



MAKING A LIVING

Sustainable use of our common resource



THREE COUNTRIES, TWO LAKES, ONE FUTURE

ТРИ ДРЖАВИ, ДВЕ ЕЗЕРА, ЕДНА ИДНИНА

ΤΡΕΙΣ ΧΩΡΕΣ, ΔΥΟ ΛΙΜΝΕΣ, ΕΝΑ ΜΕΛΛΟΝ

TRE VENDE, DY LIQENE, NJË E ARDHME



www.prespapark.org

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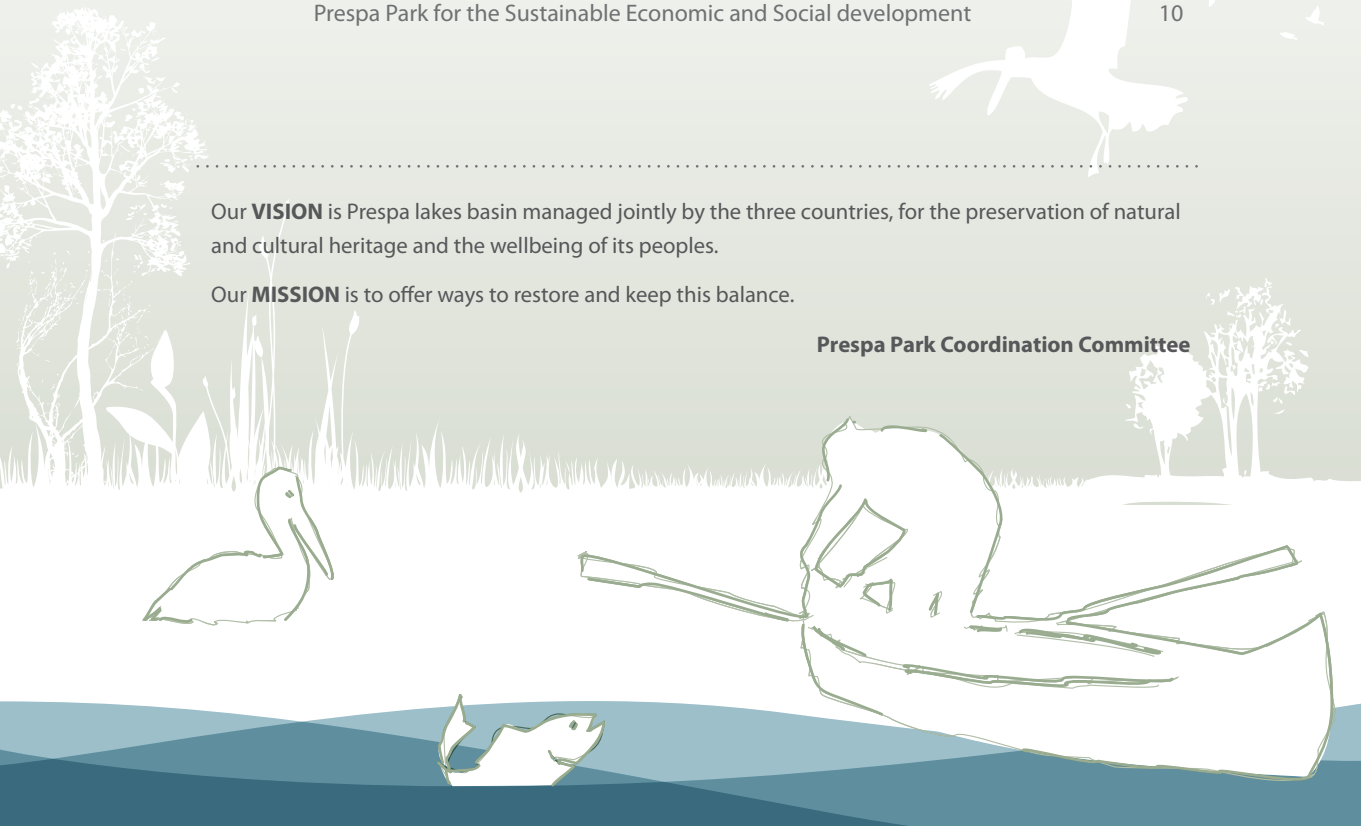
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Our **VISION** is Prespa lakes basin managed jointly by the three countries, for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and the wellbeing of its peoples.

