan was implemented as envisioned, with some variation in the comprehensiveness and timing of some of the activities. The inception workshops for the

transboundary and Albanian components were later than planned following project approval. There were some challenges in reporting information from all three project components in a single PIR template, but ultimately this was handled adequately, and the PIRs are comprehensive. Other operational and progress reports were also adequately completed.

183. One area of uncertainty is the role of the project steering committee – or rather, the steering committees for all three project components. The two national components had "Project Boards", and it appears these bodies met regularly and served their purpose. The Macedonian Project Board met seven times between July 2007 and December 2010. It is unclear exactly how many times the Albanian project board met, since as of late 2010 the Prespa National Park Management Committee filled the role of the Project Board. The "Project Oversight Committee" was a particular challenge for the transboundary component, vis-à-vis the role of the PPCC. As of early 2008 there were still major questions about the membership of the POC, the role of the PPCC as the POC, and the TORs for the POC. These issues partly related to the potential for the GEF project to finance PPCC meetings in the framework of POC meetings. This issue was eventually resolved in 2008.

184. The mid-term evaluation was completed at approximately the mid-point of the project, and was a useful tool for stimulating more urgent and strategic project implementation. The mid-term evaluation did have some shortcomings in providing overly detailed analysis (particularly of human resource issues), and overly prescriptive recommendations (e.g. recommending the creation of a particular staff position, and that a particular individual should be encouraged to apply). However, there is always room for improvement in any evaluation, including the present one. The mid-term evaluation provided 18 recommendations. An assessment of follow-up to the MTE recommendations is included as Annex 4 to this evaluation report. On the whole, the project implemented those recommendations that were practical and feasible (i.e. increased focus on communications in the second half of the project), with a few exceptions – for example, on a formal revision of the project logframe indicators and targets, and on "upgrading" of the capacity development program under Output 1.4. Six recommendations were not fulfilled, six recommendations were fulfilled, one was partially fulfilled, and for five there is not specific information on follow-up activities.

185. The key element of the project M&E system for a results-based approach is the project logframe, with indicators, baseline data, and targets. To meet GEF and UNDP M&E minimum standard, project logframe indicators must meet SMART criteria.[29] The Prespa IEM project logframe is based on the standard UNDP logframe structure and approach. The logframe was further adjusted and updated at the inception phase, with changes to the logframe outlined the inception report.[30] Specifically, Greek activities were incorporated into the logframe, as they had not been fully included at the project development phase. The inclusion of the Greek activities into the logframe at this stage appears to have been an attempt to strengthen the transboundary, results-based approach for environmental management in the basin under the project, as none of the GEF-funding was actually going to be invested in Greek Prespa.

[29] The GEF Evaluation Office defines SMART indicators as those that are: Specific, Measureable, Achievable and Attributable, Relevant and Realistic, Timebound, Timely, Trackable and Targeted. See http://www.gefcountrysupport.org/report_detail.cfm?projectId=232 for additional information.

[30] See Annex 2 of the transboundary component inception report.

186. The logframe has various strengths and weaknesses, but overall is unwieldy as a useful implement for results-based management for the Prespa IEM project. The Prespa IEM project is a complex project in that it is multi-focal and covers five outcomes in three countries – but the logframe only complicates the situation – the logframe includes more than 50 indicators, some of which have up to five target values, and sometimes specified by individual years of project implementation (e.g. "End of year 1", "End of year 2", etc.). In addition, many of the logframe indicators and targets do not fully meet SMART criteria, though they do facilitate some assessment of project results. The logframe includes a number of impact level indicators, which is an important element for assessing long-term results.

187. To support linkage with GEF biodiversity focal area strategic results frameworks, the project included application of the protected area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool for four protected areas in the Prespa Basin: Prespa National Park (Albania), Galičica National Park (Macedonia), Ezerani protected area (Macedonia), Prespa National Park (Greece). The target value for the METT was an increase of 40% in the METT score by the end of the project. In the PIR METT scores are only reported for Prespa National Park Albania, with an increase of approximately 20% (31 to 37) and Ezerani protected area, with an increase of 31% (raw score not reported). The project actually covers the GEF biodiversity strategic priorities related to both protected areas and "mainstreaming" (as discussed in Section IV.D.iii on relevance to GEF strategies and priorities). Additional indicators related to mainstreaming are further highlighted Section VI.D below on impacts, but include hectares of forest and hectares of priority habitat under improved management for biodiversity. The documented project contribution to these indicators is approximately 165 hectares of forest habitat (Macedonia) and 40 hectares of lake habitat (Albania), though the project's contribution to reducing agricultural inputs in many apple orchards in Macedonia should also be considered, but this figure is not documented.

188. At the time the Prespa IEM project was designed there wasn't a GEF international waters focal areas results framework with specific indicators, targets and outputs (as is there is presently), and obviously the current GEF International Waters Tracking Tool was not included in the project's M&E framework. For the GEF-5 international waters results framework, the project contributes to Objective 1: *Catalyze multi-state cooperation to balance conflicting water uses in transboundary surface and groundwater basins while considering climatic variability and change*. The project contributes to the following outcomes and indicators, at least partially, in a qualitative manner:

- *Outcome 1.1: Implementation of agreed Strategic Action Programs (SAPs) incorporates transboundary IWRM principles (including environment and groundwater) and policy/legal/institutional reforms into national/local plans.*
    - *1.1: Implementation of national/local reforms; functioning of national inter-ministry committees.*
- *Outcome 1.2: Transboundary institutions for joint ecosystem-based and adaptive management demonstrate sustainability.*
    - *1.2: Cooperation frameworks adopted and states contribute to financial sustainability.*

- *Outcome 1.3: Innovative solutions implemented for reduced pollution, improved water use efficiency, sustainable fisheries with rights-based management, IWRM, and aquifer and catchment protection.*
    - *1.3: Measureable water-related results from local demonstrations.*

ii. Environmental Monitoring

189. Environmental monitoring is critical for assessing impact-level results, as well as for effective decision-making related to the management of the environment and of natural resources. As the Prespa IEM project had specific activities related to environmental monitoring, this has already been discussed under Output 3.1, of Section V.B.iii (Outcome 3 results).

D. Project Impacts and Global Environmental Benefits

190. For the GEF biodiversity focal area project ***impacts*** are defined as documented changes in environmental status of species, ecosystems or genetic biodiversity resources. ***Global Environmental Benefits*** in the biodiversity focal area have not been explicitly defined, but are generally considered to involve sustained impact level results of a certain scale or significance. For the international waters focal area, global benefits are considered the improved quality and management of globally significant transboundary water resources.

191. The Prespa IEM project document identified the expected global benefits as:

- Globally significant biological diversity in terms of significant populations of migratory birdlife, endemic species, and rare habitats is conserved by applying new partnerships, resources and re-oriented resource management;
- Trans-boundary water resources are conserved and sustainably managed;
- Global indirect use values, future use values and existence values are secured;
- Lessons learned at the local level contribute to global body of knowledge and experience.

192. Achievement of global benefits implies impact level results at a certain scale. For the Prespa IEM project there have likely been some site-level impacts, but these have not yet reached the scale of global benefits, which would be considered an improvement in water quality throughout Prespa lakes, and improvements in the ecosystems within the entire watershed.

193. There are a number of site-level impacts, but there is unfortunately no adequate monitoring data to accurately quantify the impacts, so identification of impacts must rely on anecdotal and theory-based assessments. In Macedonia, impact level results include:

- Restoration of approximately 1 km of Golema Reka tributary, one of the four main inputs to Macro Prespa lake. This section of Golema Reka runs through the “industrial” zone of Resen municipality, and as part of the restoration tons of waste material was removed from the streambed, and a number of illegal waste discharge outputs were connected to the wastewater treatment system. Unfortunately there was no regular water quality monitoring data prior to the restoration so it is not possible to clearly document the improvement from the project’s intervention, but the removal of the

waste during the restoration, and the shifting of industrial waste outputs to the water treatment system had clear positive benefits.

- Implementation of the agromet system to assist farmers in more efficient application of agricultural inputs. This system has reduced the fertilizers and pesticides farmers apply to their apple orchards in the areas surrounding Prespa lake, but according to stakeholders, the overall amount of pesticides sold in the region has not decreased because new farmers are entering the market. Nonetheless, without the project investments there would be more agricultural inputs entering the system. It is unknown what percentage decrease this represents for the overall system compared to the baseline scenario.
- Implementation of a system of agricultural input waste collection – the project helped catalyze a system for proper disposal of packaging from fertilizers and pesticides, which will reduce excess discharges into the environment. In addition, the project supported a feasibility study to assess the collection and disposal of organic waste (excess apple supply) that is currently discharged to the environment, which catalyzed additional funding from SDC to construct a high quality compost facility (expected completion in 2013).
- Improved management of Ezerani protected area. The steps taken thus far to re-organize and re-establish Ezerani protected area has reduced threats to this site from local resource users, and as the Municipality of Resen assumes active management and implementation of the management plan, this should lead to improved environmental status of the area.

194. In Albania, the 2012 PIR provides the following summary information regarding some site-level impacts: "In about 3.9 km^2 of the AL Prespa Lake, 1000 ml of fish and eel traps, metallic nets, are removed. More than 500ml of existing channels maintained opened and cleaned from reeds. The area affected from this activity encompasses around 15 ha or reeds habitats."

195. There were multiple impact level indicators included in the project logframe, as shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13 Prespa IEM Project Impact Indicators and Level of Achievement[31]

Indicator	Target	Results
Three priority streams (Ag. Germanos, Brajcino & Krani) and 1 tributary of Golema River (Leva stream) maintain environmental in- stream flow and water quality as appropriate for endemic trout (MK- GR*).	Environmental flow requirements established by EoY 3. Environmental flows maintained by end EoY5. Water quality improved through reduced of agrochemicals use by EoY3 Application of small-scale waste water treatment by EoY4 Species action plan endorsed and implemented by EoY 2	See highlights above under Macedonia. In addition, work is continuing in an effort to construct a small-scale constructed wetland waste water treatment plant in the Macedonian village of Nakolec.
# hectares of forest under improved biodiversity- oriented management in MK, GR*, AL	2,000 ha in MK by EoY 3. 3,000 ha in AL by EoY 3; and 1,000 ha in GR* by EoY 3.	Forest management plan for the forest unit Leva Reka (MK) was finalized in accordance with the guidelines on

[31] Source: 2012 PIR.

Indicator	Target	Results
Prespa		ecosystem priorities provided by the project, and is being implemented by the local branch of the forestry public enterprise, covering 165.8 hectares. Work in Albanian to be completed under the KfW project that started in late 2011.
Allowable fish catch linked to population size estimates in both lakes in MK, AL and GR*.	Allowable fish catch is linked to population size estimates and other indices for five species by EoY 4.	The annual catch in both Prespa lakes now is fixed at 290-300 tons (information from Albania)
Decline in sales of detergents containing phosphorous in Resen municipality.	Decline of 50%by EoY 3; 75%by EoY 4.	Indicator Irrelevant following countrywide ban on detergents containing phosphorus. (MK)
Eutrophying inputs (N, organic material) to Macro Prespa reduced m3 through small-scale wastewater treatment pilots.	Two pilots reduce inputs by 1000 m3 by EoY 3.	Small scale waste water treatment plant at Nakolec not yet complete.
# hectares of priority habitat for birds, fish, rare plants, and mammals under improved conservation management	Target number of hectares under improved management to be determined and implemented based on recommendations of the species action plans.	Conservation action plans developed and approved, not yet implemented.
Bat colonies protected and monitored in MK, AL and GR*.	Priority bat colonies protected and monitored by year 3.	At Treni cave in Albanian the bat population is observed, and the Prespa National Park administration has assisted with controlling access to the cave.
Ecological requirements for endemic trout understood and protected.	In-stream flows and water quality maintained in Brajcino, Krani, Leva and Aghios Germanos Rivers by end of year 3; Pilot action taken according to Species Action Plan by EoY 2;Habitat protection status ensured in both countries (i.e. establishment of closed seasons, fishing bans, establishment of protection zone, maintenance of riparian forests- avoiding erosion, etc.) by EoY 2;Efficient wardening for illegal angling in both countries by EoY 2; Pollution problems ameliorated by EoY 4	Additional monitoring data collected as part of the transboundary monitoring program and for development of the transboundary fisheries management plan, which includes a recommendation for a ban on fishing of trout for six years.
Imperial eagle nesting habitat enhanced/protected, along with other important raptor and vulture nesting habitats enhanced/protected simultaneously (e.g. Golden Eagle, or rare nocturnal species) in MK, AL and GR*.	Sub-Working Group on Birdlife formulates trans- boundary conservation actions for forest raptor species following by EoY1; Pilot conservation actions applied by EoY2; At least two different potential eagle- nesting areas under special management by year 3.	The imperial eagle was not selected by the trilateral Monitoring and Conservation Working Group amongst the priority species and habitats for which conservation plans were prepared.
Rare water-bird conservation through trans-boundary protection of breeding and nesting habitats in MK, AL and GR*.	Sub-Working Group on Birdlife formulates trans-boundary conservation actions for water birds in both lakes by EoY1; Pilot conservation actions applied by EoY2; Monitoring of pilot actions.	Conservation action plan for reed beds prepared, not yet implemented. In Albanian, the former result of a diminished extensive reeds population in the lake in a length of about 500 meters is remarkably being maintained by the PNP and KfW program.
Reduction in level of threat to endemic fish posed by exotics in all 3 countries. Conservation of genetic diversity of endemic fish species in all 3 countries.	Priority threats to endemic fish from exotics, habitat change, and overfishing and re-introductions understood by EoY1; Absolute prevention of introductions of predatory fish species of potential commercial value interest; Management action agreed by EoY 2; Pilot	Small-scale actions formerly taken by the project are being replicated from the fisherman associations in order to maintain the lake area of app. 40 ha under improved ecosystem status (AL).

Indicator	Target	Results
	measures underway to reduce them by EoY 4.	
Wetland vegetation in GR and AL and MK are managed and their habitat values enhanced.	Wet meadows in GR are restored and properly managed in GR-Prespa (targeting at the maintenance of minimum 100 ha); Pilot projects are starting in AL-Prespa.	The fisherman associations in AL Prespa continued efforts to sustain improved ecosystems situation of the lake area (40 ha) and clean navigation channels in Small Prespa (reeds removal) diminishing also the extensive reeds population in the lake (i a length of about 500 meters), and fish traps in Big Prespa Lake (reducing also the usage 'llovizhda') (AL)

196. In fact it is extremely difficult for GEF projects to demonstrate significant impact level results by the end of the project, as ecosystems and species populations can take a significant amount of time to measurably respond to conservation measures. In addition, environmental monitoring data is often inadequate to make these assessments. Ultimately the project's impact will need to be assessed years in the future to appropriately consider how the actions and activities implemented under the project have contributed to improvements in the water resources, and land and biodiversity resources. In a situation such as Prespa, it must also be recognized that there are many active partners and participants contributing to improved environmental management in the area, and it would be impossible to quantify the exact GEF contribution beyond the very small site-specific level.

VII. Main Lessons Learned and Recommendations

A. Lessons from the Experience of the Prespa IEM Project

197. Below are lessons considered by the evaluation team to be some of the more significant lessons drawn from the project experience, but these should not necessarily be considered comprehensive. The project team and stakeholders should continue analyzing and drawing on the project experience to identify additional or more comprehensive lessons, and support dissemination of these lessons through documentation in knowledge products.

198. ***Lesson 1:*** Project designs and goals need to be cognizant of the fact that new approaches (i.e. IEM) can take a long time to gain traction and overcome societal inertia, and projects must be designed with stakeholder needs and capacities in mind to reach success. Active involvement of local and national stakeholders and resource users is imperative in the actual stage of the institutional and legal set up (i.e. Albania Prespa National Park Management Committee).

199. ***Lesson 2:*** Transboundary cooperation, although an international fashion, is more important at local level, and thus initiation of transboundary approaches are likely to be successful when initiated and driven by local level stakeholders. Although formalized national-level legally-binding cooperation is often the ideal for transboundary environmental management, it is also possible to move ahead from a practical perspective by supporting cooperation among technical staff, local resource users, and local government, which can be adequately effective for environmental management.

200. ***Lesson 3:*** Local level cooperation on environmental management is an effective means of building stakeholder ownership, and can contribute to good governance by involving diverse

stakeholders and promoting transparency and participation on issues related to natural resources. Such participatory approaches help establish a path for future initiatives, but in the Prespa region transboundary cooperation still needs external facilitation. The development of the Local Environmental Action Plan at the municipal level in Albania was an important tool for assuring stakeholder involvement and support for project activities, as the participatory approach used was very helpful.

201. ***Lesson 4:*** Having a local program office (in Macedonia) and a locally-based project office (in Albania) has proven to be valuable for successful and efficient implementation of project activities.

202. ***Lesson 5:*** Effective implementation of complex long-term activities with a result-based focus requires flexibility and consistent ongoing risk management. In the Prespa IEM project there were numerous challenges that arose during the six year implementation period, both for the national and transboundary components of the project. Some issues were resolved more effectively than others, and early intervention and flexible approaches proved to be keys for those issues that were successfully addressed.

203. ***Lesson 6:*** Expectation management in the early stages of external donor intervention is critical for actual and perceived success over the long-term. The expectations of local government and NGOs are usually highest, particularly when they see the amount of money involved and begin to think all of their aims or requirements will suddenly be met. This is natural, and common to most projects. However, projects should do more, particularly during the inception phase, to explain the likely level of deliverables, promote a clearer understanding of incremental cost, raise awareness of the fact that much money will be needed for enabling activities such as consultancy studies, planning, etc., and that few projects despite the best of intentions manage to deliver everything they aim to.

