

## PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

Project Title	Enhancing transboundary cooperation and governance in the Drin river basin
Project Manager	Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa, Regional Adviser on Environment
Subprogramme	Environment
Implementing Entity	UNECE
Start Date	October 2017
End Date	June 2019
Budget	216,100US\$
Beneficiary Countries	Albania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Montenegro
Cooperating Entities within the UN System	UNDP
Other Implementing Partners	GWP – Mediterranean

### Background

The extended Drin Basin is located in the south-eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula. A number of activities in the basin – many of which are related to the economy entail various uses of natural resources, including water, which are often conflicting. Furthermore, there is a record of unsustainable management approaches in the Drin Basin that have contributed to the degradation of the basin's ecosystems and to compromising the sustainable economic development in the region.

Action towards integrated basin management is ongoing by all Riparians sharing the Basin, but there is still a long way to go, as the Riparians are at different stages of transposition and implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. However, so far there has been mostly a unilateral perspective in the management of the shared water resources. There is a space for improvement in cooperation when it comes to the preparation of River Basin Management Plans. Overall, there is an absence of an overarching basin-wide policy formulation and decision-making framework grounded on scientific data and knowledge. This hinders the design of coherent strategies, legislation and regulations, and prevents the identification of investments which are aligned with the sustainable utilization of the Basin's water resources and their integrated management. The project intends to address above issues by enhancing transboundary cooperation and governance in the Drin river basin.

The proposed project is a part of the UNECE Water Convention Work Programme. It contributes to the application of the Water Convention principles. All three countries are Parties to the convention. UNECE will provide technical assistance and advise on issues of expertise. The project will use the UNECE Water Convention methodology regarding Water, Food, Energy and Ecosystems nexus assessment. An indicator-based analysis will be used for the qualification and for the initial quantification of the - identified through the TDA- inter-linkages among water, land, energy and ecosystems.

A Drin Basin Water Monitoring Program, which will be established under the project is compatible with the UNECE Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers and the Shared Environmental Information System.

A Drin Basin Management Plan will be developed in accordance with the UNECE Water Convention, that will serve as the guidance document for the development and implementation of river/lake basin management plans for each of the Sub-Basins at national and transboundary level in accordance with the bilateral and multilateral agreements among the Drin Riparians.

The project will support the achievement of the Expected accomplishment (a) “Improved response to environmental challenges”, (b) “Strengthened implementation of ECE multilateral commitments and increased geographical coverage”, (c) Strengthened national capacity for environmental monitoring and assessment systems in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe of Subprogramme 1 “Environment” of the UNECE strategic frameworks for 2016-2017 and 2018-2019. The project is a part of the PoW under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes for 2016-2018 (ECE/MP.WAT/49/Add.1).

Albania, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro are the project beneficiaries. The target group is water management professionals and decision makers dealing with transboundary water cooperation and integrated water resource management in relevant government departments. The project has been developed in line with official requests from the beneficiary countries.

UNECE has been promoting transboundary water cooperation in the Drin River basin since 2008. A major milestone in this respect has been the signature of the MoU on a Shared Strategic Vision for the Sustainable Management of the Drin River Basin, which was signed by the riparian countries in 2011 thanks to the facilitation of the Global Water Partnership Mediterranean (GWP-Med) and UNECE. The current project will support the further development of cooperation between the Riparian countries in the Drin Basin and the achievement of the objectives of the Drin MoU signed in 2011. The objectives of the MoU are to promote joint action for the coordinated integrated management of the shared water resources in the Drin Basin, as a means to safeguard and restore to the extent possible the ecosystems and the services they provide, and to promote sustainable development across the Drin Basin.

The development of the Shared Vision was the outcome of a structured multi-stakeholders consultation process at the national and transboundary levels, the so-called Drin Dialogue (2009-2011). The activities under the Drin Dialogue were financed primarily by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, but also with contributions from UNECE, GWP-Med, the German Government and UNDP. The initiative finds its routes in activities implemented in the framework of the Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process and GEF IW:LEARN.

The first Drin Basin Multi-Stakeholders Conference since the signing of the MoU was organized in Tirana, Albania, 10 -11 December 2013 by the Drin Core Group with the support of the GIZ and UNECE within the framework of the Drin Coordinated Action for the implementation of the MoU for the management of the Drin Basin. The event was one of the activities to sustain the active engagement of stakeholders in the process for the management of the Drin Basin through the Drin MoU implementation. The conference was used also to consult the stakeholders on the development of the Project Document.

The project will endeavor to strengthen the participation of women in conformity with the UNECE Gender Action Plan, with concrete strategies designed to achieve equal participation of women in the activities. Balanced gender participation in project execution activities will be sought, including in the Expert Working Group. Data regarding the participation of men and women in the meetings will be recorded and used as an indicator.

The current project will be implemented under the partnership agreement between UNECE and Global Water Partnership Mediterranean (GWP-Med) for the implementation of the project “Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Extended Drin River Basin” funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).

Partners at the national level:

- in Albania: Ministry of Environment;
- in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning;
- in Montenegro: Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The project will be implemented until the end of 2019.

### **Relationship to the Strategic Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals**

The project will support the implementation of UNECE Strategic Framework, in particular its Subprogramme 1 on Environment. It will support the achievement of the expected accomplishment (a) “Improved response to environmental challenges”, (b) “Strengthened implementation of ECE multilateral commitments and increased geographical coverage”, (c) Strengthened national capacity for environmental monitoring and assessment systems in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe, and (d) “Improved environmental performance of interested countries” of Subprogramme 1 “Environment” of the UNECE proposed strategic frameworks for 2016-2017 and 2018-2019.

