

Bridging the gap between water scientists and managers

The DRIMON project recognises the need for a better understanding between scientists and managers.

Within the framework of the project, therefore, two workshops have been held where scientists and managers have met and discussed common problems related to water resources research and management.

The principles of the EU Water Framework Directive have been used as a basis for these workshops.



Of particular focus has been issues such as freshwater monitoring and water resources management on the Balkan. The first workshop was held in Ohrid, Macedonia in June 2005, the second in Kotor, Montenegro in May 2007. The workshops have been financed by the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Interdisciplinary assessment of water resources management in South Eastern Europe

The DRIMON Project (2006-2009) is an interdisciplinary research project carried out by partners in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Norway. The project is financed by a grant from the Research Council of Norway.

The DRIMON Project ensures exchange of knowledge and experience across borders within both natural and social sciences. The main instrument is the comparison of the nutrient status in lakes and drainage basins, and water resources management challenges in Balkan and Norway. The lakes and catchment areas to be studied include:

- Lake Prespa, shared between Albania, Macedonia and Greece
- Lake Skadar, shared between Montenegro and Albania
- Lake Vansjø in Eastern Norway

Through a combination of existing data and new measurements, the nutrient and sediment loads to the lakes, as well as the lake trophic status, are being assessed. Stakeholder surveys and workshops map the various sectors in the regions, with a particular focus on agriculture and tourism.



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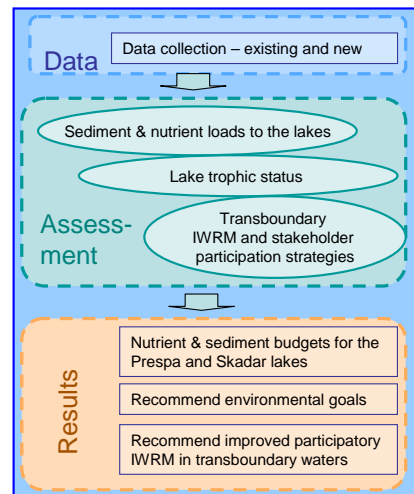
Main objectives and tasks

- Establish nutrient and sediment budgets for the lake basins of Prespa and Skadar, and assess the status of the lakes through dose-response relationships between nutrients and sediment inputs and their effects in the lakes;
- Suggest environmental goals for lakes Prespa and Skadar, based on information on their trophic status and evidence of their reference (or natural) conditions, in dialogue with stakeholders;
- Establish and/or strengthen networks nationally and across borders between scientists, water managers and end-users;
- Provide advice as to how identified environmental goals may be met through an understanding of institutional structures across borders and enhancement of the dialogue between decision-makers, stakeholders and scientists.

The DRIMON Project is divided into three different activities, including

- Data collection, which includes the collection of both existing and new data;
- Assessment of data from both natural and social sciences in order to arrive at a set of:
- Results, including recommendations to water managers.

The figure below gives an overview of these activities:

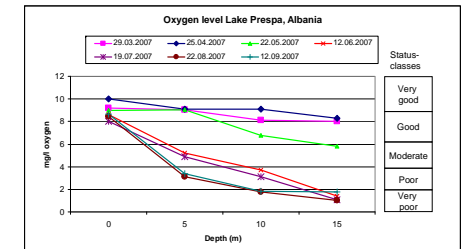


Preliminary results

The DRIMON Project lasts until 2009, and data sampling is on-going in 2008, but already some data assessment has been carried out. Water samples from the two lakes and their input rivers were collected and analysed for a number of parameters. The results indicate that, of the two Balkan lakes, the Lake Prespa has the most imminent pollution problems with oxygen depletion at the bottom waters during summer. In addition, reduced water levels over time and an incident of fish deaths in July 2007 illustrate the concern for the environmental state in this lake.

Agriculture is believed to be one of the most important activities in the Prespa with subsequent impacts on the water quality. DRIMON will attempt to identify the pressures on the lake through stakeholder analysis, with a main focus on agriculture. Improved treatment of sewage is also an important issue in the lake, especially if tourism increases.

The environmental state of Lake Shkodra/Skadar is better than in Prespa, but increased tourism in this area may give serious environmental threats unless measures are taken. In 2008, two stakeholder workshops will be held, one in the Prespa area and one in the Shkodra/Skadar. These, combined with stakeholder surveys, will give additional information on the two sectors deemed to be most important for nutrient inputs, i.e. agriculture and sewage from increased tourism.



Oxygen levels in Prespa are very low in bottom waters during summer.

