Part I: Project Information

GEF ID
10881

Project Type
FSP

Type of Trust Fund
GET

CBIT/NGI
CBIT **No**
NGI **No**

Project Title
Implementing the Strategic Action Programme of the Drin Basin to Strengthen Transboundary Cooperation and Enable Integrated Natural Resources Management

Countries
Regional

Agency(ies)
UNDP

Other Executing Partner(s)
Global Water Partnership

Executing Partner Type
CSO

GEF Focal Area
International Waters

Sector

Taxonomy

Focal Areas, Aquifer, Freshwater, International Waters, River Basin, Lake Basin, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Influencing models, Demonstrate innovative approache, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Equality, Beneficiaries, Women groups, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender-sensitive indicators, Gender results areas, Access and control over natural resources, Access to benefits and services, Awareness Raising, Capacity Development, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Participation and leadership, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Pollution, Nutrient pollution from all sectors except wastewater, Nutrient pollution from Wastewater, Strategic Action Plan Implementation, Civil Society, Stakeholders, Academia, Non-Governmental Organization, Community Based Organization, Private Sector, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Communications, Public Campaigns, Local Communities, Type of Engagement, Participation, Consultation, Partnership, Information Dissemination, Knowledge Exchange, Learning, Knowledge Generation

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation

Significant Objective 1

Climate Change Adaptation

Significant Objective 1

Biodiversity

No Contribution 0

Land Degradation

No Contribution 0

Submission Date

2/3/2023

Expected Implementation Start

11/30/2023

Expected Completion Date

11/30/2028

Duration

60In Months

Agency Fee($)

675,064.00

A. FOCAL/NON-FOCAL AREA ELEMENTS

Objectives/Programs	Focal Area Outcomes	Trust Fund	GEF Amount($)	Co-Fin Amount($)
IW-3-5	Enhance water security in freshwater ecosystems through advance information exchange and early warning	GET	1,601,337.00	9,056,146.00
IW-3-6	Enhance water security in freshwater ecosystems through enhanced regional and national cooperation on shared freshwater surface and groundwater basins	GET	2,902,425.00	16,651,896.00
IW-3-7	Enhance water security in freshwater ecosystems through investments in water, food, energy and environment security	GET	2,602,174.00	14,951,434.00
		Total Project Cost($)	**7,105,936.00**	**40,659,476.00**

B. Project description summary

Project Objective

Advance integrated natural resources management and sustainable development in the Drin River Basin and its coastal and marine areas by supporting the implementation of the Strategic Action Program (SAP) agreed upon by the Riparians.

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
Component 1 Enhancing the capacity of key institutions and stakeholders to effectively implement integrated natural resources management in the transboundary Drin Basin	Technical Assistance	1. Sustainable and climate-resilient management of the Basin?s resources enabled through development of technical and policy tools, and filling gaps in the understanding of the Drin Basin ecosystems functioning.	1.1? An updated TDA presented for adoption by the DCG, including: (i) the conceptual model of the hydrology (surface water and groundwater) of the Basin, taking in consideration climate change scenarios, and interactions with the shallow marine environment and (ii) marine environment considerations. 1.2- A design of multi-purpose transboundary monitoring programs (surface water and groundwater, sediment loads, water living resources, etc.) developed based on an assessment of monitoring capacities, gaps and needs across the Basin and presented for adoption by the DCG, along with enhanced capacities to implement these. 1.3- Analysis of the status of freshwater dependent	GET	2,030,267.00	5,554,144.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			ecosystems and fisheries and of the impacts on near shore marine ecosystems of freshwater flows (surface water and groundwater), as well as assessment of minimum ecosystem flows, to inform management planning in accordance with the EU WFD.			
			1.4- Assessment of sediment balance along the Drin Basin with focus on reservoirs siltation, land degradation hotspots and impacts on riverbed and coastal dynamics.			
			1.5- A dialogue to discuss scenarios for the operation of dams to enable optimization of water and flood risk management, and energy production.			
			1.6- An improved information management system to support transboundary basin			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			management is established.			
			1.7- Training of staff of institutions on areas that are critical for the coordinated management of the Drin Basin.			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
Component 2 Consolidating the Drin Basin transboundary institutional, policy, and legal frameworks	Technical Assistance	2. Effective cooperation among Drin Riparians and socio-economic sectors succeeded through the establishment of a transboundary institutional arrangement and the development of critical transboundary policy instruments.	2.1- A legal instrument consolidating official cooperation among the Drin Riparians is finalized and considered for signing by the Riparians. 2.2 Establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism. 2.3- A River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River prepared in accordance with the EU WFD, building on the findings of the Drin TDA, and on the enhanced knowledge achieved through Component 1 activities, including marine environment considerations and presented for adoption by the DCG. 2.4- Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin identified and integrated in the Drin Basin Flood Risk Management Plan. 2.5- Harmonization of management	GET	1,691,890.00	6,337,716.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			planning tools for adjacent nationally established protected areas in Skadar/Shkoder subbasin. 2.6- A Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo and North Macedonia developed in the context of the EU Water Framework Directive and presented for adoption.			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
Component 3 Drin Riparians implement agreed SAP actions addressing priority transboundary issues of concern	Technical Assistance	3 ? SAP implementation is accelerated through regional, riparian and local solutions to address main causes of transboundary concern, promote sustainable water use and ensure ecosystem functioning and resilience.	Demonstration and/or priority solutions in selected areas 3.1- Nutrient reduction (rural) ? Support to the broader adoption of small-scale wastewater treatment plants for nutrient removal piloted in the foundational project, in small rural settlements not easily connected to main wastewater treatment systems. 3.2- Toxic emissions reduction, and water use efficiency and reuse ? Reinforcement, also by promoting the TEST approach, of the capacity of industries and SMEs in the reduction of toxic substances emissions to waterbodies and land, as well as reinforcement of their capacity in water use efficiency and reuse, and assessment of action and/or	GET	2,368,645.00	25,764,029.00

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			investment needs for the rehabilitation of toxic pollution from mines and quires (White Drin, Skadar/Shkoder Lake, and Ohrid Lake sub-basins).			
			3.3- Sustainable agricultural practices for nutrient and toxic pollution reduction, and soil conservation ? Promotion of: (i) Integrated Pest Management practices, (ii) the transition to tourism oriented organic farming, (iii) the use of Best Agricultural Practices (BAP, e.g. buffer strips, crop rotation, application of fertilizers, no-till, use of cover crops, IT solutions) to enhance soil conservation and reduce pollution, in selected areas of the sub-basins of White Drin, Prespa and Ohrid, Black Drin and Buna/ Bojana, and Zeta plain.			
			3.4- Erosion control ? In priority areas			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			(e.g.: the Debar Lake basin, the Sateska basin, the Adriatic coastal area) promoting reforestation, nature-based solutions, sustainable tillage and irrigation systems, etc.			
			3.5 ? Support to SMEs and economic sectors (e.g.: tourism), in transboundary areas of ecological importance (e.g. Prespa, Ohrid, Skadar/Shoder and Buna/Bojana), to facilitate transition of local economy towards sustainable natural resources management practices and green growth.			
			3.6 ? Sustainable transboundary fisheries management: (i) Capacity building and training for fish stock assessments to inform management (ii) promotion of best fishing practices among fishermen and their associations (iii)			

Project Component	Financing Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing ($)	Confirmed Co-Financing($)
			enhancement of illegal fishing monitoring and control capacities.			
Component 4 Mechanisms for ensuring participation, gender consideration, coordination, and monitoring progress	Technical Assistance	4. Long-term sustainability of achievements is enhanced through implementation of project mechanisms for stakeholder?s participation, gender mainstreaming, dissemination, coordination and monitoring progress.	4.1- Awareness raising and participation actions held at local, national and regional levels to enable stakeholders engagement. 4.2- Actions to mainstream Gender in project execution. 4.3- Actions to enable coordination with other ongoing initiatives and projects. 4.4- Full participation to GEF IW LEARN activities and creation of a project website.	GET	676,756.00	1,067,421.00
				Sub Total ($)	**6,767,558.00**	**38,723,310.00**

Project Management Cost (PMC)

GET	338,378.00	1,936,166.00
Sub Total($)	**338,378.00**	**1,936,166.00**
Total Project Cost($)	**7,105,936.00**	**40,659,476.00**

Please provide justification

C. Sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure, Kosovo*	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	461,934.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure, Kosovo*	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	5,041,152.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Directorate for Water, Montenegro	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	2,468,621.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, and Physical Planning, North Macedonia	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	18,066,993.00
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment, and Physical Planning, North Macedonia	Public Investment	Investment mobilized	5,560,323.00
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	230,000.00
Donor Agency	Swiss cooperation Office in Kosovo*	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	8,230,453.00
Civil Society Organization	Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	600,000.00
			Total Co-Financing($)	**40,659,476.00**

Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

Exchange Rate: 1USD/0.972EUR ?Investment mobilized? was identified through the work under the Drin Coordinated Action, the background work and meetings done with stakeholders for the development of the Project Document and the CEO endorsement, and the co-financing letters provided. The project implementation will be supported by the identified co-financing as follows: - Kosovo?s in-kind co-financing includes worktime of staff of the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure (MESPI), and the Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency (KEPA) as well as office space for the Project. MESPI, will implement with its own resources a number of infrastructure projects that will contribute to the protection of the Drin river basin: regulation of the bed of Bistrica e Pejes river; waste

water treatment plants for Prizren, Peja and Gjakova; automatic alarm system in Radoniqi dam; and small interventions in the Drini river beds. - Montenegro?s in-kind co-financing will result to strengthening the institutional, administrative and monitoring capacities of the water management sector towards the improvement of environmental protection. This will enable the implementation of Output 1.1 for the update of the Drin TDA; Output 1.2 for the design of multipurpose monitoring program; Output 1.3 for the analysis of freshwater ecosystems; Output 2.2 for the establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism; Output 2.3 for the development of a river basin management plan; 2.5 on the harmonization of management planning for adjacent nationally established protected areas. It is expected to contribute towards up-scaling of the results of the demonstration activities under Outcome 3. - North Macedonia?s co-financing will result into: reforms in the water sector; improved implementation of the EU Floods Directive and preparation of flood risk management plans; development and implementation of River Basin Management Plans; improving capacities for Natura 2000 protected areas network. It is also related to the Supply of Specific Equipment for the Water Monitoring Information System and the Rehabilitation and Extension of Sewerage Network in Municipality of Kichevo. This will enable the implementation of Output 1.1 for the update of the Drin TDA; Output 1.2 for the design of multipurpose monitoring program; Output 1.3 for the analysis of freshwater ecosystems; Output 2.2 for the establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism; Output 2.3 for the development of a river basin management plan; 2.5 on the harmonization of management planning for adjacent nationally established protected areas. It is expected to contribute towards up-scaling of the results of the demonstration activities under Outcome 3. The in-kind support from the Swiss Cooperation Office aims to establish an integrated functional framework for the protection, sustainable use and equitable allocation of water resources in Kosovo* through a highly participatory approach of managing water resources at river basin scale, aligned with the principles of IWRM and the EU WFD. It includes activities -among others- related to institutional and organizational capacity development for water resource management; upgrade of water monitoring and water Information systems; stakeholder awareness and participation mechanisms. This support will -overall- facilitate the implementation of all project activities and will result in outputs that will be used as basis for the implementation of Output 1.1 for the update of the Drin TDA; Output 1.2 for the design of multipurpose monitoring program; Output 1.3 for the analysis of freshwater ecosystems; Output 2.2 for the establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism; Output 2.3 for the development of a river basin management plan; 2.5 on the harmonization of management planning tools for adjacent nationally established protected areas. It is expected to contribute towards up-scaling of the results of the demonstration activities under Outcome 3 and create a more fertile ground for the achievement of Outcome 4. - UNDP?s co-financing is planned from the ongoing regional project funded by the Adaptation Fund, "Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management project in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans?. Outcome 2 of the Drin Adaptation Flood Risk Management (FRM) project aims to improve institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for flood risk management in the Drin River basin, and development of climate change adaptation and flood risk management strategies and plans at the basin, sub-basin, and national levels in the Drin riparians. These activities will provide basis for the implementation of: a. Outcome 1; the technical tools to be developed as part of the climate change and flood risk management plans (institutional analysis, hydrologic and hydraulic models etc.) will provide the basis for the implementation of Output 1.1 for the update of the Drin TDA; Output 1.2 for the design of

multipurpose monitoring programme; Output 1.4 for the assessment of sediment balance; Output 1.5 A dialogue to discuss scenarios for the operation of dams to enable optimization of water and flood risk management, and energy production. b. Outcome 2; the flood risk management strategy, capacity development plan, flood risk management plan etc. will provide the background to build on for the implementation of Output 2.2 for the establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism; Output 2.3 for the development of a River Basin Management Plan; Output 2.4 for the flood Risk Management actions in the White Drin basin. c. Overall to the implementation of the flood related actions under the Drin SAP. - GWP-Med will contribute in-kind co-financing in the form of staff time and office expenses for the overall coordination and implementation of the project.

D. Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
UNDP	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	7,105,936	675,064	7,781,000.00
			Total Grant Resources($)		**7,105,936.00**	**675,064.00**	**7,781,000.00**

E. Non Grant Instrument

NON-GRANT INSTRUMENT at CEO Endorsement

Includes Non grant instruments? **No**

Includes reflow to GEF? **No**

F. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required **true**

PPG Amount ($)

200,000

PPG Agency Fee ($)

19,000

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount($)	Fee($)	Total($)
UNDP	GET	Regional	International Waters	International Waters	200,000	19,000	**219,000.00**
				Total Project Costs($)	**200,000.00**	**19,000.00**	**219,000.00**

Core Indicators

Indicator 2 Marine protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
418,243.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Indicator 2.1 Marine Protected Areas Newly created

Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 2.2 Marine Protected Areas Under improved management effectiveness

Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
418,243.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)
GE - Kolkheti			15,743.00						
UA ? NW shelf			402,500.00						

Indicator 7 Shared water ecosystems under new or improved cooperative management

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Shared water Ecosystem	Drin	Drin		
Count	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**

Indicator 7.1 Level of Transboundary Diagonostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program (TDA/SAP) formulation and implementation (scale of 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Drin	2	2		

Indicator 7.2 Level of Regional Legal Agreements and Regional management institution(s) (RMI) to support its implementation (scale of 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Drin	2	2		

Indicator 7.3 Level of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministeral Committees (IMC; scale 1 to 4; See Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Drin	1	1		

Indicator 7.4 Level of engagement in IWLEARN throgh participation and delivery of key products(scale 1 to 4; see Guidance)

Shared Water Ecosystem	Rating (Expected at PIF)	Rating (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Rating (Achieved at MTR)	Rating (Achieved at TE)
Drin	1	1		

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	331,500	150,300		
Male	318,500	149,700		
Total	650000	300000	0	0

Provide additional explanation on targets, other methodologies used, and other focal area specifics (i.e., Aichi targets in BD) including justification where core indicator targets are not provided

Core Indicator 7 - Number of shared water ecosystems (fresh or marine) under new or improved cooperative management. The number is 1: the Drin Basin Indicator 7.1 - Level of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program (TDA/SAP) formulation and implementation. The indicator is rated ??? at the PIF Stage as there is a TDA and SAP developed during the foundational project, ??? for the endorsement stage as there are no significant changes expected in between, and ?4? at the end of the project as an updated TDA will be ready while many of the actions under the SAP will be implemented and others catalysed as a result of the implementation of the new GEF project. Indicator 7.2 - Level of Regional Legal Agreements and Regional Management Institutions to support its implementation. The indicator is rated ??? at the PIF Stage as there is a joint body -the Drin Core Group (DCG)- that is functioning, serviced by the GWP-Med being its Secretariat. The activities planned under the project is expected to lead to the establishment of an organizational structure that will gradually assume responsibilities that currently GWP-Med has, under its role as the DCG Secretariat. A legal document in the form of an updated MoU or an International agreement will be put forward for negotiation and signing to legally and

operationally enable these changes. The activities to be implemented throughout the project implementation are expected to gradually deliver results hence, the indicator is rated ?3? and ?4? for the MTR and TE milestones. Indicator 7.3 - Level of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministerial Committees. The indicator is rated ?1? at the PIF Stage as there are Interministerial Committees formulated during and as a result of the foundational project. There are also on-going processes in relation to reforms of the water and natural resources management at the national level. The activities planned under the project are expected to contribute to these reforms through the generation of knowledge regarding the Drin Basin ecosystem, the development of technical and policy tools, the development of transboundary institutional settings and policy instruments and the testing of novel management approaches that could be replicated/upscaled. The activities to be implemented throughout the project execution are expected to gradually deliver results hence the indicator is rated ?2? and ?3? for the MTR and TE milestones respectively. The indicator can?t be rated ?4? as the national reforms can be influenced but can?t be controlled by the project. Indicator 7.4 - Level of engagement in IWLEARN through participation and delivery of key products. The indicator is rated ?1? at the PIF Stage as although there are linkages with the IWLEARN project (that has just recently commenced its activities), the project do not yet deliver products to feed the IWLEARN thus the IW community. There is going to be full scale engagement in IWLEARN activities immediately after the initiation of the project implementation thus the indicator is rated ?4? for both the MTR and TE milestones. Core Indicator 11 ? Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment. The following definition was used (provided by PIF GEFSEC review sheet (see below under (8) in this section the respective excerpt)) with regard to ?direct beneficiaries?: ?real, direct and quantifiable (countable and verifiable) numbers of beneficiaries (...). This then means that direct beneficiaries should be defined narrowly as those that are directly (physically/income) impacted by the project ? so this would usually be participants in pilots such as communities/families living in pilot (watershed mmgt etc.), people living in floodplains (for flood early warning systems), and so on.? The direct beneficiaries for this project equals to population of the areas where pilots will be implemented. The broad areas that the pilots will be implemented are defined and described in Component 3. A Geographic Information System (GIS) tool was used to calculate the direct beneficiaries using population related data acquired through the foundational project (for the development of the TDA). The disaggregation between genders was done -in the absence of related data- using the generic percentages of 51% for women and 49% for men.

