



Building a Greener Economic Environment



PONT | PRESPA OHRID
NATURE TRUST



**ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
RELATED TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
IN THE WIDER PRESPA AREA**

Authors:

Bojan Rantasa
Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova
Albana Cule

CNVP – Connecting Natural Values and People Foundation**Contact person:**

Janaq Male, Country Director CNVP Albania

E-mail:

janaq.male@cnvp-eu.org or businessdevelopment@cnvp-eu.org

Albania Office
7th floor Zayed Business Centre
Rr. Sulejman Delvina, Tirana
Albania
Tel: +355-4-222 9642
Fax: +355-4-222 9551

Website:

www.cnvp-eu.org

The opinions and standpoints expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of PONT.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Abbreviations and Acronyms Used	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
INTRODUCTION	8
OVERVIEW OF POLICIES WITH MAJOR ISSUES AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION	11
National Policies	11
Albania	11
North Macedonia	11
WPA Specific Policies	13
Priorities for Action	13
OVERVIEW OF PAST AND CURRENT EFFORTS	19
EXISTING ISSUES	22
Issues at the level of governance	22
Issues at national-level governance	22
Issues at the level of Municipal governance	23
Issues at the level of PA governance	25
Issues at Resource Level	27
Issues at the level of human capacity building	27
Issues at the level of infrastructure	29
Issues at the level of general infrastructure	29
Issues at the level of small-scale infrastructure	30
Issues at the level of services	31
Issues at the level of promotion and marketing	33
RECOMMENDATIONS	
<i>(concerning the main areas of intervention in future)</i>	35
On the Form of Tourism	35
General Recommendations	36
SUGGESTIONS	
<i>(about how to maximise the success of future efforts, with a focus on the role of EAs)</i>	39
General	39
Municipalities	39
PAs	40
Tourist Service Providers	40
Tourism hospitalities	41
Local people	41
Annex I: Review of past initiatives, actions and policy documents with notes on the reasons for success	42
Annex II: Review of current policies, plans and strategies	60
Annex III: Final Workshop	77
Annex IV: Database of key stakeholders	80
References	88

Abbreviations and Acronyms Used

AAQM - Authentic Albania Quality Mark

AEWA - Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds

AKZM - Agjencia Kombëtare e Zonave të Mbrojtura / National Agency of Protected Areas of the Republic of Albania

APST - Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism of the Republic of North Macedonia

ATA - Albanian Telegraph Agency (Agjencia Telegrafike Shqiptare)

BMC - Business Canvas Model

BMZ - German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

CBD - Convention on Biological Diversity

CDPPR - Center for Development of the Pelagonia Planning Region

CMS - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

COE - Council of Europe

EC - European Commission

EDEN - Tourism Cluster of South-Eastern North Macedonia

EU - European Union

FC - Financial Cooperation

GEF - Global Environment Facility

GWP - Med - Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean

IMBA - International Mountain Biking Association

INCA - Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania

IPPM - Institute for Public Policy and Good Governance

IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

JICA - Japan International Cooperation Agency

KfW - Kreditanstalt Für Wiederaufbau / German Development Bank

LCRP - Local and Regional Competitiveness Project

MAB - Man and the Biosphere

ME - Ministry of Economy

MEPSO - Electricity Transmission System Operator of North Macedonia (Оператор на електропреносниот систем на Република Северна Македонија, Акционерско друштво за пренос на електрична енергија и управување со електроенергетскиот систем)

MERNM - Ministry of Economy of the Republic of North Macedonia

MC - Mountain Club

MOEPP - Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of the Republic of North Macedonia

MP - Management Plan

MSC - Mountain Sports Club

MTC - Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of North Macedonia

n.d. - no date / unknown date

nn - no name / unknown author

NP - National Park

NPE - Ezerani Nature Park
NPG - National Park Galicica
NPP - National Park Pelister
NTA - National Tourism Agency
PA - Protected Area
PIGNP - Public Institution Galicica National Park
PIPNP - Public Institution Pelister National Park
PNP - Prespa National Park
PONT - Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust
REC - Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe
SWG - Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group
TBR - Transboundary Biosphere Reserve
TIC - Tourism Information Centre
TIES - The International Ecotourism Society
UN - United Nations
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO - United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID - United States Agency for International Development
WB - World Bank
WTTC - World Travel and Tourism Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sustainable tourism in the Wider Prespa Area should be decoupled from the conventional/mainstream tourism development thinking. For the purpose of this report, sustainable tourism has been addressed. "Tourism provides a crucial and unique way of fostering visitors' connection with protected area values, making it a potentially positive force for conservation. Visitor experiences can be transformative for an individual's personal growth and well-being, while instilling an increased sense of stewardship and support for protected area values." (Leung et al., 2018, p.xi) Therefore tourism not only needs to be sustainable, but it also needs to be supporting nature protection. That is why ecotourism should be the recommended form of sustainable tourism in the PAs, for it provides benefit to nature protection.

The Protected Areas (PAs) in the WPA, in particularly Albania and North Macedonia, have a different level of tourism development, where sustainable tourism development is lagging behind throughout the region. Sustainable tourism development should be applied at all levels of the destination, whether that be activities, facilities, and capacities that will drive a positive change for the local community and for nature. This sustainable development should follow a common WPA vision for tourism, and the report recommends the support in the development of this common vision for tourism in the WPA. There are many things to be done but crucial is that all future efforts should be coordinated in order to achieve sustainability. Policies and management plans within the countries need harmonisation and not only vertically but also referring to cross cutting issues. Nature protection is a transboundary task and in that sense harmonisation is needed between the countries in the area, including Greece. Additionally, to identify the critical overlaps, differences in priorities, and gaps in capacities, further analysis is needed on the institutional set-up for governance of sustainable tourism.

This report provides a quick overview of a tremendous number of projects and initiatives over the past twenty year period involving large donor support in the Wider Prespa Area. However, while traveling in the Prespa region one could not notice the limited effects of past efforts. Main factor for this is that the local actors and donors failed to develop the internal capacities of the protected area institutions, nor to establish mechanisms and practices for continued coordination and collaboration of the stakeholders, e.g. between PA authorities and municipalities, local NGOs, local inhabitants, different national and international financial support, and last but not least weak collaboration between the three countries sharing the Prespa resources.

The tourism sector is complex, incorporating a network of interrelated stakeholders and organisations, both public and private sector, working together. The success of Prespa as a destination relies on a coordinated approach to the planning, development, management and marketing of this destination. A clearly defined destination management structure can provide destination managers and stakeholders with a place to negotiate sustainable destination development, ongoing management and effective destination marketing outcomes. The process of supporting and developing sustainable tourism in the WPA in Albania and North Macedonia should follow complementary steps done in consultation and guidance of established local or international travel agencies and adventure tourism guides that can transfer their experience and know-how.

This analysis report was prepared for the needs of PONT by CNVP, to serve as an overview of the current situation, past initiatives and potentials for future interventions in the sustainable tourism sector. The report was prepared over a period of 5 months through a consultative process where

a number of stakeholders have been interviewed throughout the WPA region in Albania and North Macedonia; national consultative workshops have been organized on the topic; and a process for commenting has been enabled by directly distributing the report to the stakeholders, and organizing a joint, final workshop in Stenje, North Macedonia.

INTRODUCTION

The Wider Prespa Area (WPA) spans the borders of North Macedonia, Greece and Albania. The geographical scope for the current analysis focuses only on the part of the WPA in Albania and North Macedonia. The area is repeatedly recognized for its natural values: the Ohrid region is a UNESCO World Heritage Natural and Cultural Site (UNESCO, n.d.). The Prespa area in Albania, Greece and North Macedonia was declared as a Transboundary Prespa Park (Declaration on the Creation of The Prespa Park and the Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Lakes and Their Surroundings, 2000). Ohrid-Prespa area was declared a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (TBR) under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme in 2014 (UNESCO, 2014a). Lake Prespa is a RAMSAR site in both Albania and North Macedonia (RAMSAR, 1998; 2013); and Lake Prespa. Lake Ohrid, as well as the Prespa National Park (PNP), Galicica National Park (PIGNP), Pelister National Park (PIPNP), and Ezerani Nature Park (NPE) are officially nominated candidate Emerald sites (Directorate of Democratic Participation and Roekaerts, M., 2018) and potential Natura 2000 sites. In particular, this report focuses on the protected areas (PAs) of the WPA.

Though, for many people of the WPA agriculture still represents the main source of income, tourism represents the key development sector for the area (UNESCO, 2014a). The WPA has rich biodiversity, appealing landscape characteristics and abundance of cultural and historic monuments. This richness, paired with the two lakes create an attractive place for tourism. The WPA is considered to have had tourism even in the early 19 century (PIPNP, 2006), while Ohrid region being a UNESCO World Heritage Site is recently very popular, achieving tourism presence 6 times its population during the season (UNESCO, 2014a). The challenge exists ahead of transforming the tourism sector into a sustainable sector, further providing sustainable development in tourism, and minding that over tourism is avoided.



Map of the Wider Prespa Area (PONT, 2019) map © Google Inc.

Taking into account that the WPA stretches over the protected areas of Prespa NP in Albania, Pelister NP, Galicica NP, "Lake Prespa" Monument of Nature, Ezerani Nature Park, and part of the UNESCO designated a World Heritage Site in North Macedonia, it is crucial for successful nature conservation to ensure the development of sustainable tourism, and delivery of sustainable tourism packages as a means of reducing the pressure on nature and the environment from tourists.

Tourism has noted an increased growth in the World with 3, 6% in 2018, making it an eight consecutive year of growth above the world's GDP (WTTC, 2019). The numbers are staggering: \$8.8 trillion and 319 million jobs contribution to the world economy (WTTC, 2019). This trend of increased development is present in the region, where in the Western Balkans Countries is noted that tourism has greater growth than other sectors, and it provides for 14% of employment in the region (n.n., 2019). This rate of development is

not avoiding the WPA, where the adjacent Ohrid town is already under pressure from over tourism in the summer days.

Local people in the WPA are becoming more and more dependent on tourism income, as once fishing settlements become tourist settlements along the shores of Ohrid and Prespa Lakes. Yet, they have financial challenges to make a livelihood. Desires to grow and develop the tourism sector in the WPA exist, however the only thing that local people see are the lakes for swimming and a need for accommodation. Steps need to be made to enable this growth to be sustainable.

Sustainable tourism is defined as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities." (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005, p.12) Therefore sustainable tourism has the challenge to help, overcome and manage the dynamic growth of the sector; the alleviation of poverty; support for nature conservation; and the health, safety and security of travel (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005).



Wider consultative meeting held in v. Stenje Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

The objective of this analysis is to (a) identify challenges and opportunities for local actions related to sustainable tourism in the WPA in Albania and North Macedonia, and (b) develop a set of recommendations on how to maximise the success of future efforts while adhering to nature conservation needs. The analysis was prepared over 5 month period, starting in February 2019. To achieve its objective the needs assessment was developed in three steps, in parallel, taking place simultaneously in Albania and North Macedonia.

The first step was desk-top research and data gathering of all sustainable tourism related initiatives and efforts for 1990 – 2019 in the WPA of North Macedonia and Albania. Annex 1 gives a review of past initiatives, actions and policy documents with notes on the reasons for success, whilst Annex 2 gives a review of current policies, plans and strategies in relation to sustainable tourism.



Wider consultative meeting held in v. Stenje Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

The second step was a wide consultation with stakeholders, donors, CSO's and institutions in direct meetings, and a workshop in each country with invited stakeholders to gather further information (*see Annex IV for the list of stakeholders*). The third step was a joint workshop where stakeholders from: Albania and North Macedonia, had opportunity to comment on the draft assessment report (*see Annex III for the report from the workshop*).

The WPA territory is much bigger in North Macedonia in comparison with the territory in Albania. In addition the tourism sector is much more developed in North Macedonia and therefore a major part of this report is focused on initiatives and actions in North Macedonia.

OVERVIEW OF POLICIES WITH MAJOR ISSUES AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

National Policies

Looking at national policies, Albania, though with an outdated tourism strategy, heads steadily towards sustainable tourism. In North Macedonia, though exist many strategies related to tourism and additional other policies that address tourism, sustainable tourism development does not figure as a priority. However, tourism sustainability concept is not clearly understood in the policies in both countries.

Albania

The strategic policies related to tourism in Albania are outdated and in need of updating. The Sector Strategy on Tourism 2007-2013 (Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport, 2007) does focus on sustainable tourism development, and defines that guiding principles for realization of the strategy are: sustainable development, benefits of local communities, partnerships and quality (Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport, 2007). Additionally, it recognizes ecotourism as a special form of tourism that is to be developed in the mountains, but it also defines that ecotourism should be a priority for development. However it does not make a specific relation to the WPA in Albania.

The policy focus on Albania's sustainable tourism development has been transposed in major financial instruments and strategies. For instance, the Instrument For Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) 2014-2020 for Albania "aims at increasing the contribution of sustainable and responsible tourism to Albania's economic growth" (EC, 2017), while the National Strategy for Development and Investment 2014-2020 aims to improve competitiveness and economic growth of Albania through high quality and sustainable tourism (EC, 2017).

Albania have a specific law on tourism: Law No.93/2015 on Tourism, aiming for promotion of Albania. "The purpose of this law is to promote Albania as an attractive tourist destination for domestic and foreign visitors/tourists, by developing sustainable tourism, ensuring that tourism service providers meet the demands of tourists, in a healthy and safe way, as well as by taking into account the needs of the communities and future generations" (Official Journal or the Official Announcement Bulletin, 2015).

North Macedonia

At national level in North Macedonia there is a draft National Strategy for Tourism in the Republic of North Macedonia, for the period 2016 - 2021 that is expected to be adopted in 2019. The Strategy is very general, aiming to increase and improve tourism in the country. It does not make specific determinations whether the focus should be on sustainable tourism, it only notes that there is a growing demand for that. The action plan is again very general, and very little direct

reference to the WPA¹, but with potential to be utilized for Sustainable Tourism Development, thus placing the outcomes in the hand of the WPA stakeholders and their efforts and priorities. The action plan of the Study for the Development of Alternative and Mountain Tourism, (North Macedonia) foresees the development of Golem Grad as a tourist attraction, even though it is a strictly protected zone of NPG where human presence should be minimal. And its aim is to establish a system for management and protection (Petrovska et al., 2015), where specific activities, such as development of a management plan, promotion, capacity building and infrastructure improvement are noted, and it is foreseen that all activities on the island would be eco-friendly.

There are other outdated national strategies that to some extent are current, such as the Strategy for Rural Tourism 2012 - 2017. The Strategy for Rural Tourism was implemented in the policies, and a logo - a Sunflower was developed for rural tourism, however, it was not implemented in practice because finances were expected from outside sources. Additionally, it has not been updated, signifying the low importance of this strategy, as well as the other outdated and not updated strategies.

In regard to the commitment to the implementation of the policies, the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia has several programmes, among which is the Programme For Development of Tourism for 2019 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2019b) which corresponds to the not yet adopted National Tourism Strategy. It does not have Sustainable Tourism specific activities for the WPA, but it does involve activities that can have, but not necessary will have relation to the Sustainable Tourism in the WPA: activity 1, participation in an international tourism fair for promotion of the region; activity 2, participation of hospitality workers in trainings; activity 3, environmental - road cleaning campaign; activity 5, availability of funds to support the organization of tourism events; activity 7, support to improve directional signage; activity 8, funds for tourism equipment and or tourism facilities adaptation; activity 16, funds to make information digitally/online available.

None of the governmental programmes in North Macedonia have a direct relation to Sustainable Tourism, with the exception to Activity 3 of the Programme For Development of Tourism for 2019 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2019b) where a campaign at national level is planned about the importance of the environment for the development of tourism, along the road cleaning activity.

The law on tourism (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004a) regulates only the administrative form of execution of ecotourism and defines that ecotourism is conducted only in natural sites with special characteristics and in protected areas. However, the Law On Nature Protection (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004b; 2006; 2007; 2010b; 2011a; 2011b; 2012; 2013a; 2013b; 2014; 2015; 2016a; 2016b) provides foundation for the establishment of the protected areas, and regulates the activities in nature: in article 104 regulates minimal human activity in the Strictly protected zone; in article 105 states that ecotourism is allowed in the zones for Active Management, and in article 106 defines that the Zone for Sustainable Use are a place with no special characteristics for protection. Additionally, in article 62 it allows only ecotourism and traditional stockbreeding practices in the high-mountain habitats and ecosystems. Thus, the Law on Nature Protection sets the regulation that "ecotourism, in accordance to sustainable development" should be the choice for tourism activities in the Strictly protected zones of the PAs of the WPA in North Macedonia.

1 A supporting activity for establishment of modern visitors' centres in the national parks, and implementation of the action plan of the Study for the Development of Alternative and Mountain Tourism (Petrovska et al., 2015)

WPA Specific Policies

In 2010, the Environment Ministers of the three countries: Albania, Greece and North Macedonia, and the EU, signed the Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area. This agreement provides legally binding obligation with the objective "to ensure an integrated protection of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the Prespa Park Area" (Official Journal of the European Union, 2011, a.2). It lays the foundations for tourism development in Article 3, by obliging the parties to "...conserve traditional architecture and monuments, develop and implement a joint strategy for the touristic development of the Area, and promote public awareness and environmental education as a means for reaching local solutions", being mindful of environmental standards and criteria, and considering the overall objective of achieving sustainability (Official Journal of the European Union, 2011, a.3(2)(e)).

At WPA level, in Albania there is a Draft Prespa Area Tourism Action Plan of 2008 (Liqenas Commune, 2008) and a Tourism Marketing and Product Development Strategy for the Korca Region of 2009. Both of these documents are expired, and in need of updating, but are still current in terms of the needed activities to be done. In North Macedonia the Municipality of Resen has a Local Strategy for the Development of Tourism in Resen 2019 - 2024 (Pekevski, 2019) and a Strategy for Development of Resen Municipality 2016 - 2021 that has a whole chapter on tourism.

Within each of the countries the strategic documents of different institutions, e.g. between PNP and Municipality of Korca or Municipality of Pustec, are not harmonized. Very often the Municipalities have different priorities, such as the example with Ohrid and Resen and PIGNP and NPE. In addition, the policies and strategic plans between Albania and North Macedonia lack harmonization as well.

Priorities for Action

In Albania there is no current strategy or action plan that identifies the priorities for action. National and local policies in North Macedonia identify several current priorities. Considering our focus on sustainable tourism, a few specific priorities for action can be identified from the current policies that affect the WPA. However, many other supporting, and general priorities for action can be identified that can contribute to the general development of tourism in the WPA. The table below is an overview of priority actions identified by the current policies in North Macedonia and that could be relevant to sustainable (eco) tourism development in the WPA.

Area of priority for action	Strategy for Development of Resen Municipality 2016 - 2021	Local Strategy for the Development of Tourism in Resen 2019 - 2024	Draft National Strategy for Tourism in the Republic of North Macedonia 2016 - 2021
Tourism promotion	Promotion of the natural and cultural heritage	Development of Resen as a brand of a desired tourist destination through development, creation and implementation of a marketing strategy for greater visibility and recognition of the destination;	Establishment of regional Destination Management Organizations.
Tourism marketing		Improvement of cooperation of international and European tour-operators by including Resen and the surrounding in their programmes;	
Tourism offer development	Improvement of the quality and increase of the tourism offer	Adding to the current offer and introduction of new types of tourism, such as sports tourism, medical tourism, rural tourism;	Development of new leading projects for tourism in North Macedonia; Establishment of a tourism development fund; Establishment of a hotel development fund. Development of national tourist routes; Development of a modern center in each National Park; Development of Golem Grad as a tourist attraction; Establishment of rural tourism development zones.
Human capacity development	Strengthening of the capacities of the rural tourism providers	Improvement of the human resource capacities.	Assessment of the tourism high school and increasing the attraction to the students.
Tourism infrastructure	Investment in tourism infrastructure		Continuation of the financial support for placing road signage for tourism.

On the level of PAs, their management plans (MP) provide the priorities for action. Below is a table of priorities for actions in the respective MPs, in various degrees of detail. Considering that some MPs have been well implemented, and other MPs are waiting to be updated, the actions that are still current/not implemented are presented in bold letters while plans that are in draft and not yet adopted such as the draft Management Plan for Lake Prespa Monument of Nature for example are not included. Some of the current actions, are to be implemented with the support from PONT.

Area of priority for action	Management Plan for Prespa National Park 2014 - 2024	Management Plan for the "Ezerani" Nature Park 2012 - 2021	Management Plan for Galicica National Park 2010-2020	Management Plan for Pelister National Park 2006 - 2016
Tourism infrastructure	establishing visitor's infrastructure	Educational trails for students	<p>Establishment and maintenance of a system of marked and arranged walking trails of different difficulty degrees (physical effort), bringing together natural, historical and archaeological values of the Park and offering amenities</p> <p>Establishment and maintenance of a system of marked and arranged biking trails of different difficulty degrees (physical effort)</p> <p>Establishment and maintenance of a system of dirt roads intended for motor vehicles (off-road automobiles and motorcycles)</p> <p>Design and maintenance of wild animal observation platforms in various ecosystems (aquatic, forests, alpine)</p> <p>Construction and maintenance of mountain huts and shelters</p> <p>Construction and maintenance of arranged camping sites in the wilderness</p> <p>Design and maintenance of rock climbing and paragliding sites</p> <p>Design and maintenance of picnic sites</p> <p>Design and maintenance of viewpoints</p>	<p>Prepare a detailed urban plan for the Golema Livada zone;</p> <p>Develop new walking trails, alpinist, mount bike and education trails that are at the same time relevant to and in accordance with the Information, Interpretation and Education Program and the zoning of the Park;</p> <p>Maintain the existing trails and equip them with infrastructure as appropriate and in accordance with the zoning of the Park;</p> <p>Mark new trails that connect the villages in the immediate vicinity of the Park, on both the Prespa and Pelagonide side, with attractive destinations within the Park.</p>
Tourism activity development	training guides for the visitors	Specially designed tours for visitors; Observation of birds;	<p>Development and implementation of a system of boat tours at St. Naum springs and to the Golem Grad island.</p> <p>Development and implementation of a bird and large mammal watching program.</p>	<p>Prepare and implement the integrated Information, Interpretation and Education Program. This program defines the measures (materials, trails and the accompanying infrastructure, programs, training of guides, etc.) to achieve the three objectives mentioned above in an integrated and comprehensive way and through linking this program and the Plan for Visitor Infrastructure Development in Pelister National Park. Among other, this program will include information, interpretation and education materials and other measures and activities concerning the key values of the Park (habitats, species, geomorphological phenomena, the village of Malovishta;</p>

Information	placing information boards along the main roads and key access points to the PNP	Information boards;	Construction, furnishing and management of information points at Derven, Sveti Naum and Korita	<p>In the shortest possible time set up information and interpretation boards concerning the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The glacial lakes. Location of the boards: in the vicinity of the Greater Lake and the Smaller Lake, and the mountain hut at the Greater Lake; - Red-billed chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>). Location of the boards: near the Greater Lake and the Smaller Lake; - Pelagonide trout (<i>Salmo pelagonicus</i>). Location of the boards: along the rivers Rotinska, Malovishka / Shemnica; <p>In the shortest possible time print out and distribute to the visitors information/education leaflets on the ban on collection and the need of strict protection of all endemic, rare and threatened species throughout Park's territory;</p>
Visitor's Centre	building of a Visitor's centre	Info-centre or info-office.	Construction, furnishing and management of visitor centres in Ohrid and Carina	By 2007 the Visitors Center at Sedum Cladenci is operational, staffed and equipped as appropriate;
Local community engagement in tourism			Implementation of a small grants program for local communities in the Park, through the Environment Forum; Technical support provision for sustainable tourism capacity development in the local communities.	
Participation			Informing the local population on a regular basis, regarding the financial effects of tourist activities in the Park; Review and regular update of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism within National Park Galicica, through participation of the local communities and other key stakeholders.	

Event promotion			<p>Promotion and organization of the traditional excursion Dva Yavori – Ohrid;</p> <p>Promotion and organization of the traditional mountain biking crosscountry race (Ohrid Visitor Centre – Dva Yavori and back);</p> <p>Promotion and organization of a national / international paragliding competition (multiple disciplines);</p> <p>Promotion and organization of national / international rock-climbing competition.</p> <p>Organization of a hiker / paraglider / alpinist search and rescue drill;</p> <p>Organization of a traditional spring solid waste disposal campaign;</p> <p>Marking the International Day of European Parks;</p> <p>Marking the Park Proclamation Day – October 25;</p> <p>Organization of "an open day" at Visitor Centres.</p>	
Marketing			<p>Development and maintenance of a system of training and system of hiring licensed tourist guides in the Park;</p> <p>Development and maintenance of a booking system for stays in the mountain hut Sharboica and the camping sites in the wild.</p>	
Monitoring and research			<p>Conducting studies and scientific research to identify the effects of tourist activities in the Park;</p> <p>Establishment of an integrated data collection and analysis system concerning the effects of tourist activities in the Park;</p> <p>Preparation of an Annual Report concerning the effects of tourist activities in the Park;</p> <p>Organization of summer youth research camps.</p>	
Education		<p>Development of an educational programme for visitors;</p> <p>Brochures for groups of water and wetland organisms;</p> <p>Brochure on habitats;</p> <p>Biology guidebook;</p>	<p>Design and maintenance of walking trails for environmental education in Peshtani, Sveti Naum and in the vicinity of Prespa Visitor Center;</p> <p>Promotion of the arboretum and the small botanical garden at Ohrid Visitor Centre for educational purposes;</p> <p>Publishing environmental education materials for particular target groups;</p> <p>Informing multiple target groups on the Park zones (permitted and banned activities);</p> <p>Informing the visitors on the infrastructure and PINPG services;</p> <p>Preparation and distribution of information materials on popular sites in the Park;</p> <p>Organization of regular environmental education programs for visiting school children groups.</p>	

<p>Management of visitors</p>		<p>Development of a plan for development of sustainable tourism; Preparation of a birds observation plan; Making a protocol for visitors;</p>	<p>Establishment of a visitor surveillance system in the Park; Development of visitor management plans at the Park's popular destinations.</p>	<p>Prepare a Plan for Visitor Infrastructure Development in Pelister National Park through involvement of the local communities and other stakeholders (NGOs, business sector and others), and in accordance with the conservation objectives for natural and cultural values prescribed by this Plan of Management.</p>
<p>Promotion</p>		<p>Development of web page or inclusion of NPE in existing portals on Lake Prespa or the Prespa Park and use of media.</p>	<p>Promotion of cultural and historical heritage in the Park; Promotion of the infrastructure and services in the Park intended for the visitors.</p>	

OVERVIEW OF PAST AND CURRENT EFFORTS

The WPA has been a subject of many efforts in the past to promote and develop tourism. Some initiatives have been donor funded, others have been local initiatives conducted by the NPs management or even the Municipalities and the Government implementing investment driven development. Most of the efforts undertaken with donor support were in the line of sustainable tourism development, but, in contrast, those implemented by the Government of North Macedonia, in particular, had a different approach.

The most significant initiatives appear around 2001, after the establishment of the Prespa Park (Declaration On The Creation Of The Prespa Park And The Environmental Protection And Sustainable Development Of The Prespa Lakes And Their Surroundings, 2000) with the involvement of GIZ (GTZ at that time) with a cross-border cooperation project to promote tourism and tourism development (Alac, Georgievski and Gegprifti, n.d.; Georgievski, n.d.). The initiatives further increased in 2004, when donor supported processes provided for the development of the management plans of the PIPNP in North Macedonia, parallel to developing tourism content and infrastructure, out of which, most significant is the development of Sustainable Tourism in Brajcino, North Macedonia (Notarianni, 2008). Sadly the Swiss supported project in NPP abruptly ended after the change of the park's management, and the management plan was not updated after its intended period ended.

Many projects sought to develop tourism in the WPA, like the one implemented by REC in 2004 - Regional Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development with Special Accent on Eco-tourism and its Development Opportunities in the Prespa Region (REC, 2004), and the Strategic Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park that provided a plan for evolution of the Prespa Park and a set of activities for transboundary cooperation as well as for national address. It was only in 2006, that the UNDP lead a long-term project on Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin under which a trilateral Tourism Strategy for the Prespa Lakes Basin was developed (Travers and La Paz Group, 2012). Unfortunately many of the plans and strategies for sustainable tourism development (regardless of their quality) did not make an effect as they were not linked with an official institution/body that would guarantee their implementation.

In 2008, the Prespa Transboundary Biosphere Reserve project, supported by KfW begun (KfW, 2018), and in its framework PIGNP developed its first management plan, and build some tourism infrastructure, including a visitor's centre, while PNP also developed a management plan and opened a visitor's centre. However, once donor support ended, maintenance of the visitor's infrastructure failed.

In 2009 SNV supported the development of the Tourism Action Plan for the Municipality of Pustec (Liqenas Commune, 2008), and a Tourism Marketing and Product Development Strategy for the Korca Region (Becherel, 2009). In 2008 the Destination Management Organization Korca was established. However, Prespa remains in the shade of Korca and is still lagging behind in tourism and development.

In 2011, the development of monastery tourism in the WPA by North Macedonia (Paligora, 2011) gained interest, but only a study was produced. In 2014 also UNESCO started working in the

Ohrid Region on the project Towards Strengthened Governance of the Shared Transboundary Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Lake Ohrid Region with the aim to improve the management of the World Heritage Site of Ohrid Region and to increase the area under designation to Albania as well (UNESCO, 2016a; 2016b; 2016c; AKZM, n.d.).

