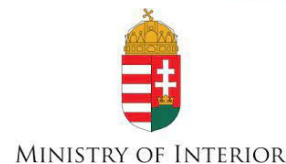


Evolution from an MoU to a full agreement: Example of the Drin River Basin

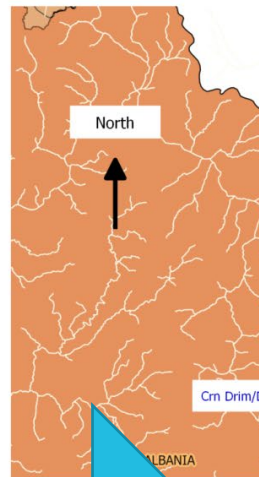
Mr. Ylber Mirta, Head of Department for Waters,
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, North Macedonia



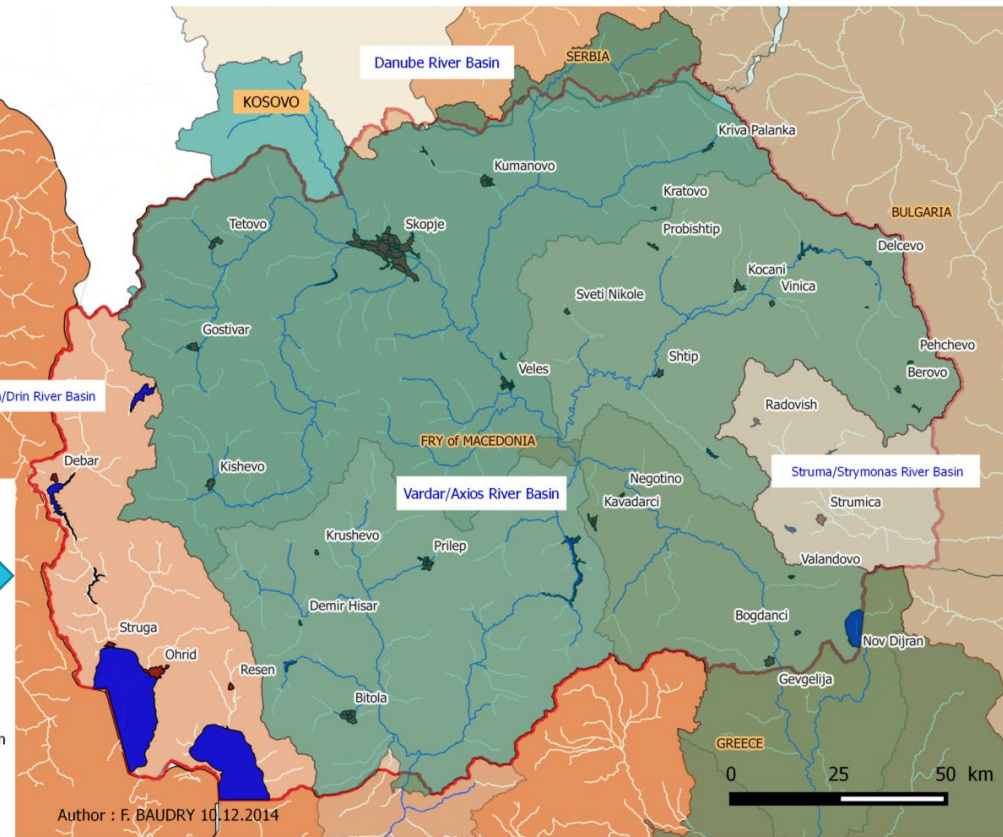
Transboundary river basins and riparian countries