Our **MISSION** is to offer ways to restore and keep this balance.

Prespa Park Coordination Committee





Economic development in the Prespa region is full of contrast, with three different countries with their own history and economic evolution. Average yearly income in Albania is estimated at US\$700, in FYR of Macedonia the average per capita income is approximately US\$ 2,000, while on the Greek side it is estimated to be US\$10,000.

Unemployment in Prespa is high: approximately 12% in Greece, 23% in Albania and 32% in the FYR of Macedonia.



Gorica village, Albania
Photo by Nehru Suleyman

Sustainable use of our common resource

The majority of the local population in the three countries is occupied in activities of the primary sector (agriculture, animal breeding, fishing, forestry). In Greece and in the FYR of Macedonia, intensive agriculture is the main occupation, complemented by

animal husbandry and fishing. In Albania, human activities of the primary sector are extensive rather than intensive. Activities such as industry and manufacturing are developed only in the FYR of Macedonia. Tourism is an important activity in Greece and the FYR of Macedonia.

Livelihoods: Facts and Figures

Approximately 28,900 people live in the Prespa Lakes Basin: nearly 75% of the total population lives in FYR of Macedonia (17,500), 17% live in Albania (5,300) and the remaining 8% in Greece (1,500). The population of the Prespa Lakes Basin in FYR of Macedonia has decreased approximately 20% over the past thirty years, but population density is still over 28 persons/km².



Traditional tools
and household items
Photo UNDP archives



Apple harvest early 20th century
Photo UNDP archives

intense need to enhance the standard of living of the inhabitants and generate sustainable economic development. The whole basin is, to a greater or lesser degree, characterized by all the typical phenomena of remote, frontier mountainous

places: depopulation, increased migration rates especially of the young, difficulties in trading of local production, disability to adapt to new technologies and challenges of a rapidly changing world, limited participation in decision-making procedures, inadequate social facilities such as health care, unemployment and inability of local people to explore and use sustainably the area's competitive advantages.



Agriculture

The life in the Prespa Park revolves around agriculture that engages approximately 75% of work force, or up to 85% in Greece and Albania.

In the Greek part of the basin intensive bean cultivation is practiced on a total area of around 1000ha, while organic bean cultivation was introduced in 1998



Fields near Pretor in November
Photo by Sonja Seizova



Open channel irrigation of beans fields, Greece
Photo by SPP

and is being expanded since. Small land ownership (around 5ha per farm on average) and some significant deficiencies in marketing and processing also characterize the sector.

In the Albanian part of Prespa basin the arable land is covered mostly by wheat (84%), orchards (5%), and vineyards (3%). In the mid-1980s more than half of the arable soils were irrigated but, nowadays, only 2.1% of the arable land is irrigated due to the destruction of pumping stations. Each family owns approximately 1.4ha, but the productivity is low due to unfertile soils. The use of pesticides and fertilizers is considered very low, which indicates the area's potential for organic farming.

In the FYR of Macedonia agriculture generates some 30% of



Apple harvest in Resen

Photo by Dimitrija Sekovski / UNDP



Apple orchards in spring

Photo by Dimitrija Sekovski / UNDP

the total income. Approximately 20% out of 61,000 ha of the total area is agricultural land, dominated by apple growing. Orchards - including some traditional local varieties of both apples and pears - spread over 2,722 ha, with a production level of 50-60,000t. Wheat, and, to a lesser extent, barley (1300 ha) are the most dominant. There are 3000 agricultural families in the region, but 50% of the farmers today are over 55 years old.



Fishing

Fishing has provided a source of income for hundreds of years and still exists today, although at a much smaller scale. Unique traditional fishing methods and tools developed in the past centuries remain an important element of the local culture and tradition, but are being replaced with modern ones.

Threshing in the bean fields
Photo by SPP



According to the local experts' estimations, 5% of the local population in FYR of Macedonian part generates more than half of their incomes by gathering forest fruit, mushrooms and medicinal plants. Another 21% supplement their income by non-timber forest products. The importance of collecting wild fruits and medicinal plants for income generation in the Albanian part is similar.

Non-timber forest exploitation:
fruits and medicinal plants
Photo by Nehru Suleyman



According to fragmented data it is estimated that 2-13% of the labour force is involved in fishing, and that approximately 50-60 fishermen across the Prespa Basin earn a significant portion of their income just from the high-value carp fishery.

