

Second workshop on River Basin Commissions and other Joint Bodies

Transboundary cooperation on Lake Ohrid

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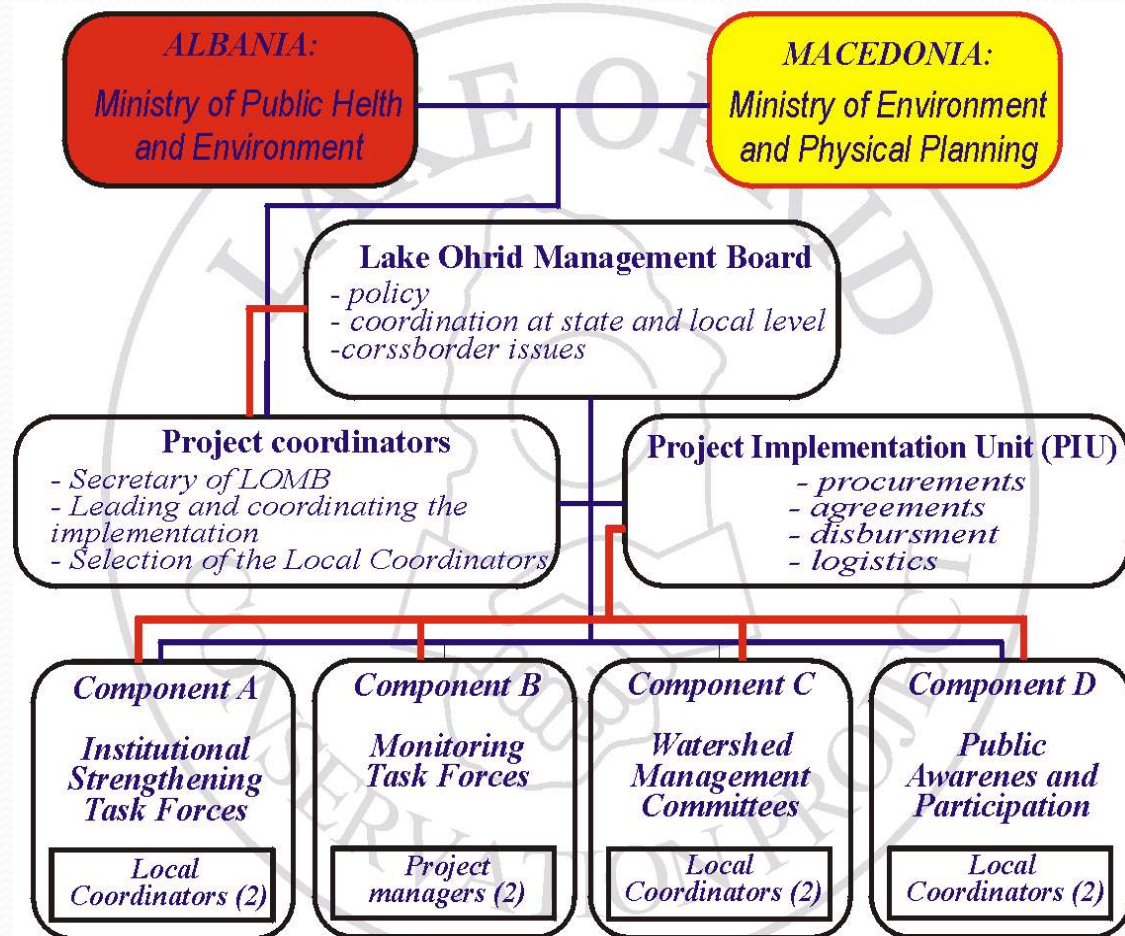


Situate in a South East Europe Lake Ohrid is the deepest lake of the Balkans, with a maximum depth of 288 m and average depth of 155 m . It covers an area of 358 km² , containing an estimated 55.4 km³ of water.