In the same period around 2014, in the WPA had been ongoing two very opposing processes. One, being the declaration of the Ohrid-Prespa region as a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (UNESCO, 2014b), while the other one, lead by the government of North Macedonia, very contrasting development activities in PIGNP - a ski centre (Horwath HTL, 2013) and an expressway (Citrus Partners LLP and PIGNP, 2015). Luckily the development of the ski centre and the expressway was halted. Similar, top-down, investment driven initiatives were laid out by the government of North Macedonia and some realized, such as the beach development in Stenje and Slivnica on Lake Prespa in 2016 (MTC, 2016).



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

From 2014 the work in the area of tourism intensified, primarily in North Macedonia, where USAID worked on promotion of the WPA, and together with Swiss Contact, ATTA, and the APST organized the Adventure Next Conference in Ohrid, North Macedonia, that is considered a milestone in the tourism sector of the Balkans (Carana, 2015). While UNDP began the project on Improving Management of Protected Areas (UNDP, 2019), for which tourism received a significant share while working with PIPNP, PIGNP and NPE. In parallel the project on Increased Market Employability implemented by

Swiss Contact, worked on the development of Ohrid region as a destination, and in the process supported the capacity building of the sector, primarily the tourism cluster of Ohrid Region.

The Albanian part of the Prespa area received more attention from 2016, with support from KfW (AKZM, n.d.), where among others, tourism activities were developed.

In 2018, PONT made grant agreements with: PIGNP (PONT, 2018b) to support them in the transfer of a wood harvesting oriented management towards a nature-protection and tourism oriented management; and the creation of a new Management Plan; PIPNP to update the first Management Plan adopted in 2006 for a period of 10 years, and to gather missing data for the significant geographical extension of the Park's area in 2007; Municipality of Resen is supported with development of tourism, promotion materials, as well as hiking trails in NPE; While PNP will be supported for rehabilitation of the hiking trails.

All in all tourism development in the WPA has been very weak without the international donor support. Though some local infrastructure existed, and local initiatives were present, It was only through the international donor funded project that the protected areas in the WPA began to develop management plans where they also address the issue of management of visitors, and to enable a welcoming environment in the protected areas through the development of visitor's infrastructure as well as visitor's info centres. It was also, only the donor projects that provided opportunities for cross-border cooperation and development. However the donor driven de-

velopment did not provide a strong effect or a sufficient change. Management plans are left not updated or even not fully implemented without donor support, and the maintenance of the infrastructure is poor, once projects end. It seems that internal capacities in the PAs were not developed in the process, or perhaps the lack of finances or the lack of political will prevented change to take place in the PAs management and focus on sustainable tourism development.



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

EXISTING ISSUES

Tourism has a cross-sectoral dimension, thus, sometimes activities in the most marginal field of living have effect in the tourism sector. Tourists, especially nature loving tourists, see and experience life in an area including all its issues. In this relation some issues may not seem at first as directly important for sustainable tourism development, but they do have an impact in the overall image and experience that the destination has to offer. This report therefore pays attention to seemingly marginal issues that the stakeholders have deemed as important to be addressed.

The issues that have been identified are considered from a point of tourism as a system, in particular, a value chain approach (Hawkings and Nikolova, 2005). It is seen that tourism functions within an institutional frame that can be divided at national, municipal and level of the location; tourism requires resources in infrastructure and human capacity; tourism service is provided through the acts of operations by the stakeholders; and lastly, tourism is marketed for sale.

Issues at the level of governance

Issues at national-level governance

The discrepancy between policies and laws and the actual practice is a major issue at the national level. Though there is legislation in place, and policies exist (some outdated, or not yet adopted), implementation and enforcement is poor and inconsistent. There is a widespread opinion among the stakeholders that **state institutions fail to create an enabling environment with efficient and reliable governance arrangements, and that often the opposite is the case.** Additionally, there is a discrepancy between the policies and the relevant legislation that in effect leads to further confusion among the stakeholders and disappointment in the state system.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** In both countries stock breeders set on fire grasslands in PAs and elsewhere as part of their strategy for grazing area management. Although the current regulation in North Macedonia considers this a felony and foresee 3000 EUR fines, it is seldom enforced. This widespread practice poses a high risk for wildfires negatively affects outdoor activities of tourists and visitors, and creates a landscape that is not appealing to nature loving tourists.
- **WPA:** Law enforcement is an issue in both countries. Illegal activities in Albania are either tolerated or the court system does not punish the perpetrators (Grazhdani, 2010). In North Macedonia, though cooperation between the NPs and appropriate environmental and/or cultural inspectorates exists, many burning issues remain not being addressed by the state institutions, even though they are pinpointed by the NPs.
- **WPA:** There are unclear institutional responsibilities in both countries. Many legal documents require opinion from a governmental institution in charge without specifying that institution. When investments need to be done, institutions deny responsibility and obtaining the needed opinion on paper takes a very long time.
- **Albania:** The concept of sustainable tourism is unknown to state institutions in Albania.
- **North Macedonia:** The Agency for Roads of North Macedonia is not maintaining the state roads on a timely manner or sufficiently to provide constant safe passage.
- **North Macedonia:** There are many tourism studies and strategies from various perspectives (rural development, economy, nature protection, etc.) that are not harmonised.

There is a general issue of weak continuity of processes and policies at State level. This is linked with the frequent changes of responsible officials in national institutions, and the practice that actions initiated by former officials are often abandoned by the newly appointed ones. This situation is transposed also at the level of management (for example: the National Parks) where the managers are appointed by the State. This practice in turn creates a system where **state enforcement is contingent on the expertise and the will of the person in charge.**

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** In both countries general issue is the attitude that everyone is an 'expert' in tourism but the availability of real tourism expertise is limited, and advice from tourism experts is rarely sought.
- **WPA:** General problem in both countries is that there is no continuity of the implemented initiatives and projects. Concern is expressed in North Macedonia that the frequent change of heads of state bodies and/or management of the NPs creates a difficult situation of weak follow-up on projects, strategies and management plans. In Albania many projects have failed on delivering the change they promised, that is associated with poor selection of the implementing organization and lack of follow up activities to sustain their outcomes.
- **WPA:** the preparation of new national tourism strategies is underway, but long overdue.

Issues at the level of Municipal governance

All local governments in the region suffer from the same issue: low transparency; weak and selective enforcement of regulations; lack of continuity of activities upon changes of responsible people; lack of public trust, including the trust in their commitment to sustainability. This situation creates issues in various fields of the local life that is under Municipal Governance, such as waste management, or preservation of local architecture. This **lack of public trust in local governments affects the tourism sector, among others.**

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** In both countries there is a problem with waste, both solid and wastewater, disposal (collection and treatment). The current wastewater and solid waste disposal systems are insufficient even for the local inhabitants. Wastewater needs to be treated. Solid waste is dispersed everywhere and is not being collected or the people that throw that waste are not sanctioned. The need is that the locals must come up with a solution and agree on rules together with the local governments, communal service providers and the PA authorities on how to dispose of the solid waste in the urbanized areas, but also in the mountain areas where tourists are present, especially close to the motor vehicle roads.
- **WPA:** There is a need for the preservation of the traditional architecture and the historic heritage. The specifics and uniqueness of the heritage is what brings added value to tourism. In North Macedonia there are no effective local policies in place on maintaining the traditional architecture, thus, many towns and villages are lost, and still are losing their authentic look. Municipalities have the power to provide directions on the architecture style through the urban plans without the procedure and burden of declaring a location as a cultural heritage site, however this is not applied.
- **Albania:** Sustainable tourism concept is unknown to local governments.
- **North Macedonia:** local governments cannot lead since they have no trust from the local people. There is no transparency in the work of the Municipalities.
- **North Macedonia:** There is no continuity of the municipal projects as Municipal Heads change.
- **North Macedonia:** Ohrid does not have an official tourism strategy, though there is one developed with Swiss support. However, the Municipality of Ohrid refuses to adopt it on the account that there is no environmental impact assessment made for it.

- **WPA:** In both countries there are no urban plans for most rural areas in the Wider Prespa Area (Grazhdani, 2010). This causes problems for use of IPA RD funds, as well as any kind of further legal development in the area.
- **WPA:** Municipal Governments are not enabling sustainable tourism development, in Albania they are not involved, while in North Macedonia they sometimes present a barrier for development.

In North Macedonia an issue at Municipal level is the securing income from tourism on Municipal level. Municipal governments are interested in investing in tourism, but lack proper mechanisms for tourism tax collection to secure the funds. Officials at Resen Municipality perceive that they are unable to generate income from tourists visiting Galicica and Pelister national parks due to the fact that the main offices of the respective public institutions are based in Ohrid and Bitola, respectively.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** Because categorization is poorly implemented, hospitality establishments do not pay tourist tax for the accommodation they provide. Therefore, the Municipality of Resen is unable to collect tourist tax that in turn affects their ability to invest in promoting Prespa as a tourist destination.
- **North Macedonia:** There is no registry of water transport entities on Lake Prespa that offer tourism transportation. Therefore no taxes from these people/companies are taken by the municipality. It is in process though.

There is a weak communication and cooperation between the national and local governments in North Macedonia. Many responsibilities concerning tourism development overlap or are shared between national and local governments; on many issues the municipalities have a subordinate position in the national system. Because of poor communication, Municipalities are unable to overcome obstacles and enable processes to improve tourism in their territory. This breeds passivity among the local government administration to the point that legislation is not enforced (that may require adaptation to local needs and situation).

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** Lack of vertical communication: Government - Municipality - Local People.
- **North Macedonia:** Tourism Attractive sites have overlapping jurisdictions, both State and Municipal, such as the Sarai in Resen.
- **North Macedonia:** Municipalities would like to preserve their cultural heritage, but they have no registry of protected monuments/buildings. The list of protected cultural heritage is within the Ministry of Culture - the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, and cooperation between the Municipality and the Directorate for Cultural Heritage is poor.
- **North Macedonia:** Possibility exists at the Ministry of Economy for setting up road signage along main roads to direct to tourist destinations, but municipalities need to submit specific requests.
- **North Macedonia:** Categorization of accommodation facilities is poorly implemented and needs local adjustments to enable hospitalities that want to categorize to do so. Municipalities can request sub-legal acts in order to adapt existing legislation to the local needs, when the legislation is not appropriate for implementation in their own municipality, however, they rarely do so. This situation enables effective grey economy, where the hospitality establishments work outside of the law.

In Albania the strategic documents at municipal level and regional level are outdated. It is important for Prespa region to **develop an appropriate strategy for the development of sustainable tourism with a focus on nature and culture-based tourism.**

Issues at the level of PA governance

Many activities in the PAs in the WPA are left undone, such as maintenance of the trails. While CSOs from the region have the potential to help, the potential is largely untapped. PA authorities need to **coordinate and cooperate with other stakeholders on this matter**.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** NPs cannot develop tourism by themselves. PNP, Albania recognizes this and needs the efforts and coordination with the other stakeholders in the area, while PIGNP, North Macedonia, takes a step forward to recognize the need for a good planning process with public involvement, and even is in the process of signing a memorandum for cooperation with the MC "Patagonija" from Ohrid.
- **Albania:** The PNP Tourism Info Centre is not functioning.
- **North Macedonia:** Though there is existing cooperation between PIGNP and mountain sports CSOs, there is potential for increased cooperation between the two. Some mountain sports CSOs, such as MC "Patagonija" and "EcoDrome" are ready to offer their manpower to serve the PIGNP's needs such as monitoring. The mountain sports CSOs are willing to volunteer in the NP, offer their expertise for marking of trails, and even act as a control to the ascent to Magaro, otherwise a highly protected area, yet it is the most popular tourism hike in the NPG.
- **North Macedonia:** The maintenance of hiking and biking trails is a burden for the NP MAs, because they have insufficient human resources and insufficient funds to do this.

In North Macedonia, where tourism activities in the PAs are more present, issues arise on the extent of exploitation of the PAs by the visitors. Questions are being opened on what and how much it should be allowed. And though some of these issues are addressed in the MPs of the PAs, there is one general issue that there is no monitoring of visitors and even more there is **no monitoring on the effects that visitors and their activities make in the PAs. Studies for the carrying capacities and the impact of the various forms of tourism present in the PAs are needed**, especially in relation to wildlife, that later can be transposed in the MPs. Additionally, enforcement of these limitations are an issue even at present.

At the moment over tourism may not be a big issue in the PAs in North Macedonia, but it may become very soon. Likewise, this issue may appear in PNP soon, so the processes in North Macedonia can be used as a learning example for Albania.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** Many strictly protected areas are also of high interest for adventure travel. The conflict is present whether and how much to allow tourism development in these areas, especially since tourism activities are ongoing there.
- **North Macedonia:** Hunters cross the borders between the hunting areas and the PAs. There is a need for stopping this in a form of a buffer zone, education of hunters, better control and enforcement of regulations.
- **North Macedonia:** There are no monitoring and evaluation mechanisms related to tourism and their impact. There are some past and current projects that tackle this issue. However very often is the case that monitoring is not being implemented by the NPs with exception on monitoring of biodiversity, in particular endangered species, but only in some PAs. Some NPs, such as PIGNP even have monitoring equipment for tourists, but do not use it. There is a need to begin implementing monitoring of tourists in PAs.
- **North Macedonia:** There is a need to assess the needs for tourism development, against the possibilities for tourism development and nature protection, in particular of the island Golem Grad where municipal and State interest collide with those for nature protection.

- **North Macedonia:** There is a need for a study on the carrying capacities for tourists of individual sites in the NPs in North Macedonia.
- **North Macedonia:** There is a need for an assessment on the environmental impact that certain forms and activities of tourism make.

Financing of PAs is an issue. Though there are wishes to have tourism as a primary income, the NPs in North Macedonia traditionally have harvesting of wood as a primary source of income, unlike PNP where it is financed by the State in Albania, as well as NPE which is financed by Resen Municipality and do not harvest trees. Here lies the basic problem with NPs in North Macedonia that the management is with knowledge on harvesting trees. PIGNP, despite the issues on control of the entrance to the NPG, made a progressive step in achieving a substantial part of their income to originate from tourism in 2018, and hopes to continue the same in 2019. Hopefully, with better control to the entrances it will achieve greater income. If this succeeds, along with the support from PONT, PIGNP may become the first NP in North Macedonia not dependent on wood harvesting, and lead the way as an example to other NPs and PAs in North Macedonia, but also the region, on tourism based financing of PAs. A step towards this change has made the PIPNP by signing a memorandum that enables Bitola residents to enter the NP for free - entrance paid by the Municipal Government, though the funds are negligible in amount, it sets a good example of development and cooperation with the municipality. However State and Local Governments do not often realise the need to support the PAs in their financing. Therefore a need to explain the significance that the PAs make for the community and for the State, perhaps by making a valorisation of the ecosystem services that the PA offers. However the issue on finances arise in all PAs in both countries, especially at the point of the strategic documents that often require additional financing, and need to be matched with external or donor sources.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** strategic action plans need to be matched with appropriate funding.
- **WPA:** Need for education where the fee for entrance to the PAs goes to.
- **North Macedonia:** PIPNP considers that the PAs management plans are fairly ambitious, and that they have no finances for its full implementation. They need funding from outside sources.
- **North Macedonia:** There is an idea for a municipal fund for development of PAs for the Ohrid area, but it is refused from the municipal government in Ohrid.
- **North Macedonia:** Tourism is considered as a panacea to economic development. Very often, disregarding nature protection and sustainability in the ideas, and seeing only financial gain. Investments are made in NPs from Municipal or State Governments with ideas for an economic boom. However when the NPs start making income from tourism, and finally see possibility for focusing more on nature protection, the local stakeholders, including municipal governments want to have a direct percentage from this earnings. The irony is that the local stakeholders have not made mechanisms/steps to make earnings from tourism. The danger is that these wants for a piece of the cut of the tourism income of the NPs is disregarding nature protection, and this position is stating an obvious disregard to the role of the NPs in attracting tourists. But this issue is in part owed to the management of the NPs, since their work is hidden from public eyes, without providing public reports and transparency to their activities. So when local stakeholders learn of the income they make from tourism, knowing that all the NPs do is cut trees, the reaction is expected.
- **North Macedonia:** At PIGNP there is a need for valorisation of ecosystem services that the park offers to the local community. Expected to be realized this year with support from PONT.

- **North Macedonia:** There is no access control to the PAs. The NPs have only one entrance points where they charge entrance fees, while there are many paths to enter the NPs.

The NPs in North Macedonia, being State institutions follow a procedure where the managers are appointed by the State Government and approved by the NP's Management Board, thus they are dependent on the State policies. Considering the issue stated above on State Governance, it is unfortunate to see the same practice at the level of NP management, thus making the **responsibility of implementing the MP and with it nature protection dependant to the expertise and the will of a political party appointed person in charge.**

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- North Macedonia: Many donor supported initiatives tend to stop when the donation support is no longer in place. Thus there is low continuity of the projects implemented. Concern is expressed in the frequent changes in PA management.

Issues at Resource Level

Issues at the level of human capacity building

The tourism sector in the WPA has a shortage of skilled and qualified personnel. **Formal education institutions do not provide the qualification level that is demanded by the tourism sector.** Low-end hospitalities pay too little for such high qualifications, and well qualified personnel goes abroad to work for higher wages. New courses, new curricula or even new approaches may be needed to amend this situation.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** There are no appropriate skilled workers in hospitality, such as: waiter, baker, cook, sweets maker. Tourism education curriculum in high school and at university is inappropriate to the needs of the tourism sector. In North Macedonia this is due to the educational system developed by the Bureau for Education. The skills listed are only with 3 years of high school, but in order to complete the minimal education requirement of 4 year high school, the student enrol at a 4th year, in other studies, thus they become eligible to work (for example) at the reception desk where they can get paid better. Therefore they are lost as the needed skilled workers they would have been. At university level there are no specialised courses such as for example for cook or waiter.
- **North Macedonia:** In practice there is no internship stagier for students in the field of hospitality.
- **North Macedonia:** There is no planning for the educational needs for labour requirements of the tourism sector.
- **North Macedonia:** There is no local possibility in Prespa for becoming a boat captain, one needs to go to Skopje or Ohrid to do that.
- **North Macedonia:** In the primary schools in North Macedonia there is possibility for students to select various classes, but this is not on offer since there are no appropriate staff to provide classes on topics of tourism or entrepreneurship. Young people should have the first contact with biodiversity, nature protection, tourism and entrepreneurship even from primary school whether in school or after school activities.

Local people in the WPA need support in developing sustainable tourism businesses. They lack the skills and the knowledge of how to develop a tourism product and/or service. **Capacity building in the form of training that will help those that are interested to begin a sustainable tourism business are needed.**

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** The local people have no knowledge or skills for entrepreneurship in the area of tourism.
- **WPA:** Local people need capacity development / training in the field of diversification of their farming activities to include tourism.
- **Albania:** Need for tourism product development capacity building.
- **Albania:** Need for capacity building on management.
- **North Macedonia:** Farmers and shepherders that have relation to the NPs need to be trained to provide services for tourists, as an additional income.
- **North Macedonia:** There were trainings in the past on, but little of the learnt was implemented. There is a need to stimulate/motivate implementation of the newly learned topics.

The local people of the WPA are mostly rural people, lacking skills and knowledge in delivering quality tourism related services. **Basic training in language, computers, hospitality, and guiding are needed. But also advanced increase of their knowledge for example on the biodiversity, in order to provide tourism services related to nature and the PAs.** In addition to the lack of capacities the local people have difficulties to envision a different life in the location they live in. They are in **need of inspiring and developing their creative sense paired with entrepreneurship.** People that have been abroad often overcome this limit. Capacity building in the form of inspirational and visioning workshops and study visits may be required to achieve the needed mental switch to start being creative in the sustainable tourism sector.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** Local people, but also tourist guides, have very little knowledge on biodiversity, and are unable to guide tourists interested in biodiversity. Rising the interest among the locals and guides paired with training may provide a solution to this and create new tourist activities related to biodiversity.
- **WPA:** The local people have very low language skills. They need to learn languages in order to be able to receive foreign tourists.
- **Albania:** Need for capacity building on hospitality.
- **Albania:** Need for capacity building on guiding tourists.
- **Albania:** Need for capacity building on ICT skills to integrate it into their sales and marketing activities.
- **Albania:** Use of internet and new communication technologies is needed with today's tourists. Local stakeholders lack language, knowledge and skills to use these technologies to communicate with tourists.



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

National Parks, in North Macedonia in particular, are facing challenges in re-training their forest guards to park rangers that would support tourists and visitors. Training on communication skills are needed. In addition, tourist guides guide tourists in PAs need to learn about the PAs and the appropriate behaviour, through targeted training courses or instruction materials (manual, brochures, etc.). This process is already ongoing in PNP in Albania.

Safety is a major issue in travel. However, it is the last thing on the minds of many start-up tourism services providers. **There is a need to make tourism service providers aware about the safety protocols they need to have** in order to be able to provide quality services.

Stakeholders should be aware about their own capacities to engage in the appropriate type of activities in relation to sustainable tourism. For example, municipalities should be able to support sustainable tourism development. While local people should understand what being sustainable means. **Training on the basics of sustainable tourism development is needed in order for the stakeholders to be able to make development and promotion of sustainable tourism in the WPA/their municipality.**

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** The roles of the stakeholders should be related to their capacities.
- **North Macedonia:** Strengthening of municipal administration capacities for sustainable tourism and to make promotion of the WPA/their region. A legal requirement is that municipalities must have a person in charge of tourism.
- **Albania:** Sustainability as a concept is not clear for the public administration.
- **North Macedonia:** There is a general misconception about what is sustainable tourism. In the eyes of the stakeholders, sustainable tourism extends throughout the whole year, unlike summer tourism where tourism season last for couple of months and for the rest of the 10 months of the year the tourism facilities remain empty and unused.

Issues at the level of infrastructure

Issues at the level of general infrastructure

There is a general lack of appropriate infrastructure, whether that be road, water supply or sewage facilities in both Albania and North Macedonia. Basic infrastructure needs improvement or development if it is missing. However, maintenance of existing infrastructure sometimes poses even a greater issue. Improvement of the state of the infrastructure for tourism needs is also improving the infrastructure for the local people, therefore sustainable tourism development is also improving the conditions for living in WPA for the locals.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** The infrastructure is either missing or the existing is neglected.
- **North Macedonia examples:** 1. Water supply in Stenje, North Macedonia needs renewal; 2. The waste water collector system around Lake Ohrid does not have the capacity for all the built structures, unlike the one in Prespa where 2m diameter pipes were used, in Ohrid only 1m diameter pipes have been used; 3. Some villages have no road connections; 4. St Naum Monastery built a wastewater treatment facility, but it is an illegal structure.
- **Albania examples:** Need for sewage system in PNP.
- **WPA:** In both countries there is a problem with wastewater (disposal and treatment). The current wastewater disposal system does not suffice even for the local inhabitants.
- **Albania:** Existing road infrastructure needs improvement. Current road infrastructure is not safe enough. Tourism safety is of prime importance.
- **North Macedonia:** No piers/docks on Lake Prespa.

Tourism in Ohrid area has sparked overdevelopment investments and initiatives that affects the WPA. **The issue is that there are many existing hotels that are in bad to terrible condition, yet they are not revitalized, but rather brand new buildings are built mostly on nature sites.** If such a process continues, sustainability criteria needs to be applied in the WPA. However, local real estate in the villages not always have clear ownership rights, and local people are prevented from being able to engage in small scale development activities.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** The impact to the environment is devastating in Ohrid area and PIGNP. New hotels are being built, occupying existing nature sites, while the old hotels remain and slowly become ruins. The old hotels should be renovated, instead of building new ones. Ohrid area is close to becoming an Endangered UNESCO World Heritage Site due to the overbuilt structures. A ban on all construction works is favoured by sustainable tourism workers.
- **North Macedonia:** Property rights are an issue for old houses.

The border crossing in Prespa between North Macedonia and Greece is closed. Opening of that border crossing would enable connection on the Greek side that is dearly sought to spark movement of tourists in the WPA. There have been numerous announcements that the border crossing will be opened, however to this date it remains closed. According to the latest announcement, it is expected to start working in 2023.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** Need for opening the border crossing Markova Noga in Prespa with Greece as a way for movement of tourists (Resen Municipality Council, 2016).

Issues at the level of small-scale infrastructure

There is a general insufficiency of appropriate infrastructure for active tourism. For example: not enough marked trails for visitor's activities in the PAs. And in the PAs where there are trails, the trails are badly maintained. There is a need for renovation of existing and establishment of new trails - a system of trails that will improve and enrich the tourism offer in the WPA. This is the same case for shelters and resting places in the high mountain areas of the WPA, as well as paragliding take off sites.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **Albania:** Hiking and bicycle trails in PNP should be revised, restored and appropriate signage is missing.
- **North Macedonia:** In NPG there is a need for maintaining the paragliding take off sites.
- **North Macedonia:** In NPG there is a need for establishment of thematic trails.
- **North Macedonia:** In NPG there is a need for facilities that will provide rest and a place for a meal, perhaps a sheepfold that offers hospitality services.
- **North Macedonia:** No bicycle trails in NPP.

Accommodation facilities in the rural and mountain areas of North Macedonia are insufficient or inappropriate. **There is a need for support for renovation of infrastructure for accommodation/resting.**

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** There is a need to define locations for construction of a system of mountain huts for cross-mountain hikes. Yet, the MSC even when they have ownership of the mountain huts, as in the case in NPP, do not have the money to build new mountain huts.

- **North Macedonia:** The PIGNP has ownership of facilities in the mountain that can be utilized for tourism, however they are not fully utilized. PIGNP is working with MC Patagonija to put to use one of the mountain huts at Lipova Livada.
- **North Macedonia:** There are no appropriate accommodation facilities for village, in-house hosting in the villages, though some accommodation exists in Brajcino and Ljubojno.



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

Supporting facilities are also identified as an issue in North Macedonia.

Whether that be a trash can, a bicycle parking or a bus parking place, tourism workers notice these needs. However it is up to the owners / managers of the properties to decide whether they can and want to have such a supporting facility.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** There is a need for waste disposal system: containers at various points on Galicica Mountain in PIGNP, and their collection.
- **North Macedonia:** Accommodations do not have facilities for bicycles, yet they have bicycle riders as guests and the accommodation management complain that the bicycles make their place dirty.
- **North Macedonia:** Lack of parking/stopping facility for busses at tourist attractions, such as the Sarai in Resen.

Issues at the level of services

Tour operators and tourism hospitality in the WPA currently do not have fully sustainable operations. Simply because it is not embedded in the practice, though it may not take much to achieve sustainability for some.

The need to move closer to sustainability exists, for some a barrier is the lack of information, for others it is a needed financial support to achieve sustainability.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

- **WPA:** Currently there is no sustainable tourism. There are, however, small scale hospitality that have close to sustainable tourism in both countries, but need further transformation to become sustainable. Some examples visited in the course of preparing this assessment: Spirit of Prespa, Carev Dvor, North Macedonia; Villa Utarna, Konjsko, North Macedonia; Villa Minami, Konjsko, North Macedonia; Sheepfold Naume, Velestovo, North Macedonia; Stilian Male, Gollomoboc, Albania; Valentina Vurmo, Gorrice, Albania; Villa Kostoski, Brajcino, North Macedonia; Villa Livae, Brajcino, North Macedonia; Villa Raskrsnica, Brajcino, North Macedonia; etc.
- **North Macedonia:** There is a need for support for existing facilities to become sustainable, such as subsidies for placing solar panels or waste water treatment.

The weak and limited offer of sustainable tourism products and services in the WPA poses the greatest challenge, deserving immediate attention. The combination of low financial capacity to invest and low idea capacity on what to develop in the area of sustainable tourism of local people poses a barrier. **Local people need incentives, and most importantly as ideas and examples on what they can do to start generating income from sustainable tourism.** Furthermore local people need support to the process of development of sustainable tourism products and services. Pilot projects as examples, or establishment of sustainable tourism incubator hubs to provide support and networking are some of the needs that may help stimulate the creation of successful sustainable tourism activities.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** Need of improving the public transport.
- **WPA:** Need to define specific WPA activities
- **WPA:** Need for diversification: to identify families that can offer experiences of local practices.
- **Albania:** There is interest from tourists for PNP (ATA, 2017), however the tourism offer in Prespa is limited.
- **Albania:** Underdeveloped production of souvenirs.
- **North Macedonia:** Need for a long term process support for development of an idea into a product.
- **North Macedonia:** local people in Prespa see tourist activities only as an additional income, secondary to the apple production they have (Smith et al., 2009) and are reluctant to engage in tourism activities. However, by avoiding to engage in tourism farmers are not diversifying their income, considering the low prices of apples diversification is needed. It is difficult for them to enter new markets in the way that Spirit of Prespa, North Macedonia is an example of agro-tourism that is perhaps the only farm that has a significant, direct sale. Due to the low income in agriculture, in Albania tourism is seen as an appropriate source of income (Grazhdani, 2010).
- **North Macedonia:** The locals continuously say that they need infrastructure like accommodation, however the fact is that they have no activities packed and ready to offer to potential customers. The only activity available, with 0 effort, is the lake - beach tourism. A step away from this approach needs to be made with a strategy to transform the tourism from a summer season work to a whole year round work.
- **North Macedonia:** There is a need to promote sustainable tourism through examples of sustainable tourism products and services. And in that way to increase awareness about the possibility of sustainable tourism to generate better income. The example of sustainable tourism that is needed, may be from the country, the region or even further, to show to the locals that tourism can provide a viable income. Such examples may be created through pilot projects.
- **North Macedonia:** Need to develop alternative skiing in the PAs.
- **North Macedonia:** No winter activities to keep tourists in the winter season.
- **North Macedonia:** Need for a tourism incubator in Resen, a facility that will support people with ideas for tourism products to help them achieve their goals.
- **North Macedonia:** PIPNP's experience is that sustainable tourism activities are difficult to create since the local population is not engaging to implement them, even when the NPs are supporting the implementation and facilitating the production of the activity. This is so because the local people do not see an opportunity in tourism, they have other sources of primary and additional income. The local population in the area is over 40w years old, and not willing to start something new. And there are no young people to start initiatives and businesses.
- **North Macedonia:** There is no offer of products from the NPs. There is a need for such products to be made available and sold in a recognizable way to their origin of the NPs.