204. ***Lesson 7:*** It can be useful to leverage additional external donor funding for concrete pilot activities that a broader general umbrella project has identified as important for sustainable development, and aligning of environmental and development priorities can create significant programmatic and financial synergies. The Prespa IEM project's linkage with SDC and KfW initiatives leveraged significant additional funding. However, there are risks along with the potential benefits to developing GEF-funded activities that are strongly integrated with and dependent on activities fully funded by other donors. Co-financing is required for all GEF projects, but the use of co-financing varies from project to project. For the Prespa IEM project there were multiple project activities directly incorporated in the project document and strategy from other donor funded activities – namely KfW's support for protected areas in Macedonia and Albania. In both cases the timing of implementation of these activities did not correspond to the timing of the GEF-funded activities (in Macedonia the KfW support began before the GEF activities, and in Albania it was significantly delayed), and thus the project's results targets that depended on the KfW activities in Albania have not been met. At the same time there have not been the level of synergies envisioned, as there has been a gap between preparation of studies and plans, and actual implementation, which causes some stakeholders to lose credibility, while the buy-in of other stakeholders is jeopardized. On the other hand, the project work on the Golema Reka restoration and development of the biodegradable waste facility in Macedonia provide an excellent example of the potential synergies from strongly

integrating donor activities. The GEF was able to fund the planning and scoping portions of these activities, which set the stage for the SDC to provide the capital investment.

205. ***Lesson 8:*** Shared natural resources are a good basis for working on common initiatives and building networks among communities divided by country borders. In historically politically divided regions, joint initiatives in solving common environmental problems through participatory approach and information sharing proved to be an important vehicle for building trust and enhancing dialogue between the communities. Shared natural resources and their sustainable management served as a platform for exchanges, establishing networks, and building bridges between trans-boundary communities. Neutrality of the environmental topics further helped this process. Preservation of natural resources is a priority for all beneficiaries and thus made it appropriate for engaging local communities in common work. In some of the sites, the project provided the first opportunity when local government officials and stakeholders met each other and worked on solving a common problem.

206. ***Lesson 9:*** Transboundary cooperation for environmental management is likely to be stronger when the participating national governments have a similar level of priority on the targeted resources. In the case of the Prespa IEM project, it became clear that the three participating states' central governments were not able to provide an equal level of engagement for multilateral activities related to the Prespa basin. This is understandable and was potentially foreseeable, but the necessary accommodations were not made in the project design to overcome this challenge. Projects supporting transboundary cooperation need to look to similar structures as a starting point for building sustainable cooperation.

207. ***Lesson 10:*** Integrated environmental management in a regional context requires projects with an integrated implementation structure. The three-part implementation structure of the Prespa IEM project, with one DEX and two NEX components, proved challenging for achieving strong synergistic and integrated project activities as a unified project rather than as three individual projects. In addition, to strengthen an integrated synergetic approach for regional projects, project activities in each of the participating countries should begin implementation at approximately the same time.

208. ***Lesson 11:*** It is important to find a nationally-sensitive approach to regional project implementation, as the perception that the project is dominated by one of the parties can reduce stakeholder ownership by all parties. This can be challenging in the context of regional projects, but there are variety of options and good practice examples within the GEF portfolio.

209. ***Lesson 12:*** Adequate political will at the national level is critical for achieving international transboundary results.

210. ***Lesson 13:*** It is important to build a common transboundary identity and ownership, to build stakeholder communication and buy-in. Effective communication, information, strengthened knowledge and capacities and exchange among all parties concerned is a crucial success factor. There are multiple ways to achieve this, but one potentially useful one is through an active and well-developed internet presence.

211. ***Lesson 14:*** Details of co-financing should be clearly specified from the beginning when project results are depending on co-financed activities from national partners (as opposed to

some instances where co-financing supports parallel processes). This is particularly critical in instances where one of the main countries involved is a non-GEF recipient country.

212. ***Lesson 15:*** An effective communications program targeted at multiple levels and audiences (including internal communication) is critical for project success, particularly in a project with numerous and diverse stakeholders, operating from the local to the international level. Communications can indeed be a powerful tool for reaching out to all target audiences and further facilitating the implementation of project activities. Communication activities catalyzed stakeholder involvement and further improved the standards for transparency and openness for project implementation. They have helped people communicate across tri-national boundaries at the Prespa level. Local peoples' knowledge of the Prespa ecosystem has improved, particularly through teaching of school children about their Prespa environment, thus building a strong youth constituency for Prespa. Municipalities, NGOs, resource users and managers have been brought together to exchange knowledge and experience and work together towards enhancing potentials and benefits. Community awareness and participation was mobilized, seeking to create new opportunities for community involvement and mobilize the skills and interest of the local communities. The communication of the ecological/cultural values and sustainable ecosystem services of Prespa have further consolidated the area's image, awareness was raised about the existence of Prespa Park at all levels, as well as of the specific subjects of importance to the Prespa lakes basin. Therefore it is important to have a communications person in place from the beginning of a project.

213. ***Lesson 16:*** It is important to have a consistent staff presence, particularly at senior levels. Sometimes circumstances outside the control of the project create staff turnover, but projects must ensure adequate resources for staffing in the project design (e.g. ITA only financed for 2.5 years of project…).

214. ***Lesson 17:*** Building political consensus and stakeholder buy-in for processes that will require later stakeholder action (such as development of the Strategic Action Plan) fare best with a combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches, and must actively engage stakeholders at all necessary levels.

215. ***Lesson 18:*** Local resource users need to see concrete tangible benefits (for example, in Macedonia, the Golema Reka restoration, and support for the meteorological stations for agriculture) to buy-in to externally initiated environmental management initiatives. Pilot activities, especially if demonstrating innovative management practices proposed by project experts, can more easily attract local stakeholder support and buy in to project activities. For example, three meteorological stations provided by the project were well accepted by the farmers in both Macedonia and Albania.

216. ***Lesson 19:*** In Macedonia, there was a good practice lesson in developing capacity for strengthened regulatory aspects (e.g. IPCC process), in which it was found to be useful to involve industrial stakeholders who will be involved in such regulatory processes from a user perspective. Involving end-users from the beginning in implementation of a regulatory framework can help clarify processes for both regulators and private sector, build trust, and establish working relationships.

217. ***Lesson 20:*** In Macedonia a good practice lesson was found in establishing the project management unit within the municipality of Resen, which led to excellent cooperation and

communication with the municipality, and helped catalyze the municipality to take on greater responsibility and ownership of the results and ongoing environmental management processes.

218. ***Lesson 21:*** A good practice lesson was that the project design included a good balance of local, national and transboundary activities. It has been demonstrated in many GEF projects that to ensure strong stakeholder support, it is important to have some tangible, on-the-ground project activities that are visible to local level stakeholders. High-level policy work and capacity development is also important, but it is helpful when a project can link the policy level with practical implementation.

219. ***Lesson 22:*** To be useful, project logframes need a manageable number of results-focused indicators, which also need to meet SMART criteria to the extent possible.

220. ***Lesson 23:*** Civil society has a critical role in directly contributing to, supporting, and facilitating transboundary integrated environmental management, but cannot serve to represent government in multi-lateral dialogues. The challenge in Prespa is that different types of institutions play a leading role on environmental management activities on different sides of the border (national government in Albania, local government in Macedonia, and civil society in Greece), which presents structural challenges to good cooperation.

221. ***Lesson 24:*** Effective project risk management requires the development of effective alternative risk mitigation strategies. Not just continuing to try harder the same way to address the problem, but to say, OK, given this risk, what alternative approach can be taken to work toward the similar objective. (e.g. issue of Greek co-financing/participation). Risks identified during project development need to have adequate risk management strategies prepared, and need to be consistently monitored and responded to during the course of implementation. The evolving political context between Macedonia and Greece created challenges for the transboundary component throughout the project and an effective alternate approach was not found.

222. ***Lesson 25:*** A good practice lesson was the use of UNDP project staff in Albania that were already very familiar with UNDP-GEF procedures and requirements, which helped the administrative aspects of project management, and increased project efficiency.

223. ***Lesson 26:*** Even when project kick-off has been delayed beyond the initially planned timeframe, it is important to keep in mind the dependent sequencing of certain project activities, and prioritize those activities on which many others are dependent. In the Prespa IEM project it would have been helpful if activities such as the TDA/SAP, communications plan, and the species and habitat conservation plans had been completed in the first half of the project so later activities could build on them and move toward implementation to strengthen sustainability.

224. ***Lesson 27:*** If significant time has passed since the project concept was first developed, or between project approval and implementation, a re-assessment of risks and assumptions at the inception phase can pay dividends. The project results framework must also be revised to take account of current reality.

225. ***Lesson 28:*** When staffing issues arise they should be dealt with as promptly as possible for the sake of project success, and when there is unavoidable staff turnover, replacement staff

should be put in place immediately. In the Prespa IEM project there were significant gaps between refilling key project staff positions, which created a negative drag on implementation.

226. ***Lesson 29:*** International donor-funded projects often rely on the expertise of international experts, but for their input to be applicable and adequate to the particular situation in the Balkan region it is important for international experts to be paired with capable national counterparts with comprehensive knowledge of the region and general context for implementing transboundary resource management activities.

227. ***Lesson 30:*** The GEF investment in the Prespa basin has actually been part of a larger body of going work undertaken in the region, with the support of multiple multi-lateral, bilateral, and other donors. Although some risks of having a program of work well-integrated with other donors appeared (e.g. with the KfW projects), the project was able to build on a body of technical work carried out in the region (e.g. previous work done on fisheries management, and on hydrological flows), generate synergistic results (e.g. the Golema Reka restoration), and to improve the sustainability of project results, at least for the national components in Albania and Macedonia (e.g. the ongoing KfW and SDC activities, respectively). There is much discussion in GEF evaluations about the value of taking a "programmatic approach"; in Prespa this has been the case, with many donors making contributions according to their comparative advantage and strategic focus. Some of the strategies and action plans produced in the Prespa IEM project should help continue this Prespa region programmatic engagement by defining priorities and identifying continued actions for integrated ecosystem management, even if in an ad-hoc manner.

B. Recommendations for Follow-up and Continued Action for Prespa Lakes Basin

228. The Prespa IEM project yielded numerous benefits to the Prespa basin region, and above all, helped catalyze a new, modern outlook toward resource conservation and use. At the same time, it initiated changes in behavior related to environmental protection across a range of stakeholders, especially for the Macedonian and Albanian parts of the Prespa region. There remains a tremendous need for further activities aiming to contribute to natural resource conservation by adopting ecosystem-based policies and management practices at the local level in southeastern Europe.

229. The recommendations from this terminal evaluation are provided below. Although the project is ending, there is still scope for recommendations to be followed-up by the stakeholders involved in the SDC and KfW funded activities that are ongoing in both Macedonia and Albania, and for the stakeholders in Greek Prespa, who remain actively involved in these issues. Furthermore, the 2010 tri-lateral agreement provides the foundation and framework for continued transboundary cooperation, once the three countries adequately buy into and again support the process that was long-established under the PPCC.

230. The target audience for each recommendation is included in brackets.

231. ***Recommendation 1:*** The most urgent and significant recommendation that this evaluation can provide is that the three littoral states work together to find the political will and funding pathways to actively continue transboundary ecosystem management in the Prespa basin. Immediate priorities are the re-activation of the PPCC (in the present form of the PPMC

under the 2010 agreement), implementation of the regional environmental monitoring program developed under the project, implementation of the species and habitat conservation plans, implementation of the transboundary fisheries management plan, and implementation of the transboundary tourism strategy. [Government of Albania, Government of Greece, Government of FYR of Macedonia]

232. ***Recommendation 2:*** Although there is at present no financing of transboundary activities in the region, the stakeholders involved in national activities ongoing in Albania (with KfW support), in Macedonia (with SDC support) and Greece (as supported by SPP, local government in Greek Prespa, and the Greek national government), should actively seek to communicate and collaborate on issues of common concern, building on the professional networks developed during the Prespa IEM project. [Prespa National Park – Albania, Municipality of Resen, SPP, Prespa National Park – Greece]

233. ***Recommendation 3:*** The Prespa IEM project resulted in a large number of positive and negative lessons. Other initiatives in the region, particularly the Drin Dialogue initiative currently being developed for possible future GEF funding, should carefully heed these lessons, and ensure appropriate adjustments are made to future plans in the region. UNDP, as a GEF Agency, should pay particular attention to the incorporation of the lessons from the Prespa IEM project. [UNDP, Drin Dialogue partners)

234. ***Recommendation 4:*** There remains a need in the region for significant investment in capacity development related to technical aspects of environmental management, such as environmental monitoring. This is particularly important for the staff and authorities of protected areas that are responsible for land, water, and biodiversity conservation in significant portions of the Prespa basin, which are also the most environmentally intact areas of the watershed. However, numerous other organizations would continue to benefit from capacity development, such as the Macedonian Prespa Watershed Management Council, the resource users associations (e.g. fishermen's associations), etc. In many cases, securing effective environmental management is not simply a matter of policy and behavior changes; it requires significant technical knowledge and skills to implement, which are still currently underdeveloped in the Prespa region. [UNDP, SDC, KfW, GEF, international donor community]

235. ***Recommendation 5:*** In Albania there is a need for further reform of the protected area system, to take steps, for example, to make protected area administrations independent legal entities. As a major funder of protected areas globally, the GEF may be in a position to support the Government of Albania to move in this direction over the medium-term. [UNDP, GEF Secretariat]

236. ***Recommendation 6:*** The environmental education curriculum is under development in both Albania and Macedonia, and stakeholders working on this issue from both countries have been involved in the Prespa IEM project. There is an opportunity to use the experience of integrated ecosystem management in the transboundary Prespa basin as an input and example for development of the environmental education curriculum (particularly for application in the region) and the local Albanian and Prespa stakeholders, as well as the responsible central government authorities from both countries should work together on this issue. [local Albania and Macedonia Prespa stakeholders, education authorities in Albania and Macedonia]

237. ***Recommendation 7:*** To further sustainably develop production landscapes in the Prespa basin (i.e. orchards, croplands, grazing lands) the Prespa stakeholders should prioritize the diversification of agricultural production, especially with respect to the apple orchards in Macedonian Prespa. Additional development of the agricultural sector in an environmentally responsible manner should include further exploration of organic production. To support this, the municipality of Resen, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, could consider establishing a few hectares of organic orchards as a pilot activity to test factors such as yields relative to inputs, and the cost-effectiveness of organic production methods. Numerous technical factors would have to be considered – for example locating organic test plots in areas where they would not inadvertently benefit from pesticides applied to nearby conventional orchards. Nonetheless, taking some initial steps to further develop the organic market could help catalyze a long-term shift to environmentally sustainable production in the region. Other approaches could include sponsoring a visit by representatives of the farmer's association to organic apple orchards in other countries in the region, and conducting a market feasibility study for organic production in the region. [UNDP-SDC Macedonia project team, municipality of Resen, Macedonia Ministry of Agriculture]

238. ***Recommendation 8:*** To further develop local level education and awareness activities in all three countries, while also increasing the availability of environmental monitoring data, stakeholders should work to institute a community-based water-monitoring program (e.g. waterkeeper programs, adopt-a-stream, etc.). Such programs are applied in many contexts around the world, and can contribute to a cost-effective environmental monitoring system. Such programs also help increase community awareness and can be integrated with environmental education programs. Information on community-based water-monitoring programs can be found at the below online resources. [UNDP-SDC Macedonia project team, municipality of Resen]

- http://water.epa.gov/type/rsl/monitoring/index.cfm
- http://inletkeeper.org/clean-water/citizen-monitoring
- http://www.georgiaadoptastream.org/db/

239. ***Recommendation 9:*** The agricultural waste management practices in Macedonia initiated under the project have shown promise, but require additional resources for further implementation, institutionalization, and scaling up in the basin. The municipality of Resen and all other relevant stakeholders should prioritize support and seek additional financing for continuing and expanding agricultural waste management activities. [UNDP-SDC Macedonia project team, municipality of Resen, Macedonia government relevant authorities]

240. The terminal evaluation team also developed specific recommendations for the ongoing work in Macedonia to follow-up on the project activities and results. These are presented in bullet form in Table 14, below.