New countries
New borders
New Agreements
The same river basins

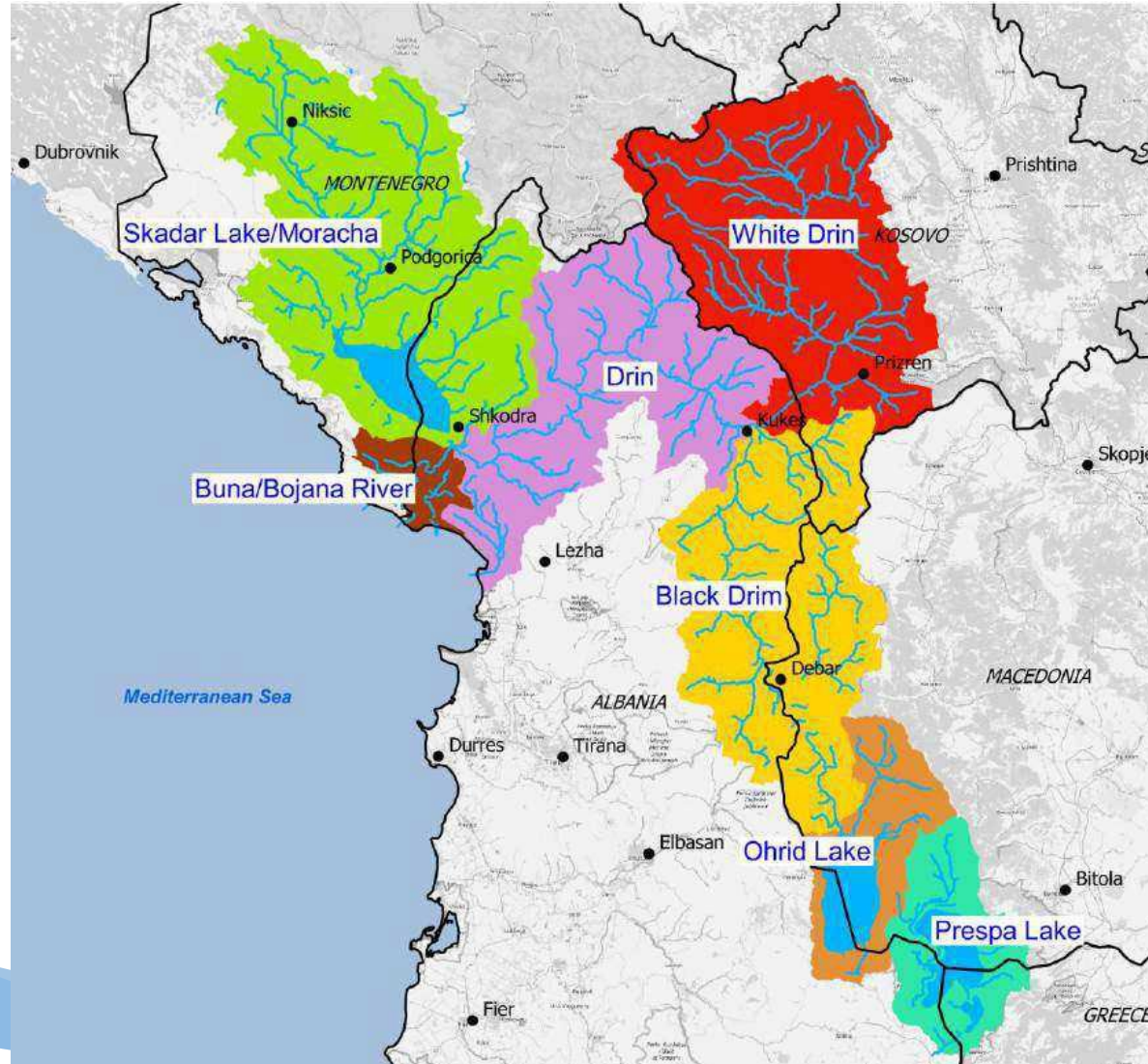


Transboundary River Basins and riparian countries



History: Transboundary cooperation between Albania and North Macedonia dates back to 1956 when an agreement between former Yugoslavia and Albania on "Questions of Water Management" was ratified. Under this agreement the so-called **Joint Water Management Committee** was established but became ineffective soon after its establishment.