Coordination among stakeholders: institutions (national and local), national park, travel agencies, and even projects is a challenge. Failure has been identified due to this weak coordination and communication among the organizations and their exchange of information. For instance, in North Macedonia mapping of tourism attractions and services has been done too many times, but the information is not exchanged, and stakeholders keep asking for it. In North Macedonia, the tourism sector is fragmented in view of the WPA: there is a Tourism Cluster at the level of South West Planning Region (Ohrid area) that is functioning well, and there is one at the level of Pelagonia Region that is not functioning. A successful tourism sector will require the joint effort of the involved stakeholders. In Albania there is DMO for the whole Korca region, where the WPA is only a segment. **There is a need for a coordinated effort among stakeholders of the WPA in planning and delivering the tourism offer.**

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** Cooperation between stakeholders is very low (Grazhdani, 2010) and poses an issue in both countries.
- **WPA:** Local people expect that their problems will solve someone from the outside, like the Government.
- **WPA:** Local people have suffered from past false promises and tourism looks like a false promise to them.

In Albania there is a need for improving the quality of service provided. The quality of services is not reliable. **Quality certification scheme is needed to secure quality of service provided.**

The traditional way of life paired with the extensive, traditional agriculture in the WPA is a sustainable tourism product that needs to be preserved and developed to be offered as a tourism offer. The challenge is to halt the loss of this way of life. Therefore sustainable agro-tourism measures to re-establish these diminishing practices are needed. The steps of moving to extensive agriculture, away from intensive agriculture (as in the case of Resen, North Macedonia) would also help the process of lowering the pollution from pesticides in the area and Lake Prespa.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **North Macedonia:** The traditional forms of cattle herding need to be returned at PIGNP as a tourist attraction and activity.
- **North Macedonia:** There is a need for maintaining the values of the anthropogenic landscape in PIGNP. Options are subsidies or support for people that return to live in the villages and practice traditional farming in the PAs.

Issues at the level of promotion and marketing

The WPA needs a clear and recognizable branding, one that can be used on a cross border level, and that businesses and municipalities in the WPA would gladly use in their promotion. Through joint efforts for promotion, everyone in the WPA would benefit from the cumulative visibility of the area.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** Being inside a PA for the businesses that are established on the territory, is not utilized in their marketing and promotion, as if it is not significant.
- **WPA:** Information and promotion of the many unknown natural attractions is lacking.
- **Albania:** Prespa area is a destination based on nature and culture. There are many products and destinations to compete with at national and international level. Thus, there is a need for a clear market positioning of the destination.

The WPA lacks presence and promotion, primarily on the internet. Information about the WPA and especially about the sustainable tourism activities, goods or services is insufficient or missing from the internet. But not only on the internet, information is insufficient on the ground as well, whether that be as information boards on the streets or as brochures at tourism hospitality establishments.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** Tourists have trouble getting information about activities and services. There is a need for promotion and accessibility of tourist information about the activities and services in the WPA, mainly on the internet.
- **Albania:** Internet presence is needed.
- **North Macedonia:** There are tourists that are interested in biodiversity, but have limited access to information on what and where they can see.
- **North Macedonia:** There is a need for WPA to be promoted on the main highways with information boards to direct country visitors to go there.
- **North Macedonia:** Missing tourism promotion on social media.

Linking markets with the sustainable tourism providers in the WPA is needed. However, to do this the local sustainable tourism providers must adhere to basic comfort and quality standards that those markets require. The fact is that travel agencies are in search of good, quality tourism providers constantly. So, before making marketing campaigns, we need to make sure that the WPA has the required quality on offer.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **WPA:** Local providers of tourist activities are not linked/known by travel agencies. Though the wish is that travel agencies need to include more elements of WPA in their offers, currently, it is the travel agencies that approach the local suppliers in need of content, and sometimes the travel agencies are those that develop the content when there is none.
- **Albania:** Accommodation facilities have low level of occupancy, where hotels experience an average of 11.6% occupancy, and private accommodation experience an average of 3% occupancy per year, while the numbers of restaurant visits is also low (Grazhdani, 2010). This situation of low capacity use of facilities is not stimulating for investments in any tourism development. The need to increase the visitors through marketing is evident.
- **Albania:** PNP is not offered as a tourism destination in Korca.

Tourism market research is needed for the WPA in order to gain proper information for the development of the sector in the right direction. For example, local people think about tourism in a very local and national scope. However, the fact is that travellers more and more are interested in cross-border tourism, rather than staying in one country. Therefore not only that the information is needed, but also an organization that can interpret these data is needed, such as a DMO for the WPA.

Some key inputs from the stakeholders on the topic that need to be addressed:

- **Albania:** Prespa needs to make significant investments in data collection in the area and management systems to monitor and analyse tourist visits, spending behaviour, profiles of tourists and other features. These data are almost missing.
- **Albania:** There is no market research to understand the consumer - tourists.
- **Albania:** There is a need of attracting new markets.
- **Albania:** There is no knowledge in tourism market intelligence to drive the sector in the right direction.
- **North Macedonia:** Tourism is seen as a national activity, while it should have a cross border / multi country approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(concerning the main areas of intervention in future)

On the Form of Tourism

For the purpose of this report, sustainable tourism has been addressed. However, the NPs of the WPA become more and more dependent on income from tourism, as they strive in North Macedonia to abandon the traditional self-financing practice of harvesting wood to finance conservation measures. "Tourism provides a crucial and unique way of fostering visitors' connection with protected area values, making it a potentially positive force for conservation. Visitor experiences can be transformative for an individual's personal growth and well-being, while instilling an increased sense of stewardship and support for protected area values." (Leung et al., 2018, p.xi). Therefore tourism in PAs not only needs to be sustainable, but it also needs to be supporting nature protection. That is why ecotourism should be the recommended form of sustainable tourism in the PAs.

The principles of sustainable tourism are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, from mass tourism to small niche markets, while ecotourism is often used to refer to smaller-scale businesses and operations (Sweeting, 2012, p.9). Ecotourism is a form of tourism that in the process also involves the local people and provides opportunity for them to achieve an income, therefore it would largely contribute to the benefit of local people. That is why ecotourism should be the recommended form of sustainable tourism also in the villages of the WPA, in or around the PAs.

Ecotourism is defined as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education" (TIES, 2015). Ecotourism is about uniting conservation, communities, and sustainable travel (TIES, 2015) in which term ecotourism should provide direct (financial) benefits to local people and to nature conservation. This means that those who implement, participate in, and further market ecotourism activities in the WPA should adopt the following ecotourism principles (TIES, 2015):

- Minimize physical, social, behavioural, and psychological impacts.
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect.
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts.
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation.
- Generate financial benefits for both local people and private industry.
- Deliver memorable interpretative experiences to visitors that help raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climates.
- Design, construct and operate low-impact facilities.
- Recognize the rights and spiritual beliefs of the Local People and work in partnership with them to create empowerment.

Ecotourism includes: nature-based tourism, community-based tourism, homestays, visits to world heritage sites and other forms of responsible travel (Sweeting, 2012, p.9).

General Recommendations

The WPA needs a common, transborder, vision: there are many things to be done but crucial is that all future efforts should be guided by a common vision that looks forward to sustainable solutions. Policies and management plans within the countries need harmonisation and not only vertically but also across issues. Nature protection is a transboundary task and requires harmonisation between the countries in the area, including Greece. Mechanisms and practices for continued coordination and collaboration of stakeholders, e.g. between PA authorities and municipalities, local NGOs, are dearly needed. Further analysis of the institutional setup for governance of sustainable tourism is needed to identify the critical overlaps, differences in priorities, and gaps in capacities.

The process of supporting and developing sustainable tourism in the WPA in Albania and North Macedonia should follow complementary steps to be taken in consultation with established local or international travel agencies and adventure tourism guides that can transfer their experience and know-how, as well as with environmental experts and the PAs authorities. It should follow these basic steps: rising the overall, local, human capacities for tourism; creating a tourism offer; matching the offer with markets; improving the quality of infrastructure and facilities; finding new markets and matching it with new products; organizing the stakeholders to work together and prepare for each new season together. This would be a continuous process, where one step would gain more focus as the demand for it grows. This should be spearheaded by few, quality, local tourism products or services that will be leaders and serve as models of sustainable tourism in the WPA; they should be gradually supported by organizations for organizing the tourism sector and the management of the destination.

- Aiming to support sustainable tourism measures of existing local and WPA based strategies would contribute and complement to the development process, such as the PAs management plans, Municipal tourism development strategy, in particular the actions related to sustainable development of tourism. Considering that the local authorities and PA management organizations face difficulties in achieving these plans, an assessment of the institutional capacities for sustainable tourism development of the managing institutions/organizations of the PAs in the WPA in Albania and North Macedonia would be necessary.
- Many of the local and adjacent residents use the PAs for recreation and they are not necessarily tourists and should be included in the vision of the sustainable tourism development. They are seen as potential drivers for the development of basic sustainable tourism activities, since they have the necessity and convenience of being in nature in the PAs of the WPA at a weekly or even daily basis.
- Development of quality, sustainable tourism offer in form of products, routes, activities, facilities and services is a basic prerequisite for sustainable tourism development of the area. The aim would be to develop sustainable tourism offer sufficient to fulfil a minimum of three full days of stay in the WPA, across as many possible topics of interests and types of tourism, in example: adventure, gourmet, biodiversity, hiking, cycling, crafts, farming, etc. The sustainable tourism offer should be, at best, following the tourist demand for: local and intrinsic to the WPA culture and people, quality, taken care about the safety and with cross-border nature. The activities to achieve this would need to follow primarily, the needs for human capacity building identified in this report. It is through the human capacity building processes that the ideas and opportunities for tourism products would be identified by the interested people, and later followed up on their ideas with support to realize the ideas. A preliminary list of capacity building priorities includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - Work with current providers of tourism products, services, facilities, activities, routes to establish champions - leaders in their own communities to sustainable tourism development. Work should be focused on their capacity building of their hospitality skills,

environmentally friendly practices, increasing the quality and helping the marketing of their products.

- Provide inspirational, mind changing experiences and lectures to people that want to engage in tourism. The experiences can be in the form of study visits to sustainable tourism products and services offered in the region that can provide inspiration and example to the people of the WPA.
- Work with aspiring local people that would like to create tourism products by providing them with skills on innovative/creative thinking; tourism product development; safety in tourism; communication; marketing and promotion. These people should be supported in the form of pilot projects in order to stimulate others to follow that innovative path.
- Enable trainings on skills and knowledge in languages, as well as specific topics, such as the biodiversity of the area, that will enable local people to provide guidance on that topic.
- Diversification of the income of farmers and shepherders/cattle herders and helping them to start providing tourism services will lead to an increased tourism offer in the WPA. This is a practice that is used in the region by sustainably oriented tour operators with great success, where farmers provide food and even accommodation in their rudimentary facilities. Most traditional farming (cattle) practices are in the process of being lost, due to the labour and time dedication that it involves, making it unpopular to the younger people. However these practices are of particular interest for experiential tourism activities, and have the potential to bring good income. Though, arguably research proposes that tourism will only compensate the loss of income not made during the time of engagement with tourism (Mettepenningen et al., 2011). However, the greatest benefit of the engagement of the farmers and shepherders with tourists, is that quality of life of farmers may increase and keep them to continue the farming practices (Mettepenningen et al., 2011). The added benefit of this type of tourism would be the maintenance of cultural landscapes in the PAs that support reach and important biodiversity. Potential for such intervention exists in the lower areas of the mountains of the WPA and it should be tapped in line with the goals set out in the PAs Management Plans.
- Support to small scale, family run hospitalities in achieving eco requirements in accordance to national standards for North Macedonia (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2009a) or the EU Ecolabel (EC, n.d.) in Albania. The needs are primarily in achieving energy efficiency, water consumption, wastewater treatment, decrease of waste and education. Many of these facilities already have practices that are close to the requirements, due to the simple fact that these practices save costs. Additional support is mainly needed in achieving the requirements that are otherwise not available in the place, such as: waste selection, wastewater treatment, etc. Having at least one hospitality receiving an Ecolabel would gain the WPA with a genuine example, a leader in environmental hospitality and sustainable tourism that will strive others to become part of that process. Furthermore, it will be an asset for drawing more attention from tourists and travel agencies to be more present in the WPA.
- Matching the tourism offer to markets should follow the process of the development of the offer in the WPA. This matching of markets can be focused on three steps:
 - The first should be on direct marketing since it will bring local travellers and intrepid international travellers, appropriate for the early development stage that the tourism offer would be at. Direct marketing would depend on the promotion and the internet presence of each tourism provider, and their reviews on tourism platforms.
 - Second, but not less important, would be to work with travel agencies that are already present in the region, such as in the Ohrid area, to attract them to Prespa. To achieve this, direct contact with the travel agencies can be made, offering sustainable tourism packages appropriate to the travellers that they have.
 - Third would be the incoming travel agencies that organize multi day tours to include part, if not the whole trip, with a stop in the WPA. They would require the best possible quality of the tourism products, however it would take the longest period of time to see results,

sometimes years, because of the nature of the procedure preparing, packaging, marketing and selling the tours. To achieve this, package trips can be made yearly in the WPA to match travel agencies to tourism activity providers.

- The tourism sector is complex, incorporating a network of interrelated stakeholders and organisations, both public and private sector, working together. The success of Prespa as a destination relies on a coordinated approach to the planning, development, management and marketing of this destination. A clearly defined destination management structure can provide destination managers and stakeholders with a place to negotiate sustainable destination development, ongoing management and effective destination marketing outcomes. In Albania, a DMO organization already exists that needs further capacity building. However in North Macedonia a DMO or a tourism cluster, or a similar form of association and organization specific to the WPA should be formed that will unite and coordinate the joint activities to promote tourism. The potential for establishing a cross border DMO for the whole WPA should be also explored. Considering the challenges cross-border bodies face, the role of coordinating the development of sustainable tourism across the WPA can be played by the bodies established under the Transboundary Prespa Park Agreement.
- Prespa cannot gain a market position capable of attracting national and international tourists without aggressive efforts that ensure the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources. A strategy focusing on nature and culture tourism is very important for the area in Albania having in mind that existing strategies developed by different actors are not relevant, incomplete, or there are no institutional arrangements to implement them. The Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for the Prespa Lakes Basin, for instance, lacked responsible institution to take the lead in its implementation.
- There is a lot of space for complementary offers linking Prespa to the markets in Ohrid, Bitola and Korca because if Prespa is presented independently could be outcompeted by the neighbouring destinations.
- People that have experienced life in large cities and/or have international experiences tend to be more successful entrepreneurs and should be attracted to the WPA by providing subsidies to develop sustainable tourism businesses, in cooperation with the municipality.
- It is of great importance that local people are provided with guidance, leadership and mediation to understand that no one from outside will solve solve their problems and that the key to a successful tourist destination lies in themselves. Furthermore a long-term investment to the human capacity building of the WPA should be considered a priority, in particular by working with teachers and students on education for sustainable tourism.
- Just because it was not identified by any of the stakeholders toilets deserve the last, and separate recommendation for intervention. Toilets are an integral part of any tourism hospitality provider. Awareness to the tourism providers must be raised that they should equally maintain and clean the toilets. Toilets are usually the second thing (the service itself, being the first) that travel agencies and tourists check. It would be most inconvenient to invest in developing a tourism product that will be disregarded due to bad or no toilet availability. Additionally, toilets should be taken care that they have an appropriate disposal of the waste, preferably in an environmentally friendly manner.



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

SUGGESTIONS

(about how to maximise the success of future efforts, with a focus on the role of EAs)

General

- Change usually take a long time to happen. Considering that almost all projects stop, the moment the donor support is discontinued, processes that have been initiated need to be sustained in the long-term, preferably over a decade. Complementary, the EAs should work on developing capacities, and dedicating human resources that will work on the projects even beyond the completion of the donor support, thus securing continuation of processes.
- There should be local ownership of any future project with support from the governmental structures. Projects that were designed to meet the needs of the local people are more likely to build local ownership.
- Some of the best practices compiled by IUCN could be applied to ensure that the growth of sustainable tourism in WPA, and in particular ecotourism, supports nature conservation and protected area management, while improving the livelihood of local communities, (Leung et al., 2018, p.xi):
 - Encourage national tourism policies that contribute to the conservation of nature as well as generate economic benefits to both protected area authorities and local communities;
 - Supporting community-based delivery of tourism services that is market related;
 - Building training in business development and management skills into community-based delivery of tourism services; and
 - Re-imagining recreational activities in protected areas as a way to meet community needs and address larger societal goals.

Municipalities

- Supportive measures and enabling procedures should be in place for sustainable tourism development. While restrictive measures and discouraging procedures should be in place for non-sustainable tourism development.
- Maintenance of traditional architecture and building with sustainable, and local materials should be encouraged, and even made regulations at local level to maintain such architecture. An example to such building would be the houses in village Jance, in North Macedonia, which are restored with the traditional crafts methods.
- Maintenance and improvement of public infrastructure should be a focus in providing conditions for tourism.
- Enforcement of current regulations, and collection of tourism tax to be efficient and the funds to be dedicated back to the development of sustainable tourism and promotion of the region.
- Financial support to the protected areas should be sought for their further development since tourism development is based on the good functioning of the PAs.

PAs

- Protected Area's Management Plans is the main instrument in the hands of PA managers to prevent short-sighted ideas that encourage destructive development. However, the legal powers supporting the implementation of Management Plans are limited. For instance, illegal constructions could not be prevented in GNP despite the restrictions prescribed by its MP. This experience should be shared with PNP from Albania to prevent similar 'development intervention' challenges in the future. To strengthen its protective position and avoid destructive tourism developments, every protected area should have a dedicated section on ecotourism in its management plans.
- Greater transparency in the work of the institutions is needed, especially in providing information to the public and the visitors on where and how the income from entrance fees to the PAs are being spent.
- Good and sustainable tourism can be achieved with the joint efforts of the whole community. Without involvement of all stakeholders' sustainable tourism within the PAs cannot be achieved. An attempt for such a process has been tried, though shortly, at the PIGNP with initial success of the so called eco-forums, but later disengaged due to changes in the management. The legally established Stakeholder Councils could play a similar role in the future.
- Monitoring of visitors, and their impact to the PAs is an activity that should be implemented, for it will bring a number of benefits through the analysis of the data gathered about the visitors.
- Local CSOs, local groups, but also students should be taken into consideration by PAs managers as a potential collaborators for achieving the PA management goals. This is made possible through the mandatory Scientific Councils and Stakeholder Councils of PAs. For instance, these stakeholders could be involved in finding solutions to improve the maintenance and building of new trails. Monitoring activities can be done with the help of local or even foreign visitors to the PAs. These kind of activities are becoming regular throughout Europe, for example International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) supports trail maintenance events by local mountain biking organizations every April (IMBA, 2019), and while the Leave No Trace camps to clean hiking trails are happening as close as Montenegro. Both activities additionally help to promote the destination in the world as an appropriate place for active tourism. A similar activity is done in Prilep, North Macedonia where every year there is an international bouldering festival, organized by a local group, where people from the whole world come to find and establish new bouldering trails. As a result, Prilep is becoming a world renowned bouldering destination.

Tourist Service Providers

Sustainable tourism in the Wider Prespa Area should be decoupled from the conventional/mainstream tourism development thinking. Tourism in the WPA does not have to be conventional, and it should not be. There are many activities of the daily life of local people, paired with the natural and cultural heritage that can become tourism worthy activity when it is properly packed. To list just a few examples:

- Ecotourism, where in organized manner people can come in the area and take part directly or indirectly in the preservation of the natural heritage.
- Nature-based tourism, as a form of ecotourism, a leisure travel undertaken largely or solely for the purpose of enjoying natural attractions and engaging in a variety of outdoor activities, such as bird watching, hiking, fishing and beachcombing (Sweeting, 2012. p.78)
- Development tourism, where in organized manner people can come and work on sustainable development in the region contributing with their time, knowledge, skills and money.
- Escape tourism, where people come to get away from the rush of the big cities.

- Artist's inspiration - local houses could be rented to artists seeking inspiration and quiet time to focus on their work.
- Rural tourism, where tourists will take part in the daily activities whether with cattle, apple orchards, and even cooking in the kitchen.

Sustainable tourism can be anything as long as the right market is found. Additionally, these specific sustainable tourism niche markets provide higher income for the locals than any conventional tourism.

The offer of sustainable tourism in the rural areas should be coordinated and organized among the many people that live there. In the same style as it would have been traditionally, each family specializing in certain activity or service. This way the whole village would gain benefit, and the service would be complementary.

Tourism hospitalities



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

There is a habit of thinking big, when accommodation is in question. People tend to desire big hotels as a prerequisite for tourism development. This is yet another area that needs decoupling from conventional tourism in order to enable sustainable tourism development. The example of Brajcino, North Macedonia and Ljubojno, North Macedonia as well as other villages in the region, like Vevcani, and even in the WPA in Greece where there are small, family owned accommodations of up to 10 rooms, prove the contrary. Focus should be given on small scale, family run accommodation that will focus on quality and enable rooms with separate toilets. This approach will provide greater income for the local people, and become interesting for travel agencies and foreign travellers that are willing to pay. Accommodation of larger groups will be achieved through the cooperation of several family accommodations to offer one joint rural experience if needed to accommodate a large group.

Local people

Local people should be motivated by providing them with successful examples that will guide and inspire them. Any new project should be developed and implemented in close relation with the local people, showing and emphasizing the positive aspects and income generation. If appropriate examples do not exist locally, then foreign countries should be identified as appropriate examples. Montenegro and neighbouring Greece has examples where the local life and local resources are used with great success and sold to international markets creating good income.



Photo: Anela Stavrevska-Panajotova

Annex I: Review of past initiatives, actions and policy documents with notes on the reasons for success

1990 - 2000

- **EXHIBITION OF THE DENDRO-FLORA OF NATIONAL PARK GALICICA** (North Macedonia) was done in 1998 by PIGNP. It was a one time event that did not continue.
- **ILLUMINATION OF SAMOTSKA DUPKA CAVE** (North Macedonia) in 1998, implemented by PIGNP. The lights were soon after stolen. This was a good thing in the end, since this way, without lights, is better for the bats.

2001 - 2010

- **STUDY FOR TOURISM MASTER PLAN** (North Macedonia) OF 2003, conducted by Lous Berge. Pilot projects foreseen, but it was not implemented since it was not transposed in a strategy. However, no activities were identified for the WPA.
- **CROSS BORDER COOPERATION IN THE REGION OF OHRID AND PRESPA LAKES - EUREGIO** (Albania and North Macedonia) Ohrid and Prespa Lakes Region supported by GIZ from 2001 to 2005. The project aimed at getting the three countries closer, improve economic ties and contribute to the development of the region. However the process did not see full realization in part due to the political issues between Greece and North Macedonia. As a product of the project there were brochures, one on the Heritage of Ohrid and Prespa Lakes (Georgievski, n.d.) and another one - Albania's Secret Beauty (Alac, Georgievski and Gegprifti, n.d.), a web page for promotion of the region <www.magiclakes.com> that now is not existing anymore, and local organizations were developed and supported to ensure their sustainability, but the organizations do not longer exist. The project also supported infrastructure development - local people in Prespa received a grant to refurbish their houses, and 40 houses in total were improved for accepting guests.
- **PELISTER MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION PROJECT** (North Macedonia) started in 2001 and supported, among others: development of a Management plan for PIPNP (PIPNP, 2006; the first document of its kind in North Macedonia); and had a component of developing Eco Tourism in Brajcino village in its second phase 2005 - 2006, as a nature protection strategy (Notarianni, 2008). With the support of the Swiss Agency for Development training in hospitality and house renovation/adaptation activities was delivered to support sustainable tourism development. The Brajcino Eco Tourism component is seen as successful since Brajcino tourism is still active. However, there has not been growth of the local tourism facilities or any offer to tourism activities. Additionally, the village has an aged population, with young people leaving that could ultimately lead to closing of the existing facilities. On the other hand the project had other sustainable tourism activities: development of thematic trails, and studies for bird species and tree species in the park. But due to the change of the management in the NP Pelister in 2007, the implementation of the Management Plan was incomplete, partly due to the termination of the additional project funded by SDC concerning the implementation of the MP.
- **EXPERIENCE PRESPA** (North Macedonia) was a project implemented by a local NGO Zocus and supported by the USAID with the aim to promote domestic tourism in Prespa by an advertisement in the printed newspapers (REC, 2004).
- **REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT WITH SPECIAL ACCENT ON ECO-TOURISM AND ITS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PRESPA REGION** (Albania and North Macedonia), developed by the Regional Environmental Centre in 2004 (REC, 2004). It includes an action plan for the development of sustainable tourism, where it includes 11 pri-

ority issues in order of importance, with appropriate actions. However some of the issues and actions listed here are still current and need addressing equally like in 2004, while others seem not eco-oriented like activity 5 (Modernization of ski tracks on Galicica Mountain) from measure 1:

- 1.** Insufficient offer of tourist services in Prespa Lakes Region. Actions proposed:
1. Training for tourist services management; 2. Creation of system for communal tax deductions for investments in development of tourist services in Prespa Lakes Region; 3. Organized hiking tours in Prespa Lakes Region; 4. Organized boat tours on Lake Prespa; 5. Modernization of ski tracks on Galicica Mountain; 6. Medical and health services; 7. Establishment of tourist info centres; 8. Decision making for establishment of body for monitoring the quality of tourist services; 9. Feasibility study for investment in tourist services in Prespa Region.
1. High percentage of unemployed people in Prespa Lakes Region. Actions proposed: 1. Training for different skills needed in tourist services in Prespa Lakes Region; 2. Creation of system for tax deductions for newly employed in tourist services in Prespa Lakes Region; 3. Organizing actions for cleaning and maintenance of beaches and lakeshore.
- 2.** Lack of capacities for tourism accommodation. Actions proposed: 1. Training for facilities for tourist accommodation management; 2. Creation of a system for communal tax deductions for investments in facilities for tourist accommodation in Lake Prespa Region; 3. Creation of positive local policy for investment in facilities for tourist accommodation; 4. Decision making for the ownership of the existing facilities; 5. Development of business plans for renovation and management of facilities for tourist accommodation.
- 3.** Undeveloped waste management system. Actions proposed: 1. Public campaign for reduction of solid waste; 2. Training on solid waste management; 3. Enforcement of mandatory penalties; 4. cleaning and cultivation of areas devastated by solid waste; 5. Modernization of technical equipment for solid waste management; 6. Assessment of options for recycling and reuse of solid waste.
- 4.** Production of food without pesticides and other chemicals. Actions proposed: (1) Media campaign for promotion of sustainable agriculture; 2. Trainings for farmers for production of food without pesticides and chemicals; 3. Marketing campaign for advertisement of healthy food; 4. Establishment of the sustainable agriculture office; 5. Establishment of local office for monitoring and licencing of food quality; 6. Conducting public survey; 7. Feasibility study for investment in sustainable agriculture in Prespa Lakes Region.
- 5.** Lack of water supply systems in the villages. Actions proposed: 1. Program for completion of village water supply system; 2. Connection of villages with central water supply system.
- 6.** Lack of infrastructure for sustainable transport. Actions proposed: 1. Public awareness campaign about sustainable transport; 2. Training for sustainable transport management; 3. Creation of system for communal tax deductions for investments in sustainable transport in Prespa Lakes Region; 4. Construction of bicycle roads in the Region; 5. Development of lake transportation system; 6. Feasibility study for investment in sustainable transport in Prespa Lakes Region.
- 7.** Degradation of the Lake. Actions proposed: 1. Public campaign for the protection of the lake; 2. Construction of wastewater treatment plant; 3. Construction of monitoring system for the quality of wastewater; 4. Enforcement of legal requirements; 5. Feasibility study for construction of wastewater treatment plant.
- 8.** Lack of usage of renewable/alternative energy sources. Actions proposed: 1. Public awareness campaign about renewable/alternative energy sources; 2. Training for renewable/alternative energy sources management; 3. Creation of system

for communal tax deductions for investments in renewable/alternative energy sources in Prespa Lakes Region; 4. Municipal advisory office for use of alternative energy sources; 5. Feasibility study for investment in renewable/alternative energy sources in Prespa Lakes Region.

9. Degradation of cultural heritage. Actions proposed: 1. Media campaign; 2. Capacity building trainings for NGOs and other institutions; 3. Establishment of system for public information; 4. Issuing of local cultural guides; 4. Organizing cultural group visits; 5. Youth/student working camps for restoration of the monuments; 6. Enforcement of legal requirements; 7. Conducting public surveys.
10. Degradation of soil. Actions proposed: 1. Public campaign for soil protection; 2. decreasing of soil erosion through planting trees and arrangement of the ground; 3. Feasibility study for decreasing the soil degradation.