There is no reliable data on fish yield in either country, but the steady decrease in catches is attributed either to the increased stress on the Lake's ecosystems, or to the limited fishing effort due to the lack of profitable markets, or both.



The catch

Photo by Nehru Suleyman



An ancient traditional boat discovered in Prespa and displayed at the Saray building, Resen
Photo UNDP archives



Walnuts drying on a traditional house balcony, Ag. Germanos
Photo by Sonja Seizova

The Secondary Sector

In the Greek Prespa, there are a few workshops operating organized as family businesses and employing about 25 people. There are no secondary sector activities in the Albanian Prespa. In the FYR of Macedonia, some 2500 persons are employed in various, often not prosperous, and mostly small enterprises.

Prespa Park for the Sustainable Economic and Social development

With a basin-wide productive system not balanced, the future development policy should focus on the promotion of structural changes by emphasizing activities of the primary and tertiary sectors where the area's competitive advantages converge.

In view of the character and the particularities of the region, large-scale or intensive development initiatives (intensive agriculture, manufacture, industry, mining, mass tourism



A reconstructed traditional house in Aghios Germanos
Photo by Sonja Seizova



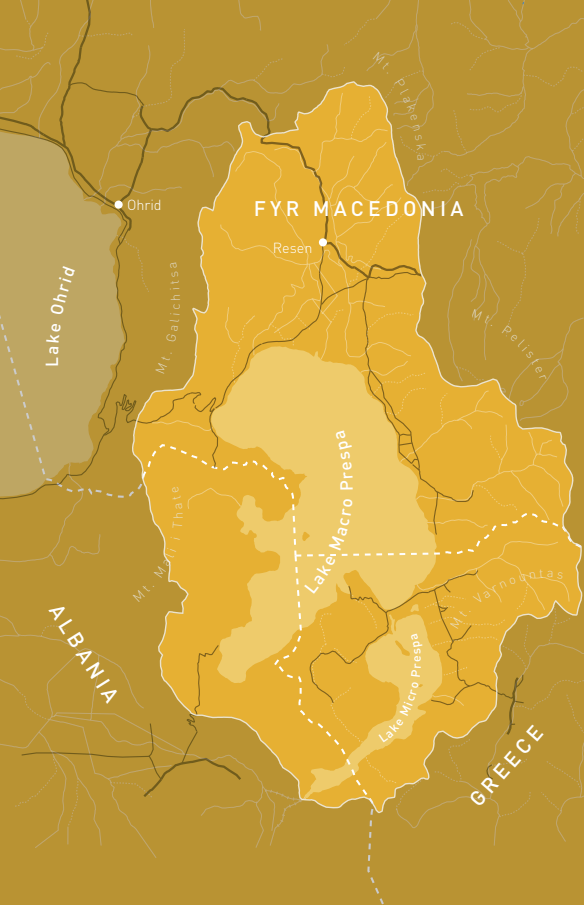
Apple tree blossom
Photo by Nehru Suleyman



Setting up of agrometeorological station in an apple orchard
Photo by Dimitrija Sekovski/UNDP

etc.) are often incompatible with the preservation of the values of the area.

The Prespa Park Coordination Committee initiates and oversees activities that support, among other things, sustainable tourism, alternative technology, renewable energy sources, improved infrastructure and new production methods. This approach is considered the most appropriate to facilitate the transition from intensive uses of natural resources to more sustainable ones.



Prespa Park boundaries

*Adapted, courtesy of the Society
for the Protection of Prespa*

The Prespa Lakes basin (Southeast Europe) is a globally significant ecological and cultural landscape comprising four National Parks and several protected areas with unique habitats, flora and fauna.

In 2000 the Governments of Albania, FYR Macedonia and Greece agreed to work together to maintain the natural values of the area and introduce environmental management practices in the Prespa Park by integrating ecological, economic and social goals.

Two Wetlands of International Importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, lie within the Transboundary Prespa Park boundaries. The area has been acknowledged as a Gift to the Earth by WWF-International, and European Union has included Prespa Lakes in its policies on water and species protection.

The Prespa Park Coordination Committee is a trilateral body representing governments, local authorities and civil society. It supports environmental protection and sustainable development in the Prespa Park for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and the wellbeing of its peoples.

Since 2006 a GEF/UNDP Project supports Integrated Ecosystem Management in the transboundary Prespa Lakes Basin, to last until 2011.



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