Part II. Project Justification

1a. Project Description

1) Global environmental and adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed

The Drin Basin is located in the southwestern part of the Balkan Peninsula. It comprises the transboundary sub?basins of the Drin and Buna/Bojana Rivers and of the Prespa, Ohrid and Skadar/Shkoder Lakes. The Drin River is the ?connecting body? of the ?extended? Drin Basin, linking the lakes, wetlands, rivers and aquatic habitats in the coastal area as well as the marine habitats in the Adriatic Sea into a single, yet complex, ecosystem of major importance. The water bodies and their watersheds are spread in a geographical area that includes Albania, Greece, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo*. The total geographical area of the Drin Basin is 20,361 km2. The basin is characterized mainly by mountainous relief (the highest peaks reach 2,500m asl in the Dinaric Arc) with the exception of the basin?s coastal area in Albania and Montenegro. With its important water resources (the third greatest river discharge into the European part of the Mediterranean, after the Po and Rhone rivers), this complex system provides a wealth of services to the Drin Riparians that share the basin: energy supply, recreation and tourism, fisheries, water supply for irrigation and domestic uses, sustenance of unique endemic biodiversity, and livelihoods. The basin is home to over 1.61 million people, living in over 1,450 settlements.

Water and natural resources management at the Drin Basin level was fragmented and uncoordinated until the development of the Shared Vision for the Sustainable Management of the Drin Basin and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (Drin MoU) on November 25th, 2011, in Tirana, by water and environment ministers and high-level officials of the Drin Riparians (Albania, Greece, Kosovo*, Montenegro and North Macedonia). The MoU established an official cooperation process, the Drin Coordinated Action (Drin CORDA) process. The objective of the MoU is to deliver the agreed shared vision, to ?*promote joint action for the coordinated integrated management of the shared water resources in the Drin Basin, as a means to safeguard and restore to the extent possible the ecosystems and the services they provide, and to promote sustainable development across the Drin Basin*?. Under the Drin CORDA process, GWP-Med with the cooperation of UNECE, implemented the Global Environment Facility (GEF; UNDP was the implementing agency) financed foundational International Waters projects ?*Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Extended Drin River Basin*? (PIMS 4482; $ 4,5M; Albania, North Macedonia and Montenegro were the beneficiaries) and the associated medium-sized project entitled ?*Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the White Drin and the extended Drin Basin*? (PIMS 5510; $ 1M; Kosovo* was the beneficiary) aimed at facilitating the implementation of the MoU through the GEF recommended TDA/SAP process.

Based on the extensive assessments developed and the research conducted as part of the Drin Basin TDA[2]2, the following four key priority and crosscutting transboundary issues have been identified and confirmed/approved by the Drin Core Group (DCG) as well as through the endorsement of the Drin SAP (24.04.2020). The TDA?s causal chain analysis is given in Annex A of the Project Document and Annex G.1 of the CEO endorsement request document. The transboundary issues of concern are:

? Deterioration of water quality, which affects ? at different levels ? all parts of the Drin Basin (surface water, groundwater and coastal/marine water). Of particular concern is the presence of excess

nutrients (and associated primary production) and BOD load (from poorly or untreated domestic wastewater and agriculture) as well as industrial and municipal solid waste pollution from mining and settlements. Within the basin there is evidence of high levels of nitrogen load in lake Ohrid, the White Drin River, tributaries of lake Skadar/ Shkode?r and especially the Morac?a River. Phosphorus (a significant part of which derives from wastewater effluents) is considered a major issue across the basin. Coastal waters are considered to be at risk from receiving excess nutrients.

? Variability of the hydrological regime -as a result of climate variability and, in some sub-basins, of seasonal water over-abstraction and hydropower generation- jeopardizing the availability of water for the ecosystems and socio-economic development, and exacerbating naturally occurring extreme phenomena, such as floods and droughts. Increasing frequency of droughts can have an adverse effect during the summer period on agriculture and industry. Drought impacts can be worsened by additional impacts from hydro-morphological modifications (as a result of hydropower dams and flood defences) that can reduce groundwater recharge. The management of the dams to maximize energy production as well as the uncoordinated management of the cascade of dams between countries can further exacerbate extreme events (floods).

? Biodiversity degradation. The importance of biodiversity in the Drin Basin is significant at the European level, though it is under pressure due to multiple threats to the basin?s ecosystems from pollution, changes in water quantity, alien species, loss of wetlands, illegal activities and climate variability and change, among others.

? Variability of the sediment transport regime, which is affected by natural events, climate variability and change and anthropogenic impacts from gravel extraction, deforestation, poor land-use management and hydropower generation, among others. The identified impacts and causes of excessive or deficient sediment transport are: decreased sediment loads and increased erosion downstream hydropower dams, Buna/Bojana River deposition and erosion processes and interaction with the sea.

Issues of transboundary concern	**Underlying causes/ Barriers**
Deterioration of water quality: Excess nutrients from diffuse sources, Excess nutrients (and BOD) from wastewater, Phosphates-containing detergents, Agrochemicals, Industrial wastewater discharges, Heavy metals from mining activities and (hazardous) wastes leakages.	1.Insufficient/inadequate policies for agriculture, Insufficient/inadequate policies for solid waste, Insufficient monitoring, Low level of enforcement, Low capacity, Low awareness of polluting activities.
Variability of the hydrological regime: Exacerbation of extreme climatic events (floods and droughts), Increased pressure on water resources at the local or sub-basin level, Hydropower plant operations of dams in the Drin River, cascade (aiming to maximize energy production).	2. Lack of integration among sectors/ministries, Lack of cooperation between hydropower plant operators, Low enforcement of existing polices, Low integration on water management, Low awareness/capacity, Low application of climate change adaptation measures, Low/lack of emergency planning.
Biodiversity degradation: Pollution, Gravel mining activities, Insufficient water quantity and variability in water level/flow as a result of hydropower plants operation, Deforestation /poorly managed forest resources, Overfishing and inappropriate fishing practices, Illegal hunting, Invasive and alien species.	3. Inadequate/insufficient policies and low enforcement of existing policies, Lack of natural resources management (including wetlands and forestry), Insufficient technical capacity, Insufficient coordination between sectors, Low awareness, Insufficient financial support.
Variability of the sediment transport regime: Unsustainable agricultural practices, Deforestation, Extreme weather events (floods and droughts), Hydro-morphological alterations, Hydropower plant operations, Gravel extraction.	4. Lack of enforcement, Lack of capacity (identify and assess problems) and mitigation measures (nature-based solutions), Lack of monitoring, Insufficient Riparian level and international coordination, Lack of awareness.

The causes for the existing barriers listed in the table above, are linked mainly with the sectoral -and non-coordinated- organization of the governments and the insufficient institutional, human, financial and technical capacities that are reflected in insufficient and non-coordinated sectoral policies, management actions etc.; these causes are described in the section *Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects*.

The TDA indicated a number of institutional, managerial and knowledge related issues that constitute impediments for the sustainable management of the Drin Basin at the national and transboundary levels.

These impediments are linked to the four transboundary problems and substantiate the barriers listed in the table above:

1. Deterioration of water quality

? The methods used for gathering or generating water quality data in the basin are weak and need to be strengthened to enhance the quality and comparability of results. This strengthening should address all stages from sampling, analyses and quality control to reporting.
? Data and information management systems exist at national level but there is absence of exchange systems that need to be established at the Drin regional level to facilitate the implementation of coordinated actions to reduce pollution.
? Policies as well as their enforcement for all pollution-related issues are weak and should be strengthened.
? The lack of adequate wastewater collection systems should be assessed and considered for development, along with the upgrade or construction of new wastewater treatment works for agglomerations with a population equivalent above 2,000. Priority should be given to agglomerations that are responsible for the largest shares of pollution in the basin.
? Appropriate agricultural measures to reduce nutrients and pesticides/ herbicides should be identified, especially in the White Drin River and Lake Skadar/Shkod?r sub-basins as diffuse agricultural sources are a significant cause of nutrient pollution.

