Monitoring in Shared Waters: Developing a Transboundary Monitoring System for the Prespa Park

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The Prespa basin

- Transboundary Basin (shared between 3 countries)
- Catchment area: appr.1,400 sq.km
- Hotspot for biodiversity, endemism:
 - > 1,500 plant spp;
 - > 260 bird spp;
 - 8 endemic fish taxa;
 - Largest Dalmatian Pelican colony worldwide
- Protected Areas: 4 National Parks, 2 Ramsar Sites
 - Pelister NP (FYRoM)
 - Galichica NP (FYRoM)
 - Prespa NP (AL)
 - Prespa Nat. Forest (GR)
- February 2000: Establishment of the transboundary Prespa Park



Project for the development of a Transboundary Monitoring System

- TB Environmental monitoring a prerequisite for management and protection of TB basin
- Prespa Park Strategy
 - need for transboundary monitoring explicitly mentioned in the Strategic Action Plan (2002)
 - a priority for the Prespa Park stakeholders
- Monitoring one of the priority activities of the GEF/UNDP Project for the Prespa Park (started 2007)
- In 2007, funding secured by the Society for the Protection of Prespa
 - In full coordination with GEF/UNDP Project; some activities cofunded by GEF/UNDP project
- Technical consultant: Tour du Valat Biological Station, France
 - National Consultants from the three littoral countries

Project Outline

| Title | Development of a Transboundary Monitoring System in the Prespa Park |
|-------------------------|--|
| Project area | Transboundary Prespa Park |
| Project duration | July 2007-September 2011 |
| Co-funding | SPP/WWF-Greece; some activities co-funded by GEF/UNDP Project |
| Technical Consultant | Tour du Valat Biological Station, France; National Consultants from the 3 littoral countries |
| Steering Body | Monitoring and Conservation Working Group (national stakeholders; MedWet; GEF-UNDP project) |

Steering Body: MCWG

- Monitoring and Conservation Working Group (MCWG)
 - to ensure scientific and political guidance
 - ownership
 - tap national expert resources
- Established Oct. 2007, supported by GEF/UNDP Project
- Representation from:
 - Ministries of Environment
 - Universities/ Research Institutions
 - National Park authorities
 - Local environmental NGOS
- Chaired by International Transboundary Adviser (GEF/UNDP Prespa Park project)



Preparatory Stage (Oct 07- June 08)

Main issues investigated:

- Aim of the TMS
- Geographical Scale
- Significant Values and Elements
- Current situation (as regards stakeholders, estimated available sources of funding, connection to EU Legislation and Policy)
- Guidelines on
 - indicators
 - institutions for implementing the TMS
 - administration
 - equipment
 - training

Preparatory Stage (Oct 07- June 08)

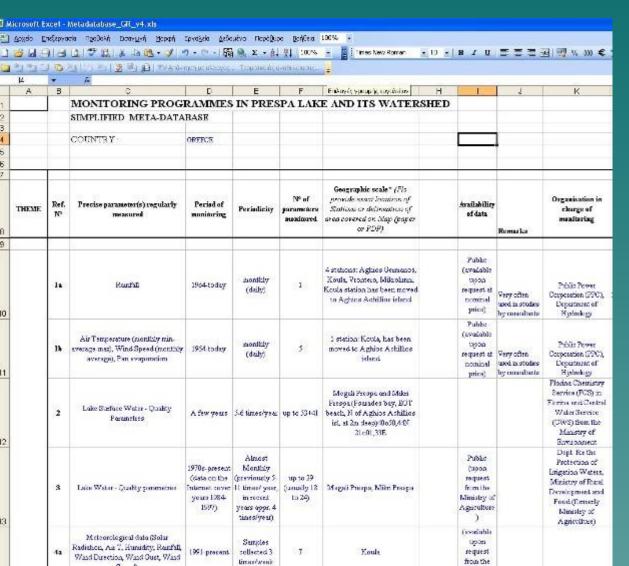
Challenges

- Institutional differences, difficulties of TB cooperation; hence, need for a wide participatory approach
- A notable dispersal of operations and responsibilities
- Indicatively: Fact-finding missions (Dec. 07 -Jan. 08) resulted in meetings with over 30 public authorities, scientific and research institutions implem. monitoring in Prespa, donors, NGOs, in 11 towns/ cities in the 3 countries

Meta-database of monitoring programmes

- Consisting of existing environmental monitoring programmes in the Prespa basin
- Analytical description sheets
 - for each programme or for each family of monitoring parameters
- Initial identification of:
 - more than 27 institutions
 - in excess of 400 parameters
 - (physico-chemical, meteorological, hydrological, biodiversity, land-uses, demographics/statistics)
- One-off monitoring projects and surveys, not included
- But: need for continuous amendment/ enrichment of the meta-database – on-going process

Meta-database: snapshot



A plethora of data types/ availability:

- Publication:
 - internet;
 - reporting;
 - published articles
- Data form:
 - synthesized or processed data;
 - raw data?
- Access??
 - publicly available upon request;
 - free/ nominal fees/ high fees;
 - not available until published;
 - restricted availability

Preparatory Stage: review by MCWG

- Outputs reviewed and approved by MCWG in its 3 meetings; trilateral consensus
- MCWG selected and endorsed the option of a routine surveillance TMS for Prespa
 - to establish baseline information
 - to establish range of variation for key parameters
- May evolve into an "adaptive management" monitoring system, once management plans are in place

Next stage: expert study for the TMS

- Expert study (Oct 08 Sep 09)
- Trilateral thematic working groups will contribute to selection of indicators
- Main themes:
 - Waters/ Hydrology
 - Fish & Fisheries
 - Aquatic Vegetation
 - Forests and Forestry
 - Birds and other Biodiversity
 - Socio-economics
 - Land Use

Overview of the TMS

- Preparatory Stage (finalized June 08)
- Expert study (Oct08-Sep 09)
- Installation of equipment
- Training
- Pilot application
- Final adjustment and evaluation
- Endorsement
- Finalised: expected by 2011

Conclusions

- Dispersal of operations and responsibilities – high complexity
- Plethora of existing monitoring programmes and parameters
- On-going process, long term effort
- Trilateral contribution and consensusbuilding prerequisites for monitoring in a transboundary context
- State commitment and support essential for monitoring

Thank you for your Attention!

For more info, you can contact the Society for the Protection of Prespa: spp@line.gr