Extended Drin River Basin



List of signed Agreements, for Transboundary Water Cooperation

1. “Declaration of the Prime Ministers for Environment protection of the Prespa lakes” (02.02.2000);
1. “Agreement for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Lake Ohrid and its Watershed,” (June 17, 2004)
3. “Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area” (NMK, AL, GR and the EU, Feb. 2010);
3. “Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the extended transboundary Drin basin” (25.11. 2011) incl. “The Strategic Action Programme” for its implementation (April.2020)
4. “Agreement for Sustainably Manage Fish Resources of Lakes Ohrid and Prespa between (AI & NM”, 02.12.2020);

The Drin Dialogue Process - Institutional structure for impl. of the Drin MoU

The Drin Dialogue Process, at both national and transboundary level, was initiated on 1 December 2009 and resulted in the development of the Shared Vision among the Drin Riparians.

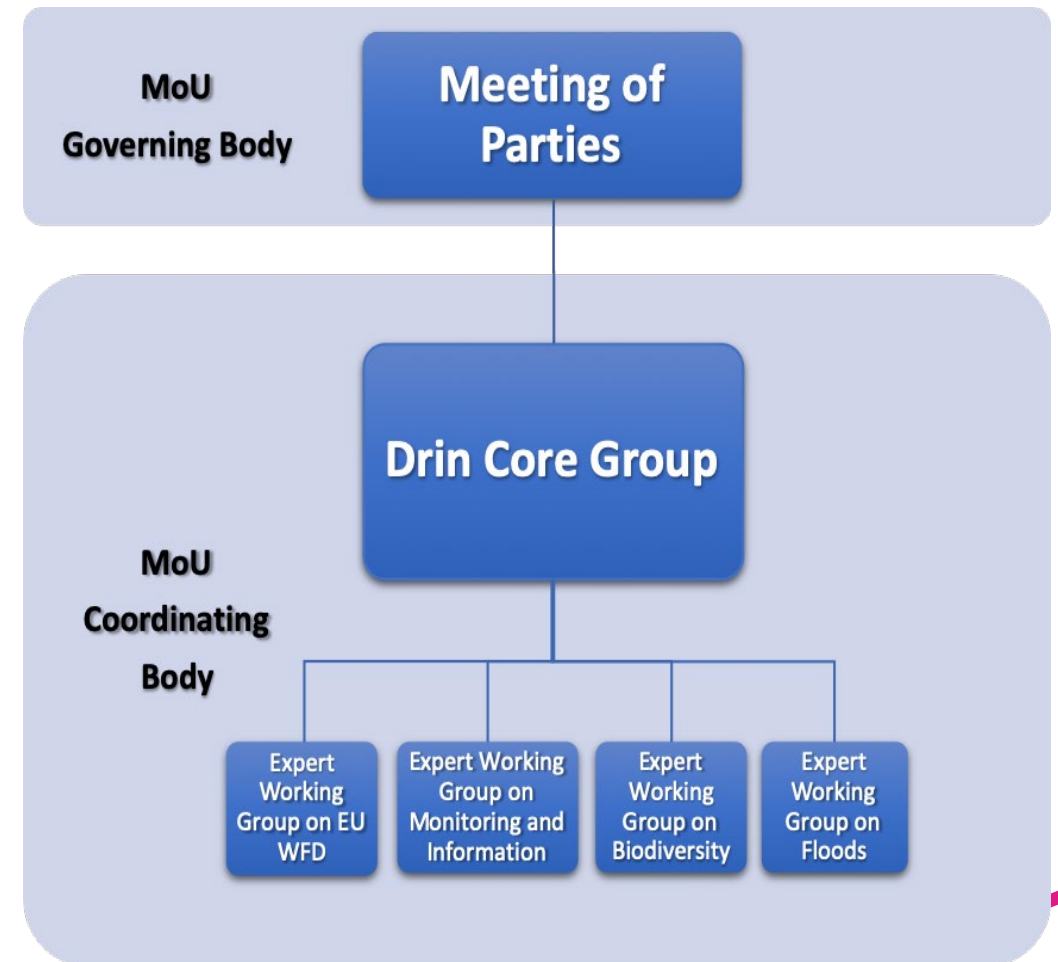
The Drin Memorandum of Understanding

The Shared Vision became the objective of the [*Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the Extended Transboundary Drin Basin*](#) (Drin MoU) signed in Tirana, Albania, on 25 November 2011 (to: Improve access to data, Minimise flooding, Decrease pollution and Minimise the damage from hydro-morfological changes)

The Drin Coordinated Action for the implementation of the Drin MoU (A process called the “Drin CORDA”).