- **STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESPA PARK**

(Albania, Greece and North Macedonia) was developed in 2005 by SPP, WWF Greece, PPNEA and MAP, and financed by the Greek Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works. The aim of the Strategic Action Plan is: "a) to facilitate the provision of information and its exchange among stakeholders; b) to outline the Prespa Park objectives in order to facilitate future discussions; as well as c) to describe in the clearest possible way the institutional, economic, management initiatives and procedures that should be taken in order to enable the accomplishment of these objectives." (SPP et al., 2005). The Strategic Action Plan provides a detailed, but indicative, plan for the evolution and institutionalisation of the TBPAC in Prespa where Sustainable tourism is addressed with three measures: "1. Integrated protected area visitor infrastructure (roads, pathways, bird watching sites etc.); 2. Network of local tourist agencies and businesses (e.g. agro-tourism, ecovillages etc.); 3. Pilot-project on linked tourism products (joint visitors facilities, boat trips etc.), on condition that the indicator of axis I has been accomplished." (SPP et al., 2005, p.34). It also addresses the development of small-scale tourism and especially alternative types of tourism in the action plan for each country and for cross border approach. Based on the text of the Prime Ministerial Declaration and the broader experience with transboundary protected areas, 4 objectives of the Prespa Park are identified. Objective II is formulated as follows: "Enhancement of opportunities for sustainable economic and social development of the local societies and wise use of natural resources for the benefit of nature, local economies and future generations". Chapter D presents proposals for specific programmes and management measures per sector for the reinforcement of transboundary cooperation and for each one of the three countries. Under the Priority axis 7: fostering the development of small-scale tourism and especially alternative types of tourism, concerning Objective II, the following measures are proposed at the transboundary and national levels. At the transboundary level, the following measures are listed:

Small-scale tourism-related activities – study. Feasibility study on the potential for developing small-scale tourism-related activities and on the proper management of those in sensitive areas

Design and implementation of integrated interventions in tourism:

- a. Creation of common structures and infrastructures regarding the integrated reception and provision of information to tourists.
- b. Design and publication of common booklets and information material
- c. Electronic information
- d. Promotion of enterprise cooperation among the three countries
- e. Revitalisation/ creation of special-purpose tourist infrastructures
- f. Actions concerning lakeside tourism
- g. Development of common cultural infrastructures and organisation of cultural events

Role of traditional cuisine in promoting alternative forms of tourism in Albania, Greece and North Macedonia. Comparative study, which will consequently be published as a trilingual brochure for the popularisation of traditional folk cultures in Prespa - Workshops with stakeholders

The specific actions under Priority axis 7 concerning Albania include:

Fostering of undertakings offering complementary tourist services (infrastructure and equipment): Promotion of family tourism in Macro Prespa as the most appropriate type for the Prespa Park conservation and development

The specific actions under Priority axis 7 concerning North Macedonia include:

Ecotourism development in the Prespa region youth sports-recreation centre in Krani camp site: Renovation of existing capacities, construction of lake dwelling settlement, hotel & adjoining structures: complex of pools and sports terrains in Krani camp site – EIA required

CONSTRUCTION OF MOUNTAIN PICNIC PARK IN ARVATI VILLAGE

Construction of a mountain weekend cottage, two sanitary units and a sports terrain on Pelister Mountain in the vicinity of Arvati village

CONSTRUCTION OF KONJSKO ECOVILLAGE AT THE PRESPA COAST (CAMPAIGN)

- a. Brochure & album "Konjsko ecovillage".
- b. Seminar on affirmation and proclamation of Konjsko an ecovillage.
- c. Promotion of traditional items and handiwork as well as cultural historic monuments in the village.

PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH TOURISM

- a. Marketing strategy/ attraction of foreign patients to the Institute for Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of non-specific, chronic respiratory and allergic conditions.
- b. Renovation of facility/ standardisation of hospital rooms, professional services and regulation of health insurance issues for foreign patients.

RELIGIOUS TOURISM

Procurement of equipment for monasteries and church complexes, paving the access roads with asphalt.

TRILINGUAL TOURIST SIGNS

- a. Procurement of suitable info-boards.
- b. Establishment of info-boards in Galicica NP in Lake Prespa and Ezerani Nature Park.

TRANS-BOUNDARY WINTER SKI CENTRE "OTESHEVO"

Revitalisation and modernisation of the Oteshevo Ski Centre and its transformation into an international Ski Centre for North Macedonia, Albania and Greece – detailed EIA required to accommodate the ecological sensitivity of the Galicica NP.

- **CAPACITY-BUILDING OF NGOS – ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF AN INFORMATION CENTRE IN ZAGRADEC (ALBANIA).** Implemented by SPP and the Womens' Association of Lesser Prespa in the period of 2005-2011. Info centre was restored in traditional building style and opened with a small café, the womens' society ran the centre and were trained by SPP. Local people were trained as eco-guides, and in the over 5 years period, there was an environmental education programme and 5,000 visitors/students were guided/taught. The centre is currently not operational and has now been handed over to the PNP/RAPA.
- **INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION (North Macedonia)** was a project supported by GIZ in 2006. In the frame of that project the peer at Golem Grad Island was improved, and an

information board was placed; and maps with places of interests were developed for the municipalities in the WPA.

- **PRESPA MUSIC EVENT** (North Macedonia) was initiated in 2006, with the aid of the Ministry of Economy where an American Company was interested to invest. However the initiative was turned down by Resen Municipality.
- **MUNICIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** (North Macedonia) was a project supported by GIZ. It ran in 2006 and 2007. In the frame of the project hiking trails in the WPA were marked, in particular connecting Kurbinovo and Slivnica.
- **INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT IN THE PRESPA LAKES BASIN** (Albania and North Macedonia) is a UNDP supported project in the period 2006 to 2012, under which a number of activities have been supported:

Feasibility Study for Ezerani Nature Park (Smith et al, 2009) where tourism is sought as a way to switch farmers from the unsustainable apple production to sustainable tourism activities and as a way to improve the livelihood of the local population. However, it also notes that locals see massive tourism as being sustainable and the proper way forward (Smith et al, 2009 p.224), but it also states that there is potential to promote sustainable tourism by good examples (Smith et al, 2009 p.236). Finally it sees tourism as a potential threat to nature protection, mainly through the pollution of the lake's waters (Smith et al, 2009 p.244).

In cooperation with KfW project, the project has contributed in establishing the Information center in Gorica. (UNDP, n.d.)

Tourism Strategy for the Prespa Lakes Basin (Travers and La Paz Group, 2012). The Strategy provides a detailed strategic vision for sustainable development of the Prespa Lakes Basin with action plan with a focus on cross border pilot projects. The Strategy's recommended plan was to: 1. place an executive manager of the trilateral Prespa Park; 2. Establish the Prespa Park as a Transboundary Biosphere reserve under UNESCO's MAB programme; 3. Establish a network of Tourist Information Centres; 4. Establish an International Prespa Ecotourism Academy; 5. Develop the NPs to receive tourists; 6. Develop tourism on the islands of Lake Prespa; 7. Establish a Lake Prespa Discovery Centre in NPE; 8. Create Blue Flag beaches on Lake Prespa; 9. Build and prepare the potential for tourism on the Albanian side by means of enforcing waste collection and better planning; 10. Putting in place a UNESCO Heritage Management Plan for the cultural heritage and proclaiming it as a transboundary UNESCO World Heritage site; 11. Develop accommodation in monasteries; 12. Develop sustainable and responsible activity tourism offer; 13. Upgrade domestic tourism offer; 14. Develop event and conference tourism based on nature, culture and ecotourism; 15. Marketing plan to create awareness about Prespa as a destination for ecotourism, promote transboundary tourism, promote off-season tourism, and ease of booking; and 16. A capacity development support programme that will provide continuous training to the locals, municipal staff and the NPs' staff. The Strategy envisions five pilot projects: 1. Market research, to ensure that flagship development projects in the Prespa Lakes basin will be market-led; 2. Celebration of Prespa cultures, for the three Prespa countries to open up and get to know each other better, nurture and enhance productive relationships and design joint actions for sustainable tourism development; 3. Prespa transboundary triathlon, to link up the three territories in a common, high profile event and put pressure on governments to reopen the border at Dolno Dupeni; 4. Taste of Prespa TV programme, to become a unique culinary experience for tourists appreciating authentic food together with unspoilt nature; 5. Prespa Lakes basin trilateral tourist map, to nurture cross-border cooperation and begin to create awareness of the Prespa Lakes basin as a trilateral tourism region.

The project invested in energy efficiency of the municipal building. This made budget savings that were used to cover the salaries for two rangers of NPE.

- **STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** (North Macedonia) was developed for Ohrid Municipality in 2007. The strategy involves four activities related to tourism: 1. Defining the tourism products and offer, and their promotion and presentation; 2. Improvement of the existing and building of new infrastructure; 3. Branding of Ohrid as a tourist destination; and 4. Institutional development and human capacity building. (Ohrid Municipality, 2007).
- **LEGAL EXPERTISE FOR THE REGULATION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE PRESPA NATIONAL PARK ADMINISTRATION** (Albania), supported by UNDP in the period from 2007 to 2008. "The project aims that through an analysis and assessment of the existing documents, regulations and studies regarding the structure and legal gaps in the functioning of the protected area, to achieve two main objectives: a) Preparation of the draft regulations for the management of Prespa National Park protected area; b) Drafting of the possible national structure of the protected area administration for PNP." (INCA, n.d.).
- **BIRDWATCHING TOWERS** (North Macedonia) in Ezerani Nature Park together with information boards were built by Resen Municipality, and financed by the Bureau for Rural Development of the Republic of North Macedonia. However they remain underutilized, because no birdwatching tours or birdwatching guides are available.
- **STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM** 2008 - 2012 (North Macedonia), financed by UNDP, and adopted by the Government of North Macedonia. It is considered that is implemented since there was a Tourism Commission at the Government with many participating parties, and chaired by the Prime Minister, thus managed to push through the activities to be implemented and supported by the various ministries.
- **STANDARDS FOR LOCAL QUALITY IN PRESPA** (North Macedonia), was a project implemented by Prespa Municipality in 2008-2009 and supported by the EU. Within the framework of this project a Study for the assessment of the existing state and the potential for development of agro-tourism in Resen Municipality (Slavkovski, et al, 2008) was delivered. The study focuses on the villages: Brajcino, Dolno Dupeni, Slivnica, Pretor, Stenje and Ljubojno. The study identifies and proposes several priority measures: 1. Road infrastructure renovation; 2. Integrated management with the tourism destination Prespa, in particular training for that and promotion; 3. Protection of the cultural monuments and making them into tourism attractions; and 4. Protection of the natural heritage and turning that into tourism attraction. It further recommends establishment of quality standards for architecture, interior furnishing, quality of services, and traditional cuisine.
- **DRAFT PRESPA AREA TOURISM ACTION PLAN** (Albania) developed by Liqenas Commune, Proger Commune and Qender Bilisht Commune, and with support from SNV in 2008 (Liqenas Commune, 2008).
- **PRESPA TRANSBOUNDARY BIOSPHERE RESERVE** (Albania and North Macedonia). Supported by KfW, lasting from 2008 to 2012. Under the framework of Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Protection in Prespa ("the Program"), from 2008 onwards grants to the National Park Galicica (NP Galicica, 24.151 ha, North Macedonia) and the National Park Prespa (NP Prespa, approx. 27.500 ha, Albania) have been made available on behalf of the German Government (BMZ) through KfW. Both grants were designed as single bilateral projects between KfW and the respective countries, with the National Parks being the project executing agencies and beneficiaries, capitalizing on financial means for procurement of works, goods and services and on internationally tendered consulting services. The overall goals (impacts) of both of the projects were:
 - a) to reduce the pressure of unsustainable use within the Park areas,
 - b) to contribute to the cross-border cooperation among the countries in the Prespa region, and – in the case of the project in cooperation with the NP Prespa in Albania – to contribute to poverty reduction of the population in the Park area.

"The open Financial Cooperation programme subsidised the Galicica NP from 2008 to 2012 with EUR 1.53 million and the Prespa NP from 2010 to 2015 with EUR 3.23 million. Management plans were developed, zones for different uses were identified, and investments were made in infrastructure and working capital for both parks. Staff in both NPs were trained and equipped with planning and operating instruments to be able to protect the habitats of animals and plants, and to reduce traditional timber harvesting with suitable measures." (KfW, 2018) The project's effects were evaluated in 2018 by KfW (2018) where they mark the overall projects in **Albania as Satisfactory** – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate; and in **North Macedonia as Unsatisfactory** – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results. The explanation is provided: "Both projects primarily concentrated on building up park management capacities. During the project implementation it was not possible to implement the measures for preserving forest area and biodiversity in the management plans or the measures for developing alternative sources of income due to insufficient funding and staffing at the park level; this is still the case today. Therefore the threat of over utilizing the (forests) and to biodiversity in both national parks continue to be high; however, this is exacerbated in North Macedonia as park authorities finance park management through timber harvesting. Sustainability is thus no longer satisfactory here, even if new funds are being provided through a subsequent FC project that supports the establishment of a financing fund to support the park in the future." (KfW, 2018)

- SYSTEM OF MOUNTAIN TRAILS (North Macedonia) in PIGNP was supported. The trails were well defined, but the implementation of the marking signs was done by a subcontractor (Construction company) that had no experience with mountain trails and many markings were improperly placed. There should be better involvement of people that have expertise, in example: mountain clubs and cycling clubs in hiking infrastructure projects and activities in marking of trails.
- MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PIGNP (North Macedonia) was developed with in this project.
- STRATEGY FOR TOURISM FOR PIGNP (North Macedonia) was developed within this project. This strategy was incorporated into the MP for Galicica NP as well as its action plan.
- Building of an INFORMATION CENTRE for PIGNP in Stenje.
- Establishment of PICNIC SITES in PIGNP.
- MANAGEMENT PLANS were developed for PNP, zones for different uses were identified. Investments were made in INFRASTRUCTURE and working capital for PNP. Staff in PNP were trained and equipped with planning and operating instruments to be able to protect the habitats of animals and plants, and to reduce traditional timber harvesting with suitable measures.
- GOOD PLANNING AND PHYSICAL CAPACITIES were established in PNP. These create a basis for future investment measures and cooperation with local actors (including communities, NGOs, scientific institutes and small businesses in the tourism sector).
- A LONG-TERM BIODIVERSITY MONITORING PROGRAMME was developed for NPG.
- Drafted: Spatial Plan, Business Plan, Organizational structure for the Park Administration, and Tourist Promotion Strategy.
- FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN 2012-2021.
- **TRANSBOUNDARY BIOSPHERE RESERVE PRESIPA**, Phase II (Albania) supported by KfW and implemented in the period from 2018 to 2021. "The purpose of this phase of the project is the reduction of the pressure on natural resources as well as a contribution to poverty reduction in the Albanian part of the Prespa Biosphere Reserve. This is to contribute to conserve the biodiversity and to improve the living conditions of the population in Prespa National Park and in the Albanian part of the Biosphere Reserve." (INCA, 2018)

- **TOURISM MARKETING AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE KORCA REGION** (Albania) developed by Lionel Becherel in 2009, for the Korca Regional Council and supported by SNV Balkans and UNWTO – SNV - ST-EP Programme (Becherel, 2009). The strategy has 5 year strategic goals and 10 year strategic goals. It also includes a 3 year action plan. One of the measures of the strategy was to establish a Destination Management Organization for the Korca region. This was implemented due to the continuous, non-formal support that SNV provided to the implementation of the Strategy.
- **SUB STRATEGY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF RESEN MUNICIPALITY** (North Macedonia) 2009-2013. Developed by a Local Group For Rural Development in 2009, and financed by Programme For the Support Of The Advisory Services In Agriculture In The Republic Of North Macedonia (nn, 2009). Recognizes the need for promoting Alternative tourism and Agro-tourism. There is a plan with good measures in place, however implementation seems close to non-existent.
- **SUSTCULT** (North Macedonia) Project was financed by the EU, and implemented by Ohrid Municipality, Municipality of Berat and the Regional Directorate of National Culture Berat as local partners and in coordination with 12 institutions from 7 different countries of the South-East Europe. Among the things that this project produced it was a Management Plan of the Municipality of Ohrid for World Heritage property: Natural and Cultural heritage of the Ohrid region (within the territory of the Municipality of Ohrid) for the period 2014-2020. The plan foresees activities regarding economic development, while General Objective 4, there is tourism development relation: To contribute to the economic development of the municipality of Ohrid through using the potentials of World Heritage Property (WHP) Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region within the territory of the Municipality of Ohrid on the sustainable growth principle. Several tourism related activities are planned: 4.1.1. Encourage the development and coordination of Audience Development and Visitor Management Strategies to identify opportunities for increasing usage of the Site, and to identify any measures required to effectively manage the impact of increased usage on the Site's material; 4.2.1. Encourage the development of Marketing and Brand Development Strategies, exploring potential benefits of cross marketing and whole site marketing. The strategy should consider domestic and international markets, and the opportunities presented by the existing high visitor profile for City of Ohrid; 4.3.1. Labelling and arranging roads and objects near the natural and cultural properties and setting up directional signs; 4.4.1. Preparation of detailed study for the existent and constructing new infrastructure in the WHP; 4.4.2. Preparation of technical documentation for needed infrastructure; 4.4.3. Construction of accessible and necessary infrastructure to and around the protected natural and cultural properties; 4.5.1. Encourage the creation of a stronger sense of arrival and sense of place; 4.6.1. Identify opportunities to improve and promote user and visitor amenities and facilities across the Site and support landowners to undertake improvements (Ohrid Municipality, 2014b).
- **COMMITTEE ON TOURISM** (North Macedonia) at the Government, where the Prime Minister chaired the Committee and Ministers as well as business and civil community participated. It was functioning from 2010 to 2016. Due to the existence of this cross institutional platform, many projects and initiatives in tourism were implemented.
- **TOURISM PROMOTION ADVISOR** (Albania and North Macedonia) supported by JICA in 2010. The project objective was: Measures for tourism promotions of Macedonian tourism authorities are enhanced (JICA, n.d.a); and Measures for tourism promotions of Albanian tourism authorities are enhanced (JICA, n.d.b); respectively. The activities in both countries were comprised of: 1) To analyse existing conditions of potential tourism resources and the performance of the counterpart organization, other organizations relevant to tourism, and local government with regard to tourism development. 2) To host tourism promotion and marketing seminars to attract international tourists. 3) To consider formulating regional tourism projects together with neighbouring countries. And 4) To strengthen the capacity of tour operators to receive a familiarization tours.

2011 - 2019

- **TRAINING OF TOUR GUIDES ON THE VALUES OF PIGNP** (North Macedonia) as own initiative of the PIGNP in 2011, to create a licencing scheme for guides that can make tours in the PIGNP. A guide book for the PIGNP was also developed. However, the director of the PIGNP was changed and the new director disregarded all past efforts.
- **RRITJE ALBANIA/COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT** (Albania), a project by USAID, in which framework an Authentic Albania Quality Mark (AAQM) program was developed considering the recent trends in tourism and travel industry, showing an increasing number of travellers seeking authenticity and enjoying experiencing a genuine connection with people in the country they visit. The Authentic Albania Quality Mark, in operation since April 2011, was designed to function as an industry-led initiative with partnerships and support from the Ministry of Tourism, and National Tourism Agency (NTA). The AAQM, is the only quality-driven standards for Albanian accommodations (hotels and guesthouses) all typically with 50 beds or less. The AAMQ is based on the sustainable tourism certification program of New Zealand - Qualimark Accreditation Program, and adopted to the specific conditions of Albania. Albanian Tourism Association, is the owner and administrator of Authentic Albania Quality Mark program. As owner of the program, NTA has a responsibility to ensure that the program is managed in a rigorous and transparent manner without favoritism or bias; The certification scheme, since the establishment year until February 2014, has been funded by Rritje Albania USAID project. It is designed to be sustainably funded through the collection of member fees and the sale of collateral materials, from NTA. Revenue is earned through an Assessment Fee, and annual Award Fee (based on the size of property) and a follow-up review every two years. Certification: There are three levels of awards given; Bronze, Silver and Gold. The assessor makes a recommendation for a hotel based on his or her visit to the property, and the final decision is ratified by the Award Committee. Hotels that hold the Authentic Albania Quality Mark are assessed, through on-site assessments carried out by trained assessors.
- **PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STUDY FOR CONNECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE MONASTERY TOURISM ON BABA MOUNTAIN** (North Macedonia) was conducted by the Center for Development of the Pelagonia Planning Region (CDPPR) in 2011. The basic problem that was treated with this project is insufficient use of the cultural and historic heritage and the natural beauties and uniqueness in the role of economic development of the municipalities of Resen and Bitola, especially Baba Mountain as a joint geographical complex in both municipalities (Paligora, 2011). Under the project, four hiking routes were developed along monasteries and churches on Baba Mountain (CDPPR, 2014a).
- "Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the extended Drin River Basin" (Drin Project)" is a four year project that started in December 2015. It is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) facilitating financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by GWP-Med (GWP-Med, 2016). The Project objective is to: "Promote joint management of the shared water resources of the transboundary Drin River Basin, including coordination mechanisms among the various sub-basin joint commissions and committees". (GWP-Med, 2016) The Project came at a critical point, as the vehicle to financially support and facilitate:
 - The operationalization of the institutional structure of the Drin CODA, rendering it capable of undertaking a coordinating, executive role that aims towards a structured cooperation among the Drin Riparians.
 - The enhancement of scientific knowledge in the Basin for informed decision-making concerning transboundary management.
 - A set of commonly agreed measures towards the sustainable management and sustainable development of the Basin.

- The systemic involvement of users, civil society and other stakeholders in the implementation of the aforementioned.
- **TOWARDS STRENGTHENED GOVERNANCE OF THE SHARED TRANSBOUNDARY NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE LAKE OHRID REGION** (Albania) is a project on Lake Ohrid Region, and was implemented in Albania and North Macedonia. It had a scoping phase from 2011 until 2014. And an implementation phase from 2014 till 2018. The project aimed to assist the extension of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Lake Ohrid Region also to Albania, and to strengthen transboundary cooperation and management effectiveness of the region's natural and cultural heritage by addressing the main threats. In the scope of the project two types of management practices were promoted, that were unknown or unusual for the area, thus training sessions were organized in those management practices: 1. The first management practice/training was 'Co-management' (UNESCO, 2016a), and 2. The second management practice/training was 'People-Centred Approaches: Engaging Communities in the Conservation of Nature and Culture' (UNESCO, 2016b; 2016c). The project prepared a brochure for tourism promotion of the region, with an accent on active, sustainable tourism that does not harm nature (Gentle, n.d.).
- **PROJECT FOR ROAD SIGNAGE TOWARDS THE SUB-PELISTER VILLAGES FOR PROMOTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE TOURIST POTENTIAL OF BITOLA AND RESEN MUNICIPALITIES** (North Macedonia). The project was implemented by the CDPPR and, in its frame, 98 signs and 11 info boards were placed. The project contributed to the connection of the cultural tourist attractions and promotion of the tourist potential of Baba Mountain (CDPPR, 2014a).
- **TRAINING ON TRADITIONAL MACEDONIAN COOKING and TRAINING OF BARISTAS AND BARMEN** (North Macedonia), financed by GIZ and implemented by EDEN in the Ohrid region. The trainings began in 2012 and are still ongoing. Every year the trainings are repeated. During this activity, in 2015 two new cocktails were developed: Ohrid Pearl and Ohrid Sunrise. STUDY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN PIPNP (North Macedonia) made in 2012 by the Ministry of Economy. However there was no followed up.
- **STUDY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN PIGNP** (North Macedonia) made in 2012 by the Ministry of Economy. However there was no followed up.
- **DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION OF A SKI CENTER IN THE GALICICA NATIONAL PARK** (North Macedonia) is an initiative of the Government of North Macedonia, for which purposes a market study was ordered in 2013 by MEPSO (Horwath HTL, 2013), and which was used as a basis for amendments to the Management Plan of PIGNP.
- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR CATEGORIZATION OF TOURISM-HOSPITALITY FACILITIES IN THE PELAGONIA REGION** (North Macedonia) implemented by the CDPPR, where training on the legal requirements was made for the owners of the accommodations, and one house in the WPA received grants to refurbish their houses. This led to the improvement of the accommodation facilities, increase of the registered accommodations, their promotion and increase of tourists in the region (CDPPR, 2014a).
- **STENJE AND SLIVNICA BEACH DEVELOPMENT** (North Macedonia) implemented in 2016 by the Ministry of Transport and Connections of North Macedonia (MTC, 2016). The beaches were constructed with modern facilities and platforms above the water, and given under concession to private companies. The beaches are in use during the high season, about 3 months, while most of the year they remain empty. The public likes this development (Shijakova, 2016).
- **OHRID-PRESPA TRANSBOUNDARY BIOSPHERE RESERVE** under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (Albania and North Macedonia) was inaugurated in 2014. The inauguration process was supported by UNESCO and indirectly the German Government through KfW Development Bank and their co-financing of the project on support to Prespa National Park in Albania. The TBR "will be governed by the Ohrid Watershed Management Committee (OWMC),

an institution created by a bilateral agreement of the two littoral countries, signed in 2004 and ratified by their Parliaments. The OWMC will be organised by a Joint Secretariat with offices in Pogradec and Ohrid. The Joint Secretariat will be the entity that will be responsible for the collaboration within the boundaries of this young TBR." (UNESCO, 2014c) "The expected results of this programme include a strengthened administration; more coordinated research; enhanced conservation of biodiversity, increased sustainability and a greater awareness and understanding of the Reserve." (UNESCO, 2014b).

- **TOUR DE GALICICA** (North Macedonia) is an annual event, organized since 2014, supported by Resen Municipality, and organized by civil organization Prespa Bike. It is a mountain biking tour covering the East slope of Galicica Mountain and Istok Mountain. The tour has moderate popularity among mountain bikers from the country. However the trail is of high difficulty level, and is only for highly experienced and well fit mountain bikers. Promoting the trail as a general tourism offer must be done with great care, since it may result in injuries, and it is one of the rare trails that has recorded fatalities. Developing alternative connections to the extremely difficult sections may solve the issue with the trail.
- **ROMAN ROAD VIA EGNATIA** (North Macedonia) passes through the area and is recognized as a tourism potential by the Agency for the Support and Promotion of Tourism in the Republic of North Macedonia. In 2014, the Agency commissioned a study on the potential for making a hiking and mountain biking trail (Rantasa, 2014) and placed information boards in the towns in the region where the road passes. Information map boards together with a replica of a roman milestone were placed in each municipality where the road passes in 2015, to inform tourists about the route. However the road remains closed due to forest overgrowth and inappropriate for anything but extreme adventure travellers, since it requires investment in clearing, crossing obstacles, cleaning and care, and none of the recommendations that the study proposes were realized. The failure to follow up on this project lies in the lack of dedicated finances for continuity, and in part that the person responsible within the Agency abruptly died.
- **CONTINUITY OF TOURISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNE OF PUSTEC** (Albania) a paper by Ema Muslli where she makes a full assessment of the current (2016) situation of tourism in Pustec area of Prespa. Visitors have increased from 16000 in 2004 to 50000 in 2016; There are 28 people working in tourism; there are 3 hotels; and 11 restaurants. Muslli (2016) makes a conclusion that " Hotels and guesthouses in the Albanian part of Prespa region need improvement. Other activities which could be offered together with accommodation are absent. One of the main problems that the tourism businesses are facing in Pustec is the irregular fresh water and power supply. Another problem affecting the arrival of tourists is the lack of a sewage system."
- **PREPARATION OF STUDY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PELAGONIA PLANNING REGION AS ADVENTURE TOURISM DESTINATION** (North Macedonia) project was implemented by CDPPR, where a Study was commissioned and prepared by PointPro in 2015 (PointPro, 2015). The study includes strategic objectives and an implementation plan. In regards to the WPA, the study proposes three, interrelated steps of: 1. Creation of the required conditions for the development of adventure tourism, in the form of infrastructure and education and trainings to local people on tourism; 2. Creation of adventure tours offers attractive for foreign tourists; 3. Marketing strategy for adventure tourism and promotional activities. And further states that the creation of adventure tourism offer is not feasible without prior investment in the preconditions because the tourists would not be satisfied and would make negative reviews.
- **SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION PROJECT (North Macedonia) – a USAID supported project (USAID, 2015)** and implemented by Carana corporation (Carana, nd) in North Macedonia
 - WEB SITE PROMOTION was made in 2017 with USAID support through the Prespa LAG. A young person was hired to maintain the information and run the webpage that was developed. Local businesses were added on internet portals to increase visibility with the idea that the Prespa LAG would manage this activity. However

once the funding stopped, the web maintenance was ceased. Now the webpage is offline. According to the donor the reasons for failure were the traditional mindset of the mainly older people with no vision, understanding and sufficient capacities to respond to clients' needs.

- **NATIONAL PARK "PELISTER"** (North Macedonia) Own Initiatives:

ANIMAL WATCH HOUSE, 2015. Initiative within a USAID project to support tourism, where a local travel agency (supplier) was linked with an international travel agency (provider) in order to promote sustainable tourism within the protected areas in North Macedonia. The NPP built the house with its own means and established a bear feeding ground, based on fruits. There was only one tour organized, because the bears did not show up in front of the tourists, so the reviews were very bad.