Table 14 Specific Follow-up Recommendations for Macedonia by Project Outcome

Objective	Recommended Follow-up Activities	Responsibility
Outcome 1 *[Strengthened*	• Disseminate developed methodology for spatial planning to other regions in the country	• MoEPP; UNDP

legal and regulatory enabling environment]	• Disseminate the River Basin Management planning manual to the target audience (planners, river basin authorities, consultants…)	
	• Initiate implementation of the Programme of Measures from the WMP	• Resen Municipality • MoEPP
	• Build capacity and support the Prespa WMC	• UNDP • MoEPP
	• Disseminate developed Guidelines for conducting SEA of water management plans to other regions in the country	• MoEPP • UNDP
	• Continuous application and improvement of established IPPC process	• Resen Municipality
	• Disseminate developed Guidelines for hazardous pesticide packaging waste to other municipalities in the country	• MoEPP • ZELS
Outcome 2 *[Modified productive sector resource management practices]*	• Broaden application of Good Agriculture Practices (and agro-ecological practices) in Prespa and other regions in the country	• Resen Municipality • UNDP • MAWFE
	• Provide continuous performance monitoring to the established agrochemical laboratory	• Resen Municipality • MAFWE
	• Provide continuous performance monitoring to the established pest and disease monitoring system	• Resen Municipality • MAFWE
	• Completion of the wastewater management system in Nakolec	• MoEPP • Resen Municipality
	• Disseminate the technology used for the WWTP in Nakolec to other villages in Prespa and regions in the country	• UNDP • MoEPP
	• Replicate and spread the biodegradable (agricultural) waste management system in Prespa	• Resen Municipality • UNDP
	• Provide further support and capacity building to the established Fishery Association	• UNDP • MoEPP
	• Provide resources for continuous work of the NCRC until it becomes be fully integrated into municipality structure)	• Resen Municipality
Outcome 3 *[Conservation of priority biological diversity]*	• Plan and implement further restoration of Golema Reka; priority should be given to the lower river section (Resen to Ezerani), per the WMC and Ezerani Management Plan	• Resen Municipality • UNDP
	• Plan and implement further reconstruction of existing and installation of new WWCS in the region; priority should be given to villages in proximity villages in proximity of water courses and important habitats	• Resen Municipality • UNDP
	• Provide continuous performance monitoring and support to the established hazardous packaging waste management system	• Resen Municipality • PE Proleter
	• Provide continuous performance monitoring, maintenance and improvement of the automatic monitoring system for Golema Reka	• Resen Municipality • MoEPP
	• Initiate implementation of measures from the Management Plan for the Ezerani protected area	• MoEPP • Resen Municipality
	• Further disseminate developed Ecosystem-based River Restoration Manual	• MoEPP
Outcome 4	• Initiate implementation of planned measures/actions	• UNDP

[Increased trans-boundary cooperation]	from the Prespa Lakes Basin Strategic Action Programme	• MoEPP
	• Secure financing for all activities resulting from signing of the International Prespa Park Agreement	• MoEPP
	• Initiate implementation of planned measures from the trans-boundary Fisheries Management Plan	• UNDP • MoEPP • MoA WFM
	• Initiate implementation of planned measures/actions from the trans-boundary Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan	• UNDP • MoE, • Resen Municipality
	• Trans-boundary monitoring system	• MoEPP

C. Prespa IEM Project Terminal Evaluation Ratings

241. The challenge for this evaluation in providing ratings on the Prespa IEM project is that there were three distinct components of one overall project. The three components were executed nearly as stand-alone projects – information was shared, but each had their own project management unit, budget, workplan, and oversight body. Yet, GEF and UNDP evaluation procedures require one rating – the project was conceived, developed, and approved, and funded as one project. While an overall project rating is provided for each of the required elements below, a rating is also given (where relevant) to the three components. This is in the interest of providing transparency for the overall rating, and recognizing the distinctions between the components, as appropriate.

Project Components	Qualitative Summary	Overall	TB	MK	AL
Project Formulation					
Relevance	The project was relevant to the environmental strategies and priorities of the Prespa region, the national policies and strategies of the three countries, and to GEF focal area strategies.	R	R	R	R
Conceptualization / design	The project design had multiple significant flaws, particularly with respect to implementation arrangements. From a technical perspective the project design also became too broad relative to the resources available.	MU	N/A	N/A	N/A
Country-drivenness	The project concept originated from the tri-lateral prime ministers' declaration in 2000 of the "Prespa Park" which led to the establishment of the Prespa Park Coordination Committee. It is not clear that the involved countries were strongly driving the project development process, following the initial concept launch.	MS	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stakeholder involvement in design	Stakeholders indicated that the project design outlined during the UNDP-GEF project development phase did not fully reflect the three countries' priorities, and stakeholder expectations were not adequately managed.	MS	N/A	N/A	N/A
Project Implementation					
Implementation Approach	Initial delays, staff turnover, and various other	MS	MU	S	S

(Efficiency)	issues have contributed to decreased efficiency of the transboundary component, which has been balanced somewhat by the national components. The cost-effectiveness of some results is also strongly linked to sustainability, i.e. whether many of the plans and outputs produced will be applied and implemented.				
Management implementation	The inconsistent presence of senior staff for the transboundary component (which was also to drive an integrated overall project) made overall management more challenging than it should have been. The two national components were well-managed, but not adequately linked with the transboundary component from a management perspective.	MS	U	S	S
Use of the logical framework	Although the logframe had some shortcomings, the project management teams referenced the logframe and indicators to guide results.	S	S	S	S
Financial planning and management	There were no significant financial management issues during implementation.	S	S	S	S
Adaptive management	The national components were adaptively managed to respond to changing circumstances, as necessary. The challenges faced in the transboundary component management and implementation were not effectively addressed.	MS	MU	S	S
Use and establishment of information technologies	The project relied on the IW:Learn platform for an online presence, which appears to have not been adequate for communicating with all relevant stakeholders and establishing a unified trilateral identity. In all technical activities of the project appropriate information technologies were utilized.	MU	N/A	N/A	N/A
UNDP supervision and support	With respect to the national components, UNDP provided the necessary support and oversight. The issues encountered in the transboundary component were not adequately addressed, and UNDP must also bear some responsibility for the multiple flaws with the project design.	MS	MU	S	S
Operational relationships between the institutions involved	There were multiple issues in the transboundary component and with the integration of the project as a whole. Within the national components, there was a good operational relationship with the municipality of Resen and national government institutions in MK. In AL, the project has worked well operationally with the main institutional partners throughout implementation.	MU	U	S	S
Technical capacities	The technical aspects of the project involved many of the best relevant technical experts in the region with respect to the issues addressed.	HS	HS	HS	HS
Monitoring and Evaluation Overall Quality	Based on the three below criteria.	MS	N/A	N/A	N/A
M&E design	The M&E aspects of the overall project did not	MU	N/A	N/A	N/A

	adequately support an integrated approach between the three components, and the project logframe was not adequately designed.				
M&E plan implementation	The elements of the M&E plan were implemented to at least meet UNDP and GEF minimum standards for M&E.	S	S	S	S
M&E budgeting	The budget planned for M&E activities was adequate for a project of this size.	S	S	S	S
Stakeholder Participation	Based on the below criteria.	MS	MU	HS	S
Production and dissemination of information	The communications program and the natural capital resource center are highlights of the project's work in MK. In AL the project produced relevant and necessary materials to support the project objective. Production and dissemination of information for the transboundary component would have been aided by a strong web presence to support tri-lateral information sharing.	S	MS	HS	S
Local resource users and civil society participation	Engagement of local resource users and participation of community-based civil society organizations were highlights of both the MK and AL components. The transboundary component had some participation of local resource users and civil society (especially in Greece), but this could have been strengthened with a more decentralized, bottom-up approach to development of the SAP.	S	MS	HS	HS
Establishment of partnerships	The transboundary component developed networks among technical professionals, strongly benefited from the partnership with the Tour du Valat biological station, and generated some positive local level tri-lateral initiatives (e.g. tourism strategy) but the fact that the tri-lateral coordination mechanism is not active is an indication that the necessary partnerships for transboundary IEM have not developed. In the MK component, the project's partnership with the municipality of Resen is a good practice example, and sustainability is enhanced through partnerships with SDC. In the AL component, the envisioned partnership with KfW did not materialize (through no fault of the project implementers), but otherwise appropriate time and energy was invested to develop the local partnerships necessary to achieve the project outcomes.	MS	MU	HS	S
Involvement and support of governmental institutions	There is still inadequate political will and ownership to carry the transboundary aspect forward. In the MK component there was good involvement and support from the relevant government institutions at the local and national levels, and including technical bodies. On the AL side there has been good involvement from	MU	U	S	MS

	technical institutions, while political support from government institutions at the local and national level has varied. For the transboundary component support from central government institutions varied between countries and over time, and the failure to so far implement the 2010 agreement is the primary indicator of the current low support.				
Project Results					
Overall Achievement of Objective and Outcomes (Effectiveness)	Although the overall objective is not yet achieved (which is highly dependent on the transboundary aspect), under each of the project components broad and significant results were produced to support the achievement of the expected outcomes.	MS	MU	S	S
Objective: To catalyse the adoption of integrated ecosystem management (IEM) in the trans-boundary Prespa Lakes Basin of FYR-Macedonia, Albania, and Greece to conserve globally significant biodiversity, mitigate pollution of the trans-boundary lakes, and provide a sustainable basis for the Basin's further social and economic development.	The overall project objective is strongly tied to the transboundary component, which speaks to the primary justification of the project as a regional, tri-lateral project rather than separate national activities. Significant and notable foundational work has been carried out by the project to support transboundary integrated ecosystem management, with the 2010 agreement standing as a critical achievement. In addition, within the national Prespa boundaries of AL and MK the project has been successful in initiating the adoption of IEM approaches. However, the current lack of functioning of a transboundary coordination mechanism (there is less transboundary activity at present than there was at the beginning of the project) and unclear sustainability of multiple elements of the transboundary work (i.e. species conservation plans, monitoring system, water management) makes achievement of the objective uncertain. This burden is borne more by the three governments than by "the project", and until there is again strong national political will to implement transboundary IEM in the Prespa region, the path forward is ambiguous. There is strong interest for coordination among local level stakeholders, which may be the primary hope for the future, but there is not yet effective transboundary IEM at this level either.	MU	MU	S	S
Outcome 1: Stakeholders strengthen legal and regulatory enabling environment and establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa Lakes Basin	The development of the Watershed Management Plan, the introduction of IPPC, the initiation of legislative and policy changes in the fishery and agriculture sectors, and the cooperation with local/national stakeholders were highlights in Macedonia. In Albania, the Local Environmental Action Plans, and a range of capacity development activities produced excellent results.	HS	N/A	HS	HS
Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource	The project results in both Macedonia and Albania to reduce agricultural inputs through the provision	MS	N/A	S	MS

management practices to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities within the national sectors of the Prespa Basin	of hydromet stations were positive, and were complemented in Macedonia by additional activities for waste collection and reduction. In Albania the forestry activities planned under this output were to be supported by KfW and thus were not yet completed. Local resource user associations were established in both Albania and Macedonia for farmers and fishers. The small-scale wastewater treatment activities in Macedonia progressed, but did not reach construction. The wastewater and agricultural input activities were also found to have lower relevance in Albania. The overall rating is based on the level of achievement toward logframe indicators and targets.				
Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin (PNP, GNP, ENR, and PPA-GR) fully operational	The work done in Macedonia to re-establish the Ezerani protected area, and the restoration of the Golema Reka, are considered highlights. The delay of the KfW activities in Albanian Prespa meant that progress here was still limited at the end of the GEF-funded Prespa IEM project (the METT score has increased ~20% instead of the targeted 40%), though the establishment and operation of the Prespa National Park Management Committee is significant. The development of the monitoring system under the transboundary component was critical (though practical transboundary implementation will be a challenge).	MS	MS	HS	MS
Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon on-going trans-boundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the trans-boundary coordination mechanism and piloting trans-boundary conservation and water management	The 2010 agreement is a significant achievement, but the PPMC (former PPCC) has had little activity since then. The Prespa Working Group on Water Management was not operationalized. The trilateral communications efforts to catalyze effective transboundary management have been limited. Species and habitat conservation plans were produced but are not detailed and have limited implementation thus far. The tri-lateral tourism strategy was a positive result that has garnered local level stakeholder support. The revised TDA/SAP appears to have uneven and limited stakeholder ownership and buy-in.	MS	MU	S	S
Outcome 5: Lessons learned and adaptive management of project	This outcome covered project management, including adaptive management, as well as knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation. Both national components are considered satisfactory for this outcome, while the transboundary component would have benefited from improved adaptive management.	S	MS	S	S
Overall Outcomes	TBD	MS	MU	S	S
Impact	Some small-scale impact level results could be assumed from the activities in the national components, particularly related to the increased efficiency of application of agricultural inputs.	N	N	M	N

Sustainability					
Overall Sustainability	Given that the national components make-up around 2/3rds of the project investment, the fact that sustainability for the results from these activities is considered moderately likely justifies an overall moderately likely rating.	ML	U	ML	ML
Financial	There is no currently foreseen prospect for financial sustainability of the transboundary coordination mechanism. In both the MK and AL components there are specific bi-lateral donor funded follow-up initiatives to carry the project's work forward.	N/A	U	L	L
Socio-political	Transboundary IEM in the Prespa region requires significant additional political will from national governments. Within the MK and AL national components there is good stakeholder ownership and support, particularly at the local level, and at the national level in MK.	N/A	U	L	L
Institutional framework and governance	There has been one initial informal meeting of the new transboundary coordination mechanism, the Prespa Park Management Committee (June 2012), but it is not formally functional, and the 2010 agreement is pending ratification in Greece. In MK, the municipality of Resen has clearly accepted responsibility for managing the resources in the Prespa region. In AL, the Prespa National Park Management Committee has been established in an advisory capacity to support a participatory approach in Albanian Prespa, while the national park administration is the official management authority. The PNP-AL is still lacking independent legal status as a PA within the ministry, an issue that if resolved would strengthen the institutional framework aspect of sustainability.	N/A	MU	L	ML
Environmental	Many of the environmental threats the project was established to address are still in existence, though some progress in threat reduction is being made. There are no significant or new environmental threats that specifically threaten the sustainability of the project results.	N/A	N/A	ML	ML
Overall Achievement and Impact	A number of important results have been achieved in the AL and MK national components, and positive work was produced under the transboundary component, but overall the present situation with respect to a transboundary IEM approach is uncertain. This relates primarily to the current level of political will and ability of the three involved countries to actively drive forward transboundary integrated ecosystem management of the Prespa Basin.	MS	MU	S	S

VIII. Annexes

Annex 1: Evaluation Terms of Reference

Annex 2: GEF Operational Principles

Annex 3: Status of Objective and Outcome Indicators Target Delivery

Annex 4: Follow-up to Mid-term Evaluation Recommendations

Annex 5: List of Persons Interviewed

Annex 6: Field Visit Schedule

Annex 1: Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference

Note: For space considerations the annexes of the TORs have not been included.

Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference

Project	PIMS 1996 – Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin of Albania, FYR Macedonia and Greece
Duty Station	Home-based + one mission in the Prespa region
Expected Duration of Assignment	Approximately 25 days
Starting date	May 2011
Expected End of the Assignment	June 2011

Background

The Prespa Lakes Watershed is shared among the three neighboring countries Albania, FYR Macedonia and Greece. It is considered to be an ecosystem of global significance and has been identified as one of Europe's major trans-boundary "ecological bricks". The entire Prespa region hosts unique habitats that are important from both a European and global conservation perspective. The health of the trans-boundary ecosystem can only be maintained in the long run through trans-boundary consensus and effective trans-boundary action. At the same time, effective trans-boundary action is only as good as the ability of each littoral country to effect change within their respective national sectors of the Prespa Lakes basin: to change how protected areas, land, forests, water, fisheries, waste, and small scale wastewater treatment are managed.

For a long period, resource management practices, from water and land-use planning to agriculture, forestry and fisheries were failing to maintain and restore ecosystem health of the trans-boundary Lakes Prespa Basin. Productive sectors din not incorporate ecosystem health objectives into their daily management practices; protected areas were not able to serve as the refuges of ecosystem health that they should be. Knowledge, experiential, and incentive barriers hampered people's ability to know of, understand, and adopt new practices. Up to date information on key species and habitats did not exist and modest monitoring of key ecosystem health parameters was not done. As a result, key habitats have being lost or degraded, globally significant species were threatened, and stakeholders were ill-prepared to manage a dynamic, ever-changing aquatic ecosystem like the Prespa lakes.

Therefore, the full sized GEF project was designed to catalyze the adoption of ecosystem management practices by stakeholders in the Prespa Basin by mainstreaming ecosystem conservation objectives and considerations into relevant productive sector practices and demonstrating proof of concept by piloting new approaches to mitigate productive sector impacts on the Prespa ecosystem. The project also aimed to strengthen the conservation of

significant biological diversity and water quality through improved monitoring, targeted research and enabling protected areas to serve as effective refuges for ecosystem health within the Prespa landscape.

In that line, the project sought to deliver the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Stakeholders establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa Lakes Basin;
- Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource management practice to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities within the Prespa Basin;
- Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin (PNP, GNP, and EWR) fully operational;
- Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon ongoing transboundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the transboundary coordination mechanism and piloting transboundary conservation and water management;
- Outcome 5: Lessons learnt and adaptive management of project

The project is implemented under Multiple Execution (MEX) modality, and two national components which are implemented under NEX (NIM) modality (national execution) are entered as separate projects and linked with the trans-boundary component which is implemented under the DEX (DIM) modality (direct execution) in parent – child relations (DEX component = parent).

The Ministry of Environment Forest and Water Management–Albania and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning–Macedonia serve as the Designated Institutions (DI) responsible for coordinating project implementation of the national components of the project. The Project Management Unit for the Macedonian NEX component is based in the city of Resen, within the Prespa Lake Watershed, and is staffed with a Project Manager, Project Specialist and a Project Assistant, with one additional Project Specialist based in Skopje, the capital of the country. The Project Management Unit for the Albanian is based in Tirana and is staffed with a Project Manager, a Project Specialist and a Project Assistant. In addition, there is a Local Project Coordinator based in Korcha near to the Prespa Watershed. In GR-Prespa, there is no PMU *per se*, but the Ministry of Environment -GR has designated the Management Body for the Prespa Protected Area to serve as the project enabling committee to coordinate project-related activities in Greek Prespa. The trans-boundary Unit is staffed by one Part-time International Trans-boundary Advisor and a Project Assistant and is based in Resen.

The Project Oversight Committee (Project Board) was represented by the Prespa Park Coordination Committee, an interim trilateral body established by the Governments of the three littoral states. The Project Boards comprise of UNDP, local governments and the Ministries of Environment in the relevant country.