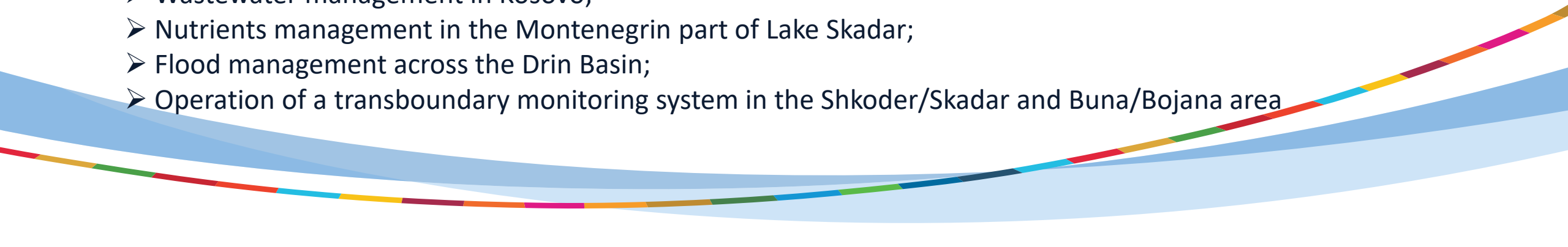
The GEF Drin Project

A Project financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), implemented by the UNDP and executed by the GWP-Mediterranean (GWP-Med) supported the realization of the Drin CORDA and the implementation of the Drin MoU.



The **DCG Secretariat** (GWP-Med) provides technical and administrative support to the DCG.

Lessons learnt from the GEF Drin Project

1. **Joint political body**: Established in 2008, the **Drin Core Group**, with the mandate :
“to promote joint action for the coordinated integrated management of the shared water resources in the Drin Basin”
 1. **Project Management Unit (PMU)**: A decentralized PMU was set up, with project officer for each country.
 2. **Effective communication and stakeholder engagement**
 3. **Simple and achievable project design** – alignment with national priorities
 4. **Pilot demonstration activities**:
 - Integrated Basin Management Planning in the Lake Ohrid sub-basin;
 - Wastewater treatment options in the Shkodra city area;
 - Wastewater management in Kosovo;
 - Nutrients management in the Montenegrin part of Lake Skadar;
 - Flood management across the Drin Basin;
 - Operation of a transboundary monitoring system in the Shkoder/Skadar and Buna/Bojana area
- 

The main results of the GEF DRIN Project

1. The Drin MoU in place;
2. The Drin Core Group and its Expert Working Groups - fully operational;
3. The Drin Transboundary Diagnostics Analysis (TDA) developed and adopted;

Four priority transboundary problems identified:

- Water Quality,
- Variability of Hydrological Regime,
- Biodiversity Degradation and
- Sediment Transport

4. The Strategic Action Plan (SAP) endorsed at ministerial level
(presents Strategy and actions to address the transboundary problems) and
5. Concrete steps for the negotiation of an international agreement for the Drin Basin are planned

During its 17th meeting, on 30-31 May 2019 in Prishtina, the DCG requested the Secretariat (GWP – Med.) to prepare a **roadmap** for the establishment of a **Drin Commission**.



The roadmap, which was approved by the 18th DCG meeting (Tirana, 30-31 January 2020), called for the development of a **Study** for an appropriately scaled legal and institutional arrangement to enable coordinated and sustainable management of the Drin Basin.



A **Feasibility Study for the enhancement of the legal and institutional arrangements** for the management of the Drin basin at a transboundary level and a legal text of international agreement for the management of the Drin basin has been drafted and needs to be negotiated among all Riparians.

Thank you!

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