2. Variability of the hydrological regime

? Knowledge in relation to water resources management need to be strengthened. In this regard, detailed studies (including modelling) are required on:
o potential climate change effects on the water availability
o water stress under different climate and water demand scenarios
o environmental water requirements (minimum flow)
o effects of hydropower generation on the hydrological regime (including effects from hydromorphological alterations, hydropeaking, etc.)
o sediment transport (including erosion and deposition)
o calculation of pollutant loads (based on concentrations and discharges).
? The benefits of a coordinated monitoring network to cover the entire Drin Basin needs to be assessed during the implementation of the SAP, considering all aspects of monitoring sites, monitoring techniques, analytical methods, quality control, reporting, etc.
? Drought forecasting should be carried out.
? Flood risk/hazard modelling and flood preparedness/risk management (including warning systems) should be developed.
? Following the recommendations of the nexus study, an investigation into multisector requirements for water resources should be conducted.
? Discussions and feasibility studies on the coordinated management of the large dam cascades in Albania and North Macedonia should be enabled.

3. Biodiversity degradation

? A systematic research and monitoring of biodiversity and its management in the Drin Basin, focusing on information gaps and conservation priorities is weak and need to be strengthened.
? A common vision regarding conservation is not in place.
? Clarification of responsibilities and improved coordination between all institutions involved in conserving and managing natural resources is necessary.
? The strengthening of natural resource management institutions through the provision of adequate long-term budgets, staffing and training is necessary.
? There is a need for an improved managerial framework related to fishing and hunting, including the enforcement of legislation.

4. Variability of the sediment transport regime

? Studies and actions/measures are required to assess and address the impacts of sediment transport variability, including:
o developing and implementing harmonized approaches to sediment monitoring
o assessing impacts on sediment transport changes from deforestation, land use and other related activities
o assessing impacts from changes to the sediment transport regime on biodiversity and tourism (for example, the loss of beaches)
o assessing impacts from in-river gravel extraction on the sediment transport regime
o assessing impacts from hydropower operation on sediment transport to identify means to reduce negative impacts from dams.

In addition to the above, a number of technical and transboundary policy tools and processes (management plans monitoring programmes in place, decision making processes for transboundary management etc.) for the Drin Riparians to managing the basin in a coordinated way are necessary. Building on the results of the foundational project and the successes of the Drin CORDA process these can now be created to strengthen/further concretize transboundary cooperation.

There is a number of projects and initiatives that are on-going or in the pipeline (see Annex G.4: Ongoing baseline projects and initiatives relevant to the objectives and activities of the project). Unfortunately, these are implemented independently as the sectoral approach in the organization of the government, policies and decision making resulting in lack of coordination among ministries and institutions, affect also the level of coordination in the design and implementation of these projects. As a result, there are

overlaps, un-tapped potential for synergies etc. The existence of the Drin SAP and strengthened transboundary cooperation should be the elements that will catalyze coordination among the different projects and initiatives supported by a number of different donors, resulting in overall increased effectiveness in terms of raising the capacities for the management of the Drin Basin.

The above can be codified in four major groups of impediments that the project should address; addressing these, the project will contribute to lifting the barriers:

1. Insufficient capacity of institutions and stakeholders to effectively manage the transboundary Drin Basin due to lack of sufficient knowledge and understanding of critical components of the Basin and the natural resources and its ecosystems (pollution, water resources, sediment transport, biodiversity etc.) lack of technical and policy tools (monitoring programs, information management, minimum ecosystem water flows etc.) and human capacities.

2. Absence of policy instruments to enable management of the basin at the transboundary level (e.g. joint monitoring programmes, management plans for waters, flood risk and protected areas etc.) and assessment of the necessity to/ and if decided by the Drin Riparians, update of the existing transboundary institutional arrangement consolidating related transboundary frameworks.

3. Insufficient action for addressing pressures that lead to transboundary problems, unsustainable water uses and ecosystem functioning (e.g. action for wastewater management, toxic pollution, diffuse pollution from agriculture, unsustainable fishing etc.).

4. Political will for sustainable natural resources management need to be strengthened/sustained and so is coordination among existing initiatives and projects at the national and transboundary level, stakeholders participation and gender mainstreaming.

The TDA analysis of the issues related to the nexus between water and the energy, forestry, and agriculture sectors in the context of river basin management, revealed three conflicting water uses that jeopardize the sustainability and functioning of the basin ecosystems and affect the livelihoods of its inhabitants. These are:

- Water and Energy: the maximization of electricity production is typically at odds with flood mitigation requirements due to the key role of hydropower operators in flow regulation and floods management.
- Water and Forestry: extensive commercial logging and rampant illegal logging have resulted in forest degradation in recent years, hindering the role of forests in relation to water resources, basin management and erosion and sedimentation.
- Water and Agriculture: agriculture ranks first in terms of increasing water consumption in many of the sub-basins.

The Drin River Basin Strategic Action Program

Based on the findings of the TDA, the Drin Riparians reached common understanding on the complexity and magnitude of the issues of transboundary concern, and consensus on a Strategic Action Program for the Drin basin to address the underlying and root causes of the transboundary problems and lift all barriers for the sustainable management of the basin and its natural resources, thus providing the means for the -further- operationalization of the Drin Coordinated Action, that is the framework set by Drin Riparians for the implementation of the Drin MoU.

The SAP adopts three key methodological approaches:

? River Basin Management: The management of water systems as part of the broader natural environment and in relation to their socio-economic environment. Such an integration of socio-economic aspects into water management with a basin-wide approach opens the way for the implementation of IWRM.

? The Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus: These three (*plus one*) sectors are inextricably linked and actions in one area more often impact one or all the others. By perceiving and understanding these

impacts, the ?nexus approach? seeks to manage trade-offs and to build synergies, allowing for more integrated and cost-effective planning, and decision-making.

? Source to Sea approach: It considers the entire social, ecological, and economic system, from the land area that is drained by a river system to the coastal area and even the open ocean (*sea*) it flows into *(GEF STAP Policy paper 2016)*. The Source to Sea approach seeks to prioritize key flows, and enhance/restore positive flows (e.g. biodiversity, ecosystem services and high-quality water) and reduce negative flows (e.g. pollution, sediments) across landscapes/seascapes.

The shared vision for the management of the Drin Basin -being also the objective of the Drin MoU- that is the restoration, to the extent possible, of the water dependent ecosystems of the Basin and of the services they provide, is at the core of the SAP. In order to achieve this shared vision, the SAP indicates 7 overarching Goals**,** and 14 objectives to meet the goals:

- Goal 1: Improving access to comprehensive data and adequate information to fully understand the current state of the environment and the water resources and the hydrologic system (including surface, underground and coastal waters) as well as ecosystems of the Drin Basin.

- Objective 1: Establishment and implementation of monitoring programs (water quality, hydrological/hydrogeological, sediment transport, biodiversity) for coordinated action among Riparians for the management of the Extended Drin Basin by 2030

- Objective 2: Enhancement and development of Riparian and regional data and information systems (water quality, hydrological/hydrogeological, sediment transport, biodiversity) for coordinated action among Riparians for the management of the Extended Drin Basin by 2030.

- Goal 2: Establish conditions for the sustainable use of water and its supported ecosystems.

- Objective 1: Establishment of a knowledge base on water resources and ecosystems for informed decision-making by 2025

- Objective 2: Strengthening mechanisms and policies to support management of water resources and ecosystems by 2030

- Objective 3: Implementation of local, Riparian and regional actions to promote sustainable water use and ensure ecosystem functioning and resilience by 2030

- Objective 4: Improvement of capacities and increased awareness to promote sustainable water use and ensure ecosystem functioning and resilience by 2030

- Goal 3: Develop cooperation measures to minimize risks of disasters due to extreme natural phenomena and climate change by 2030.

  - Objective 1: Improved coordinated management among Riparians for flood risks by 2030

  - Objective 2: Improved coordinated management among Riparians for drought risks by 2030

- Goal 4: Improve management and appropriate disposal of solid wastes.

- Objective 1: Reduction in and enhancement of the management of municipal solid wastes to achieve desired targets by 2030

- Goal 5: Decrease nutrient pollution deriving from untreated or poorly treated wastewater discharges and unsustainable agricultural practices.

- Objective 1: Reduction of untreated wastewater discharge from urban areas by 2030

- Objective 2: Reduction of nutrient pollution deriving from unsustainable agricultural practices by 2030

- Goal 6: Decrease pollution from hazardous substances such as heavy metals and pesticides.

- Objective 1: Reduction of heavy metals and pesticides pollution from industry, mining and agriculture by 2030

•Goal 7: Minimize effects of hydro-morphologic interventions that alter the nature of the hydrologic system and the supported ecosystems, resulting in their deterioration.

•Objective 1: Minimize the effects of hydro morphological interventions from HPP by 2030

•Objective 2: Minimize the effects of other hydro morphological interventions including gravel extraction by 2030

The vision, breath and structure of the SAP are summarized in Annex B of the Project Document and Annex G.2 of this CEO endorsement request.

2) Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects

Water related legislation in the Drin Riparians

Albania - Primary legislation regarding Albania?s waters has been regulated since 15.11.2012 by Law No. 111/2012 on Integrated Water Resources Management, which was amended in 2018 by Law 6/2018. The Law enables: Protection and improvement of the aquatic environment, surface waters, temporary or permanent, sea/territorial waters, exclusive economic zones, continental shelf, transboundary waters, groundwater, and their status; Security, preservation, development and sustainable and rational use of water resources, necessary for life and for the social and economic development of the country; Equitable distribution of water resources, as intended by their effective management; Protection of water resources from pollution and overuse, and promotion of consumption based on actual needs; Establishment of the institutional framework, at Riparian (central) and local level, required for the implementation of a national policy for the administration and management of water resources to the benefit of communities and according to the country?s social and economic interests. Water related priorities are included in the National Strategy for Integrated Water Resource Management (2018).

Kosovo* ? The primary water legislation is Law No. 04/L-147 On water. Among others, the Law provides for the development of River Basin Management Plans and the establishment of basin authorities that would need to work towards maintaining or restoring good ecological and chemical quality of water bodies, to ensure an adequate supply of drinking and process water, both in terms of quality and quantity, and to secure for the long term all other water uses that serve the public interest. Water related priorities are included in the 2017 Water Strategy.

Montenegro ? The Law on Water (2007, amended 2015 and 2017) is the basic law for water related issues. The Law applies for all types of waters and regulates: the legal status and the method of integrated management of waters; conditions and methods of performing water related activities; coastal land and water facilities and systems used to carry out the water related activities and other related issues of importance. It defines the measures and activities for protection of water against pollution, protection of human health, fauna and flora and environmental protection. It provides conditions for the preservation and maintenance of natural and artificial water bodies, the prevention of the deterioration of the water regime and protection from the adverse effects of water. Also, it sets out the main objectives for water protection for groundwaters. It stipulates that water, being a natural resource and an asset of common interest, is property of the state. Economic valuation of waters towards full cost recovery and public participation are among its provisions. The Water related priorities are included in the Water Management Strategy.

North Macedonia - The Law on Waters, transposes the EU WFD and daughter directives. It is a framework law regulating issues concerning both surface and underground waters and defining management and control of water use, protection and prevention of water contamination, protection against floods, as well as financing of water management activities. The adopted bylaws regulate among others: the conditions under which deviations from aquatic environment quality targets will be allowed; specific conditions for direct and indirect discharging of wastewaters; identification of water bodies with

water intended for human consumption etc. Water related priorities are included in the National Strategy for Waters (NWS).

Legal and institutional frameworks for natural resources management and environmental protection in the Drin at the Riparians and transboundary level.

The environment related strategic documents of the Drin Riparians highlight the need to strengthen water management and infrastructure, improve waste management, expand protected areas, rehabilitate polluted areas, promote sustainable land use planning and sustainable use of natural resources, strengthen environmental institutions and increase public participation in environmental decision making.

In Albania, the National Strategy for Development and European Integration 2015-2020 (NSDI II) serves as the guiding document for sustainable development and is closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) principles. In Kosovo*, no strategic documents have been adopted to set sustainability goals and serve as a framework for sustainable development; nevertheless, the development of Sustainable Development Strategy has started. The Kosovo* Environmental Strategy 2013-2022, an updated review of the Strategy of Environment (2005-2015), provides the framework for enhancing sustainable management of natural resources. In North Macedonia, a number of strategic documents govern sustainable development and set sustainability objectives including the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2009-2030 (adopted in 2010), the Second National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP 2), and the National Strategy for Environmental Investment (2009-2013). In Montenegro, the framework documents governing sustainable development and setting related framework objectives are the National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030 (prepared in 2016) and the National Strategy and Action Plan for transposition, implementation and enforcement of the EU acquis on Environment and Climate Change, which fulfil the opening benchmark for Chapter 27.

All Drin Riparians aspire to join the EU. This objective is clearly articulated in their development policies and strategies. The Riparians have made significant efforts to harmonize their legislation with relevant EU Directives. However, much work still needs to be done to enact subsidiary legislation that both meets EU standards considering Riparians?specifics and is compatible with existing institutional roles and responsibilities. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directives are of special importance because they affect all economic sectors and proactively integrate and mitigate key environmental concerns at an early stage of planning or development. Implementation of EIA and SEA including meaningful involvement of the public and civil society needs to be strengthened considerably for plans, programs and projects in all industrial sectors with significant effects on the environment. Montenegro?s laws on EIA and SEA are to a large extent aligned to the relevant EU Directives. In Albania, the law governing EIA is fully in line with Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, and specific rules and procedures govern transboundary EIA. In both Albania and Kosovo*, the application of SEA requirements in the relevant sectors is at an early stage. In Albania, since the adoption of the Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment, there has been an increase in the number of SEAs. However, no consolidated database or register of SEAs exists.

The Water Framework and Bathing Water Directives are largely transposed, and responsibilities are partly clarified in the respective laws. However, legislation in the Riparians is poorly aligned with the acquis on water quality and administrative capacity for water management remains weak. Water quality is a cause for serious concern and improving water services is a major challenge. In particular, the alignment with the Urban Waste Water Treatment, Drinking Water and Groundwater Directives is insufficient and regulations to strengthen implementation are lacking. All Riparians are either meeting the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive (as in the case of Greece) or are working towards this end through the development of River Basin Management Plans (RBM plans) that will address the issues resulting in the failure to reach good ecological status (or potential). In cases that RBM plans for the parts of the Drin Basin extending in their territories are developed -in Albania- or development is ongoing -in Kosovo* and Montenegro- these are not coordinated. A transboundary RBM plan in accordance with the EU WFD was prepared for the Lake Ohrid in the framework of the foundational GEF Drin Project.

In terms of institutional aspects, responsibilities for water management are shared by several institutions. The institutional setting for water resources management in Albania is rather centralized and undergoes regular reform but includes nonetheless overlapping responsibilities between central and local level institutions, resulting in a fragmented water sector with inefficient operations. In Kosovo* the division of responsibilities among different institutions in the water sector needs to be clarified and the same is true for North Macedonia. In the latter, environmental objectives are inadequately defined, subsidiary legislation is missing, and the legislation is deficient in setting an adequate and clear permitting, pricing and inspection system. In Montenegro, responsibilities are shared between the two ministries responsible for agriculture and nature/water quality; the full implementation and compliance with the EU water acquis is estimated to cost more than 1 billion EUR over the period to 2035, representing more than 50% of the total cost of full compliance with the entire environmental acquis. The institutional capacity of and cooperation between institutions for monitoring and data management need to be strengthened.

For waste management the main challenges are related to poorly defined roles and responsibilities at various levels of authorities, weak enforcement of laws, low level of administrative and institutional capacity to implement existing legislation, inadequate and uncontrolled disposal of waste, and lack of policies and measures for recycling or processing of waste. The legal frameworks of the Drin Riparians are partially aligned with the EU acquis in this field. Considerable efforts are needed to develop and implement strategies and laws on waste management with special attention to clarifying the roles and responsibilities of various institutions, implementation of local waste management plans, strengthening of financial and administrative capacities at the municipal/local level, improving systems of separation of waste collection, increasing the effectiveness of waste management planning, and addressing the management of hazardous waste.

On nature protection, priorities include establishment of the Natura 2000 network, strengthening the capacities of protected area authorities, and implementation of regulations concerning the obligations of hydropower investments to protect nature. Administrative capacities will have to be significantly strengthened, in particular in relation to application of the Habitats and Birds Directives, with respect to assessment, compensatory measures and other specifics with regards to establishment of the Natura 2000 network.

Concerning forest management, despite the fact that the Drin Riparians are rich in forest resources, the increased use of firewood for energy purposes, extensive commercial logging and rampant illegal logging have resulted in forest degradation in recent years. An overly restrictive legal framework limiting the rights of forest owners and users has hampered the application of sustainable forest management practices. There is a need to strengthen capacities in the field of municipal forest management by involving local communities, owner associations and other stakeholders in the preparation of forest management plans.

Overall, through the EU Accession process and the adoption of the EU acquis, the Riparians have committed to the management of water bodies in accordance with the principles provided by -among others- the EU Water Framework Directive, the EU Flood Risks Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The implementation of these directives will also benefit the Riparians implementing and reporting of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets.

The Strategic Documents in the Drin Riparians are presented in Annex D of the Project Document and Annex G.3 of the CEO endorsement request document.

Source to Sea approach

Basin management, coastal zone management and marine area management are largely not coordinated due to the lack of basic knowledge on the interaction of the natural and anthropogenic elements in the three spatial domains (e.g. the ways water flow and sediment flow regime affect the coastal area and the marine environment), integrated policy instruments and management tools.

Both Albania and Montenegro are parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention; signed on 16 February 1976/amended on 10 June 1995) and its Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean.

The Integrated Resources Management Plan (IRMP) for the Buna/Bojana area was developed in 2015 in the framework of a pilot activity under the GEF/UNEP MedPartenrship looking into basin and coastal zone management issues and measures in an integrated way. Still, this plan misses (naturally as there was not enough information and data at the time of its development) input from analysis of issues and solutions covering to the full extent the Drin Basin and the marine area.