Initiative to build ECO RESORT at two locations in NPP in 2015. One of the locations is 'Lipova Livada' near village Malovista. The plans were made, but further implementation was disabled since there are no urban plans in the PA. (Kunovski, 2015) Initiative to create a HORSE RIDING TRAIL in NPP in 2015 was placed in motion by the park's administration. However it did not reach realisation because the local people from village Maloviste did not want to work with horse riding.

- **PREPARATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AREA BASED DEVELOPMENT (ABD) APPROACH IN THE WESTERN BALKANS** (Albania, North Macedonia, etc.), 2nd phase, implemented from February 2014 till April 2015 by SWG and financed by the EU. The project was a follow up and a second phase of the project entitled "Preparation for implementation of the Area Based Development Approach in the Western Balkans". The SWG Head Office/Secretariat and the Project management units in the cross-border regions "Drina – Sava", "Drina – Tara", "Prespa" and "Sharra" were responsible for project implementation. "The overall objective of this second phase was to continue with the process of building capacities and structures within the SWG and within selected regions in order to be able to implement the forthcoming Area-Based Development (ABD) programmes." (SWG, n.d.g) Within this project, among others, several promotional publications were made for the Prespa region in 2014: Region Prespa (Jovanovic, Tanevska and Kondura, 2014a), Gastronomy - Tastes of the Prespa Region (Jovanovic, Tanevska and Kondura, 2014b), Accommodation and Restaurants - Where to Stay, Eat and Drink in the Prespa Region (Jovanovic, Tanevska and Kondura, 2014c), Attractions - Getting Familiar with the Prespa Region (Jovanovic, Tanevska and Kondura, 2014d), and Routes and Tours - Discovering the Prespa Region (Jovanovic, Tanevska and Kondura, 2014e).

- **IMPROVING MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS** (North Macedonia) The project is implemented by UNDP and supported by the EU. The duration period is from 2014 till end of 2020. The aim is to improve nature protection and to promote sustainable use of natural resources while increasing the capacity of designated authorities and NGOs to manage protected areas professionally (UNDP, 2019). Activities of this project are being implemented in "Pelister" NP, Galicica NP, Lake Prespa Monument of Nature and Ezerani Nature Park. There are three sub projects related:

Strengthening the National Park "Pelister" Administration that is done with NP "Pelister" aiming to build capacities for monitoring of the species, including NTFP species.

Sustainable Future Of Lake Prespa Monument Of Nature And "Ezerani" Nature Park that is done with Resen Municipality as manager of NPE, and aims to build the capacities for monitoring of the species, and to raise the public awareness with the aim to raise the protection level. The municipality emphasizes one of the results that there will be developed a Program for Landscape Planning of the "Ezerani" Nature Park. The outputs include: (1.) Established inventory database for habitats and species according to the national legislation and EU birds and habitats directive (NATURA 2000), hence, developed monitoring protocols. (2) Improved

management of habitats and eco systems. (3.) Developed and pilot implemented environmental friendly tourism activities (biking, hiking, swimming, kayak, etc.). (4.) Informed and partially trained students (from local and national schools) and local population for the values of Ezerani Nature Park and Lake Prespa Monument of Nature. (5.) Improved capacities of the municipal administration for PA management.

Sustainable Management of Plant Natural Resources in the Prespa Region is done with Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development. The project aims to improve protection, conservation, monitoring and sustainable use of commercial species of flora in the Prespa region (NP "Pelister") and will produce digital maps of 15 flora species together with their productivity. Among these plants is a study of the blueberry that is considered to be of the biggest economic value in the Park.

Improvement of the Management Effectiveness in Galicica National Park is done with Galicica NP and the aim is to improve the Management Effectiveness through Promotion, Biodiversity Conservation and Monitoring. In the scope of this project the plan is to reintroduce deer in the park and to create an arboretum of the local dendro flora.

- **ADVENTURE NEXT CONFERENCE** (Albania and North Macedonia) was an event prepared by Adventure Tourism Trade Association in 2015 to promote emerging destinations, and was a joint effort from USAID, Swiss Contact and the Agency for the Support and Promotion of Tourism of North Macedonia. The aim was to draw the attention of the travel agencies from the world on North Macedonia and the Balkan, and many adventure tourism activities that were provided as examples were conducted in the Wider Prespa Area. Some travel companies after this event started offering Albania and North Macedonia (where the WPA is included) to the USA, UK and German markets, while North Macedonia (with the WPA) received a lot of world media coverage in the area of tourism as the emerging destination in adventure tourism (CARANA, 2015). However the high end tourism companies went back home empty handed with the conclusion that the region is not yet ready for such tourists, and leaving the comment that currently it is right for more intrepid travellers, young people that take budget travels, and lower grade services.
- **INCREASED MARKET EMPLOYABILITY** (North Macedonia) Phase I, 2015 - 2018, was a project implemented by Swiss Contact and supported by the Swiss Government. In this project they had a tourism programme in which they focused in Tourism Destination Management, where one of the three destinations taken was the Ohrid Region. Under this project several activities were implemented:
 - DESTINATION MANAGEMENT TRAINING to the South-East Tourism Cluster EDEN, supported by Swiss Contact in 2015. The Cluster has difficulty in working on its own, but after this training the Cluster started planning the season beforehand, and thinking about out of season offers.
 - In 2015 and 2016 a Tourism Strategy for Ohrid was developed. The Municipality of Ohrid refused to adopt it under the account that there is no impact assessment to it.
 - In 2017 and 2018 **language courses for guides** were supported by Swiss Contact. Two local guides sent by NP Galicica took part learning Dutch and Polish language. There is still need for further learning in order for these and other guides to be able to use it to guide groups, but the fact that they have recognized the need and made an effort is valuable.
 - Sustainable Tourism Training** was organized for representatives of municipalities by Swiss Contact in 2018. Among the 20 participants the Mayor of Resen took part.
- **RURAL DEVELOPMENT BY INTEGRATED FOREST AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH-EAST-EUROPE** (LEIWW) (Albania and North Macedonia) project from 2016 to 2018, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and was jointly implemented by GIZ and the SWG. The primary aim of this project was

to strengthen regional capacities for rural development through integrated forest and water resources management in SEE (SWG, n.d.h).

- Balkan Hiking Adventure was developed - a three-county (Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia) hiking paths, connected to the international Via Dinarica. One trail of that Via Dinarica ends on Galicica Mountain in the WPA. The result is a success, since the experts involved continue to work together on adventure tourism issues on a cross-border level. However the trails in NPG are the existing hiking trails of the Park, which are supposed to be maintained by Park's administration.
- Grant scheme was included where 11 projects in two calls (SWG, n.d.i; n.d.j) were funded, mainly in tourism and agriculture where four were in Albania, and seven in North Macedonia, while two were in the WPA: projects No. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, while only project No. 3, related to Lake Vlew Hotel, Otesevo, North Macedonia; and project No. 4, related to Villa LivaE in Brajcino, North Macedonia was in tourism (SWG, n.d.i).
- Safety and Risk Management trainings were organized for the people involved in adventure tourism. A group of adventure guides from the WPA were included in the trainings.

The success of this project is due to the fact that the project was designed to the needs of the local people with engagement of the local people and stakeholders, and a transfer of the ownership to the locals.

- **CAPACITY ASSESSMENT FOR HUNTING AND MOUNTAIN TOURISM** (North Macedonia) made in 2016 by the Ministry of Economy. Prespa area is not included, only Ohrid and Bitola.
- **ECO ADVENTURES** (North Macedonia) is a project implemented by Eco Sense in 2016 and supported by the Heinrich Boell Foundation. Within the project a map was developed, together with activities, to promote eco-tourism and environmental awareness about Mavrovo and Galicica National Parks (Eco-Sense, n.d.). The project had an initial successful beginning by establishing a cooperation with an adventure travel company - Ride Macedonia, however the project was never finished and the awareness raising activities planned were not realized, having only the map as a deliverable.
- **MOUNTAINS AND MEMORIES** (North Macedonia) was a youth exchange project that dealt with youth education on nature awareness and readiness for outings in nature (Sfera, 2017). It was implemented by the CSO SFERA in 2017 as an international youth exchange supported by ERASMUS+ programme. The project is evaluated as very successful due to the possibility for the 25 young people to learn about nature and the explore NP "Pelister".
- **RURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INTEGRATED FOREST AND WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE:** Rural perspectives: qualification, reintegration and (self) employment (Albania and North Macedonia) from 2017 till 2018. The "project was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and was jointly implemented by GIZ and the SWG. The project was focused on institutional and individual capacities development for regional and inter- sectoral coordination processes and finding EU compliant solutions (policy development and implementation). It provided support to local economic development for achievement of effective mobilization of local natural resources by encouraging investments with the highest rate of socio-economic return. The project strived to forge partnerships (national/local governments, private sector, civil society) to stimulate a policy environment that mainstreams the concept of employment promotion, economic development under the regional overall strategic economic growth agenda (SEE2020). The primary aim and the overall objective of the Project was to support qualification, reintegration and (self) employment in rural areas and to strengthen regional capacities for rural economic diversification in Southeast Europe." (SWG, n.d.k) In the framework of the project, two capacity building activities were organized:
 - FOSTERING INTEGRATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND GREENING OF VALUE CHAINS organized in April 2017,

where the stakeholders from Prespa were introduced to specific planning and development tools such as the Business Canvas Model (BMC). (SWG, n.d.l)

- CAPACITY BUILDING FOR NETWORKING AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS IN APPLE AND TOURISM SECTORS IN THE CROSS-BORDER REGION PRESPA, 20-22 November 2017 in Otesevo, Macedonia. The workshop focused on: joint promotion and marketing of products and services as part of the apple and tourism value chain with a view to enhancing cooperation and creating business partnerships; connecting traditional and innovative products with tourism offers in Prespa; creating and maintaining new products and services in the region of Prespa; creating joint business development strategy. (SWG, n.d.l)
- **REGIONAL COOPERATION AND NETWORKING IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-BORDER AREAS** (Albania, North Macedonia, etc.) Implemented in the period 2017 - 2018. The project was financed by the European Union and implemented by the Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development in South Eastern Europe (SWG) in the Western Balkan Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia and Bulgaria). "The action strives to contribute to balanced socio-economic development of rural areas in the WB targeted cross-border regions, through efficient regional cross-border cooperation and strengthened regional capacities for rural economic diversification. The objective of the project is to promote local entrepreneurship, employment and strengthen regional capacities for rural economic diversification. This will ultimately increase the attraction of the areas, improve the market access, maintain/develop natural or cultural heritage values, encouraging young people to get involved and contribute to reduced out-migration." (SWG, n.d.b) Within the project several activities have been realized:
 - Field presentation of positive practices and examples in tourism and agro-food value chains, through LEADER approach and Local Action Groups in Pelagonija and Prespa regions for stakeholders and participants from the cross – border region "Prespa". The activity was held on 26-28.10.2018, for stakeholders and participants from the cross – border region "Prespa". "The aim of the study tour is to introduce the stakeholders involved in agro-food and tourism sector from "Prespa" cross-border region with good practices of LEADER approach and Local Action Groups in the regions of Prespa and Pelagonija." (SWG, n.d.c)
 - "Sports and culture – the future of our region" event, organized by Public Enterprise "Biljanini Izvori" was held on 16th of June 2018 till 17th of June 2018 in Ohrid, Macedonia. "The aim of this event is to influence the development of sports, cultural tourism and strengthening of the regional tradition and values which will lead to better communication in the Prespa cross-border region." (SWG, n.d.d)
 - "TOUR DE GALICICA 2018" was organized by the Municipality of Resen and was held on 16th of June 2018 till 17th of June 2018 in Resen, Macedonia. "The aim of this event is to promote the touristic opportunities in Prespa region and to discover its nature through biking on the Galicica mountain, promoting the healthy life-style, cultural, natural and historical heritage in the Prespa region, especially the Galicica National Park." (SWG, n.d.e)
 - "Days of wine and cheese 2018", was organized by the Municipality of Ohrid, and was held in the period 10 – 11.08.2018 in Ohrid, Macedonia. "The aim of this event is to enable exchange of experience, opportunities for creating new markets and further development of value chains, especially in agriculture and tourism in the rural areas of the cross-border region Prespa." (SWG, n.d.f)
- **REGION OF LAKE OHRID - SAFE DESTINATION FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM** (Albania and North Macedonia) is a project financed by the EU, cross-border IPA2 programme and implemented by the Rescue service of Red Cross, Ohrid and the National Centre for Environment, Tourism and Sustainable Development of Albania. It was from 2017 till 2019. The project developed the capacities on both sides of the Lake Ohrid for mountain and water rescue.

- **PROTECTION OF THE ECOSYSTEM IN THE CROSS BORDER REGION OHRID-PRESPA** (Albania and North Macedonia) is a cross border project, 2017-2019, with ongoing implementation by the Albanian Foundation for Development of Local Capacity; SEG Holding; Hunting Association of Macedonia; and the Federation of Fishing Organizations on inland Waters of Albania, and supported by the EU. They are developing a Spatial Information and Planning System where tourism is included in the information system.
- **LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT** (North Macedonia) supported by EU, administered by WB, and implemented by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, begun in 2017, and will be active till 2019. "The Project Development Objective of the LRCP is to enhance the contribution of tourism to local economic development and improve the capacity of the Government and public entities to foster tourism growth and facilitate destination management." (LRCP, n.d.a) Within the project strategies for development of the 10 regions in North Macedonia were developed, among which Plan No.1 for the area of Ohrid, and Plan No.3 for Pelagonia, both of them affecting parts of the WPA.

Plan No.1: Tourism Development Plan for Ohrid, Struga, Prespa and Surroundings. It defines priorities: "1) Better conservation of ecosystems and natural resource management; 2) Maintain and enhance (more and better) job opportunities; 3) Preservation of local traditions and culture including handicrafts and heritage structures; 4) Improved and expanded facilities and infrastructure for residents; 5) Increased number of SME opportunities" (LRCP, n.d.b). It recognizes PIGNP and Prespa as tourist attractions, in particular of interest: 1. Lake Ohrid and surrounding nature; 2. Lake Prespa and surrounding nature; 3. Golem Grad; 4. Galicica National Park; 5. Hiking, mountaineering, biking; and 6. Rural and traditional experiences (LRCP, n.d.b). It recognizes "the high concentration of tourism traffic and activity around Lake Ohrid itself, as well as the increasing focus on low-value segments" (LRCP, n.d.b).

Plan No.3: Tourism Development Plan for Pelagonija. It defines priorities: "1) Maintain and enhance (more and better) job opportunities; 2) Preservation of local traditions and culture including handicrafts and heritage structures; 3) Increased awareness of the importance of environmental protection; 4) Better conservation of ecosystems and natural resource management; 5) Enhanced image of the area ('make people proud to live in it')" (LRCP, n.d.c). It recognizes PIPNP as a tourist attraction, in particular of interest: 1. Pelister National Park; 2. Hiking, mountaineering, some biking; and 3. Rural and traditional experiences (LRCP, n.d.c). It defines "underutilization of its significant tourism potential" (LRCP, n.d.c) as its most significant challenge.

- **SMILE ALBANIA** (Albania) an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania, started in 2018 on national level and only in the summer months of July and August. The project purpose was to employ young people and students from 18-30 years old in 9 border crossing points and 15 info points to inform the tourists and offer their assistance, where PNP was one of the locations. Additionally, they collect info on the tourists coming to the location, thus gathering data for analysis. The project is continuing in 2019.
- **DIVERSIFICATION OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN RURAL AREAS OF SOUTHEAST EUROPE THROUGH VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT** (SEDRA 2) (Albania, North Macedonia, etc.) Implemented in the period 2018 - 2021. This project is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), to be jointly implemented by GIZ and the SWG in the Western Balkan Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia and Bulgaria). The objective of the project is to contribute to the diversification of economic activities in rural areas of SEE through strengthening selected value chains in specific cross-border regions, where Prespa cross-border region is one of those selected regions. The project aims to develop sustainable business models in structurally weak border regions through improvement of the production and marketing of agricultural and wild products, local crafts and culinary traditions, sustainable tourism. Support is provided through

different capacity building measures, facilitation of cooperation and networking processes along the value chains and targeted investment support to relevant key stakeholders. (SWG, n.d.a) In the framework of this project the following sub projects have been financed (SWG, 2019):

- Macedonian Cultural Summer 2019 Prespa, implemented by Association of Macedonians in origin from Albania SONCE Skopje.
- Tour de Galicica 2019 Prespa, implemented by Resen municipality.
- Hiking tour "Holy waters" on Pelister / Baba Mountain - Prespa Side Prespa, implemented by National Park Pelister.
- Apple Harvest at Spirit of Prespa, implemented by Red Sky Logistics.
- Development of Agritourism through the improvement of managerial capacities (on focus - The involvement of young generation) Prespa, implemented by Economic Intelligent Center.
- Reach the mountain, implemented by the Municipality of Ohrid.
- **MES GRANT AGREEMENT WITH PONT** (North Macedonia). Within the first agreement signed in 2018 the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES) and the Greek Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP), conducted a detailed study to map the wetland habitats on the Macedonian side, in close cooperation with the Municipality of Resen that manages the Ezerani Nature Park and Lake Prespa Monument of Nature. In order to get a full picture of wetland habitats in Prespa, the PrespaNet partners will replicate the mapping exercise in 2019 on the Albanian part of the region, while designing the first restoration measures in the North Macedonia territory. These efforts were co-financed by PONT over the following two years through the new grants to MES and the Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA), which were signed at the end of January 2019, and through the ongoing five-year grant to SPP. The grants will also enable the PrespaNet partners to strengthen their capacity to contribute to biodiversity conservation in Prespa, through concerted environmental education activities and conservation of large carnivores and their prey.
- **PPNEA GRANT AGREEMENT WITH PONT** (Albania). In 2018, PONT granted the NGO, Protection and Preservation of Nature Environment in Albania (PPNEA), an initial one-year grant. The grant aimed to strengthen PPNEA's institutional capacities through enhancing its involvement in transboundary projects and projects specific to Prespa, Albania, and through improving overall operations and research activities, including large carnivores conservation activities. 2018 was a preparatory year for PPNEA with number of activities focused on laying the groundwork for the upcoming year and projects. Within this support in September 2018 PPNEA organised a transboundary summer school on "Nature Interpretation and Environmental Education for Prespa". As a continuation activity in 2019 a local staff was supported by PONT to coordinate the large carnivores monitoring activities that will contribute to Nature and Wildlife Protection.
- **SPP GRANT AGREEMENT WITH PONT** (Greece). Through a 5-year strategic framework (2018-2022) with the Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP), PONT provides most of the core financing for administrative operations and implementation of the following projects: Pelicans census; Water bird monitoring; Habitat research; Active wetland vegetation management; Transboundary Wetland Management Technical Group; Transboundary conservation activities for large carnivores; Restoration works; Presenting PONT on the Pan-European Green Belt Conference; Number of different engagements related to water management.
- **FINNISH VILLAGE** (North Macedonia) - The Resen Municipality is preparing a project and plans in 2019 for a tourism focused village, close to the border with Greece on an area of 15000 m2. The idea is from 2009 and is slowly being implemented. The clarity of the idea and whether the approach will be sustainable remains unknown since it will depend on any future potential investors, especially since the person that proposed the idea seems not available to follow up on it and invest in its realization.

- **HOLY WATERS HIKING TRAIL** (North Macedonia) was marked, along the monasteries of the East side of Lake Prespa. The first project only marked the existence of a trail with support from the Bureau for Regional Development, but was not cleared and subsequently maintained. Resen Municipality now got a cross border EU funded project to turn the trail into a usable tourism product for hiking and biking, and is expected to be implemented in 2019 and 2020.
- **PIGNP GRANT AGREEMENT WITH PONT** (North Macedonia) ongoing until end of 2020. Within the agreement several results are foreseen: strengthening capacities within the park for programming and planning operations in line with the management plan; develop operational plan for 2019 that meets international standards; update of the management plan for the period 2021-2030; new webpage; renovation and maintenance of trails and phone application for the trails (PONT, 2018b).
- **PIPNP GRANT AGREEMENT WITH PONT** (North Macedonia) ongoing until end of 2019. PONT's financing is matched by contributions from the park administration and the European Union through the Twinning Project "Strengthening the capacities for effective implementation of the acquis in the field of nature protection". The Agreement allows the PIPNP to update the first Management Plan adopted in 2006 for a period of 10 years, and to gather missing data for the significant geographical extension of the Park's area in 2007. The management planning process will be accompanied by capacity building activities focused on monitoring priority species and habitats.
- **MUNICIPALITY OF RESEN GRANT AGREEMENT WITH PONT** (North Macedonia) concerning the management of the Lake Prespa Monument of Nature and Ezerani Nature Park. PONT's funds are matched by contributions from the Municipality of Resen, and the European Union, through the Twinning Project "Strengthening the capacities for effective implementation of the acquis in the field of nature protection", and the project "Improving the Management of Protected Areas", implemented by UNDP. The Agreement aims at activities to improve the technical and management skills of the municipal staff involved in the management of the two protected areas. This includes monitoring of priority habitats and species, improving the visitor experience, management, and raising awareness among local people about the natural values of Prespa and the need for acting sustainably. The activities are implemented by the Sector for the Environment at the Municipality of Resen until May 2019 however by the end of the June 2019 for the purpose of this assessment the authors were not able to find official report on the success or failure of the project.
- **PNP GRANT AGREEMENT WITH PONT** (Albania) where the rehabilitation of the hiking trails is being supported.

Annex II: Review of current policies, plans and strategies

Multilateral

- There are several International Commitments that have been ratified by the Albanian and the parliament of North Macedonia and that have an impact to a need for enforcing sustainable tourism for the protection of biodiversity in the Wider Prespa Area:
 - Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitats. UN Convention, Ramsar, 2 February 1971, entered into force in North Macedonia by Act of Succession in 1991 (Official Journal of the SFRY, 1977) and in Albania in 1996 (Ramsar, n.d.).
 - Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. UNESCO, Paris, 16 November 1972, entered into force in North Macedonia by Act of Succession in 1997 (MOEPP, 2019) and in Albania in 1979 (UNESCO, 2017).
 - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats. Council of Europe, Bern, 19 September 1979, entered into force in Albania in 1999 (COE, 2019c), and in North Macedonia in 1997 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1997a).
 - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. UN Convention, Bonn, 23 June 1979, ratified by Albania in 2001 (CMS, n.d.), and by the Republic of North Macedonia in 1999 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1999b).
 - Convention on Biological Diversity. UNEP, Rio, 5 June 1992, ratified by North Macedonia in 1997 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1997b) and by Albania (CBD, n.d.).
 - Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe. COE, Granada, 1985 (COE, n.d.b.). Ratified by North Macedonia (COE, 2019a).
 - European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage. COE, London 1969 (COE, n.d.a) and Valletta 1992 (COE, n.d.c). Ratified by North Macedonia in 2006 (COE, 2019b) and by Albania in 2008 (COE, 2019b).
 - Agreement on the Conservation of African - Eurasian Migratory Water Birds. Hague, June 1995, ratified by the Republic of North Macedonia in 1999 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1999a) and in Albania in 2001 (AEWA, n.d.).
 - European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe, ratified in North Macedonia in 2003 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2003).
- **DECLARATION ON THE CREATION OF THE PRESPA PARK AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESPA LAKES AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS** (2000), represents the beginning and the foundation that lead to the cross border protection of the Wider Prespa Area that requires development of sustainable tourism.
- **AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA FOR THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF LAKE OHRID AND ITS WATERSHED** was signed by the Governments of Albania and North Macedonia in 2004, with the aim for further deepening the cooperation between the two. The parties agree to protection and sustainable development; give the status of World Cultural and Natural Heritage and "Biosphere Reserve"; and prepare condition to propose the declaration of the Prespa - Ohrid area as a Euro-Region. For the fulfilment of the objectives the Governments agree to take the following measures:

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

The Agreement provides for the establishment and the work of the Lake Ohrid Watershed Committee.

- **AGREEMENT ON THE PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESIPA PARK AREA** (Official Journal of the European Union, 2011) was signed by the Environment Ministers of the three countries, Greece, North Macedonia, Albania and the EU in 2010. This agreement provides legally binding obligation "to ensure an integrated protection of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the Prespa Park Area, including the development of integrated river basin management plans, according to international and European Union standards" (Official Journal of the European Union, 2011, a.2). It lays the foundations for tourism development in Article 3; where it obliges the parties to "conserve traditional architecture and monuments, develop and implement a joint strategy for the touristic development of the Area, and promote public awareness and environmental education as a means for reaching local solutions" (Official Journal of the European Union, 2011, a.3(2)(e)) being mindful to employ environmental standards and criteria and in a sustainable manner.
- **Objective of the agreement:** The Parties shall cooperate in order to ensure an integrated protection of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the Prespa Park Area, including the development of integrated river basin management plans, according to international and European Union standards. The Mechanisms of cooperation are defined as follows: The Ministers of Environment of the three State Parties and the representative of the EU shall meet regularly to review progress in the implementation of this Agreement. In order to ensure effectiveness in the achievement of the objectives and commitments specified in this Agreement, the Parties establish the Prespa Park Management Committee meeting on a regular basis and deciding upon consensus. The most important functions of the Management Committee are to monitor and coordinate the activities carried out for the protection and sustainable development of the Prespa Park Area in the implementation of this Agreement and of the Strategic Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park. The Committee is assisted by a subsidiary technical organ, the Secretariat, in fulfilling its duties and in addition the Committee will establish a Working Group on Water Management.

National

Albania

- Sector Strategy on Tourism 2007-2013 (Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport, 2007), adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2008. The Strategy has been approved through the Decision of the Council of Ministers (VKM) No. 884, dated June 11th, 2008 "On the approval of the Sector Strategy on Tourism". The strategy was developed as a review of the Strategy for Tourism Development for the period 2002 – 2012 to align it with the Strategy on the Development of Natural and Environmental Tourism and its Action Plan developed by UNDP, and to comply with the Law on tourism of 2007. It sets the vision: "Albania is a safe,

high-value tourism destination featuring an unparalleled variety of world-class natural and cultural attractions in a small geographic area, managed in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, easily accessible to European tourism markets (Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport, 2007)." Defines that guiding principle for realization of the strategy are: sustainable development, benefits of local communities, partnerships and quality.

- The National Strategy for Development and Investment 2015-2020 aims to improve competitiveness and economic growth of Albania through high quality and sustainable tourism (EC, 2017). The Strategy is approved through the Minister Councils Decision no. 348, date 11.5.2016. This Strategy is the main strategic document that supports sustainable socio-economic development of Albania, in all sectors, including Tourism, according to the European standards toward the EU integration process. It is a 5 years development platform focusing on:
 - * European integration
 - * Good Governance, democracy and rights
 - * Macro economic and fiscal stability
 - * Increase of competition
 - * Social and human development
 - * Sustainable use of natural resources
- Law No.93/2015, on Tourism aim is the promotion of Albania; the purpose of this law is to promote Albania as an attractive tourist destination for domestic and foreign visitors, backing up sustainable tourism development, provided that tourist service providers meet the demands of tourists, in a healthy and safe environment, and respecting the needs of today's and future generations (Official Journal or the Official Announcement Bulletin, 2015). In addition, the Law sets out clear rules regarding the development of tourism, investor's financial support, criteria on operation of tourism related activities, etc. The Law regulates (Deloitte, 2015):
 - The determination of a (vertical) institutional tourism framework, which comprises, among others, the ministry responsible for tourism, National Tourism Agency, National Coastal Agency, the inspectorate covering the field of tourism, the Commission of Standardization of Tourism Activities, etc.
 - The approval of the tourism development planning, which should be prepared in accordance with the national territory planning, the strategy on tourism and the legislation governing the territory planning and development.
 - Classification of touristic resources/ attractions. Such resources shall be inventoried in the National Registry of Tourism Resources ("NRTR"), which shall be prepared by the Ministry and other national and local public bodies.
 - The development and operation of a tourism project, in the priority areas of tourism development, based on the general public interest, might be carried out in state properties as well, in case the relevant structures, constructions and auxiliary services do not harm the natural and cultural parameters of such areas and comply with the national sectoral tourism plan.
 - The Ministry can provide financial support to tourism related projects through funds deriving from the annual approved budget fund. The projects exceeding the value of 50% of the annual fund foreseen for tourism projects are subject to approval by the Council of Ministers.
 - In the ambit of investments in tourism, the state might assume the role of the developer, enter into public-private partnerships, hold shares/stocks in tourism companies, make available immovable properties to private investors, provide supporting infrastructure, as well as combinations of the foregoing forms of investment participation.

- Any tourism enterprise operating as accommodation facility (i.e. whether "guesthouse", "hostel", "camping", "hotel", "motel", "resort", "curative centre" or "bed and breakfast") should apply with the Ministry for the issuance of the classification certificate, within 30 days following its registration with the National Registration Centre.
- With regard to travel agencies and tourism operators, among other criteria for carrying out their activities, the Law provides that such enterprises should be licensed in accordance with the procedure provided for under article 16/3 of the law no. 10081, dated 23.02.2009 "On licenses, authorizations and permits in the Republic of Albania" as amended. The travel agencies and tourism operators, having commenced their activity prior to the date of entry into force of the Law, must obtain the relevant license within 12 months from such date.
- The new law on tourism provides a range of changes for the tourism sector in Albania, aiming to transform it into one of the most important economic sectors in the upcoming years. The Ministry responsible for the tourism sector is the link between the Government of Albania, local authorities and strategic investors, and plays the monitoring role in the implementation of the signed agreements for different investments in this sector.
- Strategy for the development of tourism in Albania for the period 2017-2022. Developed by the Institute for Public Policy and Good Governance and supported by GIZ (IPPM, 2016). "The basic principle of the strategy include(s) sustainable development, orientation toward the market, whereby tourist destination is considered to be at the core of development (Sonia Popa in: Albanian Newsroom, 2014)."