The project has been implemented since April 2006 and is expected to be completed in March 2012. The total GEF contribution amounts to $ 4,300,000.

This Final Evaluation (FE) is initiated by the UNDP CO Skopje as the Implementation Agency for this project and it aims to determine whether the project has met its objectives accordingly, to document the lessons learned and best case practices, and to recommend the most appropriate next steps to ensure the sustainability of results.

The evaluation is to be undertaken taking into consideration the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation policy (http://thegef.org/MonitoringandEvaluation/MEPoliciesProcedures/mepoliciesprocedures.html) and the UNDP-GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (http://www.undp.org/gef/05/monitoring/policies.html).

Objective of the Terminal Evaluation

This terminal evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental goals. It will also identify/document lessons learned and make recommendations that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects.

The evaluator should seek the perspectives of the different project stakeholders, mainly in the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP), UNDP CO, members of the Project Board, Management Authorities of Protected Areas, Municipalities, NGOs, and other, and ensure such perspectives are duly reflected in the evaluation.

More specifically the purpose of the FE is:

(i) To assess overall performance against the project objective and outcomes as set out in the Project Document and other related documents;
(ii) To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project;
(iii) To analyze critically the implementation and management arrangements of the project;
(iv) To assess the progress towards achievement of the outcomes;
(v) To assess the sustainability of the project's interventions;
(vi) To list and document initial lessons concerning project design, implementation and management;
(vii) To assess project relevance to national priorities;
(viii) To provide lessons learned for the future.

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will focus on the range of aspects described below. In addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (R) should be rated using the following divisions: *Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory*. All ratings given should be properly substantiated:

1. Project concept/design, relevance and strategy

1.1 Project relevance, country ownership/drivenness (R): the extent to which the project is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time as well as the extent the activities contribute towards attainment of global environmental benefits:

a. Is the project concept in line with the sectoral and development priorities and plans of the countries?
b. Are project outcomes contributing to national development priorities and plans?
c. How and why project outcomes and strategies contribute to the achievement of the expected results.
d. Examine their relevance and whether they provide the most effective way towards results.
e. Were the relevant country representatives, from government and civil society, involved in the project preparation?
f. Have the governments approved policies or regulatory frameworks in line with the project's objectives?

1.2 Preparation and readiness:

a. Are the project's objective and components clear, practicable and feasible within its timeframe?
b. Were the capacities of executing institution and counterparts properly considered when the project was designed?
c. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated in the project design?
d. Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and the roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project approval?
e. Were counterpart resources (funding, staff, and facilities), enabling legislation, and adequate project management arrangements in place at project entry?

1.3 Stakeholder involvement (R):

a. Did the project involve the relevant stakeholders through information-sharing, consultation and by seeking their participation in the project's design?
b. Did the project consult and make use of the skills, experience and knowledge of the appropriate government entities, NGOs, community groups, private sector, local governments and academic institutions in the design of project activities?

1.4 Underlying factors/assumptions:

a. Assess the underlying factors beyond the project's immediate control that influence outcomes and results. Consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of the project's management strategies for these factors.
b. Re-test the assumptions made by the project management and identify new assumptions that should be made.
c. Assess the effect of any incorrect assumptions made by the project.

1.5 Management arrangements (R):

a. Were the project roles properly assigned during the project design?
b. Are the project roles in line with UNDP and GEF programming guidelines?
c. Can the management arrangement model suggested by the project be considered as an optimum model?

1.6 Project budget and duration (R):

a. Assess if the project budget and duration were planned in a cost-effective way?

1.7 Design of project M&E system (R):

a. Examine whether or not the project has a sound M&E plan to monitor results and track progress towards achieving project objectives.
b. Examine whether or not the M&E plan includes a baseline (including data, methodology, etc.), SMART indicators and data analysis systems, and evaluation studies at specific times to assess results and adequate funding for M&E activities.
c. Examine whether or not the time frame for various M&E activities and standards for outputs are specified.

1.8 Sustainability:

a. Assess if project sustainability strategy was developed during the project design?
b. Assess the relevance of project sustainability strategy

2. Project Implementation

2.1 Project's adaptive management (R):

a. Monitoring systems
    - Assess the monitoring tools being used:
        - Do they provide the necessary information?
        - Do they involve key partners?
        - Are they efficient?
        - Are additional tools required?
    - Assess the use of the logical framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to it.
    - What impact did the retro-fitting of impact indicators have on project management, if such?
    - Assess whether or not M&E system facilitates timely tracking of progress towards project's objectives by collecting information on chosen indicators continually; annual project reports are complete, accurate and with well justified ratings; the information provided by the M&E system is used to improve project performance and to adapt to changing needs.

b. Risk Management
    - Validate whether the risks identified in the project document and PIRs are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate. If not, explain why.

- Describe any additional risks identified and suggest risk ratings and possible risk management strategies to be adopted.
- Assess the project's risk identification and management systems:
  - Is the UNDP-GEF Risk Management System appropriately applied?

c. Work Planning
- Assess the use of routinely updated work plans.
- Assess the use of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities.
- Are work planning processes result-based?

d. Financial management
- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions. (Cost-effectiveness: the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.). Any irregularities must be noted.
- Is there due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits?
- Did promised co-financing materialize (please fill out the co-financing form provided in Annex 1)?

e. Reporting
- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management.
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

f. Delays
- Assess if there were delays in project implementation and what were the reasons.
- Did the delay affect the achievement of project's outcomes and/or sustainability, and if it did then in what ways and through what causal linkages?

2.2 Contribution of Implementing and Executing Agencies:

a. Assess the role of UNDP and the Ministries of Environment against the requirements set out in the UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures. Consider:
- Field visits
- Participation in Steering Committees
- Project reviews, PIR preparation and follow-up
- GEF guidance
- Operational support

b. Consider the new UNDP requirements outlined in the UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures, especially the Project Assurance role, and ensure they are incorporated into the project's adaptive management framework.

c. Assess the contribution to the project from UNDP and the Ministries of Environment in terms of "soft" assistance (i.e. policy advice & dialogue, advocacy, and coordination).

2.3 Stakeholder participation, partnership strategy (R):

a. Assess whether or not and how local stakeholders participate in project management and decision-making. Include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted by the project and suggestions for improvement if necessary.
b. Does the project consult and make use of the skills, experience and knowledge of the appropriate government entities, NGOs, community groups, private sector, local governments and academic institutions in the implementation and evaluation of project activities?
c. Consider the dissemination of project information to partners and stakeholders and if necessary suggest more appropriate mechanisms.

2.4 Sustainability:

b. Assess the extent to which the benefits of the project will continue, within or outside the project scope, after it has come to an end; commitment of the government to support the initiative beyond the project.
c. The evaluators may look at factors such as mainstreaming project objectives into the broader development policies and sectoral plans and economies.

3. Project results (outputs, outcomes and objectives)

3.1 Progress towards achievement of intended outputs, outcomes/measurement of change:

Progress towards results should be based on a comparison of indicators before and after the project intervention.

To determine the level of achievement of project outcomes and objectives following three criteria should be assessed:

- *Relevance*: Are the project's outcomes consistent with the focal areas/operational program strategies and country priorities?
- *Effectiveness*: Are the actual project outcomes commensurate with the original or modified project objectives? In case the original or modified expected results are merely outputs/inputs then the evaluators should assess if there are any real outcomes of the project and if yes then whether these are commensurate with the realistic expectations from such a project.
- *Efficiency*: Is the project cost effective? Is the project the least cost option? Is the project implementation delayed and if it is, then does that affect cost-effectiveness? Wherever possible, the evaluator should also compare the cost-time vs. outcomes relationship of the project with that of other similar projects.

Outcomes should be rated as follows for relevance, effectiveness, efficiency:

- *Highly Satisfactory (HS):* The project has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.
- *Satisfactory (S):* The project has minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.
- *Moderately Satisfactory (MS):* The project has moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.
- *Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)*: The project has significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.

- *Unsatisfactory (U):* The project has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.
- *Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):* The project has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives.

EvaluationDeliverables

The core product of the terminal evaluation will be the Terminal Evaluation Report that includes:

- Findings with the rating on performance;
- Conclusions drawn;
- Lessons learned concerning best and worst practices in producing outputs;
- A rating on progress towards outputs.

The report is proposed to adhere to the following basic structure:

1. Executive summary
   - Brief description of project
   - Context and purpose of the evaluation
   - Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned
2. Introduction
   - Project background
   - Purpose of the evaluation
   - Key issues to be addressed
   - The outputs of the evaluation and how will they be used
   - Methodology of the evaluation
   - Structure of the evaluation
3. The project and its development context
   - Project start and its duration
   - Implementation status
   - Problems that the project seeks to address
   - Immediate and development objectives of the project
   - Main stakeholders
   - Results expected
   - Analysis of the situation with regard to outcomes, outputs and partnership strategy
4. Findings and Conclusions
   4.1 Project formulation
      - Project relevance
      - Implementation approach
      - Country ownership/Driveness
      - Stakeholder participation
      - Replication approach
      - Cost-effectiveness
      - Sustainability
      - Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
      - Management arrangements

4.2 Project implementation
- Financial management
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Management and coordination
- Identification and management of risks (adaptive management)

4.3 Results
- Attainment of outputs, outcomes and objectives
- Project Impact
- Prospects of sustainability

5. Conclusions and recommendations
   - Findings
   - Actions to strengthen or reinforce benefits from the project
   - Proposals for follow up actions
6. Lessons learned
   - Good practices and lessons learned in addressing issues relating to effectiveness, efficiency and relevance
7. Annexes
   - Evaluation TOR
   - Itinerary
   - List of persons interviewed
   - Summary of field visits
   - List of documents reviewed
   - Questionnaire used (if any) and summary of results
   - Comments by stakeholders (only in case of discrepancies with evaluation findings and conclusions)
   - Final stage Tracking tool (METT) for the Protected Areas within the watershed in MK and Alb
   - Table on co-financing and leveraged Resources

The expected length of the report is around 50 pages in total. The first draft of the report is expected to be submitted to the UNDP Country Office in Skopje and to the Regional UNDP/GEF RTA responsible for the Prespa project in Bratislava within 2 weeks of the in-country mission for subsequent circulation to the key project stakeholders. UNDP Country Office in Skopje will share the report with UNDP Albania, and the key national partners in the implementation of the project. Based on the consolidated comments on the report submitted by UNDP, the consultants will finalize and submit the final version of the report to UNDP CO Skopje and UNDP/GEF RTA in Bratislava, within two weeks of receipt of comments from UNDP. Any discrepancies between the interpretations and findings of the evaluator and the key project stakeholders will be explained in an annex to the final report.

Review Methodology

The evaluation approach will combine methods such as documentation review (desk study); interviews; and field visits. All relevant project documentation will be made available to the consultant by the project management team, facilitated by UNDP. After studying the

documentation the consultant will conduct interviews with all relevant partners including the key partners and beneficiaries. Validation of preliminary findings with stakeholders will happen through circulation of initial reports for comments or other types of feedback mechanisms.

Throughout the period of the evaluation, the consultants will liaise closely with the UNDP COs, UNDP/GEF RTA, the concerned agencies of the Government and the counterpart staff assigned to the project. The consultants can raise or discuss any issue or topic it deems necessary to fulfill the task, the consultants however is not authorized to make any commitments to any party on behalf of UNDP or the Government.

The consultant for TE will be supported by national consultants in FYR Macedonia and Albania selected by UNDP COs. The national consultants will provide support in review of documents, interviews/meetings with stakeholders etc.

Although the Evaluator should feel free to discuss with the authorities concerned, all matters relevant to its assignment, it is not authorized to make any commitment or statement on behalf of UNDP or GEF or the project management.

The Evaluator should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Tasks and Milestones
The final review will be conducted within 5 weeks, according to the following activities and time frames:

1. Desk Review
   (to be conducted within the first week)
   a. Familiarize with the project through related documentation, mid-term review and publications.
   b. Develop work plan and discuss with UNDP for approval.
2. Consultations
   (to be conducted within the second and third weeks)
   a. Conduct interviews and/or Focus Group Discussions with national and local stakeholders
   b. Conduct statistical surveys/polls to stakeholders, where appropriate.
   c. Present and discuss initial findings with UNDP, and the key national stakeholders
3. Reporting
   a. Submit draft report to and solicit comments/inputs from UNDP (within forth week)
   b. Submit final report UNDP (one week upon receipt of the comments on the draft report)

Qualificationsand Requirements
The consultant shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Former cooperation

with GEF is an advantage.

Qualifications:

- Academic Qualifications: Advanced university degree in Environmental Management, Biodiversity Conservation, Water Management or related areas.
- Professional Experience: At least 10 years of professional experience in the areas addressed by the project and proven track record with policy advice and/or project development/implementation in integrated ecosystem management, international waters, biodiversity conservation or;
- Proven track record of application of results-based approaches to evaluation of projects focusing on integrated ecosystem management, international waters management, biodiversity conservation or (relevant experience with GEF projects would be an asset);
- Experience with evaluation of trans-boundary projects or/and MEX (Multiple Execution) Modality would be a strong asset
- Knowledge of the region and its key development issues or comparable experience in other developing countries shell be an asset
- Competencies:Advanced skills in analysis, reporting, facilitation of meetings, and team coordination
- Excellent communication skills; demonstrated ability to assess complex situations in order to succinctly and clearly distill critical issues and draw forward-looking conclusions;
- Language Requirements: Language proficiency in both written and oral English.

Note: The selected evaluator should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

Implementation Arrangements

The Evaluator will work under the supervision of the Regional UNDP/GEF RTA in Bratislava responsible for the Prespa project and the Head of Energy and Environment Unit in UNDP Skopje. All practical support for the final review, including facilitation of travel, accommodation, scheduling of activities (as agreed in the work plan), and supporting documents will be arranged and provided by the project management unit and UNDP COs.

Although UNDP is administratively responsible for the conduction of the TE, UNDP shall not interfere with analysis and reporting, except where requested and at opportunities for comments/feedback. UNDP will share the final version of the final review report with the National Executing Agencies.

The Evaluator will be supported by National consultants hired separately by UNDP, one for Albania and one for FYR Macedonia.

The total duration of the evaluation is expected to be approximately 25 days in May/June 2012

Annex 2. GEF Operational Principles

http://www.gefweb.org/public/opstrat/ch1.htm

TEN OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATIONOF THE GEF'S WORK PROGRAM

1. For purposes of the financial mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the GEF will **function under the guidance of, and be accountable to, the Conference of the Parties** (COPs). For purposes of financing activities in the focal area of ozone layer depletion, GEF operational policies will be consistent with those of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendments.

2. The GEF will provide new, and additional, grant and concessional funding to meet the agreed **incremental costs** of measures to achieve agreed global environmental benefits.

3. The GEF will ensure the **cost-effectiveness** of its activities to maximize global environmental benefits.

4. The GEF will fund projects that are **country-driven** and based on national priorities designed to support sustainable development, as identified within the context of national programs.

5. The GEF will maintain sufficient **flexibility** to respond to changing circumstances, including evolving guidance of the Conference of the Parties and experience gained from monitoring and evaluation activities.

6. GEF projects will provide for **full disclosure** of all non-confidential information.

7. GEF projects will provide for consultation with, and **participation** as appropriate of, the beneficiaries and affected groups of people.

8. GEF projects will conform to the **eligibility** requirements set forth in paragraph 9 of the GEF Instrument.

9. In seeking to maximize global environmental benefits, the GEF will emphasize its **catalytic role** and leverage additional financing from other sources.