The GEF/UNEP project ?Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning? focused on Albania and Montenegro -finished in June 2021- and looked into the coastal and marine areas, enriching the knowledge base, generating management tools and building capacities.

The GEF Drin (foundational) Project TDA made an initial effort to analyze the system using the Source-to-Sea approach to the extent allowed by the information available on transitional waters and the marine area; the results of the GEF/UNEP project Adriatic related project were not available when the TDA was being developed.

The international agreement text developed through the foundational GEF Drin Project following up on the related request of the DCG follows the Source-to-Sea approach; the Drin Riparians will define through the negotiation process to what extent related provisions will remain as part of the text.

Cooperation among Riparians

Cooperation in the Lake Ohrid sub-basin is established through the ?Agreement between council of ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of Republic of Macedonia for the Protection and Sustainable development of Lake Ohrid and its Watershed? signed on 17 June 2004 in Skopje and ratified by the Parliaments of both countries in 2005. The Lake Ohrid Committee established through this agreement became operational again in 2020 as a result -also- of the actions under the foundational GEF Drin Project in the framework of which the transboundary Lake Ohrid Watershed Management Plan -only the second transboundary basin management plan in Southeast Europe- was developed in accordance with the EU WFD.

The Prespa sub-basin riparian countries signed the ?Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area? on 2 February 2010 providing among others for the establishment of the Prespa Commission; it came in force in 2020. There are on-going actions for the establishment and operationalization of the Prespa Commission.

Aiming to secure coordination at all levels, the Drin MoU provides that in addition to officially appointed representatives of the Drin Riparians, also representatives of the Lake Ohrid Committee and Prespa Commission are members of the DCG.

Work at the Drin Basin level has progressed through the foundational GEF Drin project as it enabled the implementation of ~90% of the short- and medium-term measures included in the Drin MoU. Through the SAP the Riparians of the Drin Basin recognized their roles and responsibilities in conserving the global values of the resources in the Drin Basin. The SAP operationalizes action for the implementation of the long-term measures and objectives of the Drin MoU.

The foundational project has been instrumental in enhancing cooperation among the Drin Riparians. The DCG decided in its seventeenth ordinary meeting (May 2019, Pristina) to initiate actions to enable the Riparians to agree on the form and mandate of an institutional setting to succeed the Drin MoU and DCG responding to the advanced level of coordination necessary for the implementation of the SAP. In the same meeting, it was decided to initiate actions for the development of a River Basin Management Plan at the Drin Basin level (Drin RBM plan). In line with the DCG decisions, the GEF Drin Project supported

the development of the: draft text of an international agreement to provide the basis for negotiations among the Riparians; ToR for the Drin RBM plan.

The Riparians are Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention). In addition to Albania and Montenegro, Greece is also party to the Barcelona Convention while it signed the ICZM protocol.

Ongoing relevant baseline projects

Water and environment related activities in the Drin Riparians consist primarily of Riparian level actions driven by the EU approximation processes, as they strive to adhere to EU policy frameworks and standards, address climate change, and improve wastewater treatment and solid waste management. Coordinated investments and cooperative efforts are however lacking. The table included in Annex H of the Project Document and in Annex G.4 of the CEO endorsement request document, presents the list of ongoing baseline projects and initiatives relevant to the objectives and activities of the project. Coordination and experience exchange mechanisms will be put in place (see Component 4) to ensure optimization of efforts and capture possible synergies.

In addition to the GEF/UNEP project ?Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning? aimed at introducing marine spatial planning in the Adriatic Eastern shores, there is the on-going GEF IW and CW funded MedProgram project aimed at reducing land-based sources of marine pollution. As such, exchanges of experiences and information with the Med Program?s child projects (in particular 2.1 and 4.1) as well as the GEF/UNDP/UNESCO IHP DIKTAS project, will be established in order to coordinate actions in the coastal areas of Albania and Montenegro and the shared aquifers of the Drin Basin.

3) Proposed alternative scenario - description of expected outcomes and components of the project

The proposed Project builds on the official cooperation process -the Drin Coordinated Action- established in 2011 (through the Drin MoU) that in turn was the result of a multi-stakeholders Drin Basin policy dialogue initiated in 2009; both were facilitated by GWP-Med in cooperation with UNECE. UNDP joined forces in 2013 for the development and implementation of the foundational projects.

Furthermore, the proposed Project builds on the results of the GEF-funded foundational projects and the Drin SAP; the latter responds to the aims and objectives of and provide the means for the operationalization of the Drin Coordinated Action.

The Drin MoU that provided the political framework of the foundational projects, will continue to do so for the proposed Project. The Drin Core Group, the joint body established through the Drin MoU comprising officially appointed representatives of all Drin Riparians became operational through the foundational projects, and performed the role of the projects? Steering Committee. The same arrangement is planned for the new SAP implementation GEF Project being proposed.

Strengthening the political and technical dimensions of cooperation among the Drin Riparians and enhancing Riparian level capacities to support the joint efforts in line with the commitments already undertaken through the SAP, will be main directions of work under the Project.

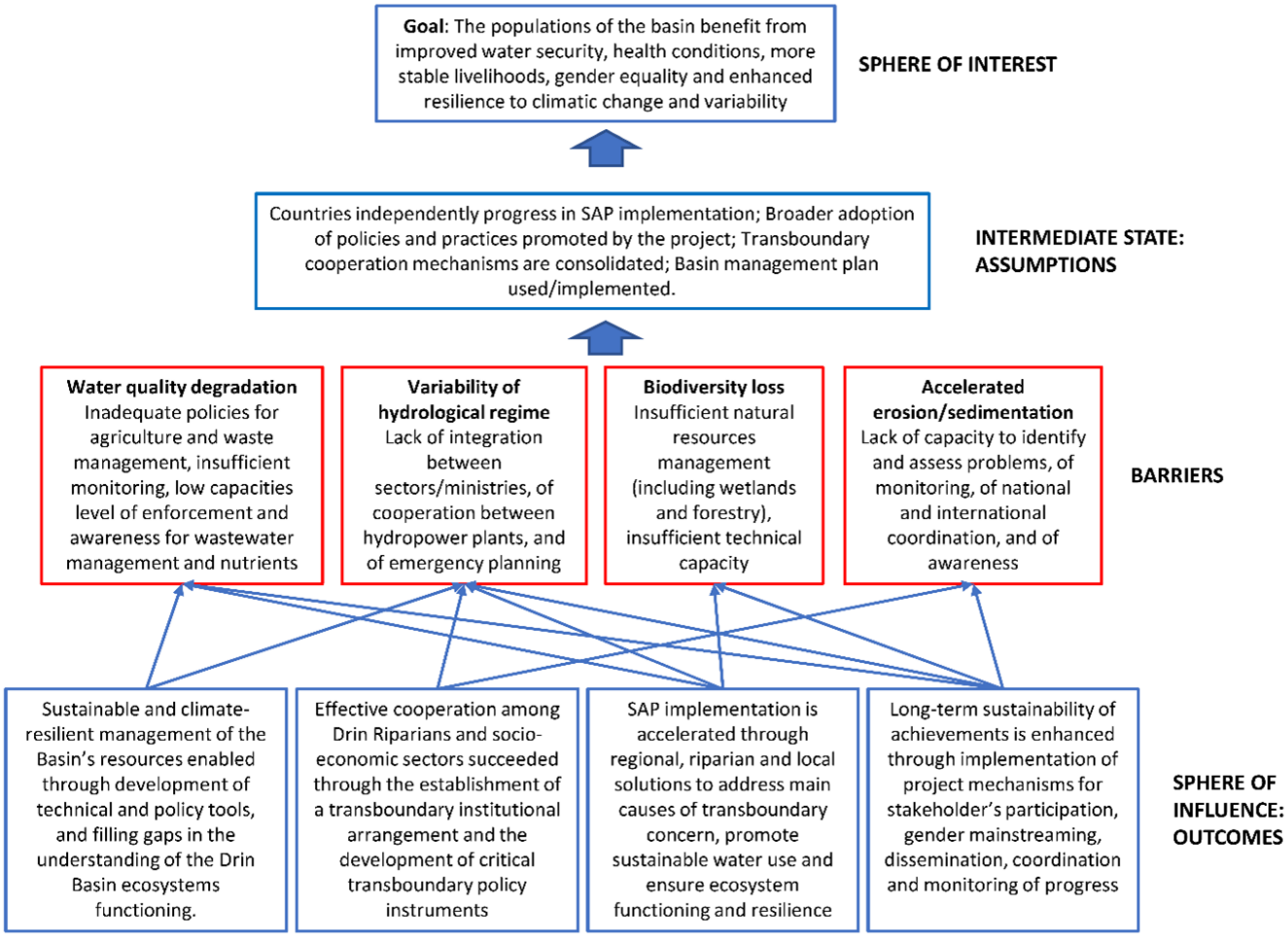
The project addresses a part of the barriers and priority impediments towards sustainable management of the Drin Basin using means that are among the actions agreed by the Drin Riparians and contained in the Drin SAP.