The project will support the monitoring of SDG 6 on safe water and sanitation, in particular its target 6.5 “by 2030 implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate”. In particular, the monitoring of indicator 6.5.2 has been coupled to the reporting under the UNECE Water Convention. The intergovernmental meetings under the Convention will offer an important platform for an in depth review of progress and for formulating policy responses, thereby supporting implementation of SDG 6 and its target 6.5.

### **Objective**

To enhance transboundary cooperation and governance in the Drin river basin

### **Expected accomplishments**

- EA1. Improved understanding on key transboundary concerns and Integrated Water Resource Management among countries in the extended Drin River Basin;
- EA2. Strengthened monitoring and information exchange in the Drin River basin.

**Indicators of achievement**

Indicators should reflect whether EA is achieved and should be measurable e.g.

- IA1.1 3 beneficiary countries developed legal and institutional analysis based on the technical support provided by the project;
- IA1.2 3 beneficiary countries developed thematic report on Water-Food-Energy nexus based on the technical support;
- IA2.1 At least 50 experts are trained on transboundary water cooperation in three countries.

**Main activities**

The objective of the project will be achieved through the following activities:

- A.1.1. Preparation of thematic report on legal and institutional analysis and contribution to the chapter on legal and institutional analysis of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis;
- A.1.2. Preparation of thematic report on Water-Food-Energy nexus and chapter on Water-Food-Energy nexus;
- A.1.3. Provision of technical and policy advice to the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan;
- A.1.4. Contribution to the development of Lake Ohrid Management Plan including the development of the chapter related to legal and institutional analysis with proposed measures;
- A.2.1. Support to the work of the Expert Working Group (EWG) on Monitoring and Information Exchange, including support to the servicing of 6 meetings of the EWG;
- A.2.2. Organization of two capacity-building workshops on transboundary cooperation in the Drin river basin

**Assumptions and Risks**

It is assumed that the political stability in the sub-region will be maintained and project beneficiary countries remain committed to the project implementation. It is also assumed that countries and data owners will agree to contribute data and information that are necessary for the respective reports and chapters. There is no significant risks in implementation of the project.

**Annex 1.**

**Results-based work plan**

EA	Activity	Timeframe by activity		Budget class and Code	Amount (USD)
		Year	Quarter		
	A1.1 Preparation of thematic report on legal and institutional analysis and contribution to the chapter on legal and institutional analysis of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis	Y1	Q1-4	Staff and personnel costs	\$15,000
	A1.2. Preparation of thematic report on Water-Food-Energy nexus and chapter on Water-Food-Energy nexus	Y1 Y2	Q1-4 Q1-4	Staff and personnel costs International consultant	\$45,000 \$15,000
	A1.3 Provision of technical and policy advice to the draft Strategic Action Plan	Y2 Y3	Q1-4 Q1-4	Staff and personnel costs	\$7,500
	A1.4. Contribution to the development of Lake Ohrid Management Plan	Y2 Y3	Q1-4 Q1-4	Staff and personnel costs International consultant Travel of staff or experts	\$22,500 \$15,000 \$4,800
	A2.1. Support to the work of the Expert Working Group (EWG) on Monitoring and Information Exchange, including support to the servicing of 6 meetings of the EWG	Y1 Y2 Y3	Q1-4 Q1-4 Q1-4	Staff and personnel costs International consultant Travel of staff or experts	\$15,000 \$10,000 \$7,200
	A2.2. Organization of two capacity building workshops on various aspects of transboundary cooperation	Y2 Y3	Q1-4 Q1-4	Staff and personnel costs International consultant Travel of staff or experts	\$30,000 \$5,000 \$9,600

## Budget

### Staff and personnel costs (010) \$ 135,000 (Total)

Staff at P3 level for temporary assistance contributing to administration, planning and substantive input to support activities:

A1.1 P3 staff x \$15,000 x 1 month = \$15,000

A1.2 P3 staff x \$15,000 x 3 month = \$45,000

A1.3 P3 staff x \$15,000 x 0.5 month = \$7,500

A1.4 P3 staff x \$15,000 x 1.5 month = \$22,500

A2.1 P3 staff x \$15,000 x 1 month = \$15,000

A2.2 P3 staff x \$15,000 x 2 month = \$30,000

### Consultants (010): \$ 45,000 (Total)

#### *International consultants*

International consultants to help prepare the thematic report and chapter on water-food-energy nexus; develop Ohrid Lake management plan; and provide assistance to the organization of Expert Working Group meetings and in delivering the two workshops:

A1.2 International consultant x 30 days x \$500 = \$15,000

A1.4 International consultant x 30 days x \$ 500 = \$15,000

A2.1 International consultant x 20 days x \$500 = \$10,000

A2.2 International consultant x 10 days x \$ 500 = \$5,000

### Travel of Staff (160): \$ 21,600 (Total)

10 missions by UN staff or experts to Albania/former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia/Montenegro in support of activities

A1.4 Travel of staff or experts x \$1,200 x 4 = \$4,800

A2.1 Travel of staff or experts x \$1,200 x 6 = \$7,200

A2.2 Travel of staff or experts x \$1,200 x 8 = \$9,600

Total direct cost	\$201,600
7% of Programme Support Costs	\$14,100
<b>Total budget</b>	<b>\$215,700</b>