10. The GEF will ensure that its programs and projects are **monitored and evaluated** on a regular basis.

Annex 3: Status of Objective and Outcome Indicators Target Delivery (Source: 2012 PIR – final project PIR)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
Objective: To catalyze the adoption of integrated ecosystem management (IEM) in the trans-boundary Prespa Lakes Basin of FYR Macedonia, Albania, and Greece to conserve globally significant biodiversity, mitigate pollution of the trans- boundary lakes, and provide a sustainable basis for the Basin's further social and economic development	Demonstration of IEM approach	None	At least 5 visible demonstrations in AL, MK and GR* in key sectors related directly to conservation of significant biodiversity and trans-boundary waters	1. The adjustment of the Transboundary Monitoring System was completed by end of June 2012, including the reports from the piloting phase. (TB) 2. Pilot monitoring activities are successfully implemented in AL Prespa. Park administration capacity strengthened (AL). 3. Instructional set up in the agriculture sector is strengthened with 4 associations receiving support and assistance. (AL) 4. Newly shaped Information and Local Initiative Centre (ILIC) in Gorrica is established and operational. (AL) 5. Equipment and logistic for environment monitoring and communication for the Prespa National Park are fully functional and serving the purpose. (AL) 6. The monthly project electronic newsletter is developed and distributed widely nationally and regionally (AL) 7. Accomplishment of assessment of spatial and urban Plan for Prespa AL and ToR for Master planning (AL) 8. Conservation plans for priority species and habitats in Prespa (Brown Bear, Mountain Tea, Caves/Bats, Reedbeds, Juniper Forests and Prespa Barbel under the Transboundary Fisheries Management Plan) were completed. 9. Transboundary Fish and Fishery Management Plan completed (TB); 10. Integrated Watershed Management Plan for the Macedonian part of the Prespa watershed developed;
	Financial resources for IEM approach made available	Not available from public funds Not trained	US$2 million for IEM by end of project	1. The amount of 1,325,243 USD is disbursed (consultancies, trainings, awareness, actions, equipment, monitoring, etc.) (AL) 2. The project has disbursed 1.539.181 USD by end of June 2012 (consultancies, trainings, awareness, actions, monitoring, etc.)(TB) 3. The amount disbursed for IEM approach so far are 1.469.253 USD
		0	Key local stakeholders trained	1. 55 participants (Park Administration, NGOs, local administration, local experts) trained on conservation and ecosystem monitoring. (AL) 2. Assistance to farmer groups on prognoses and early warning system. (AL) 3. 25 PNP and farmer NGOs participants trained on monitoring issues and prognosis and early warning (Agromet) (AL) 4. Over 60 tea gatherers in Prespa in Macedonia, Albania and Greece were trained on sustainable techniques on tea gathering and conservation of the mountain tea - Sideritis Raeseri . (TB) 5. Over 60 stakeholders from Prespa including primary and high school teachers introduced to pririty species and habitats and conservation efforts (TB).
	Management tools for IEM approach	Not defined	Incentives, information, communication provided	1. Prespa Park Management Committee functional and performing planning and management tasks; 2 meetings held during reporting period. (AL) 2. Fisherman and farmer associations are assisted progressively and trainings provided. (AL) 3. Joint activities are accomplished with KfW /OBF at the Prespa Park.(AL) 4. Celebration of wetland day, 2 February (AL) 5. Reports from piloted parts of the Transboundary Monitoring System leading to adjustment of the system and an Adjustment Study were completed in this period. (TB) 6. Subsidiary legislation (decree) regulating the work of the national River Basin Management Councils, supported by the project is in the final stages of approval by the Government. (MK) ; Management Plan for "Ezerani" protected area completed

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
Outcome 1: Stakeholders strengthen legal and regulatory enabling environment and establish land and water use management basis for maintaining and restoring ecosystem health in the Prespa lakes	Main sectoral laws incorporate ecosystem health objectives/priorities ; strengthened regulations for water, spatial planning and environmental management at local level.	Water, Ag, Forest, Fishery Law do not prioritize ecosystem health	In-stream flows for fish become priority use of water; Ag/pesticide certification criteria strengthened for aquatic ecosystem health; Forest law incorporates maximizing ecosystem services as priority objective; Regulations for local water use management, spatial plan enforcement and environmental management adopted by EoY 3.	1. The public forest enterprise is adequately operating the nursery, and using the equipment provided by the project and contributes substantially to other project related activities (e.g. watershed management council, consultations on Ezerani protected area and other).(MK) 2. Th Watershed Management Plan for Prespa was completed and submitted to the national authorities for endorsement following national procedures (MK) 3. The bylaw on establishment of watershed management councils was adopted by the Governmnent. The bylaw, which is a result of the work on the Watershed Management plan/Watershed councul will regulating the work of the national River Basin Management councils for other river basins in Macedonia. (MK) 4. The new water law and respective regulatory actions are in progress. The ministry of environment has established the Prespa basin authority (AL) 5. The Management Plan for Prespa Park is under development by KfW project with input and support from with information, studies and assessment performed from UNDP project (AL) 6.The Management committee is supervising, assisting and coordinating all the projects in the Park. (AL)
	Replication: Watershed planning manual adopted as official manual by MoEPP and MoEFWM for rest of country	No manual; replication not facilitated.	Manual integrated into watershed planning nationwide by EoY 4.	1. A watershed manual capturing the lessons leaned and practices from the watershed management planning process was completed and disseminated. (MK). 2. A consolidated report was prepared, published and widely disseminated to project stakeholders and other institutions. (AL)
	Spatial plan (MK, GR)/LEAP (AL) incorporate ecosystem management objectives in detail	No LEAP in place; Spatial plan in MK ad GR under way	Spatial plans completed in MK ad GR by EoY 2 and approved by EoY3	1. The spatial planning assessment is duly taken into account durign the management planing process as well as during the tourism strategy development. (AL) 2. The activities related to spatial plan were completed and reported earlier. It should be noted that the Watershed Management Plan also provides a very strong legal basis for establishment of an integrated land- and water-use management at watershed scale. This aspect has been accepted by all key stakeholders. (MK)
	Strengthened local management of important riparian habitat of both lakes in AL, MK and GR*.	No conservation n or management t of shoreline habitat in AL and MK; Active conservation n management t of wetland habitats in Lake Micro Prespa, GR*.	Approved protected area managements plans in the 3 countries and definition of institutions for their implementation n by EoY 3; Other important riparian habitat to be defined by EoY2 and 50% of these areas managed well by EoY 4 (MK+AL). 100 ha of wet meadows in GR* by EoY 4.	1. Following the recommendation in the Study for revalorization of Ezerani protected area, the Government enacted a re-designation Law on Ezerani. A Management Plan for the Ezerani protected area is also prepared, in accordance with the national regulations, the primary management objectives, and the category type proposed in the revalorization study. The Management Plan has been handed over to the designated management authority - Municipality of Resen. The process has been conducted in a highly participatory environment through various formal and informal communication mechanisms, such as the stakeholder advisory body called Ezerani Council which has been established for the purpose.(MK) 2. In parallel with the management planning process, the project supported the preparation of an Economic Valuation Report aiming at raising the awareness of the economic values of effective conservation, evaluating the costs and benefits of specific habitat management actions to inform conservation and public funding decisions, identifying financial opportunities for the protected area and neighboring communities associated with the provision of ecosystem services and with specific management actions; and generating participation and training opportunities for conservation managers and decision-makers in economic valuation for integrated ecosystem management. (MK) 3. In cooperation with KfW further Prespa National Park admiration improvement in respect to park management practice. (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
				4. The KfW project is developing the management plan; 2,3 km2 of lake and 4,5 km of shoreline habitats are kept continuously under improved management practice.(AL) 5. The Management Committee provides synergies among fishermen and farmers organised in associations (AL) 6. Assistance provided to fisherman NGOs in terms of equipment and trainings (AL) 7. Training for Park Administration and pilot monitoring are accomplished (AL) 8. Participation at TB conservation action plans and small-scale conservation interventions for 2 species (mountain tea, brown bear) and 3 habitats (reed beds, caves and juniper forest) of TB importance (AL)
	Three priority streams (Ag. Germanos, Brajcino & Krani) and 1 tributary of Golema River (Leva stream) maintain environmental in-stream flow and water quality as appropriate for endemic trout (MK-GR*).	Currently, lower parts of these rivers may run dry in summer months and water quality is reduced by agricultural run-off and waste water	Environmental flow requirements established by EoY 3. Environmental flows maintained by end EoY5. Water quality improved through reduced of agrochemicals use by EoY3 Application of small-scale waste water treatment by EoY4 Species action plan endorsed and implemented by EoY 2	1. The Waste Water Treatment Plant in Nakolec is still not operational due to delays in completion of the works for construction of the sewage system. At the last Project Board meeting, the Municipality of Resen and the Ministry of Environment commited to finalize the sewage system by the end of 2012 thus fulfilling their commitment towards the project. (MK) 2. The envrionmental flows are defined under the Watershed Management Plan which is submited for adoption by the Ministry of Envrionment and Physical Planning. (MK). 3. Conservation plans for agreed priority species and habitats in Prespa were prepared. They include detailed analysis of treats and propose conservation measures and priority actions. (TB) 4. In order to tackle organic waste problems in Prespa, there is an ongoing parallel effort funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency aimed at piloting centralized organic waste management system within the Golema Reka basin which is the key tributary to the Prespa Lake. It included construction of local collection sites, central composting facility, and other technical support to the Municipality of Resen and its public enterprise responsible for waste management The project will be completed by early 2013. (MK) 5. Fully operational agricultural laboratory and trainings provided to the farmers contribute to reduced impact from agricultural activities on the quality of the water in the lake and the streams in the watershed. (MK)
	Water management in the Prespa basin is aligned between the 3 littoral countries, considers ecosystem health needs and follows the principles of integrated basin water management	No assessment of current water uses; good ecological status not considered; no basin specific water management plans; no trilateral coordination mechanism	Establishment of the trilateral Working Group on Water Management (WGWM) by EoY 2. Approved and aligned water management plans with targets regarding water quality, integrated water uses, and ecological status. Regulations for local water use management adopted by EoY 4	1. The Trilateral Strategic Action Programme, the studies done as part of the Transboundary Monitoring Programme and other key transboundary strategic documents that were developed with the project support should serve as a basis for decision making on the issues related to the water quality and management once the Prespa Park Management Committee and the Tansboundary Water Management Working Group become fully operations. At the first informal meeting of the Prespa Park Management Committee (PPMC) organized by the project in June 2012 all relevant PPMC members, the Ministries of Envrionment, the local governments and NGOs, have commited to work to on accelerating the process of operationalization of the PPMC and the establishment of the Water Management Working Goup. It is expected that this proces will be finalized by end of 2012, as soon as the Prespa Agreement is ratified by the governments of Macedonia and Greece. (TB) 2. The Prespa Lake Watershed Management Plan (WMP)is the first watershed management plan prepared fully in accordance with the Macedonian Law on Waters (2008), which itself is founded on the EU Water Framework Directive and the Integrated River Basin Management principles. Thus, the WMP preparation process, as well as the document itself, have established the basic guiding principles for development of other such plans and represent invaluable accomplishments for the country as a whole. The Watershed Management plan included an initial 12-month comprehensive surveillance and monitoring of water quality and ecological status for all the basin water bodies, based on which reference conditions have been established. The pressures on water bodies from both natural and anthropogenic origins were identified andalayzed extensively. These pressures include the input of pollutants (e.g. nutrients and hazardous sub¬stances) and physical pressures on the water bodies (e.g. agriculture in the river corridor, drainage, watercourse maintenance, etc).

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
				The existing monitoring activities have been analyzed and assessed for their compliance with the requirements of the Law on Waters and other relevant national environmental laws and regulations. The absence of monitoring and data, the existing monitoring capacity and the organizational and financial aspects of required monitoring have also been analyzed in depth. As a result of the monitoring activities the status of all the water bodies in the Macedonian part of the Prespa basin has been determined. Environmental objectives and respective indicators, both for the general environment and for the individual water bodies in terms of their progress towards achieving good water status for all water bodies, have been identified. The economic use of water has also been analyzed, whereas the analysis has revealed significant problems regarding institutional setup and capacity, overall management deficiencies, deterioration of infrastructure, low- or no-cost recovery, and dire prospects for investment in the water sector. Based on problem analysis, a comprehensive Programme of Measures for achieving the set objectives has been developed. This consists of 45 measures aimed primarily at resolving technical and environmental issues and problems in the region. Based on the assessments, it is recommended that the WMP processes be initiated with measures at local level as the priority for the first six-year period. An economic analysis has been made of the proposed Programme of Measures. Based on the previous analyses, an Implementation Schedule for the Prespa Watershed Management Plan has been proposed. The comprehensiveness and the inclusive character of the WMP preparation process, along with successful promotion activities, have secured consequent funding that will be provided by the SDC for continuation of the 'GEF Programme agenda' in the following 6-year period (starting from July 2012). (MK) 3. New water law is approved and respective regulatory frame changes are in progress by the Ministry of Environment (MoEFWA) (AL) 4. The Management Plan for Prespa Park under development by KfW project is duly taking into account water management 4. The Management Committee of Prespa Park is operational and two other Prespa MC meetings are organised and water issues duly addressed. (AL)
Outcome 2: Stakeholders modify productive sector resource management practices to reduce pesticide inputs, increase habitat heterogeneity, and improve the status of target species and communities in the Prespa Basin.	# hectares of forest under improved biodiversity-oriented management in MK, GR*, AL Prespa.	No ha of forest under this kind of management	2,000 ha in MK by EoY 3. 3,000 ha in AL by EoY 3; and 1,000 ha in GR* by EoY 3.	1. Activities related to forestry were completed in the earlier reporting period. (MK) 2. Direct interventions through small grants on forestry and fishery habitats. (AL) 3. National monitoring activities took place during 2011 Information, data, studies, expertise is provided to the KfW team for the management plan process. (AL) 4. An increased are of 2% under improved biodiversity management as a result of kfW project actually under implementation. (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	# of farmers applying integrated pest management practices in MK and AL.	Number of farmers in MK currently applying Integrated Pest Management nt? (To be determined by EOY1) 90 out of a total of 200 farmers in GR* currently applying Integrated Pest Management nt	20 farms by EoY 2 (5 in AL and 15 in MK); 50 by EoY 4 (10 in AL and 40 in MK)	1. Continuous Technical assistance is provided to farmers associations on different technical issues; Agrometeorological stations are operational. The knowledge and equipment are transferred to the Agriculture Directorate of Korca, which is replicating the exercise to other sites. Increased number of farmer receiving early warning and prognoses through three agromet stations. (AL); 2. Long-term partnership has been established with the farmer association in the municipality of Resen and the programme for an upgrade of their knowledge on GAP (Good Agriculture Practces) is incorporated in the new project for implementation of the Prespa Lake Watershed Management Plan that will be funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency (MK)
	% of wood community forests (CF) contribute to two communities' needs for fodder and fuel wood in AL.	CF provides none of the fuel wood and fodder needs.	CF provides 50% of 2 target villages' (AL) needs by EoY 4.	1. 4500 ha of forest and 300 ha of pastures belong to the communal forests fund, which is about 40% of the total surface of the forest of the Park. (AL) 2. CF provides almost 42% of the population needs for firewood only. (AL) 3. The result is maintained due to support and cooperation with KfW project in site (AL)
	Allowable fish catch linked to population size estimates in both lakes in MK, AL and GR*.	There is no limit on fish caught during regular season; Fishery authorities from the 3 countries are usually deciding jointly a yearly spring "closed period" for fishing since 2004.	Improved collection of fishery data in all three countries by EoY2; Sharing of data by all three countries by EoY2; Allowable fish catch is linked to population size estimates and other indices (# of fishing boats, territory of fishing area in each country) for five species by EoY 4; Regular contacts between fisheries authorities of the three countries to reach common decisions on allowable fishing tools, closed seasons and other sustainable management measures; Harmonized by- laws on fisheries amongst the 3 littoral states.	1. First Transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan for thePrespa Lakes was completed at the beginning of 2012. The Plan is the key policy document which defines but not limit to management aspects such as: Enhancement (ameliorative and selective fishing, fish stocking, sourcing of stocking material, quality control of stocking material, other sanitary measures); Input controls (identification of spawning periods and setting the close fishing season by species; identification of the spawning grounds of native fish and setting of closed areas by species; Allowable fishing gears and fishing days; number of fishing days for recreational fishing); Output controls (setting allowable catch size in length per species; setting allowable catch quotas per species by country), and etc. The development of the Plan included methodologies such as review of the existing legislatives (plans, statutes, rules, regulations etc.) from the three countries; previous and recent research, monitoring and surveillances; involving various stakeholders – direct and indirect related to fisheries; open opinion survey among the people and institutions in the basin; conducting of a limited fish stock assessment (in the lakes and the tributaries); fish health check (parasites, heavy metals and pesticides in the fish tissues); various impacts on the fish and fishery (including fish eating birds); habitat conditions; fishery statistics. These things were obtained through intensive field work and laboratory analysis. The plan proposes number of measures and 4 key, mid-term objectives (i) a programme and supporting actions to strengthen the administrative structures, (ii) a programme to strengthen the organisational structures, (iii) actions supporting the operational activities, (iv) enhancing information and public awareness. The Transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan was shared with the relevant stakeholders. (TB) 2. Series of capacity development activities regarding sustainable fish and fisheries management practices are accomplished (AL) 3. In about 3.9 km2 of the AL Prespa Lake, 1000 ml of fish and eel traps, metallic nets, are removed. (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
				4. More than 500ml of existing channels maintained opened and cleaned from reeds. The area affected from this activity encompasses around 15 ha or reeds habitats.(AL) 5. The annual catch in both Prespa lakes now is fixed at 290-300 tons (AL)
	Change in awareness among local people regarding the Prespa ecosystem;	Baseline to be established by EoY1.	20% improvement by end of EoY (EoY) 2; 50% by EoY 4. (To be assessed based on specific methodologies developed)	1. Several awareness activities have taken place, like celebration of the Wetland Day 2012 and local important events focussing the schools, youth and environmental organizations and Prespa National Park administration. Wide coverage thought the media. (AL) 2. Establishment of the Information Centre at Park Administration building equipped and assisted in performing nature interpretation activities and other events. (AL) 3. Increased awareness of the inhabitants and stakeholders on Prespa values and practical information on project results.(AL) 4. The project continues maintaining the project web site (AL, TB, MK) 5. The project organized a training with the tea gatherers in Prespa on tea (Sideritis Raeseri) conservation and sustainable gathering methods. Furthermore, number of stakeholders were made aware on the significance, conservation efforts of priorty species and habitats under the public awareness raising activities launched by the project. Appropriate materials were prepared and distributed widely in all 3 countries in Prespa. Furthermore, the project organized public awareness rasining activities with the primary and secondary schools in Albania and Macedonia. Presentations and workshops were organized with school age children, and the teachers in biology, geography and natural sciences were included in all workshops as a measure of rasining awareness. (TB). 6. The project organized public screening in Prespa and Skopje of the documentary film In the Heart of the Balkans – The Pelicans of the Prespa Park produced by the Arte TV, together with the Macedonian Ecological Society. This film which shooting was also supported by the project staff will contribute to promotion of the values of the Prespa region not only in the region but worldwide as it will be shown on many festivals around the world.(TB, MK). 7. The National Capital Resource Centre (NCRC) is fully functional and serves as a valuable source of information and data on all features of the Prespa watershed. The sfatt of the NCrc organized numerous events for school children and broader public and also supports the local government in preparation of project proposals and identification of potential funding oportunities. (MK)
	Cost savings to specific farmers from use of fertilizer made from waste apples in MK.	Costs and technique to produce fertilizer made from waste apples tbd in first six months.	Reduced in participating farms by significant percentage by EoY 3.	With the paralel co-funding ensured by UNDP is currently implementing aproject for establishment of a biodegradable waste management in the Macedonian part of the Prespa watershed. The organic waste mostly from the rotten apples will be used for production of fertilizer thus significantly reducing the negative impact of agricultural waste on the quality of water and soil in the watershed. The construction of the system should be completed by the end of 2012. At the same time, the problem with the management of the pasticide packaging waste has been significntly reduced through the system for collection of this waste that was established with support from the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency. (MK)
	Decline in sales of detergents containing phosphorous in Resen municipality.	Baseline TBD in first six months.	Decline of 50% by EoY 3; 75% by EoY 4.	n/a
	Eutrophying inputs (N, organic material) to Macro Prespa reduced m3 through small-scale wastewater	One wastewater treatment plant in MK and none in AL. Relevant project underway	Two pilots reduce inputs by 1000 m3 by EoY 3.	1. The Waste Water Treatment Plant in Nakolec is still not operational due to delays in completion of the works for construction of the sewage system. At the last Project Board meeting, the Municipality of Resen and the Ministry of Environment commited to finalize the sewage system by the end of 2012 thus fulfilling their commitment towards the project. (MK)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	treatment pilots.	in GR* Prespa (Current input to be determined by EoY1)		
	Improved overall quality of life in villages with small-scale wastewater treatment.	Community survey measures quality of life baseline first 6 months	Significant increase in quality of life measurement from survey of participating local communities.	1. Sustained improvements of local communities' quality of life due to impact and positive progress in the fishery and agricultural sector, enforcement of the law, improvement of the infrastructure, support to the management activities (AL) 2. Considerable river restoration works have been completed in Prespa through the SDC-funded Restoration of Golema Reka project. Both urban and non-urban sections of Golema Reka, the largest and most degraded tributary of Prespa, have been restored, which involved construction of wastewater collection systems in industrial and residential areas located along the river. The SDC funds have also been used for improvement of the hydrological and meteorological monitoring of environmental parameters of Golema Reka. An urban section with total length of almost 1 km of the Golema Reka riverbed has been fully restored and regulated. A wastewater collection pipeline in the town of Resen with length of 660 m, located along the restored urban section, has been reconstructed. A boundary-urban (sub-urban) section of the Golema Reka riverbed with total length of 64 m, identified as highest priority, has been fully restored and regulated. A non-urban section of the Golema Reka riverbed with length of roughly 300 m in proximity of Jankovec village has been fully restored and regulated. Automatic monitoring system has been installed. Hazardous pesticide and fertilizer packaging waste system has been designed, established and put into practice. A Feasibility Study on Biodegradable Waste Management for the entire Prespa region has been developed. Follow up activities on establishing a pilot composting plant covering the area of Resen and Jankovec are ongoing based on recommendations from the Study (see above). A wastewater collection pipeline with a total length of 1,250 m in the village of Gorna Bela Crkva has been installed. The pipeline connects the village to the central Waste Water Treatment Plan Ezerani. As a result of these interventions there's an improved quality of life for the local communities living in the area. (MK)
	Reduced costs for water, pesticide and fertilizer inputs for local farmers in MK, AL and GR*	Costs tbd in first six months	Reduced in monitored farms by significant percentage (more than 35-40%) by EoY 3	1. Same estimates remain for this period. (MK) 2. Insignificant export of pesticides and fertiliser marked in the custom observations (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
Outcome 3: Stakeholders conserve priority biological diversity across the Prespa Basin and make key protected areas in Prespa Basin fully operational	# hectares of priority habitat for birds, fish, rare plants, and mammals under improved conservation management	No managemen t plans; no active managemen t; no specific # of hectares under special managemen; Approved management plan (2001) for wet meadows of Micro Prespa in GR* which is being revised through SPP LIFE-Nature project GR*.	Target number of hectares under improved management to be determined and implemented based on recommendatio ns of the species action plans.	1. UNDP project assistance and resource materials are provided for the development of the Prespa Park Management Plan as well as for the training and capacity building for the monitoring aspect with PNP administration (AL) 2. Conservation plans for transboundary priority species and habitats were prepared in this reporting period. The conservatiion plans include an analysys of threats and offer comprehensive set of measures for protection and conservation of the species and habitats. The plans are completed ans shared with the relevant stakeholders and further promoted through public events/public awareness activity. (TB) 3. The conservation plan on Juniper Forest ((Juniperetum excelsae) aims to provide measures for establishment of sustainable management of juniper forest, which includes (a) the prevention of illegal cutting, (b) introduction of sustainable management for coppicing and (c) effective enforcement of existing legislation.(TB) 4. Furthermore, the Brown Bear (Ursus arctos L.) Conservation Action Plan for Lake Prespa's provides measures for eliminate poaching and trade, safeguarding the coherent bear range/habitats, reduce the human-bears' conflicts, secure the natural supply and diversity of food production, to have sufficient knowledge, minimize disturbance and Improve communication. The plan also includes a detailed 5–year period. (TB) 5. The action plan on Caves/Bats in Prespa Conservation projects includes a 5-year action plan and proposes a number of approaches for protetcion of these species/habitat including establishment of working groups on bats and appoint a coordinator in each country, organization of regular contacts, exchange of information/findings from bat surveys, and meetings, planning and implement joint monitoring and research efforts based on commonly agreed protocols and methodologies, etc. (TB) 6. A 5-year conserv ation plan is developed for Prespa reedbeds. The plan analyses the threats and proposes measures and actions including controlof the human induced oscillations in the water level; Mitigation of the impacts from siltation processes on reedbeds in Lesser Prespa Lake through modification of management practices; Minimization of the pressure/impact on reedbeds from uncontrolled land use; Promotion and implementation of appropriate management of the reedbeds; Improvement of the general viability of the reedbeds through better implementation of the existing legislation; Improvement of the knowledge and data about the reedbeds and raising of public and stakeholder awareness about the value of the habitat and the need for its proper management.(TB) 7. Following the recommendation in the Study for revalorization of Ezerani protected area the Prliament enacted a Law on protected area "Ezerani". A Management Plan for the Ezerani protected area is also prepared, appointing the Municipality of Resen as a management authority .(MK) 7. The first Transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan for the Prespa Lakes was completed at the beginning of 2012. Amongst other measures, the plan proposes a total ban on fishing Prespa barbell for 6 years period and a 3 years ban on fishing Prespa Trout from the tributaries (for more information on the plan see above).

