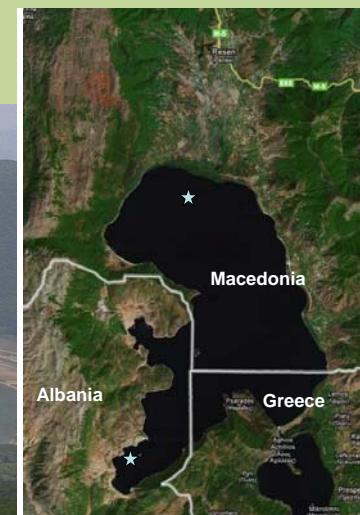


Tri-lateral cooperation (Albania, Greece and Macedonia) – a demand for improvement of fish conservation in cooperation with Prespa GEF project

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The area of the eastern Adriatic Sea slope - houses one of the highest biodiversity of freshwater fishes in Europe

Result of complex geological history – numerous isolated basins = vicariant speciation

Prespa lakes are a typical case of high freshwater biodiversity spot.

The most important species *Barbus prespensis*, *Salmo persitericus*, *Rutilus prespensis*, *Chondrostoma prespensis*, *Phoxinela*, etc.



Cobitis taenia

Next to the lakes Shkodra and Ohrid the lakes Macro and Micro Prespa, actually forming one wetland, are the largest waterbodies of the Balkans. They belong to three countries.

The Fishery inspectorate is cooperating with Prespa GEF project in:

- LEAP
- Fishery management activities
- Fishery and Agriculture

The highest biodiversity of native species is in the Prespa- Ohrid- Drin-Shkodra/Skadar basin, which counts altogether 68 species.

This is by far the largest hydrological system in this area. The second richest drainage is the basin of the Neretva River, with 43 native species. However, the number of species endemic strictly to a drainage area is in both cases high, i.e., 20 and 17 in the Ohrid- Drin-Skadar system and the Neretva drainage, respectively.

The highest degree of strict endemism is observed in the isolated karstic fields, where it is not unusual that the ichthyofauna is composed purely of endemic species.

There are only a few natural lakes in this part of the Adriatic Sea slope, among which by far the most important ones are the **lakes Ohrid, Skadar and Prespa**.

Although the surface of these three lakes is incomparably larger than that of all remaining water bodies, these lakes are inhabited by some real endemics.

It is caused both by their historic and recent connections to the neighbouring rivers, which enabled migration and homogenisation of the ichthyofauna. However, several (!) salmonids in Ohrid Lake, three cypriniforms and one salmonid in Prespa Lake, and one cyprinid and one clupeid in Skadar Lake seem to be strictly endemic to each of the lakes.

In Albania:

Generally the data on freshwater species and issues related to them are scarce!

1957: Poljakov – 55 freshwater species

1997: Rrakaj-Flloko-63 species

2009: Sanda-Shumka - 83 species

A long way forward in many aspects related to FF

Ecology

Conservation

Status

Taxonomy etc...



Prespa Lake, at an altitude of 853 m (above sea level), flows into Ohrid Lake by an underground stream and is shared by Albania, Macedonia and Greece. This eutrophic lake has a total area of 274 km², of which 49.4 km² (18 percent) lies in Albania. It has an average and maximum depth of 20 and 54.2 m respectively. **The fish catch is mainly of cyprinids, moreover bleak (*Alburnus albidus*) and common carp, and the average production varies from 300 to 500 t/year.**



Prespa park
declaration of
2nd February
2000 in Ag.
Germanos.

The needs for
fishery sector
cooperation.

How to
coordinate
things among
fishery
authorities



Fish stock should be protected.

The challenges – cooperation-coordination-control-capacity building etc.

Our thoughts for future cooperation:

- the fishing activities, methods, activity etc., should be coordinated;
- Securing effectives for reducing the illegal fishing activities;
- Registering boats on three sides;
- Common coordination of the fishing ban period and control of fishing equipments;
- Undertaking measures for reducing the rate of non-native fish species invasion;
- Monitoring of the lakes water quality;
- Securing the coordination of the legal frame;
- Protecting the spawning sites for specific fish species;
- WFD and fishery. Commitments.