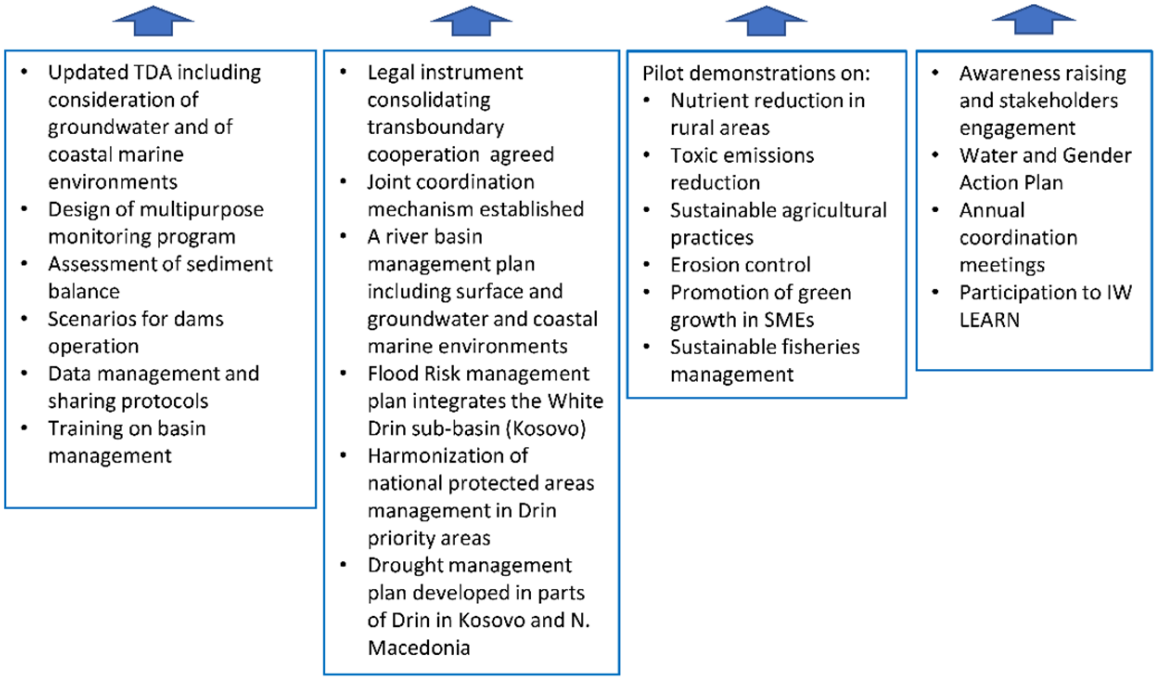
Theory of Change

The Theory of Change that is based on the SAP vision and informs the design of the project, builds on the notion that if:

- sustainable and climate-resilient management of the Basin?s resources is enabled through development of technical and policy tools and the enhancement of the understanding of the Drin Basin ecosystems functioning;
- effective cooperation among Drin Riparians and socio-economic sectors is consolidated through the establishment of a transboundary institutional arrangement and the development of critical transboundary policy instruments;
- SAP implementation is fostered and accelerated through the demonstration of regional and local solutions addressing main causes of transboundary concern, and promoting sustainable water use and ensuring ecosystem functioning and resilience;
- long-term sustainability of achievements is enhanced through implementation of project mechanisms for stakeholder?s participation, gender mainstreaming, dissemination, coordination and monitoring progress,

Then, after project completion, the four major groups of impediments that substantiate the barriers are addressed and the Drin Riparians? authorities and major stakeholders will continue successfully the implementation of SAP actions, and the population of the basin will eventually benefit from improved water security, health conditions, more stable livelihoods, gender equality and enhanced resilience to climatic change and variability.





The strategy is fully consistent with GEF-7 programming directions, in particular with objective 3 of International Waters Focal Area - Enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems, and its three strategic actions:

? Component 1, by actions for improving knowledge of the basin functioning, promoting the implementation of modern monitoring networks, will advance information exchange and early warning;

? Component 2, by consolidating transboundary coordination mechanisms among all Riparians, will enhance regional and riparian level cooperation on shared freshwater surface and groundwater basins;

? Component 3, by addressing at the pilot scale TDA identified issues of transboundary concern such as nutrient pollution, accelerated erosion, industrial emissions, and agricultural pollutants, will promote investments in water, food, energy and environmental security.

Project design, Outcomes and Outputs

As the Drin Riparians and their economies recover and rebuild from the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, authorities have been making the choice to build back better and build back greener and design their economic recovery packages having environmental sustainability and resilience as the underlying principles. The EU Economic and Investment Plan to the Western Balkans has the same aims and principles. Overall, the project is aligned with the above, as it will work towards the sustainable management of the natural resources from the source to the sea. The project will result in enhanced -jointly acquired- scientific and technical knowledge, develop management tools and foster the establishment of institutional settings at the regional level in an effort to address the root causes of transboundary issues and environmental degradation, and support sustainable management of the water resources and the water-depended ecosystems. It will also contribute to increasing the resilience of more vulnerable populations to the effects of climate change. In doing so, the project will facilitate green growth in ecologically sensitive areas through activities that will foster economic development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which human well-being relies. To this end, the Project will contribute to the transition of local economy towards sustainable approaches and activities through pilot interventions in partnership with industries, farmers, SMEs, fishermen. The Project will thus work with the private sector and the local authorities in these areas to empower both, to catalyse innovation and possibly investments, and give rise to new

economic opportunities, through promotion of green entrepreneurship. Capacity building, small grants programmes and possibly small-scale soft loans through credit lines from development banks, will be means to be used/tested.

The Project design follows the logic of the Drin SAP and aligns with the priority actions agreed upon by the Drin Riparians. It is expected to produce the following results:

? Establishment of a sustainable joint coordination body in the form of the current institutional arrangement or an evolved one -a Drin Commission- that may be created as a result of negotiations among the Drin Riparians and the signing of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin in line with the EU Water Framework Directive and the UNECE Water Convention.

? Strengthened capacity of institutions for informed decision making for the management of the shared resources, servicing multiple socio-economic sectors and environmental management, by providing enhanced knowledge and understanding of the: (i) hydrological and hydrogeological conditions including interaction with the receiving sea, incorporating climate change projections; (ii) ecological flows; (iii) status and trends of biodiversity; (iv) sediment balance, the pressures that lead to its disturbance and its relation to riverbed and coastal erosion.

? Further enhancement of trust among Riparians and of their management capacities by supporting improved transboundary monitoring and information/data sharing.

? Adoption of harmonized policies and instruments for the sustainable management of shared resources such as lake?s fisheries and protected areas that are adjacent.

? Development of a River Basin Management Plan at the Drin Basin level as well as management planning and measures for improved and coordinated management response among Riparians for floods (for Kosovo*) and drought risk reduction.

? Implementation of regional, riparian level and local solutions to promote water security and ensure ecosystem functioning and climate resilience. This will include technical and policy tools to be tested on the field to: (i) decrease point and diffuse pollution pressures, address unsustainable management of liquid waste as well as unsustainable agricultural practices; (ii) address the issue of accelerated erosion and sedimentation processes. It is expected that these interventions will also alleviate pressures in the adjacent coastal marine environment.

? Effective stakeholders? engagement in the management of the Drin Basin, providing solid basis for promoting planning and action. Annual Conferences, focus groups meetings, policy dialogues backed up by awareness and communication and stakeholder?s engagement strategies implemented throughout the project duration.

? Improved gender equality and women participation in water management.

It is structured in four components each one designed to address each of the four major groups of impediments that substantiate the barriers.

Component 1: Enhancing the capacity of key institutions and stakeholders to effectively implement integrated natural resources management in the transboundary Drin Basin.

This component is in line and assists in the implementation of the following goals and objectives of the Drin SAP: Goal 1, Objectives 1 and 2; Goal 2, Objective 1, Goal 7, Objective 1, and will address barriers 1 and 2.

Outcome 1: Sustainable and climate-resilient management of the Basin?s resources enabled through development of technical and policy tools, and filling gaps in the understanding of the Drin Basin ecosystems functioning.

The primary aim of this Component is the consolidation of the institutional capacity of the Riparians, and the provision of the knowledge necessary for decision making at riparian level and transboundary levels. The bulk of the effort will be on producing and submitting for adoption to the DCG two knowledge/management tools indispensable for managing the Basin?s natural resources (i) an updated TDA of the Drin basin, from its sources in the Dinaric Arc mountain range to its mouth in the Adriatic Sea, incorporating: a definition of hydrological and hydrogeological conditions including interactions with the shallow marine environment and consideration of future climatic scenarios; marine environment management considerations (ii) the design of multi-purpose transboundary monitoring program(s). These tools will be complemented by targeted analyses of the natural and anthropogenic processes in the Basin aimed at -among others- addressing priority concerns such as: over-exploitation of freshwater fisheries; erosion and sedimentation; freshwater ecosystems health; water stress; etc. The combination of Component 1 products will have the effect of enabling Riparians to sustainably manage the Basin?s natural resources.