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	ENR and PPA-GR* are/are not gazetted and boundaries are/are not clearly marked on maps or on the ground	Not gazetted; Not clearly marked	ENR and PPA-GR *are gazetted and boundaries are clearly marked on the ground by EoY4.	1. Following the recommendation in the Study for revalorization of Ezerani protected area, the Parliament enacted a re-designation Law on Ezerani. A Management Plan for the Ezerani protected area is also prepared, in accordance with the national regulations, the primary management objectives, and the category type proposed in the revalorization study. The Management Plan has been handed over to the new management authority, the Municipality of Resen as per the Law on Ezerani. The Management Plan will be used as the main document guiding the area's operation. The process has been conducted in a highly participatory environment through various formal and informal communication mechanisms, such as the stakeholder advisory body called Ezerani Council which has been established for the purpose.(MK) 2. In parallel with the management planning process, the project supported the preparation of an Economic Valuation Report aiming at raising the awareness of the economic values of effective conservation, evaluating the costs and benefits of specific habitat management actions to inform conservation and public funding decisions, identifying financial opportunities for the protected area and neighboring communities associated with the provision of ecosystem services and with specific management actions; and generating participation and training opportunities for conservation managers and decision-makers in economic valuation for integrated ecosystem management. (MK)
	Golema Reka River (MK) restored	Degraded Golema River in need of solid waste removal, stream habitat and substrate protection and reduction of pollution (including pollution from fish farms near Krusje springs)	Analysis of situation by EoY 1; Approval of final plans by EoY 2; Pilot demonstration restoration by EoY3;	1. (see above) Following the recommendation in the Study for revalorization of Ezerani protected area, the Parliament enacted a re-designation Law on Ezerani. A Management Plan for Ezerani protected area is also prepared, in accordance with the national regulations, the primary management objectives, and the category type proposed in the revalorization study. The Management plan has been handed over to the new management authority - the Municipality of Resen as per the Law on Ezerani. The Management Plan will be used as the main document guiding the area's operation. The process has been conducted in a highly participatory environment through various formal and informal communication mechanisms, such as the stakeholder advisory body called Ezerani Council which has been established for the purpose.(MK) 2. In parallel with the management planning process, the project supported the preparation of an Economic Valuation Report aiming at raising the awareness of the economic values of effective conservation, evaluating the costs and benefits of specific habitat management actions to inform conservation and public funding decisions, identifying financial opportunities for the protected area and neighboring communities associated with the provision of ecosystem services and with specific management actions; and generating participation and training opportunities for conservation managers and decision-makers in economic valuation for integrated ecosystem management. (MK) 3. Considerable river restoration works have been completed in Prespa through the SDC-funded Restoration of Golema Reka project. Both urban and non-urban sections of Golema Reka, the largest and most degraded tributary of Prespa, have been restored, which also involved construction of wastewater collection systems in industrial and residential areas located along the river. The SDC funds have also been used for improvement of the hydrological and meteorological monitoring of environmental parameters of Golema Reka. An urban section with total length of almost 1 km of the Golema Reka riverbed has been fully restored and regulated. A wastewater collection pipeline in the town of Resen with length of 660 m, located along the restored urban section, has been reconstructed. A boundary-urban (sub-urban) section of the Golema Reka riverbed with total length of 64 m, identified as highest priority, has been fully restored and regulated. A non-urban section of the Golema Reka riverbed with length of roughly 300 m in proximity of Jankovec village has been fully restored and regulated. Automatic monitoring system has been installed. Hazardous pesticide and fertilizer packaging waste system has been established and put into practice. A Feasibility Study on Biodegradable Waste Management for the entire Prespa region has been developed. Follow up activities on establishing a pilot (small-scale) composting plant covering the area of Resen and Jankovec are ongoing based on recommendations from the Study (see above). A wastewater collection pipeline with a total length of 1,250 m in the village of Gorna Bela Crkva has been

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
				constructed. The pipeline connects the village to the central Waste Water Ttreatment Plant Ezerani.(MK)
	Number of species action plans developed and approved	Few species action plans; Information very good for some species, spotty or lacking for others	Species action plans developed and agreed in the Prespa basin by EoY 4.	1. Conservation plans for transboundary priority species and habitats were prepared in this reporting period. The conservatiion plans include an analysys of threats and offer comprehensive set of measures for protection and conservation of the species and habitats. The plans are completed ans shared with the relevant stakeholders and further promoted through public events/public awareness activity. (TB) 2. The conservation plan on Juniper Forest ((Juniperetum excelsae) aims to provide measures for establishment of sustainable management of juniper forest, which includes (a) the prevention of illegal cutting, (b) introduction of sustainable management for coppicing and (c) effective enforcement of existing legislation.(TB) 3. Furthermore, the Brown Bear (Ursus arctos L.) Conservation Action Plan for Lake Prespa's provides measures for eliminate poaching and trade, safeguarding the coherent bear range/habitats, reduce the human-bears' conflicts, secure the natural supply and diversity of food production, to have sufficient knowledge, minimize disturbance and Improve communication. The plan also includes a detailed 5–year period. (TB) 4. The action plan on Caves/Bats in Prespa Conservation projects includes a 5-year action plan and proposes a number of approaches for protetcion of these species/habitat including establishment of working groups on bats and appoint a coordinator in each country, organization of regular contacts, exchange of information/findings from bat surveys, and meetings, planning and implement joint monitoring and research efforts based on commonly agreed protocols and methodologies, etc. (TB) 5. A 5-year conserv ation plan is developed for Prespa reedbeds. The plan analyses the threats and proposes measures and actions including control of the human induced oscillations in the water level; Mitigation of the impacts from siltation processes on reedbeds in Lesser Prespa Lake through modification of management practices; Minimization of the pressure/impact on reedbeds from uncontrolled land use; Promotion and implementation of appropriate management of the reedbeds; Improvement of the general viability of the reedbeds through better implementation of the existing legislation; Improvement of the knowledge and data about the reedbeds and raising of public and stakeholder awareness about the value of the habitat and the need for its proper management.(TB) 6. The First Transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan for Prespa was completed at the beginning of 2012. Amongst other measures, the plan proposes a total ban on fishing Prespa barbell for 6 years period and a 3 years ban on fishing Prespa Trout from the tributaries (for more information on the plan see above).(TB)
	Pilot application of the transboundary monitoring system and assessment of methods, training and capacity needs and analysis/interpretation of data	Evaluation of applied original monitoring system (see above	Revised monitoring system in place and generating useful data by end of EoY 4	1. The pilothing phase of the Transboundary Monitoring System was completed in the period 2010 -2011. The reports in all thematic areas (Water, Fish and fisheries monitoring, aquatic vegetation, forests and other terrestrial habitats were prepared which address the piloting phase, gathered data and methodology,. The piloting was done by institutions in all three sides in parallel. Upon conclusion of the piloting, a revision or Adjustment to the Transboundary Monitoring Study is prepared which looks at the document in a critical manner and subject it to a reality check, involving questions relating to how manageable is it, how realistic and how much cost effective. Its aim is to suggest all necessary modifications to the initial TMS plan that will enhance it to become simpler, more concrete, as manageable, realistic and cost-effective as possible, and able to start operating as fast as possible without needing long preparation periods or sophisticated and expensive tools. The implementation of the Transboundary Monitoring System was not directly controlled by the project, but the project actively supported the process from the development, into piloting phase and contributed especially by bringing in national ownership and provided some equipment for the institutions. (TB) 2. Input and support was provided by the National components, especially in terms of expertise and input. (AL, MK)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	Presence/absence of up-to-date information on extent/condition of priority species and habitat distribution, abundance, and condition.	Information spotty, dated, and focused on single species	Updated data by EoY 2; Establishment of reference conditions for selected species by EoY 3.	1. The conservation plans prepared as well as the Transboundary management plan provide clear information on the extens and the condition and distribution of the selected species and habitats in Prespa. The conservation plans and the status papers before that provide analysis of distribution and condition, analysis of threats, status of national conservation efforts (legislation etc). (TB) 2. The Albanian component provided input in the development of the plans, by sharing, consulting the stakeholders and made the plans avaliable to locla stakeholders, authoritiers, PNP and project partners (AL) 3. Input and support is provided from Albanian expert into finalisation and implementation of this plan (AL)
	Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score for PNP, GNP, and ENR, PPA-Greece*.	X (TBD at project inception)	X + 20% by mid term; X + 40% by project end.	1. The 4th METT is applied throught the KfW programme based on cooperation and experience delivered by UNDP Project; a improved result from 36 to 37 is noted. (AL) 2. The METT for Ezerani protected area was applied upon the appointement of the management body and development of the management plan. The METT overal score shows increase of 31% over the previous METT done during the preparation of the revalorization study for Ezerani in 2009. (MK)
	The management authorities of ENR, PNP-AL, GNP and PPA-Greece* are fully equipped and operational to carry out basic management activities	Staff numbers are inadequate for critical management activities; relevant funding lacking	The respective management authorities have adequate scientific and administrational personnel for critical management activities by EoY 5.	1. Two other Prespa National Park Management Committee meetings are organsied in Korca and addressed all problems related to IEM of Prespa. The project reported and approved the activities at Management Committee (AL). 2. 1. Following the recommendation in the Study for revalorization of Ezerani protected area, the Parliament enacted a re-designation Law on Ezerani. A Management Plan for the Ezerani protected area is also prepared, in accordance with the national regulations, the primary management objectives, and the category type proposed in the revalorization study. The Management Plan has been handed over to the new management authority - Municipality of Resen as per the Law on Ezerani. The Management plan will be used as the main document guiding the area's operation. The new project for the Prespa region that will be funded by SDC forsees a component for further strengthening of the capacities of the local government of Resen and persons that will ne nominated to work specifically on Ezerani protected area (MK).