It is 30.4 km long by 14.8 km wide at its maximum extent with a shoreline length of 87.53 km. Lake is shared between Macedonia 2/3 and Albania 1/3.

EARLY BEGGININGS

The primary objective of the LOCP is to promote cost-effective solutions for transboundary natural resources management and pollution problems and to provide a basis for sustainable economic development of the watershed.



Lake Ohrid Management Board

- Joint LOMB was established with Memorandum of Understanding between Governments of Macedonia and Albania**
- Joint LOMB includes highest representatives of MoE , local authorities (mayors) and representatives of NGO's from both sides - as voting part**
- Joint LOMB held meetings discussing issues on waste water treatment , protection of Ohrid trout , institutional issues, coordination and following the implementation of the LOCP**
- Decision of joint LOMB is to establish the Day of Ohrid Lake (21.June)**

Joint Monitoring program

- **Hydro biological Institute – Ohrid and Hydro meteorological Institute –Tirana are responsible to perform Monitoring on Lake Ohrid & Prespa**
- **Joint Albanian and Macedonian MTF's prepared selection of analytical methods and signet Joint Protocol for sampling and analysys**
- **First ever done Joint Lake Ohrid watershed assessment study**

Watershed management approach

- In supporting involvement of public STAKEHOLDERS meetings were held. At the meetings the stakeholders elected their representatives to WMC.**
- The purpose of the WMC is to help address watershed management issues of the Lake Ohrid Watershed and provide a framework for coordination and cooperation among key interests in the development and implementation of a watershed action plan.**
- First JOINT ACTION PLAN is developed**

Public awareness and NGO sector

-Institutional Strengthening of the regional NGO's through a capacity building program;; Increasing the public awareness about the environmental issues and problems; Increasing the public participation in the decision making process ; Strengthening the cross-border co-operation among the NGOs

-The initial number of NGO when LOCP started was 31 with 700 members. So far, the number of NGOs is increased to 67 NGOs with 2200 members

-Green Centers were established in Ohrid and Struga and in Pogradec

PERIOD OF INSTITUTIONALIZING

INSTITUTIONAL FRAME

Joint Agreement on protection and sustainable development on Lake Ohrid is signed on June 17th 2004 by Prime Ministers and ratified by both Parliaments.

Established Lake Ohrid Watershed Committee

Established Lake Ohrid Watershed Secretariat

ROLE OF THE BILATERAL COMMITTEE

**Prevent, control and reduce pollution of the waters in the watershed;
Protect the soil from erosion, depletion, infections and pollution;
Protect the biodiversity by protecting especially the endemic, rare, threatened or endangered species of flora and fauna; Prevent introduction and breeding non-autochthonous animal and plant species; Ensure the sustainable use of natural resources of the watershed; Avoid any serious damage of the cultural values and natural landscapes , control the economic activities which cause or may cause negative impact in the Lake watershed**

The Committee is composed of an equal number of members from each Party. The Committee include three titular of central governmental institutions appointed by the Respective Governments, three titular of local governments institutions and one representative of civil society. There will be one non-voting representative of the international donor community.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Recognize the value of a clearly articulated “lake vision” to guide our action planning process. It will contribute to making conservation of the ancient oligotrophic character of Lake Ohrid an engine of sustainable economic growth based on domestic and international tourism.**
- **The capacity of all institutions needs to be strengthened and maintained by means of short-term and long-term programmes (including postgraduate education and curricula development, and establishing co-operation with river basin organisations in other lake regions).**
- **Development of public communication strategies and mechanisms to support the public participation in transboundary context.**

Field of actions and challenges

Joint fishery – harmonization of legislation (still a challenging question)

Biodiversity protection– Nomination for establishing of Ohrid Prespa Biosphere reserve under UNESCO supported by LOWC

Infrastructure development – support of project on reconstruction of sewage water system

International projects – support on Drin Dialogue process and GEF Drin project as well GIZ projects on climate change adaptation and biodiversity protection.