WPA specific

- Decision on the Declaration of National Park of Prespa, taken by the Albanian Council of Ministers, No. 80, dated 18 February 1999.
- DRAFT PRESIPA AREA TOURISM ACTION PLAN (Albania) developed by Liqenas Commune, Proger Commune and Qender Bilisht Commune, and with support from SNV in 2008 (Liqenas Commune, 2008). The Action plan, though outdated it is still current, defines five goals with subsequent objectives:
 - Goal: to improve tourism attractions, events and activities. Objectives: (1) Identity tourism Action Plan for Prespa National Park; (2) Share of responsibilities on legal basis for administration of Prespa National Park; (3) Encourage the respective organs to implement the status for monuments of nature and culture; (4) Protection of natural environment from illegal activities; (5) Encourage regional and national activities for development of tourism.
 - Goal: to improve tourism marketing and promotion. Objectives: (1) Development of promotional and marketing materials with all information; (2) Promotion of tourism host houses; (3) an operational tourism info centre within the existing centre of National Park.
 - Goal: to improve tourism infrastructure. Objectives: (1) Encourage public-private partnership to create the needed infrastructure for water and winter sports; (2) Encouragement + pressure + collaboration of all actors to develop the service infrastructure; (3) Development of an urban planning for the tourist Area; (4) Encouragement of Improvement of road infrastructure to complete road infrastructure; (5) Development of informative and promotional signs for the National Park; (6) Keeping a clean environment in tourism Area (including Lake Prespa); (7) Keeping livestock away from shore and houses area.
 - Goal: to improve tourism hospitality (awareness and industry training). Objectives: (1) Female involvement in all tourism developing activities; (2) Improve community

awareness on the importance of tourism industry; (3) Encourage the collaboration of community within the National Park Area and in Region.

- Goal: to improve tourism commercial/retail services. Objectives: (1) Improvement of services' quality in the Area (in restaurants, hotels, bars); (2) Encouragement to open souvenir shops; (3) Provision of facilities for tourists in the shore; (4) Provision of bank services in the Area; (5) Development of professional guides for different tourism activities.
- TOURISM MARKETING AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE KORCA REGION from 2009, made by Lionel Becherel, International Tourism Consultancy for the Korca Regional Council. The strategy has been officially approved by the Korca Regional Council in 2009. The Regional Council Leded the process, and cooperated with Destination Management Organization for implementation, supported by the World Tourism Organization. Furthermore, the strategy contains an outdated 3 year action plan, however its actions are still current:
 - Products/Institutional: (0-5 years):
 - * The regional DMO is set up, with links to all tourist areas in the region;
 - * The road network in the region is improved, especially to tourist attractions;
 - * General infrastructure is improved;
 - * Attractions are fully prepared for tourist visits (established opening and closing times, fully staffed, guides available and associated retail outlets are opened);
 - * Events and festivals are organized throughout the region;
 - * K City has a pedestrian zone; the roads and pavements in the city are restored; more accommodation including high category accommodation is opened;
 - * Lake Ohrid is cleaned up of sewerage and environmentally safe; beaches are prepared for visitors;
 - * Villages tourism has become established; growth of accommodation capacity and activities;
 - * Signage is improved around the region;
 - * Capacity building in hospitality and marketing is bearing fruit;
 - * Souvenirs, handicrafts shops in city centres, villages and tourist attractions are opened;
 - * Nature tourism is starting to become important in the region through the development of activities, availability of rental equipment and infrastructure;
 - * Korca's Region image is becoming defined.
 - * Markets (0-5 years):
 - * Domestic Market including Macedonians - Albanians and Kosovars is buoyant;
 - * Focus on North American-Albanians is increasing with greater arrivals from the US and Canada;
 - * Grand Tour as well as regional tours are expanded resulting in a greater number of arrivals from Western Europe and others;
 - * Focus on Western European markets;
 - * Cross-border tourism is initiated;
 - * Focus on special interest markets (bird watching, archaeology and history, etc);
 - * Products/Institutional: (6-10 years):
 - * The institutional structure for tourism in the region is established and fully functional with PPP;
 - * Cities are fully developed for tourism with the range of accommodation of all categories, restaurants for tourists, attractions and entertainment activities;

- * The festivals and events of the Korca region have gained national and international fame;
 - * Lake and beach products are of high quality;
 - * Villages are a major draw to the region and fully prepared to accommodate tourists;
 - * A range of activities are available for all types of tourists throughout the region;
 - * Nature tourism is now well established with possibilities to enjoy ecotourism, adventure tourism and sports tourism;
 - * Strong cross-border links are established with Albania providing a complementary but distinct product to Greece and North Macedonia;
 - * Tourism human resources in the region provide excellent services and are well trained;
 - * The Korca Region's image is strong in the market place and recognized nationally and internationally.
- o Markets: (6-10 years):
 - * All identified markets now visiting; those focused on in the first five years are already well established;
 - * Focus on new generating markets such as Turkey, Egypt, Dubai, etc, as well as long haul destinations in Asia, Australia, New Zealand, etc.
- Management Plan for Prespa National Park for 2014 - 2024 is a document that draws the potentials and sets up the management of PNP. More information is provided in the table under the chapter Priorities for Action. The Management plan for Prepa NP has two management objectives:
 1. Inform Inhabitants and visitors about the park, its restrictions and possibilities;
 2. Increase attractiveness for visitors

And number of actions within the two management objectives:

- * Place info tables for visitors on proper behaviour
- * Issue licenses for tour guides allowing them to visit the island with visitors
- * Apply a proactive visitor management
- * Apply a landing Kay at Mali Grad to allow visitors to access the chapel but restrict the access of the rest of the island
- * Develop and implement action plan including visitors guidance system
- * Place info-tables and sign boards to keep visitors on the marked path
- * Create infrastructure in the PNP to allow visitors to experience nature
- * Identify and mark hiking trails, biking and riding trails
- * Provide information for visitors in a visitor center
- * Implement info points in the park where visitors get information about recreation possibilities
- * Raise awareness and educate local population and visitors about the special values of species
- *

North Macedonia

- **CATEGORIZATION OF ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES** is a policy at national level from 2004, and implemented individually by the municipalities. Though the Development Strategy for Resen Municipality recognizes 20 categorized B&Bs, currently there is only one categorized B&B and that one will soon not be categorized since the categorization requirements cannot be met. However municipalities can ask for sub legal acts that due to the specifics in the municipalities an exemption needs to be made, and the Ministry of Economy would enable this exemption, for example the rule that only actual owners can ask for catego-

rization while in fact many of the real estate in Prespa has no inheritance resolved issues. To his date this has not been elaborated by Resen Municipality.

- **THE LAW ON TOURISM** (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004a; 2008; 2009b, 2011a; 2011c; 2011d; 2012b; 2013d; 2014a; 2015b; 2015d; 2016c) regulates the administrative form of execution of tourism, the rules regarding travel agency, tourist guide and tourist companion. It defines that rural tourism and eco tourism is: renting of horses, foto-safari, making and sale of handicrafts, souvenirs, instruments and other products and services in the village household. The Law defines that ecotourism is conducted only in natural sites with special characteristics and in protected areas.

The Law on Tourism (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004a; 2008; 2009b, 2011a; 2011c; 2011d; 2012b; 2013d; 2014a; 2015b; 2015d; 2016c) also sets the basis for **tourism subventions** in article 57, paragraph 2. The rules for tourism subventions for foreign, income tourists are laid out in the Rulebook For The Method, Type, And The Amount Of The Subventions (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2013b; 2014c; 2015a; 2016a). The subventions are in place since 2011. They cover partial costs on transport and/or accommodation for incoming tourists to travel agencies (APST, n.d.).

- **LAW ON NATURE PROTECTION** (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004b; 2006; 2007; 2010a; 2011b; 2011e; 2012a; 2013a; 2013c; 2014b; 2015c; 2016b; 2016d, 2018) in article 105 states that ecotourism is allowed in the zones for Active Management, and defines the Zone for Sustainable Use as a place for implementing non-conservative activities. The law also is a basis for financing of protected areas, and payment of fees in the protected areas. The fees for visiting protected area are foreseen in the Law on Nature Protection, article 161 through 163 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004b), and the prices are to be defined by the Government of North Macedonia. Financing and fees for visiting a national park are regulated with the amendment from 2006 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia), with article 141-a, and prices are set by the steering committee. However it was only in spring 2012 when fees in the NPs were introduced in gratitude to a decree of the Government. National Parks still face difficulties in implementing this obligation. The NPs are even opposing it, since traditionally they have sought financing only from wood harvesting, and due to the structure of the parks with many inhabited areas and major roads going through the NPs the management have difficulties in implementing this regulation. However NP Galicica has managed to collect 90000 EUR only from entrance fees. With increasing the offer of the NP and providing facilities to tourists, the NPs hope and can increase their income from tourism even further while working on models how to have even more effective entrance fee payment scheme. Unfortunately some activities in NP Galicica have dropped in rate of occurrence, due to the price for doing those activities, such as paragliding take offs from PIGNP.
- **STUDY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE AND MOUNTAIN TOURISM**, made in 2015 and ordered by the Ministry of Economy, foresees development of five alternative and mountain tourism locations, among which the island Golem Grad in Prespa. The Study also has an action plan where it states for Golem Grad that the aim is to establish a system for management and protection (Petrovska et al., 2015). The action plan foresees improvement of the availability of information; having appropriate staff and guides; reconstruction of the peer; to have well designed marking system; and to create well designed paths (Petrovska et al., 2015). The study unofficially has been abandoned, however it is referred to as one of the activities to be implemented in the forthcoming National Strategy for Development of Tourism (Kohl and Partner, 2016).
- **NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM** 2016 - 2021, developed by Kohl and Partner (2016) and financed by the Ministry of Economy. The strategy is in the final draft version available on the website of the Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism of the Republic of North Macedonia however it has never been officially approved and ad-

opted by the State. The document does not provide information if there are a governance arrangements for its implementation and what are the responsible institutions. The document is intended for all territory of North Macedonia, without specific measures for the WPA. It includes an analysis of the sector, strategic recommendations and an action plan. Although that this document identify the natural resources (mountains, lakes) and cultural heritage as one of the main strengths of North Macedonia the document gives a blunt and interesting statement: "Macedonia achieved the best results in the field „Business environment" – the worst in „Natural resources". In analysing the current situation it concludes the following, among other:

- * The cost of maintaining basic "natural" resources for tourism such as beaches, lakes, rivers and winter sports areas will increase - in major mountain resorts for example, there will be an increased need for artificial snow;
- * Higher demand for Eco-Tourism and Nature-Based holidays and the provision of more information on product sustainability by suppliers will help to increase tourists' environmental awareness; The sustainability of tourism will be more important and therefore marketing activities in this direction are suggested. The assessment concludes that about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the previous strategy 2009-2013 has been implemented. It defines that Ohrid and Prespa region are the most attractive tourist sites in North Macedonia and lists PIGNP and PIPNP among the best ranked on TripAdvisor. And yet pointing out Lake Prespa, as the least developed one, is only of limited attractiveness for visitors at the moment. The strategy sets Experiences in nature as one of the 4 pillars of the strategy. Among its recommendations, several have relations to the WPA: support of local pilot projects; and setting up regional destination management organization where most of the WPA would be in the Bitola Prespa region, and a part in the Ohrid region. The action plan does not have an activity that has a direct impact to sustainable tourism in the WPA. However, several activities may be utilized to achieve this:
 - Activity No.3: Development of leading projects for the tourism of North Macedonia till 2030;
 - Activity No.6: Establishment of Destination management organizations.
 - The strategy also lists several supporting activities that may have relation to the WPA:
 - Assessment of the tourism high school and increasing the attraction to the students.
 - Establishment of a tourism development fund;
 - Establishment of a hotel development fund;
 - Organization of a summer tourism academy;
 - Development of national tourist routes;
 - Development of modern centres in the national parks;
 - Implementation of the action plan of the Study for the Development of Alternative and Mountain Tourism (Petrovska et al., 2015), among other, in the location of Golem Grad, Prespa;
 - Establishment of rural tourism development zones.
- **PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM FOR 2019** of the Government the Republic of North Macedonia. The programme dedicates 36.000.000, 00 MKD of the budget of the Government. Within the programme there are 21 actions (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2019b):
 1. International and bilateral cooperation, in particular membership in international tourism bodies and presence on international fairs, supported with 2.500.000, 00 MKD.
 2. Education and training in tourism and hospitality, provided from WTO representatives secured by the ME, supported with 1.000.000, 00 MKD.

3. Environmental activity and a campaign for cleaning the waste on the roads leading to the tourist destinations, where the ME will coordinate the CSOs, the private sector and the tourism faculties in cleaning the roads and will distribute promotional material on the importance of the environment for tourism. Supported with 1.500.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019b).
 4. Organizing of an international tourism conference, supported with 2.000.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a).
 5. Subsidies for tourism projects, events and forums, supported with 4.500.000, 00 MKD. Call already published.
 6. Development of a study for spa and wine tourism in RNM, supported with 1.000.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a) and completed.
 7. Unified tourist information, road signage across the country, supported with 2.500.000, 00 MKD.
 8. Subsidizing rural households with funds for equipment, refurbishment and adaptation of facilities for tourism, supported with 2.500.000, 00 MKD.
 9. Prize for innovative tourism business ideas from tourism students, supported with 500.000,00 MKD.
 10. Subsidies for municipal tourism strategies of 10 municipalities, supported with 3.000.000, 00 MKD.
 11. Study about unused facilities that could become info centres, souvenir shops or training centres, and are of potential for foreign investors, supported with 3.000.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a).
 12. Campaign for safe travel, conducted with the Ministry of Interior by making materials placed at each border and a media campaign, supported with 1.000.000, 00 MKD.
 13. Marking the world tourism day - 27 September by giving credit to the most successful, supported with 500.000,00 MKD.
 14. Development of three sub strategies for Rural, Cultural and Active tourism, supported with 1.500.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a) and completed.
 15. Development of a wine guidebook for North Macedonia, supported with 500.000,00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a) and completed.
 16. Support of projects for innovation and making online available information, supported with 1.000.000, 00 MKD.
 17. Promotion of a mobile application "Visit Macedonia", supported with 500.000,00 MKD.
 18. Development of a "Brand Strategy" for tourism of RNM, supported with 4.000.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a).
 19. Surveys of incoming tourists on the tourist offer in RNM, supported with 2.000.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a) and completed.
 20. Printing of promotional materials in the field of tourism, supported with 1.500.000, 00 MKD. Included in the annual plan for public procurement (MERNM, 2019a).
 21. Support to active tourism for CSOs in acquisition of equipment, supported with 2.000.000, 00 MKD.
- **LONG TERM TOURISM STRATEGY** for the period 2019 - 2029 is in process of development, supported by the WB.

WPA specific

- **TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ZONES** are foreseen by the Government of North Macedonia, and two locations are in Prespa: Otesevo and Stenje. The Government plans to support investments in this zones mainly through tax incentives such as exempt from personal tax payment for 10 years and exempt from paying VAT on building materials (Resen Municipality Council, 2016, p.38). However these zones have been abandoned by the current Government.
- **SUB STRATEGY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT OF OHRID MUNICIPALITY 2014 – 2018** was developed by the Municipality of Ohrid, in which each village is addressed. Tourism development is part of the priorities and measures foreseen. For the villages that are within PIGNP tourism development was planned to be developed mainly through: 1. developing rural tourism and alternative forms of tourism; and 2. rising the capacities of the local people by giving trainings to the providers of services. Some of the planned projects involve: placing tourist signage; involvement of the villages in promotional campaigns and advertisements; establishment of a local tourism oriented organization in Pestani; making viewpoints and barbeque designated places around Elsani; restoration of the watermills in Elsani; building of a cable car to Konjsko village; making walking pathways to and along the beachfront in Raca and Konjsko. (Ohrid Municipality, 2014a).
- **STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF RESEN MUNICIPALITY 2016 - 2021**, adopted by the Resen Municipality Council in 2016, has a whole chapter for tourism. It recognizes the need for opening of the border crossing Markova Noga with Greece. It recognizes the role of crafts as tourism products. It recognizes the natural and historical characteristics as tourism potential. The responsible body for the implementation of the Strategy is the Mayor of Resen, through the Sector for urban matters, communal works, local economic development and cross-border cooperation (Resen Municipality Council, 2016) It involves activities for development and promotion of tourism in general in its action plan, under strategic aim 1. Improvement of the socio-economic position of the population; Specific goal 1.1. Support to the development of rural tourism; under four programmes, with the following measures:
 - 1.1.1.1. Improvement of the quality and increasing of the tourist offer
 - 1.1.1.2. Establishment of a database and mapping of the tourism enterprises.
 - 1.1.1.3. Registration of all sites and highlights that can have a tourism function.
 - 1.1.1.4. Programme for establishment of offers: excursions, courses, short guided travels, pathways, National park visits, related with accommodation offer, food and etc.
 - 1.1.1.5. Financial support of small projects in the area of tourism.
 - 1.1.1.6. Improvement of the opportunities for development of mountain biking, mountain tourism, culture tourism and other forms of alternative tourism.
 - 1.1.1.7. Preparation of different touristic thematic DVD presentations and promotional videos.
 - 1.1.1.8. Analysis of the specifics within markets similar to Prespa and analysis of target groups
 - 1.1.1.9. Trainings and workshops for tourism stakeholders.
 - 1.1.1.10. Kreation of joint offer.
 - 1.1.1.11. Networking of all stakeholders.
 - 1.1.1.12. Exchange of experiences for development of alternative tourism with entities from neighbouring and other EU countries.
- 1.1.1. Investments in touristic infrastructure
 - 1.1.1.1. Mapping of existing touristic offer.

- 1.1.1.2. Setting info boards with basic information.
- 1.1.1.3. Accommodation categorisation.
- 1.1.1.4. Opening tourist info birou.
- 1.1.1.5. Setting touristic signalisation.
- 1.1.1.6. Building port in the Lake of Prespa.
- 1.1.1.7. Conservation of the rural land marks (architecture, tradition, old crafts, agriculture practices and habits).
- 1.1.1.8. Construction of infrastructure for Ethno tourism, Eko tourism, mountain tourism and other specific points of interest.
- 1.1.1.9. Financing of micro projects for renovation of traditional old houses in the rural communities.
- 1.1.1.10. Establishing functional tourism local structures.
- 1.1.2. Promotion of Prespa natural and cultural treasures
 - 1.1.2.1. Promotion of touristic potentials and offers on national and international events and fairs.
 - 1.1.2.2. Preparation and printing of promotional materials for Resen.
 - 1.1.2.3. Production of professional photographs of Prespa region natural values.
 - 1.1.2.4. Promotion of Prespa beauties through electronic media and other sources for information dissemination.
- 1.1.3. Strengthening capacities of service providers in rural tourism
 - 1.1.3.1. Organise concrete activities for capacity development on entrepreneurship skills (theoretical and practical) for their involvement in the tourism business.
 - 1.1.3.2. Motivate tourism stakeholders to attend international and national tourism fairs for own promotion
 - 1.1.3.3. Organise study visits for service providers in countries with developed alternative tourism
 - 1.1.3.4. Motivate service providers to make use of EU funds-IPARD and others
 - 1.1.3.5. Improving skills to create successful offer and promotion of traditional food
- **LAW ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE OHRID REGION** from 2010 (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2010b). The law affects the Wider Prespa Area that is under the Ohrid Municipality. It regulates the formation of a Commission and a Management Plan for the World Heritage Site in the Ohrid Region and aims, among other, to prevent negative influences to the natural and cultural values of the Ohrid Region.
- **MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE NATURE PARK “EZERANI”** for the period 2012 - 2021 is in place, where Resen Municipality is responsible for the care, protection and implementation of the plan. It concludes that tourism is constantly diminishing. It identifies that there is a need for the local people to start offering accommodation and tourism activities. It also identifies that local people are not optimistic about tourism, and recognize that the state is not providing any support for development. Yet, there are people that think that Ezerni Nature Park can become a good tourist destination. The action plan of NPE involves a number of activities related to visitors and sustainable tourism development:
 - Subprogram 4.6: Public Information in within the NPE
 - * Information boards
 - * Making a WEB Portal and maintaining it or the inclusion of Ezern in already existing portals for Lake Prespa or Prespa Park using the media
 - * Info-center or info-office
 - * Use of the media

- Subprogram 4.7: Visit protocol
 - * Making a protocol for visitors
 - * Specially designed tours for visitors
 - * Observation of birds
 - * Educational paths for students
- Subprogram 4.8: Sustainable Tourism
 - * Development of a plan for development of sustainable tourism
 - * Preparation of a birds observation plan (see sub-program 4.7)
- **LOCAL STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN RESEN 2019 - 2024.** the Strategy is approved within the agreement between the Ministry of Economy of the North Macedonia and the Municipality of Resen, number 09-1715/1 from 30.08.2018. Municipality of Resen main vision for the Prespa region is to become known and attractive tourist destination becoming one of the most desired tourist destinations in the region.

The strategy sets up four strategic goals, and pairs them with activities (Pekevski, 2019):

- Development of Resen as a brand of a desired tourist destination through development, creation and implementation of a marketing strategy for greater visibility and recognition of the destination:
 - * Development of a slogan and a logo for Resen and the Prespa region;
 - * Development and distribution of promotional materials on several foreign languages;
 - * Creation of souvenir;
 - * Advertising in foreign media;
 - * Designation of a promoter of Resen and the Prespa Region (public person);
 - * Creation of a web page portal for the region on several languages.
- Improvement of cooperation of world and European tour-operators by including Resen and the surrounding in their programmes:
 - * Participation in tourism fairs, especially in North Macedonia, as a separate entity;
 - * Participation on international conferences on tourism;
 - * Organization of workshops in Resen and the Prespa region on the topic of tourism;
 - * Organizing free road-trips in Resen and the Prespa Region for foreign journalists and tourist bloggers;
 - * Creation of a body that would directly work with the tour operators, tour agencies and tourism workers.
- Adding to the current offer and introduction of new types of tourism, such as sports tourism, medical tourism, rural tourism:
 - * Brajcino as a tourist destination;
 - * Krani as a tourist destination;
 - * Pretor as a tourist destination;
 - * Golem Grad as a tourist destination;
 - * Stenje as a tourist destination;
 - * Ezerani Nature Park;
 - * Maintenance of sport events in triathlon, running, cycling and paragliding;
 - * Promotion of the caves;
 - * Promotion of adrenalin tourism (paragliding and mountain biking);
 - * Increase of the tourist road signs and their renewal (more languages on the signs);
 - * Promotion of Lake Prespa as a hunting place;

- * Promotion of Otesevo as a place with the cleanest air (health tourism);
 - * International promotion of the events (Prespa apple harvest, International theatre festival "Acter of Europe", Easter happening);
 - * Development of new events in summer and spring (triathlon, days of culture, days of the fishermen etc);
 - * Marking of walking trails on Baba Mountain, Galicica and Bigla mountain for hiking or mountaineering;
 - * Marking of biking trails on Baba Mountain, Galicica and Bigla mountain.
- o Improvement of the human resource capacities.
 - * Participation on seminars and trainings for the increase of the capacities of direct participants in tourism;
 - * Cooperation with faculties and universities from abroad in the area of tourism;
 - * Development of a traditional school for tourism in Resen.

From a nature conservation perspective some of the actions envisaged in the Action Plan might be controversial, such as "marking of Leskovecka Cave" or promoting Golem Grad as a tourist destination.

- **LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN 2017-2022** of Resen Municipality. The LEAP has been created by wide involvement of stakeholders and experts. It has been adopted by the Resen Municipality in April 2017, setting the pathway for the Municipality to face all the environmental challenges until 2022. Furthermore the document states that tourism is important and that focus will be given on alternative tourism (p.28). Aims to promote agro-tourism through the Apple Picking Festival (Resen Municipality, 2017).
- **PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PELAGONIA REGION 2015-2019** of the Centre for Development of the Pelagonia Planning Region provides a regional strategy that includes the WPA. The program is prepared by the Center for development of the Pelagonia planning region in close cooperation with the Ministry for Local Self Governance with the support of GIZ, The German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation and the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC). The program has been adopted and the responsibility for its implementation within the four year period is shared by the Municipality and the local Non-Governmental Organisations with expected financial support by different sources (Government and Donor).
- The second strategic goal is devoted on tourism development of the region as a competitive tourist destination (CDPPR, 2014b) and focuses on sustainable tourism development. It plans to achieve this by improving the tourism offer of the region, and in particular for the WPA:
 - o Improved categorization and standardization of the tourism offer in the region;
 - o Investments in the infrastructure related to tourism;
 - o Strengthening of the institutional structures for support and development of tourism in the region;
 - o Development and promotion of a regional offer on adventure tourism;
 - o Internationalization of the regional tourism product through promotion and networking;
 - o Investment in the development of the human capacity for tourism.
- **MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GALICICA NATIONAL PARK for 2010-2020**. The plan sets out the vision; goals; planned activities; zoning; the activities in each zone; as well as the development and protection activities needed to be carried out. The Plan lays the foundations for sustainable and eco-tourism in the vision for the Park, where it says: "We, the visitors, care for the Park and enjoy its abundant natural and cultural wealth. Along with our presence on the shoreline, a large number of us are within, where we can find riches of inspiration, unforgettable experiences and recreation in natural, non-urbanized ambiance. The immediate contact with nature arouses a great interest in us to support nature protection. For our activities, we prefer to use modest infrastructure in order to avoid significant distur-

bances of the environment." (PIGNP, 2010, p.200) In its mission, it is pinpointed the role of the PIGNP's management to provide visitors' support and environmental education (PIGNP, 2010) which is the program two on "Tourism and Environmental Education". The PIGNP's management plans to develop a "comprehensive network of adequate and marked paths" (PIGNP, 2010, p.206); appropriate visitor's infrastructure; provide visitor's activities in the park that are not causing significant disturbances to nature. The Plan also foresees support for the local communities in the direction of changing the practices of local people in exploitation of nature to move to sustainable tourism, thus increasing the revenues of local communities (PIGNP, 2010).

The plan foresees the following activities related to tourism:

- Establishment and maintenance of a system of marked and arranged walking trails of different difficulty degrees (physical effort), bringing together natural, historical and archaeological values of the Park and offering amenities;
- Establishment and maintenance of a system of marked and arranged biking trails of different difficulty degrees (physical effort);
- Establishment and maintenance of a system of dirt roads intended for motor vehicles (off-road automobiles and motorcycles);
- Design and maintenance of wild animals observation decks in various ecosystems (aquatic, forests, alpine);
- Construction and maintenance of mountain huts and shelters;
- Construction and maintenance of arranged camping sites in the wilderness;
- Design and maintenance of rock climbing and paragliding sites;
- Design and maintenance of picnic sites;
- Design and maintenance of view points;
- Promotion and organization of the traditional excursion Dva Javori – Ohrid;
- Promotion and organization of the traditional mountain biking crosscountry race (Ohrid Visitor Centre – Dva Yavori and back);
- Promotion and organization of a national / international paragliding competition (multiple disciplines);
- Promotion and organization of national / international rock climbing competition Organization of a hiker / paraglider / alpinist search and rescue drill;
- Development and maintenance of a system of training and system of hiring licensed tourist guides in the Park;
- Development and maintenance of a booking system for stays in the mountain hut Sharboica and the camping sites in the wild;
- Development and implementation of a system of boat tours on Sveti Naum springs and to the island Golem Grad;
- Development and implementation of a bird and largemammal watching program;
- Establishment of a visitor surveillance system in the Park;
- Development of visitor management plans at the Park's popular destinations;
- Construction, furnishing and management of visitor centres in Ohrid and Carina;
- Construction, furnishing and management of information points at Derven, Sveti Naum and Korita;
- Design and maintenance of walking trails for environmental education in Peshtani, Sveti Naum and in the vicinity of Prespa Visitor Center;
- Promotion of the arboretum and the small botanical garden at Ohrid Visitor Centre for educational purposes;

- Publishing environmental education materials for particular target groups;
- Promotion of cultural and historical heritage in the Park;
- Informing multiple target groups on the Park zones (permitted and banned activities);
- Informing the visitors on the infrastructure and PINPG services;
- Preparation and distribution of information materials on popular sites in the Park;
- Organization of regular environmental education programs for visiting school children groups;
- Organization of a traditional spring solid waste disposal campaign;
- Marking the International Day of European Parks;
- Marking the Park Proclamation Day – October 25;
- Organization of “an open day” at Visitor Centres;
- Organization of summer youth research camps;
- Promotion of the infrastructure and services in the Park intended for the visitors (through the implementation of relevant activities under GOV and GOVI);
- Implementation of a small grants program for local communities in the Park, through the Environment Forum;
- Technical support provision for sustainable tourism capacity development in the local communities;
- Support for the development of organic production of mountain herbal tea rosehip and juniper berries in the Park (cultivated and growing wild);
- Support for the development of organic livestock production;
- Support for the development and manufacturing of souvenirs related to the Park and its natural values;
- Support for the development of associations of local organic and traditional food and souvenir producers;
- Support for local products branding and direct marketing;
- Conducting studies and scientific research to identify the effects of tourist activities in the Park;
- Establishment of an integrated data collection and analysis system concerning the effects of tourist activities in the Park;
- Preparation of an Annual Report concerning the effects of tourist activities in the Park;
- Informing the local population on a regular basis, regarding the financial effects of tourist activities in the Park;
- Review and regular update of the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism within National Park Galicica, through participation of the local communities and other key stakeholders;

The Plan also includes a Strategy for developing sustainable tourism in PIGNP 2009 – 2013 (Haeusler, 2010) to serve as a guide to all interested parties. However this strategy is outdated and needs updating.