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	Trans-boundary monitoring of important biotic and abiotic factors functioning/not functioning.	No monitoring system in place in AL and MK; In GR*, the Society for Protection of Prespa (SPP) has experience in monitoring several biotic and abiotic parameters	Establishment of monitoring and conservation working group (MCWG) in first six months; MCWG operational by EoY1; Participatory field survey protocols standardized by EoY1; Assessment of terrestrial & aquatic habitats for priority bird and mammal species by EoY 2; Capacity building and training programs underway by EoY1; Monitoring system in place and generating useful data by end of EoY 2 (including GIS).	1 (see above) 1. The pilothing phase of the Transboundary Monitoring System was completed at the beginning of 2012. The reports in all thematic areas (Water, Fish and fisheries monitoring, aquatic vegetation, forests and other terrestrial habitats were prepared which address the piloting phase, gathered data and methodology. The piloting was done by institutions in all three sides in paralell. Upon conclusion of the piloting, a revision or adjustment to the Transboundary Monitoring Study is prepared which looks at the document in a critical manner and subject it to a reality check, involving questions relating to how manageable is it, how realistic and how much cost effective. Its aim is to suggest all necessary modifications to the initial TMS plan that will enhance it to become simpler, more concrete, as manageable, realistic and cost-effective as possible, and able to start operating as fast as possible without needing long preparation periods or sophisticated and expensive tools. The implementation of the Transboundary Monitoring System was not directly controlled by the project, but the project actively supported the process from the development, into piloting phase and contributed especially by bringing in national ownership and provided some equipment for the institutions. (TB) 2. The MCWG Transboundary Monitoring and Conservation Working Group although did not meet in this reporting period, continued to provide substantial feedback to the processes. The members of the groups participated in most transboundary meetings related to fisheries, conservation plans etc.(TB) 3. The inputs from the member of MCWG continued as well as support to key trans boundary processes. The input was provided to the piloting stage of the TB as well as to the reports prepared in the reporting period (AL) 4. Local capacities on biodiversity monitoring issues and water management are strengthened through training workshops (AL) 5. Continued training on biodiversity monitoring Synergies and cooperation with KfW program enabled maintenance and strengthening of the results (AL) 6. The year-long comprehensive surveillance and monitoring of water quality and ecological status was conducted for all the basin water bodies, based on which reference conditions have been established in Macedonian Prespa. As a result of the monitoring activities the status of all the water bodies in the Macedonian part of the Prespa basin has been determined. Environmental objectives and respective indicators, both for the general environment and for the individual water bodies in terms of their progress towards achieving good water status for all water bodies, have been identified. The findings are shared and cross-referenced with the transboundary monitoring system study. (MK) 7. The Institute for Public Health in Bitola with the equipment provided by the project conducts continuous pesticide residues analyses at the inflows of the three main tributaries of the Prespa Lake, and at additional 6 locations in the littoral zone of the lake. The monitoring results are delivered to the Ministry of Envrionment and the Municipality of Resen. Furthermore, on a long run, it is expected that the Institute will adjust its monitoring programme with the requirements of the trans-boundary monitoring programme.(MK)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	Within the key protected areas human activities (e.g. including forestry, fishing, building) may/may not be practiced in an uncontrolled and/or unsustainable way (MK, AL, GR*)	No adequate control mechanisms for unsustainable human activities in the protected areas	Warden and control mechanisms (effective EIA process; law enforcement etc.) for controlling unsustainable human activities in protected areas exist and are effectively implemented; Expansion of scheme outside key protected areas (i.e. Trout streams)	1. The establishment of the Management Committee for the Prespa Park has multiplied the efforts for a more controlled development in the region, especially in sensitive and vulnerable areas (AL) 2. The preparation by the KfW of the management plan for Prespa Park forms a very strong basis for addressing the ecosystem management aspects, influencing the development of various contributing sectors, such as agriculture, industrial production, urbanization and etc. (AL) 3. The new law on water is expected to improve the management aspects (AL) 4. Provision of disease prognosis applications (integrated in agro-meteorological stations platform) for apple, onion and potato. Respective training with farmers accomplished; Results are maintained and instuitionalized through handing over of hard and software to Regional Agriculture directorate of Korca (AL) 5.The support provided by the national authorities in the development of the Watershed Management Plan for Prespa, as well as adoption of the bylaw on watershed management councils, the support to the eco-tourism strategy demonstrate a continued interest of the national authorities to mainstream ecosystem priorities in key productive sectors. (MK, TB). 6. The relevant municipal staff that was trained by the project is sucessfuly performing its duties especially regarding the Integrated Pollution and Prevention Control, communal waste management, etc thus ensuring an effective implementation of relevant national and local laws and regulations.
Outcome 4: Stakeholders build upon ongoing trans-boundary cooperation in the Prespa Basin by strengthening the trans-boundary coordination mechanism and piloting trans-boundary conservation and water management	Bat colonies protected and monitored in MK, AL and GR*.	Bat colonies known to a good extent, but not protected or monitored.	Priority bat colonies protected and monitored by year 3.	1. The action plan on Caves/Bats in Prespa Conservation includes a 5-year action plan and proposes a number of approaches for protetcion of these species/habitat including establishment of working groups on bats and appoint a coordinator in each country, organization of regular contacts, exchange of information/findings from bat surveys, and meetings, planning and implement joint monitoring and research efforts based on commonly agreed protocols and methodologies, etc. (TB) 2. The project has continued observation of the bat colonies in Treni cave (AL) 3. Prespa Park administration is assisted to perform control the access into the cave (AL)
	Continuing financial and institutional commitment from three littoral states (local and/or national commitments).	No long-term formal commitments	Continuing financial and institutional commitments made to adequately staff and continue operations of key project- inspired processes and use of tools	1. While the Prespa Park Management Committee (PPMC) is still not operational, the International Agreement for Prespa demonstrates a commitment of the national authorities to provide funding for transboudary governance and related institutions. At the informal PPMC meeting held in June 2012, the Ministries representatives, Mayors and NGOs from the three countries re-confirmed this commitment. (TB) 2. The Municipality of Resen became the management authority for Ezerani protected area which clearely demonstrates ownership and continuation of the activities started by the project. (MK) 3. The IPPC (Integrated Pollution and Prevention Control) process launcged by the project with the Municipality of Resen is now scalled up by the municipal authorities. The Municipality of Resen is constantly increasing the number of installations (polluters) being incorporated in the IPPC system by enforcing the permitting scheme. Furthermore, introduction of the IPPC system triggered private investments by the installtions (production plants) in reducing emissions, which is considered a specific leveraged financing that will last for years after the Programme ending. To meet the increased work, the Municipality increased its capacity and manpower. (MK) 4. The entire Watershed management planning process has national impact and was met with a great interest by the national authorities and support to suceed. The Manual for development of watershed management plans is now used by the Ministry of Environment for development of the other watershed plans. (MK) 5. By using the model established by the Prespa Watershed Management Council, the project has also supported preparation of subsidiary legislation regulating the work of the national River Basin Manage-ment Council (including financing). The legal act (decree) was adopted by the Ministry of Envrionemnt. (MK) 6. The state budget for the Regional Forestry Service Directory (including Park Administration) is increased Support provided by KfW to Park Administration on capacity building (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
				7. Additional training and support provided for Prespa Park administration and local involved authorities (AL) 8. Supstantive additional financial resources were mobilized for implementation of the Prespa Lake Watershed Management Plan on the Macedonian side and the municipality of Resen will be the key implementing partner.
	Declaration for the Prespa Park is/is not followed by specific tri-lateral agreement	No trilaterally agreed plan exists for the Prespa Basin	Agreed Strategic Action Program/Plan for Prespa basin with long-term operational objectives, commitments and ways to strengthen trans-boundary management (output 4.7)	1. The International Agreement passed adoption process in the EU Commission and is in process of adoption by the national authorities in the three countries. (TB)
	Ecological requirements for endemic trout understood and protected.	Species Action Plan (through research carried out in GR* and MK) to be produced by summer 2007.	In-stream flows and water quality maintained in Brajcino, Krani, Leva and Aghios Germanos Rivers by end of year 3; Pilot action taken according to Species Action Plan by EoY 2; Habitat protection status ensured in both countries (i.e. establishment of closed seasons, fishing bans, establishment of protection zone, maintenance of riparian forests- avoiding erosion, etc.) by EoY 2; Efficient wardening for illegal angling in both countries by EoY 2; Pollution problems ameliorated by EoY 4	1. The Transboundary Monitoring System suggested following trout population trend parameter, which is also retained under the Adjusted Transboundary Monitoring Study. The proposed frequency of monitoring is once per year along the rivers at suitable habitats (eg 3 locations per river). (TB) 2. The Transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan determins the fish stoch for fish species in Prespa including the trout, and includes detail analysis on fish distribution patterns, fish health etc. The Plan details measures for protection and a special measure of banning trout fishing for a period of 3 years. (TB) 3. Full ban on fishing in MK continued in this reporyting period. Lake concessionaries are not yet selected. (MK)
	Governments commit/ do not commit to funding full time executive secretary position for Prespa Park Coordination Committee.	No such position or funding exists.	Commitment by EoY. 3. Funding by EoY. 4.	1. Under the International Prespa Agreement the Governments commit to fund a position of expert in transboundary cooperation on protected areas and river basin management to head the PPMC Secretariat. The PPMC is yet to be operationa;ize, which is beyond control of the project (TB). 2 There has been significant investment on environment infrastructure throu government works mainly in improvement of road access and reconstraction of sewerage systems (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	Imperial eagle nesting habitat enhanced/protected, along with other important raptor and vulture nesting habitats enhanced/protected simultaneously (e.g. Golden Eagle, or rare nocturnal species) in MK, AL and GR*.	Ecological needs of eagle not understood by protected areas, forest managers or MoEPP.	Sub-Working Group on Birdlife formulates trans-boundary conservation actions for forest raptor species following by EoY1; Pilot conservation actions applied by EoY2; At least two different potential eagle- nesting areas under special management by year 3.	1.The imperial eagle was not selected by the trilateral Monitoring and Conservation Working Group amongs the priority species and habitats for which conservation plans were prepared. (TB)
	Inhabitants and stakeholders in the 3 countries aware/ unaware of Prespa values and informed on project activities	Environmental education/nature interpretation programs executed by SPP in GR*-Prespa during recent past; SPP Information Center on Trans- boundary Prespa Park operating in Aghios Germanos; Info Center in Zagradec, Micro Prespa (AL).	Increased awareness of stakeholders on values of Prespa and project activities – 20% by EoY 2 and 50% by EoY 4.	1. Targeted educational programme have been implemented in the course of implementation of various project components (stakeholder meetings and on Prespa ecosystem consultations, workshops, publications, etc) (AL) 2. Various public awareness activities have been carried out, T-shirts, caps and pens with Prespa Park logo produced, and distributed, monthly newsletter, Journalist tour in Prespa region. (AL) 3. The information centre in Gorrica is being reshaped, updated and supplied with necessary material and logistic and fully operational (AL) 4. The institutions and local NGOs are fully involved in TB activities on studies and monitoring (AL) 5. The project organized a training with the tea gatherers in Prespa on tea (Sideritis Raeseri) conservation and sustainable gathering methods. Furthermore, number of stakeholders were made aware on the significance, conservation efforts of priorty species and habitats under the public awareness raising activities launched by the project. Appropriate materials were prepared and distributed widely in all 3 countries in Prespa. Furthermore, the project organized public awareness rasining activities with the primary and secondary schools in Albania and Macedonia. Presentations and workshops were organized with school age children, and the teachers in biology, geography and natural sciences were included in all workshops as a measure of rasining awareness. (TB). 6. The project organized public screening in Prespa and Skopje of the documentary film In the Heart of the Balkans – The Pelicans of the Prespa Park produced by the Arte TV, together with the Macedonian Ecological Society. (TB, MK). 7. The National Capital Resource Centre established in Resen is fully functional and serves as a hub for knowledge and information on the Prespa region. The staff of the Centre also support the municipality of Resen to develop and implement varous projects on local level. (MK) 8. Number of articles on Prespa watershed related issues have been published in national and local newspapaers, magazines and the municipal web site.

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	NP and forest managers formulate trans-boundary management actions for priority trans- boundary forest biotopes [mountain meadows and rangelands of Galicica/Mali I Thate, juniper forest on Kalammas peninsula, Varnous Mountain – PPA (GR*) /Pelister PNP (MK)].	No consensus among managers regarding cooperative trans-boundary management of forest biotopes	Identification and prioritization of habitats by EoY1 according to the NATURA 2000 methodology or any other compatible one; Establishment of protection corridors (where feasible) in case of non-adjacent PAs by EoY 1; Development of management plans by EoY 2; Common monitoring of actions agreed and implemented by EoY 2; Pilot application of management actions by EoY 3.	1. (see above) Conservation plans for transboundary priority species and habitats were prepared in this reporting period. The conservatiion plans include an analysys of threats and offer comprehensive set of measures for protection and conservation of the species and habitats. The plans are completed ans shared with the relevant stakeholders and further promoted through public events/public awareness activity. (TB) 2. The UNDP project is assiting KfW with inputs and assessment into the management planing proces, which will also address the priority transboundary forest biotopes (AL)
	PPCC is/is not a legal entity under International Law	PPCC is an informal institution with no legal basis.	PPCC is legal entity as agreed to under trilateral agreement.	1. The Prespa Park Management Committee (PPMC) that replaced the interim PPCC under the new International Agreement on Prespa has a formal status (TB). 2. Albanian Ministry of Environment (MoEFWA) has provided coninous support and assutance to the functionality and operation of the PPMC (AL)
	Rare water-bird conservation through trans-boundary protection of breeding and nesting habitats in MK, AL and GR*.	Reedbed and wet meadows under some management in GR*, but not in MK and AL; No sufficient wardening applied in MK, AL and GR*.	Sub-Working Group on Birdlife formulates trans-boundary conservation actions for water birds in both lakes by EoY1; Pilot conservation actions applied by EoY2; Monitoring of pilot actions.	1. Conservation plans for transboundary priority species and habitats were prepared in this reporting period. The conservatiion plans include an analysys of threats and offer comprehensive set of measures for protection and conservation of the species and habitats. The plans are completed ans shared with the relevant stakeholders and further promoted through public events/public awareness activity. (TB) 2. A 5-year conserv ation plan is developed for Prespa reedbeds. The plan analyses the threats and proposes measures and actions including controlof the human induced oscillations in the water level; Mitigation of the impacts from siltation processes on reedbeds in Micro Prespa Lake through modification of management practices; Minimization of the pressure/impact on reedbeds from uncontrolled land use; Promotion and implementation of appropriate management of the reedbeds; Improvement of the general viability of the reedbeds through better implementation of the existing legislation; Improvement of the knowledge and data about the reedbeds and raising of public and stakeholder awareness about the value of the habitat and the need for its proper management.(TB) 3. The Ezerani management plan includes conservation measures for reedbed and birds. (MK) 4. Prespa National Park maintains inventory of forest trees, survey on bat colonies, and protection of endangered species (AL) 5. The local institutions and NGOs are involved in TB activities on studies and monitoring (AL) 6. The former result of a diminished extensive reeds population in the lake in a length of about 500 meters is remarkably being maintained by the PNP and KfW program (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	Status of agreement of transboundary water management to achieve good ecological water status in the water bodies of the Prespa Park. Coordination mechanism established through regular operation of Working Group on Water Management (WGWM).	No common agreed targets of water management	Establishment of the trilateral WGWM by EoY 1; monitoring; agreement of targets for TB water management by EoY4	1.While the Prespa Park Management Committee (PPMC) is still not operational and thus the Water Management Working Group is not estaplished yet, the International Agreement for Prespa demonstrates a commitment of the national authorities to provide funding for transboudary governance and related institutions. At the informal PPMC meeting held in June 2012, the Ministries representatives, Mayors and NGOs from the three countries re-confirmed thiir intention to work to on accelerating the process of operationalization of the PPMC as well as establishment of the Water Management Working Group. It is expected that this will be operationalised by end of 2012, as soon as the Prespa Agreement is ratified by the governments of Macedonia and Greece. (TB)
	Three states agree/ disagree on transboundary habitat conservation priorities that reflect ecological management objectives for sustainable use and conservation of species and ecosystem health and agree upon specific programmes	Management regime is not aligned regarding basin-wide important species and habitats	Three states agree on transboundary habitat conservation priorities that reflect ecological management objectives. Two habitat-related pilot projects agreed by EoY 1; relevant management activities implemented by EoY 3.	1. (above) Priority species and habitat for conservation were defined in 2010 within the Monitoring and Conservation Working Group. The Conservation plans for transboundary priority species and habitats were prepared in this reporting period. The conservatiion plans include an analysys of threats and offer comprehensive set of measures for protection and conservation of the species and habitats. The plans are completed ans shared with the relevant stakeholders and further promoted through public events/public awareness activity. (TB)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	Three states agree on trans-boundary fish conservation priorities that reflect ecological management objectives for sustainable use and conservation of native species and aquatic ecosystem health and agree upon specific program of measures for cooperative fish management.	Management regime does not reflect ecosystem objectives, though three countries ban fishing during spawning season.	Three states cooperate on enforcement; monitoring; and research by EoY 3.	1. The first transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan for the Prespa Lake was completed at the beginning of 2012. Amongst other measures, the Plan proposes a total ban on fishing Prespa barbell for 6 years period and a 3 years ban on fishing Prespa Trout from the tributaries (for more information on the plan see above).(TB)
	Robust shared database on priority ecosystem and species health parameters	No shared database w/ updated information; x-boundary discussions occur w/no support data.	MCWG or relevant Subworking Group defines parameters and rules for access to database; Shared database populated with reliable data supports x-boundary discussions.	Already reported in the previous period. Once the PPMC is fully operational, a decision on how to maintain the database and how to exchange the information will be made.
	Reduction in level of threat to endemic fish posed by exotics in all 3 countries. Conservation of genetic diversity of endemic fish species in all 3 countries.	Not understood or even recognized as a problem in MK, AL and GR. SPP holds long term data on native, endemic and introduced fish species.	Priority threats to endemic fish from exotics, habitat change, and overfishing and re-introductions understood by EoY1; Absolute prevention of introductions of predatory fish species of potential commercial value interest; Management action agreed by EoY 2; Pilot measures underway to reduce them by EoY 4.	1. The Fisheries Management Plan is prepared and respective recommendations duly taken into account Intensive public awareness and capacity building of key stakeholders. (AL) 2. Small scaled actions formerly taken by the project are being replicated form the fisherman associations in order to maintain the lake area of app. 40 ha under improved ecosystem status (AL) 3. The first transboundary Fish and Fisheries Management Plan for Prespa was completed at the beginning of 2012. Amongst other measures, the plan proposes a total ban on fishing Prespa barbell for 6 years period and a 3 years ban on fishing Prespa Trout from the tributaries (for more information on the plan see above).(TB)
	Wetland vegetation in GR and AL and MK are managed and their habitat values enhanced.	Wet meadows are under some management in GR (with 100 ha of wet meadows in Micro Prespa) but not in AL	Wet meadows in GR are restored and properly managed in GR-Prespa (targeting at the maintenance of minimum 100 ha); Pilot projects are starting in AL-Prespa.	1. The fisherman associations in AL Prespa continued efforts to sustain improved ecosystems situation of the lake area (40 ha) and clean navigation channels in Small Prespa (reeds removal) diminishing also the extensive reeds population in the lake (i a length of about 500 meters), and fish traps in Big Prespa Lake (reducing also the usage 'Ilovizhda') (AL)