The Plan also includes a Solid Waste Management Plan for National Park Galicica 2009 – 2014, placing waste management as an integral part of the management of the Park, however this outdated and needs updating.

- **MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GALICICA NATIONAL PARK for 2010-2020, AMENDMENTS 2015**, prepared by Citrus Partners LLP and PIGNP in 2015. This procedure for amending the MP has been suspended by the Government under the wide public criticism and local nature conservation experts continuous efforts. This particular plan portrays the pressure of the stakeholders for rapid development activities in the park (Citrus Partners LLP and PIGNP, 2015), mainly the government. Therefore it sets focus on a tourism

development activity of constructing a ski centre on the slopes of Mountain Galicica, in PIGNP, and establishment of Tourism Development Zones inside the Park. The activities foreseen with these amendments some are in strictly protected zones of the Park or the Zone for Active Management where such development is not foreseen, therefore the numerous amendments as to enable the foreseen construction activities. (Citrus Partners LLP and PIGNP, 2015)

- **MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PELISTER NATIONAL PARK** for 2006 - 2016 sets the management direction for the management of nature protection, tourism and sustainable use (PIPNP, 2006), though outdated, it is soon to be replaced with a new Plan, developed with support from PONT (PONT, 2018a). The plan lays out the vision of the park in relation to visitors: "For the visitors it is a place which continues to inspire a sense of wonder and a feeling of freedom with ample opportunities for recreation in natural and undeveloped setting. In order to provide for pleasant enjoyment and to protect the Park visitor numbers do not exceed the carrying capacity of the Park and they respect the natural values of the area. Visitors have a range of opportunities to appreciate and understand the Park, including its cultural and historical values. There are simple visitor facilities necessary to support visitors and their stay in the Park." (PIPNP, 2006, p.41). Two tourism zones are identified in the Park in the zone for sustainable use: 1. Recreation zone - Golema Livada as an "area designated for intensive recreation activities and large number of visitors supported by highly developed infrastructure" (PIPNP, 2006, p.53) and 2. Zone of protection and recreation - Nize Pole. Above village of Capari, Turkish Fountain and zone Malovishta as "extensive natural area allowing for a significant level of recreation activities and a large number of visitors without significant impacts upon the values" (PIPNP, 2006, p.53). The plan as well foresees development of infrastructure for visitors, development of hiking and biking trails, maintenance of existing trails, and develop trails that connect the villages around the Park, and a zone for urban development at Golema Livada. It also foresees the setting into operation a visitor's centre and development of an information, interpretation and education programme (PIPNP, 2006).
- **LAKE PRESPA MONUMENT OF NATURE MANAGEMENT PLAN** (2018-2028) is a comprehensive document that is still in draft and not yet adopted and therefore not mentioned in the above chapter on Priorities for Action. However, here we provide an overview on the main vision, objectives and activities and measures envisaged in this document.
- **MANAGEMENT VISION** - To stop the unfavorable anthropogenic processes that impact the hydrological changes and the authentic landscape of Lake Prespa, which is closely linked to the interests of the local population, whose priority would be preservation of natural and cultural values of the area and its protection.

Relevant management objectives:

- * To educate the local population, particularly young people, about all types of protection of the environment, educate the local population about rural tourism.
- * To identify locations, accommodation facilities, conditions for visual adaptation of tourist facilities when designing plans for development of the area, identify target groups, establish cooperation with tourist organizations and align the offer with the promotion.

4.4.6 Tourism and Recreation

4.4.6.1 Cooperation with the Tourism Sector

Objective: Identifying sites, accommodation facilities of the tourist facilities, conditions for the visual adaptation of the tourist facilities, identifying target groups of tourists, cooperating with the tourist organizations and coordinating the activities of offer and promotion.

Measures:

- * Preparing a study of the accommodation facilities of the lake and the coast for tourist purposes and target groups of visitors;
- * Establishing cooperation with the persons preparing the detailed plans of the tourist sites;
- * Establishing cooperation with tourist organizations;
- * Introducing contents that are important for the protection of the natural resources against the impact of the visitors (waste collection, resorts equipped with the necessary facilities, placement of sufficient number of ecological toilet cubicles);
- * Establishing the conditions in the sightseeing areas (roads, government and aid funds) and the requirements for various recreational activities (walking, running, cycling, horseback riding, swimming, sailing);
- * Encouraging the improvement of the quality of the accommodation facilities and catering services in the surrounding settlements;
- * Building an information and management station at one of the entrances of the protected area;
- * Providing assistance in programs for development of complementary tourist offer in the border area (theme parks, gastronomy).

Indicators: Increase in the number of accommodation facilities in the marginal settlements, increase in the number of visitors

4.4.6.2 Cooperation with the Local Sports Associations

Objective: Establishing cooperation in planning, education and training where the sports associations/organizations will be involved in the activities of the protected area management unit.

Measures:

- * Cooperating and participating in the performance of the control and monitoring over sport fishing and hunting activities;
- * Establishing regular communication and exchange of information with the sport fishing and hunting clubs, particularly with the competent inspection bodies;
- * Initiating common activities in the promotion and attraction of sport fishermen from the region to the lake area (actions, manifestations, competitions);
- * Conducting training for the fishermen and the members of the local sport fishing organizations;
- * Initiating new sports associations (rowing, extreme sports), conducting trainings.

Indicators: The area is used in accordance with the priority of protecting the natural values of the area in a sustainable manner according to the persons controlling the area, the game population is stabilized at an optimal level, the increase in the number of sales of fishing licenses, the ichthyo production of quality autochthonous species of fish is increased, the number of hunting licenses, the introduction and growth of the number of extreme sports licenses.

Annex III: Final Workshop

The final consultation workshop to the Assessment of challenges and opportunities for Sustainable Tourism in the Wider Prespa Area in Albania and North Macedonia, was held on the 20 June 2019 in the premises of the Monitoring Station in village Stenje, North Macedonia.

On the workshop there were 21 people present from both Albania and North Macedonia, but also guests from Greece. There were stakeholders from the public sector - Resen Municipality and Pustec Municipality, representatives from local CSOs, representatives from the donor community, representatives from farmers, and representatives from the academic sector.

During the workshop the final draft of the report was briefly presented, since the full text had been distributed beforehand with the invitations. Discussions on the various sections of the report were opened and several key points were noted:

On Sustainable Tourism governance:

- Need to provide actual matching funds when developing strategic action plans.
- Need for practical involvement of stakeholders (municipalities, local people, and their initiatives) in Sustainable Tourism through piloting projects that will drive the development.
- UNOP project on Prespa Lakes Basin is a good model (though in relation to agriculture).
- MP of PNP has ecotourism measures, but promotion needs improvement and to be connected with the offers in Korca Municipality.
- There is a need for a strategy of tourism on regional and municipal level in Albania.
- Need to harmonize MPs and policies, both vertically and cross border.
- The term nature tourism is preferred over ecotourism.
- Need for a decision and management on the type of activities and the type of tourists.
- Need for a vision on tourism.
- Need for coordination of stakeholders, and cross border coordination.
- The roles of the stakeholders should be related to their capacities.
- There is a need for an analysis on the institutional setup for governance.
- Sustainability concept is also not clear in Albania.
- Need for involvement of students and volunteers to improve monitoring of tourists and to do academic thesis.
- There is no harvesting of forests in PNP.
- Need for education where the fee for entrance to the PAs goes to.

On resources for Sustainable Tourism:

- Need to re-involve the people originating from the region that went away.
- Communication with the visitors should be done in functional visitors' centre and there should be monitoring of visitors.
- Student education visits should be done in modern, interactive centre.

- Property rights are an issue for old houses.
- Sustainable tourism development is improvement of local people's lives.

On Sustainable Tourism services:

- Need for cross-border activities.
- There should be study tours in PAs.
- The community to be better connected to offer better mix of services (Accommodation, food, transport, etc.).
- Need of improving the public transport.
- Need to use what we have: traditional and local.
- Need for coordination and organization of the offer.
- Need for diversification: to identify families that can offer experiences of local practices.
- Need to define specific WPA activities.

On promotion and marketing of Sustainable Tourism:

- Information and promotion to the many hidden natural attractions.
- Local authorities to do marketing and to provide support to locals for marketing.



*Final workshop on presentation of draft report
Stenje, North Macedonia 8 April 2019. Photo: Anela Stavrevska - Panajotova*

List of participants

Name	Country	Institution / NGO
Xheni Prenda	Albania	GFA
Maja Kotevska	North Macedonia	Resen Municipality
Dejan Dodevski	North Macedonia	Bitola Municipality
Nikola Zdraveski	North Macedonia	UNDP
Ajman Almalla	North Macedonia	Resen Municipality
Cveta Trajce	Albania	PPNEA
Valentina Vurmo	Albania	Prespa marketing
Violeta Prculovska	North Macedonia	Spirit of Prespa
Erjola Isa	Albania	DMO
Mirjam de Koning	Albania	PONT
Oliver Avramoski	North Macedonia	PONT
Albana Cule	Albania	CNVP
Daniela Zaec	North Macedonia	MES
Lazjon Petri	Albania	Tour guide / Freelance
Ronny Dobbelstey	Albania	PONT
Frose Gjorgievska	North Macedonia	Society of fruit growers – Blagoj A.Kotlarovski
Endri Haxhiraj	Albania	Institute for Environmental Policy
Brunilda Bashllari	Albania	ESDA Organization
Gjergji Gjinko	Albania	KORSA
Anela Stavrevska	North Macedonia	CNVP
Bojan Rantasa	North Macedonia	Consultant

Annex IV: Database of key stakeholders

Albania

Name Surname	Institution represent	Function	Telephone Number	e-mail
Vasil Jankulla	FUA Pustec AU	Chairman	0682560840	vasiljankulla@gmail.com
Jani Nikolla	Prespa Marketing Organisation	Chairman	0685157057	jani1@abv.bg
Valentina Vurmo	Prespa Marketing Organisation	Border member / Secretar	0684659694	vurmovala@gmail.com
Enver Hoxha	Private Sector	Beekeeper		
Erjola Isa	Destination Management Organization	Coordinator	0695479245	isa.erjola@gmail.com
Brunilda Bashllari	ESDA Organization	Executive Director	0692189888	brunabashllari@gmail.com
Nevila Popa	Freelance consultant	tourism consultant	0672077635	nevilapopa@gmail.com
Ardita Mici	University F.S. Noli Korce	Proffesor	0673067163	ardianamici@yahoo.com
Cveta Trajce	PPNEA	Local Point	0684592746	c.trajce@ppnea.org
Mihallaq Apostollovski	DIELLI Association	Chairman	0689079065	sunofliqenas@yahoo.com
Stilian Andon	Miqte e Presper Association	Chairman	06839662357	
Dorjana Bregu	Tourism Info center	Specialist	0696225932	bregu.dorjana@yahoo.com
Aida Kristo	Tourism Director, Korca Municipality	Director	0694709337	aidashkodrani@gmail.com
Ada Elezi	AIDA specialist	Specialist		ada.elezi@aida.gov.al
Anxhela Taho	Regional Professional training Center	Director	0692187967	
Lazjon Petri	Free lance	Tourist Guide, Prespa area	0695787684	lazjon.petri@gmail.com
Mamica Nene	Korca University	Professor at Tourism Marketing	0697762266	mamicanene@yahoo.com
	Albanian National Tourism Agency		355 4 2273778	info@akt.gov.al
Blendi Klosi	Ministry for Environment and Tourism	Minister		

	National Agency of Protected Areas		355 4 222 50 68	info@akzm.gov.al
	Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania		355 42231437	info@inca-al.org
Mihallaq Qirjo	R.A.P.A	Director	0682603689	mqirjo_1@hotmail.com
Vasil Male	Prespa National Park	Manager	0685585334	vasilmale@gmail.com
Andon Jani	Pustec Municipality	Vice chairman	0693142062	andon1983@gmail.com
Edmond Themelko	Pustec Municipality	Chairman		
Ruzhdi Hymetllari	FUAs Federation Korca Region	Chairman	0699764032	pylliblerte@hotmail.com
Constanze Shcaaft	Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa	National Coordinator	0685619720	constanze.schaaft@gfa-group.de
Spase Shumka	Agriculture University Tirana	Professor	+355 68 2351130	sprespa@gmail.com
Spase Vurmo	Pustec Municipality	Agronom	0684475374	

North Macedonia

Name Surname	Institution represent	Function	Telephone Number	e-mail
Vlatko Trpeski	MOEPP	Department of Nature	00389 (0)76 404 395	v.trpeski@moepp.gov.mk
Sasko Jordanov	MOEPP	Head of Unit for Natural Heritage Conservation and Natura 2000	076 445 883	s.jordanov@moepp.gov.mk
Daniela Kamcheva	MOEPP	Junior Associate for keeping records of biodiversity		d.kamceva@moepp.gov.mk
Smiljka Taneva	MOEPP	Department of Nature	00389 (0)76 455 418	smiljkataneva@yahoo.com
Amet Haxhiu	NP Pelister	Director	00389 (0)78 401 977	amet.axhiu@yahoo.com; np.pelister@yahoo.com
Pece Cvetanovski	NP Pelister		071 348039	p_cecvet@yahoo.com/ np.pelister@yahoo.com
Bekim Haxhiu	Ministry of Economy	Head of Sector for Tourism	00389 2 3093-540	bekim.hadziu@economy.gov.mk
Nikola Stankovski	PE National Forests	Head of Prespadrvo Unit, Resen	078 303781	stankovski19@gmail.com
Andon Bojadzi	PE NP Galicica	Head of Sector for Nature Protection	075 282200	

Ognen Dostinovski	PE NP Galicica	Head of Sector for Tourism	075 282206	
Ljubo Atanasovski	Bitola Municipality	Department of Local Economic Development		
Zivko Gosharevski	Municipality of Resen	Mayor	00389 (0)47 551 770	kabinet.gradonacalnik@resen.gov.mk
Ajman Al Malla	Resen Municipality	Head of Environment Sector	047/551-490	ajman.almalla@resen.gov.mk
Krste Micalovski	Resen Municipality	Head of Local Economic Development Sector	047/551-901	krste.micalovski@resen.gov.mk
Zivko Gosarevski	Municipality of Ohrid	Mayor	00389 (0)46 262 492	gradonacalnik@ohrid.gov.mk
Goran Mickoski	Ohrid Municipality	Tourism and Local Economic Development Sector	389 72 524642	goran.mickoski@ohrid.gov.mk
Nektarij	Orthodox Christian Church	Head of St Nahum Monastery, Ohrid	070 236222	
Zoran Nikolovski	Agency for promotion and support of tourism	Head of Tourism Support	075 226307	zoran.nikolovski@tourismmacedonia.gov.mk
Kristijan Kjulovski	Prespa Bike, Resen	member	078 254443	
Jovan Jovanoski	Eko Drom, Ohrid	member	389 71 352432	jovanohtm@gmail.com
Dimce Popov	PSK Pelister, Bitola	president		dimcepov@yahoo.com
Jonce Ilievski	PSK Dimitar Ilievski Murato, Bitola	president	389 78 232 132	psk.dimitarilievski.murato@gmail.com
Stevan Joseski	PSPK 7 maj, Bitola	president	070 395 892	pspk.7maj.bitola@gmail.com
Gogo Vidimce	Pelagonia Planning Region, Bitola	Director	389 47 232 800	director@pelagonijaregion.mk
Antonio Dodevski	Crven Krst, Ohrid	Head of Rescue Service	071 342248	info.dode@gmail.com
Petar Nolev	Mountain Solution, Bitola	Owner	00389 75 458 782	pnolev@gmail.com
Aleksandar Jovanoski	EDEN Tourism Cluster of SW Macedonia, Ohrid	Project Manager		
Petar Andonov	Hotel Molika, Bitola	Manager	00389(0) 70 547 281	molika@t-home.mk
	Villa Raskrsnica, Brajcino		075 796 796	
	Villa Kostovski, Brajcino		070 507 367	
	Villa Livae, Brajcino		071 339 942	

	Villa Stara Cesma, Ljubojno		070 822 642	
	Beach Bar Markova Noga, Dolno Dupeni		070 525 440	
	Camping Krani, Krani			
	Hotel MVR, Krani			
	Etno Village, Arvati			
	Camping Coca, Slivnica		075 408 296	
	Beach Bar Connect, Slivnica		077 994 635	
	Youth Hostel, Pretor			
	Hotel Martin, Pretor			
	Hotel Pretor, Pretor		075 560 978	
	Restaurant Galaxy, Pretor		070 482 105	
	Restaurant Carnelian, Pretor		078 296 116	
	Pizza Bar, Pretor		071 225 073	
	Villa Kirjana, Pretor		071 307 301	
	Sunset Club Restaurant, Pretor		047 551 051	
	2Proper&More Pizza Bar Restaurant, Pretor		071 225 073	
	Bungalovi J.P. Vodovod Skopje, Pretor			
	Relax Beach Resort		075 421 262	
Jone Eftimovski	Ethno Museum, Pod- mocani		075 261 515	
	Motel "Majska Rosa", Resen		078 848 981	
	Hotel Dior, Resen			
	Hotel Holidej, Resen			

	Restaurant Vito, Resen			
	Restaurant Gerdan, Resen		047 525 359	
	Royal L Hotel, Carev Dvor		047 488 500	
	Restaurant Klarite, Gorno Perovo			
	Lakeview Hotel & Resort, Otesevo		047 551 195	
	Oteshevo Camping		070 207 259	
	B&B Sonceev Raj, Stenje			
	Restaurant Mali Raj, Stenje		075 356 833	
	Hotel Riva, Stenje		071 381 040	
	Beach Summer Club Bar Delirium, Stenje			
	Hotel Rot, Konjsko		075 240 691	
	Mountain Hut Golemo Ezero, Bitola			
	Mountain hut Neolica, Bitola			
	Villa Minami, Gorno Konjsko		076 900 007	
	Terasa Utarna, Gorno Konjsko		076 621 843	
	Campgrounds Gradishte, Pestani			
	Beach Orevche, Pestani		077 763 516	
	Restaurant Bane 2, Pestani		075 295 619	
	Bay of Bones Museum, Pestani			
	Vila Tino, Trpejca			
	Under the Shade of the Willows Apartments, Trpejca		072 523 391	
	Villa Bube, Trpejca		078 313 570	

	Trpejca Terrace Mermaide, Trpejca			
	Restoran UNO, Trpejca			
	Terasa Sirena, Trpejca			
	Ribar Restaurant, Trpejca			
	Villa Mrestilishte, Trpejca			
	Taverna Mrestilishte, Trpejca			
	Apartments Kostoski, Trpejca		075 334 011	
	Philip Apartmany, Trpejca			
	Villa Elena, Trpejca			
	Rooms And Apartaments De Niro, Trpejca			
	House Geros, Trpejca			
	Klimoski Apartments, Trpejca		077 600 800	
	Villa Trpe, Trpejca			
	Elite House Trpejca		075 932 009	
	Apartments Joco		078 600 594	
	Bluebay Guest House			
	Grebnos RV Park / Camping, Trpejca		071 387 241	
	Restaurant Ostrovo, Ljubanista		046 283 090	
	Restaurant Sveti Naum, Ljubaniste		071 285 994	
	Hotel Sveti Naum, Ljubaniste			
Lasko Micalevski	Hotel Kitka, Resen			
	Lale Tours, Ohrid			

Ivana	Free Pass, Ohrid		389 71 906616	
Ivan Cekic	JJ Travel, Ohrid	tourist guide	077 605095	ivan.cekic@gmail.com
	Kompas Travel, Ohrid			
Rubin Nikolovski	Tourism Macedonia	tourist guide	075 322323	rubinnikoloski@hotmail.com
Anica Palazzo	GIZ, Ohrid	coordinator		anica.palazzo@giz.de
Frosina Pandurska Dramakinin	MES, Skopje	Project coordinator		
Ana Colakovic	EcoSense, Skopje	Director		ana@bankwatch.org
Dragi Pop-Stojanov	BFSO, Skopje	Executive Director		bfso@t-home.mk
	SDC, Skopje			
Zlatko Samardziev	GEF, Skopje			
Mirjana Makedonska	Palladium, Skopje	Chief of party		
	USAID, Skopje			
Anela Panajotova	CNVP, Skopje	Director		
Metodija Szdov	UNDP, Skopje	Program coordinator	070 383840	
Elena Ivanovska	Swiss Contact, Skopje	Program coordinator		
Cvetko Andreeski	Faculty for tourism, Ohrid	dean		
Cliff Hammer	Swiss Embassy, Skopje	Program coordinator		
Frosina Gorgievska	Society of fruit growers – Blagoj A.Kotlarovski		071 811828	fgorgievska@gmail.com
Goran Milanoski	AK Patagonija, Ohrid	member	075 931362	goran.milanoski@hotmail.com
Ilina Arsova	Zs Adventure	member	070 377826	inence@gmail.com
Gorki Balojani	Balojani Tours	owner	075 207273	gorkibalojani@hotmail.com
Jonce Gagovski	Society for Sustainable Development, Brajcino	president	00389 47 482 405	

Toni Kotevski	Ekstrim Bajk, Bitola	president		
	Prespaturist, Resen			
Ana Labor	Spirit of Prespa			
Endri Haxhiraj	Institute for Environmental Policy			

REFERENCES

1. AEWAs (Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds), n.d. AEWAs Range States in Europe. [online] Available at: https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/parties-per-region/238?title_field_value=&field_country_status_tid=All [Accessed 13 May 2019].
2. Agreement Between The Council Of Ministers Of The Republic Of Albania And The Government Of The Republic Of North Macedonia For The Protection And Sustainable Development Of Lake Ohrid And Its Watershed, 2004. Skopje, North Macedonia. 17 June 2004: Government of Albania, Government of North Macedonia. [online] Available at: http://www.cawater-info.net/bk/water_law/pdf/albania-makedonia_2004.pdf [Accessed 5 June 2019].
3. AKZM (National Agency of Protected Areas), n.d. Projects. [Online] Available at: <http://www.akzm.gov.al/us/activities/projects/item/227-projects> [Accessed 26 April 2019].
4. Albanian Newsroom, 2014. Strategy for the Development of Tourism 2014-2020, the model that will be used in Albania. [online] 15 May. Available at: <https://balkaneu.com/strategy-development-tourism-2014-2020-model-albania/> [Accessed 15 May 2019]
5. APST (Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism of the Republic of North Macedonia), n.d. Консолидиран правилник за начинот, видот и висината на субвенциите. [online] Available at: <http://tourismmacedonia.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Konsolidiran-pravilnik-1.pdf> [Accessed 29 April 2019].
6. ATA (Albanian Telegraph Agency), 2017. Nature, Legends, and Traditions Attracted 80,000 Tourists to Prespa. [online] 18 December. Available at: <https://invest-in-albania.org/nature-legends-traditions-attracted-80000-tourists-prespa/> [Accessed 4 June 2019].
7. Becherel, L., 2009. TOURISM MARKETING AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE KORCA REGION. Final Report. Korca: Korca Regional Council.
8. Carana, nd. Macedonia Small Business Expansion Project (SBEP). [online] Available at: <http://www.carana.com/projects/regions/projects-by-region-europe-and-eurasia/801> [Accessed 18 March 2019].
9. Carana, 2015. Bike tours in Macedonia receive international attention. [online] Available at: <http://www.carana.com/about-us/news-archives-all/987-bike-tour-macedonia> [Accessed 18 March 2019].
10. CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity), n.d. Albania - Country Profile. [online] Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/countries/default.shtml?country=al> [Accessed 20 March 2019].
11. CDPPR (Center for Development of the Pelagonia Planning Region), 2014a. Проекти ЦРППР 2010-2013. [online] 3 February. Available at: https://issuu.com/pelagonija/docs/katalog_pelagonija_final-web [Accessed 15 May 2019].
12. CDPPR (Center for Development of the Pelagonia Planning Region), 2014b. Програма за развој на Пелагониски плански регион 2015-2019. [online] Available at: <http://pelagonijaregion.mk/programa-za-razvoj-na-pelagoniskiot-region-2015-2019/> [Accessed 15 May 2019].
13. Citrus Partners LLP and PIGNP (Public Institution Galicica National Park), 2015. План за управување со Национален Парк Галичица за периодот 2011-2020: Измени 2015 - Предлог. Ohrid: PIGNP.

14. CMS (Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals), n.d. Parties and Range States. [online] Available at: <https://www.cms.int/en/parties-range-states> [Accessed 13 May 2019].
15. COE (Council of Europe), n.d.a. Details of Treaty No.066. [online] Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/066> [Accessed 13 May 2019].
16. COE (Council of Europe), n.d.b. Details of Treaty No.121. [online] Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/121> [Accessed 13 May 2019].
17. COE (Council of Europe), n.d.c. Details of Treaty No.143. [online] Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/143> [Accessed 13 May 2019].
18. COE (Council of Europe), 2019a. Chart of signatures and ratifications of Treaty 121. [online] Last updated 13 May 2019. Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/121/signatures?p_auth=IAJzipOQ [Accessed 13 May 2019].
19. COE (Council of Europe), 2019b. Chart of signatures and ratifications of Treaty 143. [online] Last updated 13 May 2019. Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/143/signatures?p_auth=GOTg3NeG [Accessed 13 May 2019].
20. COE (Council of Europe), 2019c. Treaty list for a specific State: Albania. [online] Last updated 13 May 2019. Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/country/ALB?p_auth=GOTg3NeG [Accessed 13 May 2019].
21. Declaration On The Creation Of The Prespa Park And The Environmental Protection And Sustainable Development Of The Prespa Lakes And Their Surroundings 2000. Aghios Germanos: Government of Republic of Albania, Government of Republic of Greece, and Government of Republic of North Macedonia. [online] Available at: http://www.spp.gr/declaration_en.pdf [Accessed 16 March 2019]
22. Deloitte, 2015. Legal News. September 2015. Tirana: Deloitte Albania sh.p.k
23. Directorate of Democratic Participation and Roekaerts, M., 2018. Updated List Of Officially Nominated Candidate Emerald Sites. 38th meeting to the Standing Committee of the Convention On The Conservation Of European Wildlife And Natural Habitats. Strasbourg, France, 27-30 November 2018. [online] Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/updated-list-of-officially-nominated-candidate-emerald-sites-november-/16808f184c> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
24. EC (European Commission), n.d. EU Ecolabel for Tourist Accommodations. [online] Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/documents/hotels.pdf> [Accessed 5 June 2019].
25. EC (European Commission), 2017. Instrument For Pre-accession Assistance (Ipa II) 2014-2020. Albania: EU support to a tourism-led model for Local Economic Development. [online] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/ipa_2017_040210_01_eu_support_to_a_tourism-led_model_for_local_economic_development_.pdf [Accessed 14 May 2019].
26. Eco-Sense, n.d. Eco Adventures Map [map] Skopje: Eco-Sense.
27. Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, 2018. What is the Forest Dialogue? [Online] 6 June. Available at: <https://www.bmnt.gv.at/english/forestry/AustrianForestDialogue/Forestdialogue.html> [Accessed 4 June 2019].
28. GWP-Med (Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean), 2016. The GEF Drin Project. [online] Available at: http://drincorda.iwlearn.org/gef-supported-drin-project/03-gef-project-supported-drin-project#_ftn1 [Accessed 20 July 2019].
29. Gentle, S., n.d. Lake Ohrid Region: Begin Your Journey. [online] Available at: https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/ohrid_brochure_eng_final_web.pdf [Accessed 10 June 2019]

30. Grazhdani, D., 2010. Current Status of Tourism and its Opportunities for Ecotourism Development in the Lakes Prespa Region. In: BALWOIS 2010. Ohrid, Republic of North Macedonia, 25 - 29 May 2010. [online] Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238741885_Current_Status_of_Tourism_and_its_Opportunities_for_Ecotourism_Development_in_the_Lakes_Prespa_Region?enrichId=rgreq-03fa816ceb01e08b95c-c3a393cf89395-XXX&enrichSource=Y292ZXJQYWdlOzIzODcoMTg4NTtBUzoyMTIzMDAx-NTkwMzMzNDdAMTQyNzYyNzcwMDUwMQ%3D%3D&el=1_x_2&_esc=publicationCoverPdf [Accessed 11 June 2019].
31. Haeusler, N., 2010. Management Plan For National Park Galicica 2010-2020, Draft. Volume III. Strategies: Strategy Paper for Sustainable Tourism Development at National Park Galicica. Ohrid: PIGNP.
32. Hawkings, D.E. and Nikolova, M., 2005. Knowledge Applications for Competitive Destinations: A Visitor Experience Value Chain Approach. In: WTO (World Tourism Organisation) Education Council Conference, XVI General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization. Dakar, Senegal. 1 December 2005. Madrid: World Tourism Organization.
33. Horwath HTL, 2013. MARKET STUDY: Development and Construction of a Ski Center in the Galičica National Park. Skopje: MEPSO.
34. IMBA (International Mountain Biking Association), 2019. Take Care Of Your Trail. [online] Available at: <https://www.takecareofyourtrails.com/> [Accessed 4 June 2019].
35. INCA (Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania), n.d. Legal expertise for the regulation and organization of the Prespa National Park administration. Project document. [online] Available at: https://www.inca-al.org/en/projects/projects/item/download/56_5c1292f24fdc97fc8bf13cc9b1401612 [Accessed 26 April 2019].
36. INCA (Institute for Nature Conservation in Albania), 2018. Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa TERMS OF REFERENCE Administrative Assistant / Translator. [online] 8 May Available at: www.inca-al.org/en/about-inca/item/656-vacancy-announcement [Accessed 26 April 2019].
37. IPPM (Institute for Public Policy and Good Governance), 2016. Strategy for the development of tourism in Albania for the period 2017-2022. [online] Last updated 19 October 2016. Available at: <http://www.ippm.al/2016/10/19/strategy-for-the-development-of-tourism-in-albania-for-the-period-2017-2022/> [Accessed 15 May 2015].
38. JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), n.d.a. Tourism Promotion Advisor. In: Activities in Republic of North Macedonia. [online] Available at: https://www.jica.go.jp/north_macedonia/english/activities/activity06.html [Accessed 29 April 2019].
39. JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), n.d.b. Tourism Promotion Advisor. In: Activities in Albania. [online] Available at: <https://www.jica.go.jp/albania/english/activities/activity05.html> [Accessed 29 April 2019].
40. Jovanovic, V., Tanevska, Lj. and Kondura, E., eds., 2014a. Region Prespa. Skopje: SWG. [online] Available at: http://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/1.-General-brochure_Prespa.pdf [Accessed 23 July 2019].
41. Jovanovic, V., Tanevska, Lj. and Kondura, E., eds., 2014b. Gastronomy - Tastes of the Prespa Region. Skopje: SWG. [online] Available at: http://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/2.-Gastronomy_Prespa.pdf [Accessed 23 July 2019].
42. Jovanovic, V., Tanevska, Lj. and Kondura, E., eds., 2014c. Accommodation and Restaurants - Where to Stay, Eat and Drink in the Prespa Region. Skopje: SWG. [online] Available at: http://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/3.-Accommodations_Prespa.pdf [Accessed 23 July 2019].