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Self-reported Level at 30 June 2012
	Tri-national ecotourism management plan is/is not endorsed and promotion underway. Network of operational Information Centres in all 3 States.	No regional tourism management planning. SPP Info Centre operational in GR; operation of more Info Centres by Protected area authority-GR imminent; Info Centre in Gorica;	New tourism management and investment plan in place by year 5. Ensure the capacity and viability of Info Centres in all 3 sides; Network these Info Centres	1. The Transboundary Strategy for Sustainable Tourism and an Action Plan for the Prespa region was completed in this reporting period. The Strategy was prepared in a participatory manner including stakeholders from all three counries on local and national level. The overall aim of the Strategy is to enhance sustainable economic and social development of local societies and the wise use of natural resources. In particular the Strategy outlines the way forward forintegrating tourism into the overall development policies and patterns of the region and the countries; Providing a rational basis for decision-making by both the public and private sectors on tourism development; Optimising and balancing economic, environmental and social benefits of tourism; Laying the foundations for successful implementation of tourism policies; Initiating effective coordination and cooperation of stakeholders in the three countries; and Emphasizing the direction towards nature-based, sustainable tourism development. An integral part of the tourism strategy is five year action plan This identifies key actions and measures, priority levels, indicative budgets, responsible parties, timing, and monitoring mechanisms as well as success criteria. Pilot projects for immediate action are also suggested. The Strategy was endorsed by the Municipalities in Prespa i.e. Municipality of Resen, Municipality of Liqenas and the Municipality of Prespa in Greece. The municipalities are using the document for further fundraisning. (TB) 2. The contributin and input to regional torusim strategy and action plan are provided (AL) 3. The locla authorities and PNP with KfW are refering to this strategy for the future activities in the sector: (AL)
Outcome 5: Lessons learned and adaptive management of project	Effective delivery rate	Block B delivery	As good or better than Block B delivery rate	1. Only for the reporting period: 87,245.62 USD are disbursed (consultancies, trainings, awareness, actions, equipment, monitoring, etc.). Delivery till June 2012 is 100 % (AL) 2. Total delivery for the MK component is 1.469.253 USD till end of June or 99.64 %. (MK) 3. Total delivery for the component by end of June 2012 is 1.539.181 USD or 95.6 %.(TB)
	Positive evaluations	First evaluation	Improvement with each successive evaluation.	1. The terminal project evaluation of the project started in June 2012. The final report is expected by end of September/beginning of October 2012. (TB, MK, AL)

Annex 4: Follow-up to Mid-term Evaluation Recommendations

Recommendation	Fulfilled	Notes
The Project replaces the position of International Transboundary Advisor and the current PPCC Secretariat with fully professional national staff.	N	The project was not in a financial or political position to replace the PPCC Secretariat
UNDP-GEF again requests the Greek Government to honour the financial commitments it made to the Project and applies the requisite level of pressure through its office until this is achieved.	Y	
The Project's oversight arrangements are re-examined with a view to ensuring maximisation of their relevance and effectiveness in meeting the Project's requirements.	?	No significant changes made in oversight arrangements. Role of the PPCC as the POC were initially clarified in February 2008 (prior to the MTE).
The replacement option for the International Transboundary Advisor should report technically directly to the Regional Technical Advisor in Bratislava.	N	While theoretically possible, such an arrangement was not practical for UNDP or for project implementation, and its value was not certain.
UNDP-MK should review its procedures and staffing levels to better service Project implementation and streamline procedures enabling Project staff to spend more time on technical activities and less on bureaucratic procedures.	?	Unclear if a specific review was carried out, but according to project participants administrative bureaucracy improved after the initial stages of the project.
UNDP-AL ensures that the Project staff of the Albanian component remain in post subject to satisfactory performance evaluations	?	This does not appear to have been an ongoing issue, and the UNDP-AL project staff have been consistently in place through the life of the project.
A professional communications specialist should be hired to implement the Communications, Education and Public Awareness Strategy and to manage transboundary information and knowledge effectively.	Y	Significant additional attention was devoted to communications aspects in the second half of the project.
The Albanian component of the Project should develop a contingency plan as to how it intends to implement or amend those activities to be conducted in concert with the KfW project should there be further delays to that project's commencement beyond September 2009.	Y / ?	Unclear if a specific contingency plan was developed, but the Albanian component activities moved ahead, while the KfW activities remained stalled until late 2011.
A rigorous system of computer back-up, especially for the GIS, should be instigated with two back-up copies being stored in separate locations and backed up alternately. It would be preferable if one of these was stored within a fire-proof safe within the office. Similarly, back-up lists of computer passwords should be stored securely	Y	Back-up procedures were implemented.
The GEF logo should be included appropriately on all signs, banners, and publications in Albania.	Y	This was not investigated to the Nth degree by the terminal evaluation, but it appears that improvements in this regard were made.
The Project indicators should be re-examined and minor changes effected.	N	It does not appear that the logframe indicators and targets were formally revised following the MTE.
The Deputy Resident Representative of the UNDP-MK Office should examine the staff performance evaluation of the ITA retrospectively and act on her	?	Unclear what specific procedures were followed, but there do not appear to be any outstanding substantive issues

findings		between the ITA and UNDP Macedonia office.
The right bank of the Golema Reka Restoration Phase I should be planted to favour biodiversity and public access should be denied to that bank.	N	It does not appear that this was a practical or feasible recommendation for the project.
The River Restoration Manual should be re-examined and re-written to better reflect global best practice and to provide a more biodiversity-sympathetic emphasis to river restoration[32].	?	Unknown if the river restoration manual was significantly revised or updated to reflect these considerations, but there is no indication that it was.
The training and capacity building programme for the Watershed Council members and stakeholders should be upgraded.	N	No significant additional effort made in this regard.
Phase II of the Golema Reka Restoration Scheme should be designed with biodiversity at the forefront of the scheme's aims, and that the principles of best practice for urban schemes should be applied to provide a model in the area for replication.	N	No significant additional steps taken in this regard; practical feasibility uncertain.
The Project should incorporate Strategic Environmental Assessment within the process of developing the Watershed Management Plan as a demonstration of best practice.	Y	Strategic Environmental Assessment included in MK-Prespa WMP.
A capacity building programme covering the procedure for the approval of the Environmental Impact Assessments should be established for appropriate environmental staff in the Municipality of Resen and other key stakeholders.	Partial	The project supported introduction of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control B-type permitting for various industries in Resen municipality through training and expert support in reviewing permit applications.

[32] Consolidated comment: The Manual is now under development. See the comment 50.

Annex 5. List of Persons Met and Interviewed During Terminal Evaluation Mission

UNDP / GEF

Alessandro Fracassetti	Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Macedonia
Anita Kodzoman	UNDP-Macedonia Head of Environment Programme
Elvita Kabashi	UNDP- Program Analyst, UNDP Albania
Vladimir Mamaev (Phone or Skype)	GEF Regional Technical Advisor, Regional Coordination Centre, Bratislava
ZlatkoSamardziev	National Coordinator, GEF Small Grants Programme FYR Macedonia

Project Staff

Dimitrija Sekovski	National Project Manager for MK national component
Violeta Zuna	National Project Manager for AL national component
Eno Dodbiba	Project Specialist for AL national component
Nikola Zdraveski	Project Specialist for MK national component
Alexander Ivanovski	Project Specialist for MK national component
Ardit Konomi	Local Project Coordinator for AL national component
Gordana Cvetkoska	Project Assistant
Sandra Ismanovski	Communications and Partnership Officer/ Former Communication Specialist for the project

Project Consultants

Peter Whalley	International Transboundary Advisor, Consultant for TDA/SAP process
Ljupco Melovski	Team leader – Species and Habitats conservation plans
Zoran Spirkovski	Team leader – Transboundary Fisheries Management Plan
Robert Travers (phone or Skype)	International Consultant – Tourism Development Strategy and Action Plan
Naumce Tashevski	Ezerani Protected Area
Thimaq Lako	Former project expert METT Evaluator
Laurent Chazee (Phone or Skype meeting)	Socio economic consultant
Rezar kapedani	Fishery consultant
Molnar Kolaneci	Water management consultant
Sulejman Sulce	Rural development and agro-environment

Government Departments

Sonja Lepitkova	State Secretary at the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Skopje
Dejan Panovski	Project coordinator for the MK components, Ohrid Lake Secretariat
Daniela Stefanovska	GEF Focal Point at the Ministry of Environment
Boyan Durnev	Head of Department for Water Management, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (FYR Macedonia)
IlberMirta	Head of Department on Waters, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (FYR Macedonia)
Sasko Jordanov	Head of Division for Nature Protection, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (FYR Macedonia)
Aleksandar Nastov	Head of Division for Biodiversity, MOEPP (Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (FYR Macedonia)
Svetozar Petkovski	Consultant to Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (FYR Macedonia) on Biodiversity, Ezerany Study
Spyros Plessas (email)	Head of Department of Management of Natural Environment, Ministry of Environment, Greece
Pellumb Abeshi	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration (MoEFWA) – General Director and Chairman of Management Committee, Albania
Nihat Dragoti	MoEFWa – Head of PA section, Albania
Elvana Ramaj	MoEFWA – Biodiversity specialist, Albania
Jadranka Ivanova	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning

Local Administration

Sasko Andreevski	Head of local Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Resen (FYR Macedonia)
Ayman Al-Malla	Head of Local Economic Development at Municipality of Resen

Mihail Volkanovski	Mayor of Municipality of Resen
Adriana Georgievska	Environmental Inspector, Sector of Urban Planning, Environmental and Planning Services, Municipality of Resen (FYR Macedonia)
Muzafer Murati	Director of Public Enterprise "Proleter", Resen (FYR Macedonia)
Vasilis Tsapas	Mayor of Municipality of Prespa (Greece)
Yannis Kazoglou	Advisor, Municipality of Prespa, Greece
Edmond Themelko	Mayor of Liqenas Commune (Albania)
Artur Agolli	Mayor of Proger (Albania)
Pellump Hoxha	Fishery inspectorate (Albania)

International Organisations/Donors

Stanislava Dodeva	National Programme Officer, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Thimaq Lako / Spase Shumka	KfW Project
Miltos Gletsos (Skype or Telephone)	Worldwide Fund for Nature-GR / Society for the Protection of Prespa Transboundary Monitoring Project Coordinator

NGOs

Sonia Fuzevska	President of the NGO Coalition for Perspective Prespa Region (FYR Macedonia)
Frosina Gorgievski	Laboratory Manager of Union of Agricultural Producers
Vasil Jankulla	Head of NGO "Association of Forest and Pasture Users of Prespa" (Albania)
YlliKape	Head of "Fisherman's Association of Small Prespa" (Albania)
Mihallaq Qirjo	REC Albania
Koco Trajce	OFM Korca
Sulejman Sulce	RCRD, Tirana
Zamir Dedei	INCA, Tirana
Ferdi Bego	Mammals association
Nevruz Shkembi	Farmers associations
Valentina Vurmo	Woman/ tourist associations
Ljupco Krstevski	Natural Capital Resource Center
Maja	Natural Capital Resource Center
Myrsini Malakou	Director Society for the Protection of Prespa
Vivi Roumeliotov	Policy and Sustainable Development Coordinator, Society for the Protection of Prespa
Stevce Radevski	President of Union of Agricultural Producers
Sali Zulal	President of Fisherman's Association "PrespanskiKrap" (FYR Macedonia)

Protected Areas

Olsi Duma	Director of Prespa National Park (Albania)
Vasil Male	Chief inspector Prespa National Park
Zoran	National Park Galicica
Naumce Noveski or Oliver Avramoski	National Park Galicica
Leto Papadopoulou (phone)	Transboundary Officer, Prespa National Forest Management Board (Greece)

Annex 6. Prespa IEM Terminal Evaluation Field Visit Schedule

Date		
Tue	12th June	Arrival in Skopje
Wed	13th June	09.00 Briefing with national consultant for support of the terminal evaluation in MK (Danco Uzunov, UNDP CO Office in Skopje) Meeting with National Project Manager for the MK component (Dimitrija Sekovski, UNDP CO Office in Skopje) Meeting with State Secretary for Environment, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, FYR Macedonia (Sonja Lepitkova) Meeting with the GEF Operational Focal Point at the Ministry of Environment (Daniela Stefanovska) National Programme Officer, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (Stanislava Dodeva) Meeting with Communications and Partnership Officer at UNDP CO Skopje (Sandra Ismanovski, UNDP CO Office in Skopje) (Overnight in Skopje)
Thu	14th June	Meeting with the Head of Department on Waters, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (Ylber Mirta) Meeting with the Head of Division for Nature Protection, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (Sasko Jordanov) Meeting with the Head of Department for Legislation, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (Jadranka Ivanova) Meeting with the Team leader – Species and Habitats conservation plans (Ljubco Melovski) (Travel to Ohrid)
Fri	15th June	Meeting with the Project coordinator for the MK components, Ohrid Lake Secretariat (Dejan Panovski) Meeting with the Team leader – Transboundary Fisheries Management Plan (Zoran Spirkovski) Meeting with the Mayor of Municipality of Resen (Mihail Volkanovski) Meeting with the Environmental Inspector, Sector of Urban Planning, Environmental and Planning Services, Municipality of Resen (Andrijana Georgievska) Meeting with the President of Union of Agricultural Producers (Stevce Radevski) and the Laboratory Manager of Union of Agricultural Producers (Frosina Gorgievska) Meeting with focal point for the Ezerani protected area at the Municipality of Resen (Naumce Tashovski) (Overnight in Ohird)
Sat	16th June	Meeting with the Public Forestry Enterprise PrespaDrvo (Kire Barandovski) Meeting with the President of the NGO Coalition for Perspective Prespa Region (Sonja Fuzevska) Meeting with the staff at the Natural Capital Resource Center (Ljupco Krstevski and Maja Kotevska)

		Afternoon: Meetings with project staff at the project office in Resen (Overnight in Ohrid)
Sun	17th June	All day: Document review (PE)
Mon, 18th June	8.30 (GMT +1) 12.00 (GMT+2) 14.00 (GMT +2)	Departure for Greece Meeting with the Society for Protection of Prespa (Myrsini Malakou, Vivi Roumeliotou) Meeting with the Mayor of Municipality of Prespa (Vasilis Tsepas) and Advisor (Dr. Yannis Kazoglou) Travel to Albania (Overnight in Korca)
Tue, 19th June	0930-1000 1030-1100 1100-1130 1130-1230 1300-1330 1430-1500 1500-1530 1630	Meeting with the Mayor of Liqenas, Albania (Edmond Temelko) Meeting with the Director of the National Prespa Park Albania (Olsi Duma) and Chief Inspector of National Park Prespa (Vasil Male) Meeting with Head of NGO "Association of Forest and Pasture Users of Prespa" (Vasil Jankulla) Meeting with Head of Fisherman's Association and OFM (Yilli Kape, Koco Trajce) and the Fisheries Inspector for the Prespa Lake (Pellumb Hoxha) Meeting with Head of Woman/ tourist associations (Valentina Vurmo) Meeting with Mayor of Proger (Artur Argolli) Meeting with the representative of the Farmers' Association (Nevruz Shkembi, Nardi Hoxha) Travel to Tirana Overnight stay in Tirana
Wed, 20th June	0930-1000 1030-1130 1200- 1300 1500-1530	Meeting with the UNDP Albania Environment Program Analyst (Elvita Kabashi) Meeting with the National Project Manager for the Prespa Project in Albania (Violeta Zuna) and the Project Specialist (Eno Dodbiba) Meeting with the General Director and Chairman of Management Committee at the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration and Project Director for the Prespa Project (Pellumb Abeshi) Meeting with the Head of Protected Areas Department at the Ministry of Environment in Albania (Nihat Dragoti) Meeting with the Biodiversity specialist at the Ministry of Environment in Albania (Elvana Ramaj) Meeting with representative of REC – Regional Environmental Center Albania (Mihallaq Qirjo) Meeting with a representative from INCA (Zamir Dedej)

	1600-1630	Overnight stay in Tirana
Thu, 21st June	0930-1000 1030-1100 1130-1200 1230-1300 1400-1500 1600	Meeting with a representative of the Association of mammals (Ferdinand Bego) Meeting with KfW representative and former METT specialist for the project (Timaq Lako) potentially brought forward to Tuesday – TBC Meeting with Water management consultant (Molaner Kolaneci) Meeting with a project fisheries consultant (Rezart Kapedani) Meetings with project staff at the Project office in Tirana, Debriefing Travel to Skopje Overnight stay in Skopje
Fri, 22nd June	22nd June	Meeting with a representative from GIZ (Nikoleta Bogatinova) Skype meeting with Prespa National Forest Management Body (Leto Papadoloulou) Debriefing with Head of the Environment Cluster (Anita Kodzoman), DRR of UNDP (Alessandro Fracassetti) Overnight in Skopje
Sat	23rd June	Departure