43. Jovanovic, V., Tanevska, Lj. and Kondura, E., eds., 2014d. Attractions - Getting Familiar with the Prespa Region. Skopje: SWG. [online] Available at: http://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/4.-Attractions_Prespa.pdf [Accessed 23 July 2019].
44. Jovanovic, V., Tanevska, Lj. and Kondura, E., eds., 2014e. Routes and Tours - Discovering the Prespa Region. Skopje: SWG. [online] Available at: http://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/5.-Routes-and-Tours_Prespa.pdf [Accessed 23 July 2019].
45. KfW (German Development Bank), 2018. Ex post evaluation – Macedonia and Albania. [online] Available at: https://www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de/PDF/Evaluierung/Ergebnisse-und-Publikationen/PDF-Dokumente-L-P_EN/Mazedonien_Prespa_2018_E.pdf [Accessed 26 April 2019].
46. Kohl and Partner, 2016. Националната стратегија за туризам на Република Македонија. Project: Preparation of a National Strategy for Development of Tourism 2016 - 2021. Skopje: Kohl & Partner. [online] 20 April. Available at: http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/Kohl%20&%20Partner_Tourism%20Strategy%20Macedonia_FINAL%20REPORT_16%2004_MK.pdf [Accessed 29 April 2019].
47. Kunovski, M., 2015. Ресторани, бунгалови и камп приколки за развој на туризмот на Пелистер. Sitel. [online] 27 October. Available at: <https://sitel.com.mk/restorani-bungalovi-i-kamp-prikolki-za-razvoj-na-turizmot-na-pelister> [Accessed 14 February 2019].
48. Leung, Y.F., Spenceley, A., Hvenegaard, G. and Buckley, R., eds., 2018. Tourism and visitor management in protected areas: Guidelines for sustainability. Gland: IUCN [online] Available at: <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/PAG-027-En.pdf> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
49. Ligenas Commune, 2008. Draft Prespa Area Tourism Action Plan.
50. LCRP (Local and Regional Competitiveness Project), n.d.a. Background Information. [online] Available at: <http://lrcp.mk/background-information/> [Accessed 27 April 2019].
51. LCRP (Local and Regional Competitiveness Project), n.d.b. Volume II – Destination Development Plans – Plan No.1: Tourism Development Plan for Ohrid, Struga, Prespa and Surroundings. One of ten Destination Development Plans for North Macedonia. [online] Available at: <http://lrcp.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Destination-1-Ohrid-Struga-Prespa-and-their-surroundings.pdf> [Accessed 27 April 2019].
52. LCRP (Local and Regional Competitiveness Project), n.d.c. Volume II – Destination Development Plans – Plan No.3: Tourism Development Plan for Pelagonija. One of ten Destination Development Plans for (North) Macedonia. [online] Available at: <http://lrcp.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Destination-3-Pelagonija-and-surroundings.pdf> [Accessed 27 April 2019].
53. MERNM (Ministry of Economy of the Republic of North Macedonia), 2019a. Годишен план за јавни набавки за 2019 година на Министерство за економија. [online] Available at: <http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/--%202019.pdf> [Accessed 28 April 2019].
54. MERNM (Ministry of Economy of the Republic of North Macedonia), 2019b. Дополна на податоци во Планот за јавни набавки за 2019 година. [online] Available at: <http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/%20.pdf> [Accessed 28 April 2019].
55. Mettepenningen, E., Messely, L., Schuermans, N., Cappon, R., Vandermeulen, V., Van Huylbroeck, G., Dessen, J., Van Hecke, E., Leinfelder, H., Bourgeois, M., Laurijssen, T., Bryon, J., Lauwers, L., Allaert, G. and Jourez, M., 2011. Multifunctionality And Local Identity As Paradigms For Sustainable And Competitive Agriculture, MUSICAL.[Final report] Science for Sustainable Development: Agro-Food. Brussels: Belgian Science Policy. [online] Available at: <http://planning.ugent.be/medialibrary/purl/nl/8959891/musical-finalreport-2011.pdf> [Accessed 4 June 2019].

56. Muslli, E., 2016. Continuity Of Touristic Development In The Commune Of Pustec. In: European Journal of Business, Economics and Accountancy 4(9). pp.84-90. [online] Available at: <http://www.idpublications.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Full-Paper-CONTINUITY-OF-TOURISTIC-DEVELOPMENT-IN-THE-COMMUNE-OF-PUSTEC.pdf> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
57. Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport, 2007. Sector Strategy On Tourism 2007 – 2013. [online] Available at: https://shtetiweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/strategy_of_tourism_2007_2013.pdf [Accessed 14 May 2019].
58. MOEPP (Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of the Republic of North Macedonia), 2019. Ратификувани конвенции | МЖСПП. [online] Available at: http://www.moep.gov.mk/?page_id=4200 [Accessed 16 March 2019]
59. МТС (Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of North Macedonia), 2016. СЕ УРЕДИ ПЛАЖАТА ВО СЛИВНИЦА, ВО ПРЕСПА. [online] 22 February. Available at: <http://www.mtc.gov.mk/vesti/se-uredi-plazata-vo-slivnica-vo-prespa> [Accessed 14 June 2019].
60. nn, 2009. Под - стратегија за Рурален развој на Општина Ресен 2009 - 2013. [online] Available at: <http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/Pod-strategija%20za%20Rural.Razv.%202009-13Resen.pdf> [Accessed 15 May 2019].
61. nn, 2019. РСС доделува грантови во вредност од 750 илјади евра за развој на туризмот во Западен Балкан. Sitel. [online] 11 June. Available at: <https://sitel.com.mk/rss-dodeluva-grantovi-vo-vrednost-od-750-iljadi-evra-za-razvoj-na-turizmot-vo-zapaden-balkan> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
62. Notarianni, M., 2008. Linking people and culture with nature "Sustainable tourism development as a base for additional income and self-employment for the population in the mountain regions" The village of Brajcino, (Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, Balkan Region, Europe). [online] Available at: <http://ertr.tamu.edu/files/2013/04/Notarianni.pdf> [Accessed 17 February 2019].
63. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1997a. No.49/97. Закон за ратификација на Конвенција за заштита на дивниот растителен и животински свет и природните живеалишта во Европа (Берн).
64. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1997b. No.54/97. Закон за ратификација на Конвенција за биолошка разновидност.
65. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1999a. No.32/99. Закон за ратификација на Договор за заштита на Африканско-Евроазиските миграторни видови водни птици (Хаг).
66. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 1999b. No.38/99. Закон за ратификација на Конвенција за заштита на миграторни видови диви животни (Бон).
67. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2003. No.44/2003. Закон за ратификација на Европската Конвенција за пределот (Фиренца, 2000).
68. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004a. No.63/2004. Закон за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/0DBE-51B8AAD60144B46F27D7463966D4.pdf> [Accessed 2 May 2019].
69. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2004b. No.67/2004. Закон за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/E2B653116A9D-A5439B5A8B715F258DE0.pdf> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
70. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2006. No.14/2006. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at:

<http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ZAKON%20za%20izmenuvanje%20i%20dopolnuvanje%20na%20Zakon%20za%20zastita%20na%20prirodata%20SV%20br.14-2006.pdf> [Accessed 13 June 2019].

71. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2007. No.84/2007. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: <http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ZAKON%20za%20izmenuvanje%20i%20dopolnuvanje%20na%20Zakon%20za%20zastita%20na%20prirodata%20SV%20br.84-2007.pdf> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
72. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2008. No.89/2008. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/66D54974FC284B42899DC44AB50699F2.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019].
73. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2009a. No.2/2009. Правилник за критериумите кои што треба да се исполнат за добивање на еколошка ознака за туристичко сместување. [online] Available at: <http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Pravilnik%20za%20kriteriumite%20koi%20sto%20treba%20da%20se%20ispolnat%20za%20dobivanje%20na%20eko%20oznaka%20za%20turist.%20smestuvanje.pdf> [Accessed 5 June 2019].
74. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2009b. No.12/2009. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/66D54974FC284B42899DC44AB50699F2.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019].
75. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2010a. No.35/2010. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/SV%2035-12.03.2010_Zakon%20za%20izmeuvanje%20i%20dopolnuvanje%20na%20Zakonot%20za%20priroda.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
76. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2010b. No.75/2010. Закон за управување со светското природно и културно наследство во Охридскиот регион.
77. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2011a. No.17/2011. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/BA1B0F4B02F9604CA715E2D0E89DBD3F.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.15-21.
78. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2011b. No.47/2011. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/SV%2047_08.04.2011%20ID_Zakon_za_Zashtita_na_prirodata.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
79. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2011c. No.47/2011. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/69B525F06E82CB4A98C583CCE982CD98.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.104-106.
80. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2011d. No.53/2011. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/AD02C8F55237234E8180E5700F3A27A3.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.35-38.
81. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2011e. No.148/2011. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: <http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/SV%20148.21.10.2011%20>

[%20Zakon%20za%20izmenuvanje%20i%20dopolnuvanje%20prirodata.pdf](#)> [Accessed 13 June 2019].

82. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2012a. No.59/2012. Закон за изменување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/SV%2059_11.05.2012%20ZAKON%20ZA%20DOPOLNUVAWE%20NA%20ZAKONOT%20ZA%20ZASTITA%20NA%20PRIRODATA.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
83. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2012b. No.123/2012. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/A476010CEFB1624BB3E2CCF43B304BA1.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.6-7.
84. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2013a. No.13/2013. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ZAKON%20za%20izmena%20i%20dopolna%20na%20Zakonot%20za%20zastita%20na%20Prirodata_Januari%202013.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
85. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2013b. No.53/2013. Правилник за начинот, видот и висината на субвенциите. [online] Available at: <http://tourismmacedonia.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/-----2014-.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019].
86. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2013c. No.163/2013. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: <http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Zakoni-i-izmena-na-zakoni-SV-163-2013.pdf> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
87. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2013d. No.164/2013. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/376d63d696e446ccaa4cb8b9d112aef3.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.15-16.
88. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2014a. No.27/2014. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/6ed04b3db86643b297d84aa94513d055.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.43-45.
89. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2014b. No.41/2014. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: <http://www.pravo.org.mk/download.php?id=6968> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
90. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2014c. No.147/2014. Правилник за изменување и дополнување на правилник за начинот, видот и висината на субвенциите. [online] Available at: <http://tourismmacedonia.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/-----2014-.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019].
91. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2015a. No.50/2015. Правилник за изменување и дополнување на правилникот за начинот, видот и висината на субвенциите. [online] Available at: <http://tourismmacedonia.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/50-15-Pravilnik-za-dopolnuvanje-na-Pravilnikot-za-nacinotvidot-i-visinata-na-subvenciite.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019].
92. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2015b. No.116/2015. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/6ed04b3db86643b297d84aa94513d055.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.43-453.

93. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2015c. No.146/2015. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: <http://www.pravo.org.mk/download.php?id=7480> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
94. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2015d. No.192/2015. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/6ed04b3db86643b297d84aa94513d055.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.43-45.
95. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2016a. No.32/2016. Правилник за изменување и дополнување на правилникот за начинот, видот и висината на субвенциите. [online] Available at: <http://tourismmacedonia.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/-----2016--.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019].
96. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2016b. No.39/2016. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: <http://www.pravo.org.mk/download.php?id=8021> [Accessed 13 June 2019].
97. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2016c. No.53/2016. Закон за изменување и дополнување на Законот за туристичка дејност. [online] Available at: <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/aage244ea1c142f1b6e8d3acde0825e2.pdf> [Accessed 20 July 2019]. pp.20-22.
98. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2016d. No.63/2016. Закон за изменување на Законот за заштита на природата. [online] Available at: http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Zakon-za-izmenuvanje-na-Zakonot-za-zastita-na-prirodата-SV_63_2016.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
99. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2019a. No.15/2019. Програма за поддршка на домашен туризам за работници со ниски приходи. [online] Available at: <http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%2019.pdf> [Accessed 28 April 2019].
100. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2019b. No.16/2019. Програма за развој на туризмот за 2019 година. [online] Available at: <http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/%20%20%20%20%20%202019%20.pdf> [Accessed 28 April 2019].
101. Official Journal of the European Union, 2011. L258. Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area. [online] Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/downloadFile.do?fullText=yes&treatyTransId=14802> [Accessed 16 March 2019] p.2-8.
102. Official Journal or the Official Announcement Bulletin, 2015. No. 164, 21.07.2015. Law No. 93/2015 "On tourism" [online] Available at: https://www.turizmi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Ligj_93-2015.pdf [Accessed 14 May 2019].
103. Official Journal of the SFRY, 1977. No.9/77. Уредба за ратификација на Конвенција за заштита на водните живеалишта со меѓународно значење за заштита на водните птици.
104. Ohrid Municipality, 2007. Стратегија за одржлив локален економски развој. [online] Available at: https://ohrid.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Strategija_Lokalen_Ekonomski_Razvoj.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
105. Ohrid Municipality, 2014a. Подстратегија за рурален развој на Општината Охрид. Ohrid: Municipality of Ohrid. [online] Available at: https://ohrid.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Podstrategija_ruralen_razvoj_2014_2018.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
106. Ohrid Municipality, 2014b. Management Plan of the Municipality of Ohrid for World Heritage property: Natural and Cultural heritage of the Ohrid region (within the

- territory of the Municipality of Ohrid) 2014-2020, Final Draft. SUSTCULT Project: "Achieving SUSTainability through an integrated approach to the management of CULTural heritage". [online] Available at: https://ohrid.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Management_Plan_Ohrid_World_Heritage_Property_Eng.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
- 107.** Paasi, A., 2002. Bounded spaces in the mobile world: deconstructing 'regional identity'. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*. 93(2) pp.137-148.
 - 108.** Paligora, R., 2011. Студија за поврзување и промоција на манстирскиот туризам на Баба Планина. Bitola: CDPPR. [online] Available at: <http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/%20%20%20%20%20%20.pdf> [Accessed 15 May 2019].
 - 109.** Pekevski, S., 2019. Локална стратегија за развој на туризмот во Ресен 2019 - 2024. Resen: Resen Municipality. [online] Available at: <http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/Documents/2019/strategija%20za%20turizam%202019-2024/%20%20%202019-2024.pdf> [Accessed 15 May 2019].
 - 110.** Petrovska, S., Celeski, A., Gorin, S., Taleska, M., Radevski, I. and Biljarska N., 2015. Студија за проценка на можностите за развој на алтернативен и планински туризам во локалитетите Китка, Спортско-рекреативен центар Сарај, Кањон Матка, Голем Град – Преспа, Водопади на планината Беласица. Skopje: Ministry of Economy.
 - 111.** PIGNP (Public Institution Galicica National Park), 2010. National Park Galicica Management Plan For The Period 20102020, Draft. Volume I. Ohrid: PIGNP.
 - 112.** PIPNP (Public Institution Pelister National Park), 2006. Plan Of Management For Pelister National Park. Pelister Mountain Conservation Project. [online] Available at: http://park-pelister.com/uploads/pubs/management_plan.zip [Accessed 10 June 2019].
 - 113.** PointPro, 2015. Study On The Development Of The Pelagonia Planning Region As Adventure Tourism Destination. CDPPR. [online] Available at: https://issuu.com/pelagonija/docs/crppr_-_feasibility_study_on_advent [Accessed 15 May 2019].
 - 114.** PONT (Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust), 2018a. Pelister National Park Management Plan to be updated thanks to PONT's Grant. [online] 17 July. Available at <https://www.pont.org/pelister-national-park-management-plan-updated-thanks-ponts-grant/> [Accessed 10 June 2019].
 - 115.** PONT (Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust), 2018b. A momentous move for Galicica National Park. [online] 16 August. Available at <https://www.pont.org/momentous-move-galicica-national-park/> [Accessed 27 April 2019].
 - 116.** PONT (Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust), 2019. Region - Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust [online] Available at: <https://www.pont.org/balkans-prespa-ohrid-ecoregion/> [Accessed 16 March 2019].
 - 117.** Rantasa, B., 2014. Трасирање и анализа на рутата Виа Егнација. [report] October 2014. Skopje: Agency for Support and Promotion of Tourism of Republic of (North) Macedonia.
 - 118.** Ramsar, 1998. Lake Prespa. Ramsar Sites Information Service. [online] 1 January 1998. Available at: <https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/726> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
 - 119.** Ramsar, 2013. Albanian Prespa Lakes. Ramsar Sites Information Service. [online] 13 June 2013. Available at: <https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris/2151> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
 - 120.** Ramsar, n.d. Country Profiles. [online] Available at: <https://www.ramsar.org/country-profiles> [Accessed 13 May 2019].
 - 121.** REC (Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe), 2004. Regional Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development with Special Accent on Eco-Tourism and its Development in the Prespa Region.

- 122.** Resen Municipality, 2017. Локален еколошки акционен план на Општина Ресен за период 2017-2022. Resen: Resen Municipality. [online] Available at: <http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/Documents/Zivotna%20sredina/%202017-2022.pdf> [Accessed 15 May 2019].
- 123.** Resen Municipality Council, 2016. Strategy For Development Of Resen Municipality 2016 - 2021. [online] Available at: <http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/Documents/Strategii/%20%20%20%20%202016%20-%202021.pdf> [Accessed 16 February 2019].
- 124.** Sfera, 2017. Mountains and Memories for Youth Workers. Booklet. Project: Youth Exchange "Mountains & Memories". Bitola: Sfera.
- 125.** Shijakova, A., 2016. Со нова плажа во Сливница со 1000 лежалки Преспа се подготвува за помасовен туризам. [online] 10 July. Available at: <https://kanal5.com.mk/articles/265251/so-nova-plazha-vo-slivnica-so-1000-lezhalki-prespa-se-podgotvuva-za-pomasoven-turizam> [Accessed 20 July 2019].
- 126.** Slavkovski, I., Lazareski, V., Manasova, S., Churkoska, I.K., Lozanoska, A., Manasov, S., Angelov, G. and Veljanoska, D., 2008. Студија за проценка на постоечката состојба и капацитетите за развој на агротуризмот во Општина Ресен. Project: Standards for local quality in Prespa. [online] Last updated 8 May 2013. Available at: https://issuu.com/opstinarenen/docs/studija_daniela_turizam_final_1 [Accessed 14 May 2019].
- 127.** Smith et al., 2009. Драфт Физибилити Студија за Езерани. Society For The Investigation And Conservation Of Biodiversity And The Sustainable Development Of Natural Ecosystems Bioeco, Regional Environmental Center For Central And Eastern Europe, Country Office North Macedonia. [online] Available at: [http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/MKD-Ezerani-Final%20Draft%20Report-December-17-2009%20\(1\)_1.pdf](http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/MKD-Ezerani-Final%20Draft%20Report-December-17-2009%20(1)_1.pdf) and at: [http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/MKD-Ezerani-Final%20Draft%20Report-December-17-2009%20\(1\)_2.pdf](http://www.resen.gov.mk/content/MKD-Ezerani-Final%20Draft%20Report-December-17-2009%20(1)_2.pdf) [Accessed 18 March 2019].
- 128.** SPP (Society for the Protection of Prespa), WWF-Greece, PPNEA (Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania), MAP (Macedonian Alliance for Prespa), 2005. Strategic Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park, Executive Summary. Aghios Germanos: SPP. [online] Available at: https://www.spp.gr/sap_executive_summary_edition_en.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2019].
- 129.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.a. Regional cooperation for evidence-based and EU compliant policy development for economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe (SEDRA 1). [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/ongoing-projects/project-title-regional-cooperation-for-evidence-based-and-eu-compliant-policy-development-for-economic-diversification-of-rural-areas-in-southeast-europe-sedra-1/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 130.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.b. REGIONAL COOPERATION AND NETWORKING IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-BORDER AREAS. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/ongoing-projects/regional-cooperation-and-networking-in-the-field-of-agriculture-rural-and-economic-development-of-cross-border-areas/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 131.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.c. Field presentation of positive practices and examples in tourism and agro-food value chains, though LEADER approach and Local Action Groups in Pelagonija and Prespa regions for stakeholders and participants from the cross - border region "Prespa". [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/news/field-presentation-of-positive-practices-and-examples-in-tourism-and-agro-food-value-chains-through-leader-approach-and-local-action-groups-in-pelagonija-and-prespa-regions-for-stakeholders-and-partic/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 132.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.d. "Sports and culture – the future of our region" will be organized by the Public Enterprise "Biljanini Izvori" and will be held on 16th of

June 2018 till 17th of June 2018 in Ohrid, Macedonia. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/news/sports-and-culture-the-future-of-our-region-will-be-organized-by-the-public-enterprise-biljanini-lzvor-i-and-will-be-held-on-16th-of-june-2018-till-17th-of-june-2018-in-ohrid-m/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].

- 133.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.e. "TOUR DE GALICICA 2018" will be organized by the Municipality of Resen and will be held on 16th of June 2018 till 17th of June 2018 in Resen, Macedonia. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/news/tour-de-galicica-2018-will-be-organized-by-the-municipality-of-resen-and-will-be-held-on-16th-of-june-2018-till-17th-of-june-2018-in-resen-macedonia/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 134.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.f. "Days of wine and cheese 2018", will be organized by the by the Municipality of Ohrid, and will be held in the period 10 – 11.08.2018 in Ohrid, Macedonia. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/news/days-of-wine-and-cheese-2018-will-be-organized-by-the-by-the-municipality-of-ohrid-and-will-be-held-in-the-period-10-11-08-2018-in-ohrid-macedonia/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 135.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.g. SWG EC Project – Preparation for Implementation of the Area Based Development (ABD) Approach in the Western Balkans – 2nd phase – February 2014 – April 2015. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/realized-projects/preparation-for-implementation-of-the-area-based-development-abd-approach-in-the-western-balkans-2nd-phase-2/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 136.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.h. "Rural development by integrated forest and water resource management in South-East-Europe (LEIWW)". [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/news/rural-development-by-integrated-forest-and-water-resource-management-in-south-east-europe-leiww/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 137.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.i. List of Grant Awarded Applications in Prespa, Second Call. [online] Available at: http://abda.seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/List-of-Grant-Awarded-Applications-in-Prespa_Second-Call.pdf [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 138.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.j. List of Grant Awarded Applications in Prespa. [online] Available at: <http://abda.seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/List-of-grant-awarded-applications-in-Prespa.pdf> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 139.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.k. Rural development through integrated forest and water resources management in Southeast Europe: Rural perspectives: qualification, reintegration and (self) employment. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/news/rural-development-through-integrated-forest-and-water-resources-management-in-south-east-europe-rural-perspectives-qualification-reintegration-and-self-employment/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 140.** SWG (Standing Working Group), n.d.l. "Capacity building for networking among the stakeholders in apple and tourism sectors in the cross-border region Prespa", 20-22 November 2017 in Otesevo, Macedonia. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/other-events/capacity-building-for-networking-among-the-stakeholders-in-apple-and-tourism-sectors-in-the-cross-border-region-prespa-20-22-november-2017-in-otesevo-macedonia-2/> [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 141.** SWG (Standing Working Group), 2019. List of approved events for financing within P2P Call. Project: Diversification of economic activities in rural areas of Southeast Europe through value chain development. [online] Available at: <http://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/List-of-approved-events.pdf> [Accessed 19 July 2019].
- 142.** Sweeting, A., 2012. Integrating Business Skills into Ecotourism Operations. [online] Available at: <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2012-032.pdf> [Accessed 27 June 2019].

- 143.** TIES (The International Ecotourism Society), 2015. What Is Ecotourism? [online] Available at: <https://ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism/> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
- 144.** Trajkovski, M., 2019. Што прави Охрид по препораките на УНЕСКО?, VOA, 3 June 2019 [online] available at: <https://mk.voanews.com/a/unesco-ohrid-/4943832.html> [Accessed 5 June 2019].
- 145.** Travers R., and La Paz Group, 2012. Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for the Prespa Lakes Basin 2012-2016. UNDP project: Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin [online] Available at: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/docs/Tourism%20Strategy.pdf [Accessed 16 March 2019].
- 146.** UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), n.d. Inception Report - UNDP. Project title: Integrated Ecosystem Management of Prespa Lakes basin in Albania, FYR of Macedonia and Greece. [online] Available at: <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/ALB/Prespa Results report March 2012.doc.docx> [Accessed 14 May 2019].
- 147.** UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 2019. Improving The Management Of Protected Areas | UNDP in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia [online] Available at: http://www.mk.undp.org/content/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/en/home/operations/projects/environment_and_energy/improving-the-management-of-protected-areas-1.html?fbclid=IwAR3g4fmZRkLHel7rcZTwJ_CooYVhmxMbvN3nl_195nf1wlyQBT-nv6VoH2bU [Accessed 18 March 2019].
- 148.** UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) and UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization), 2005. Making Tourism More Sustainable - A Guide for Policy Makers. [online] Available at: <http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/DTIx0592xPA-TourismPolicyEN.pdf> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
- 149.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), n.d. Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region. [online] Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/99> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
- 150.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2014a. Ohrid-Prespa. Ecological Sciences for Sustainable Development. [online] Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/europe-north-america/albania-the-former-yugoslav-republic-of-macedonia/ohrid-prespa/> [Accessed 10 June 2019].
- 151.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2014b. Inception Workshop Report "Towards Strengthened Governance Of The Shared Transboundary Natural And Cultural Heritage Of The Lake Ohrid Region". Tushemisht, Albania. 15-16 September 2014. [online] Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/document/135162> [Accessed 10 June 2019].
- 152.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2014c. Inauguration of the Ohrid-Prespa Transboundary Biosphere Reserve, a watershed of unique value. [online] 16 October 2014. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/member-states/single-view/news/inauguration_of_the_ohrid_prespa_transboundary_biosphere_res/ [Accessed 23 July 2019].
- 153.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2016a. Collaborative and Integrated Management of Protected and Heritage Landscapes Training. [online] Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/collaborative-management-training/> [Accessed 10 June 2019].
- 154.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2016b. Promoting nature, culture and World Heritage in the Lake Ohrid region. [online] Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1306/> [Accessed 10 June 2019].

- 155.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2016c. Course on Promoting People-Centred Approaches: Engaging Communities in the Conservation of Nature and Culture. [online] Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1320/> [Accessed 10 June 2019].
- 156.** UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), 2017. States Parties. In: World Heritage Convention. [online] Last updated on 31 January 2017. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/> [Accessed 13 May 2019].
- 157.** USAID (United States Agency for International Development), 2015. Small Business Expansion Project | U.S. Agency for International Development. [online] Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/macedonia/fact-sheets/small-business-expansion-project> [Accessed 18 March 2019].
- 158.** WTTC (World Travel and Tourism Council), 2019. Travel & Tourism continues strong growth above global GDP. [Online] 27 February. Available at: <https://www.wttc.org/about/media-centre/press-releases/press-releases/2019/travel-tourism-continues-strong-growth-above-global-gdp/> [Accessed 11 June 2019].
- 159.** Zimmerbauer, K., 2011. From Image to Identity: Building Regions by Place Promotion, European Planning Studies. [Online] 19:2 pp.243-260. Available through: Inform world database [Accessed 13 January 2011].