The following Gender related activities that are part of the Gender Action Plan (see CEO Endorsement Request document section ?Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment? and Annex G.8 ?Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan 3?) will be implemented under this Component/Outcome:
- 1.4 Enhance gender capacities and/or knowledge of stakeholders/community groups to promote GEWE in the water management sector, focusing both on women and men. This will be achieved through dedicated trainings under Output 1.7.
- 1.5 Ensure Stakeholder Engagement and gender balanced participation in national and regional dialogues/meetings and processes, as appropriate, at all levels under Output 1.1.
- 3.1 Review of key documents under all Outputs of this Component, such as reports, surveys etc., through gender lenses to ensure gender mainstreaming in all key interventions.
- 5.1. Collect data, monitor the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, and share sex-disaggregated data with the stakeholders and project staff on an annual basis, to meet reporting requirements of the gender monitoring templates.

Outputs

1.1 ? An updated TDA presented for adoption by the DCG, including: (i) the conceptual model of the hydrology (surface water and groundwater) of the Basin, taking in consideration climate change scenarios, and interactions with the shallow marine environment and (ii) marine environment considerations.

The TDA developed through the foundational projects will be updated to take stock of newly developed data as well as to expand its coverage to the coastal zone and marine areas. As part of this work, the following information and documents will be produced:

? An updated Drin Basin hydrological map including the water bodies as per WFD and a hydrogeological map including transboundary aquifers. Further actions will focus on increasing precision of water balance prepared through the foundational project using additional data coming from the Adaptation Fund supported and UNDP implemented project entitled "Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans? making use of the newly developed therein hydrological model; effort will be made to cooperate in this regard with the Hydro Power (HP) Companies in the Drin Basin, for obtaining operational dams? data (e.g. outflow of water per day) to be used to increase the accuracy and precision of the mathematical models. This work will assist in updating/increasing the precision of another output of the foundational project regarding the stress to the basin?s water resources under different socio-economic development scenarios.

? Water quality / pollution risk maps at the riparian level/sub-basin levels, and an inventory of hotspots (regarding hazardous substances, heavy metals, pesticides, etc.) indicating potential sites for transboundary early warning of accidental release monitoring/warning to guide necessary managerial action.

? Coverage of the shallow marine environment and adoption of the source-to-sea approach that will rely among others on the results and scientific information produced through the GEF/UNEP project ?Implementation of Ecosystem Approach in the Adriatic Sea through Marine Spatial Planning? focused on Albania and Montenegro - completed in June 2021.

1.2 - A design of multi-purpose transboundary monitoring programs (surface water and groundwater, sediment loads, water living resources, etc.) developed based on an assessment of monitoring capacities, gaps and needs across the Basin and presented for adoption by the DCG, along with enhanced capacities to implement these.

The design will be based on an assessment of: (i) existing monitoring programs and capacities at the Riparians? level and (ii) required needs and procedures for the Riparians to perform monitoring in the Drin Basin at the transboundary level, in accordance with EU directives and strategic guidance from the Water Convention. The assessment is expected to focus on the following aspects (the list is to be finalized during project implementation): Monitoring sites and parameters, including parameters to be monitored for accidental pollution; Frequency of monitoring; Methodologies and protocols; Equipment; Opportunities for shared analytical/laboratory capabilities across Riparians; Training requirements; Quality assurance and quality control procedures; Financing requirements; etc.

The design of the Drin transboundary monitoring program - including (the list is to be finalized during project implementation) locations of monitoring stations building on riparian level networks, possibly monitoring guidelines and standards for implementing monitoring protocols etc. - will be agreed upon by the responsible institutions of the Drin Riparians. The agreed design of the Drin transboundary monitoring program will be submitted for adoption by the DCG.

Aiming to increase the accuracy of monitoring and reduce costs, the project will explore opportunities to work with international and riparian level partners to set up a programme to assess levels of main pollutants as means to complement riparian level and transboundary monitoring programmes using: (i) remote sensing; (ii) pollution models /machine learning/Artificial Intelligence.

UNECE will implement this Output being responsible for the envisaged results as described in the respective parts of the Project?s Results Framework Analysis and Monitoring & Evaluation Plan.

1.3 - Analysis of the status of freshwater dependent ecosystems and fisheries and of the impacts on near shore marine ecosystems of freshwater flows (surface water and groundwater), as well as assessment of minimum ecosystem flows, to inform management planning in accordance with the EU WFD.

The status and trends of Drin Basin freshwater biodiversity -key habitats and species- for priority areas will be determined in terms of (the list is indicative and will be formulated on the basis of the locations to be selected by the DCG) among others fish stocks in lakes and rivers; condition of coastal/marine ecosystems and marine fisheries etc.

A coarse assessment of acceptable ecological flows across the Drin Basin was done during the foundational project. This will be updated and refined to inform the riparian level River Basin Management plans as well as the Drin River management plan to be developed under Component 2.

1.4 - Assessment of sediment balance along the Drin Basin with focus on reservoirs siltation, land degradation hotspots and impacts on riverbed and coastal dynamics

Understanding sediment balance patterns is necessary to formulate action for ecosystem and coastal management. The Project will work for the identification of pressures along with their causes and impacts, on sediment balance/transport (including in relation to reservoirs siltation, land degradation hotspots and impacts on riverbed) by a review of existing data and using sediment transport model(s).

The results will be used to update understanding of sediment balance trends and its impacts on coastal erosion /deposition processes as means to develop key recommendations for policy making and management actions, relating amongst others -to the extent possible-to the identification of areas for the exploitation of riverbed material and the development of criteria and standards for extraction.

1.5 ? A dialogue to discuss scenarios for the operation of dams to enable optimization of water and flood risk management, and energy production.

Scenarios for the operation of dams to support sustainable basin management, contribute to the reduction of flood risk and maximise energy production, have been assessed during the foundational project with the use of hydrologic and energy models with the support of a project focusing on the Water-Food-Energy Nexus, financed by the Austrian Development Agency.

These results will be used for the establishment of a dialogue among the HPP companies, other relevant authorities, and the DCG /Joint Coordination Mechanism (see under Output 2.2) with regard to the management of water resources in the basin. It will be proposed that the dialogue discuss, inter alia, also impacts of different scenarios for the operation of dams on surface water and groundwater hydrology, sediment balance patterns, water quality and ecological status of water bodies, and freshwater dependent ecosystems and near-shore marine ecosystems and to define further specific environmental and climate-change related issues that should be considered in the future. A Feasibility study to assess the scope and level of cooperation among the companies will be developed.

The project will work for the active engagement of the HPP companies in the work of the Expert Working Group on Floods.

1.6- An improved information management system to support transboundary basin management is established .

The foundational project has developed an information management system (IMS) that includes all data developed/acquired during its implementation. The data and information developed/acquired through the proposed project will be included in the IMS?s database. Based on the notion that storage and exchange of data developed at riparian level or through the joint multi-purpose transboundary monitoring programs is a prerequisite for regional level sustainable basin management as well as an element of trust to enhance transboundary cooperation, this project will invest on upgrading the existing IMS. The following will be realized during the project:

? Identification of the status of existing relevant Riparian Information Management Systems (IMS) and analysis of historical Drin data for incorporation in the IMS

? Definition of additional Drin data management requirements

? Agreement on data processing procedures and exchange formats at the regional level

? Preparation of functional and technical requirements to develop and test data exchange mechanisms/procedures among Riparians

? Digitization of historic monitoring data

? Development, implementation and testing of the updated Drin Basin Information Management System (Drin IMS v2)

? Training of staff of responsible institutions

1.7- Training of staff of institutions and other stakeholders on areas that are critical for the coordinated management of the Drin Basin.

The focus of the trainings is already defined in the Drin SAP and is given below; the final list of themes as well as the exact subject of each training will be defined during the project implementation following guidance by the DCG or by the body that will succeed the DCG, should the draft international agreement be signed and ratified:

? Water/environmental management for members of the DCG and its EWGs, local level authorities, local/regional water companies etc.

? Requirements for EIA and SEA processes and transboundary consultations between the riparians within these processes that arise from the Riparians? obligations under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA (and their future EU accession requirements related to the implementation of the EU EIA and SEA Directives).

? Harmonized monitoring protocols and intercalibration exercises

? Best Agricultural Practices

? Fisheries management

? Environment, water and energy nexus for small HPP operators

? IED/SEVESO Directive permitting

? Establishment of eco-friendly SME-business activities e.g. tourism nature related activities, bee keeping, sustainable forestry, non-conventional water resources management etc.Gender mainstreaming

Component 2*:* Consolidating the Drin Basin transboundary institutional, policy, and legal frameworks.

This component is in line and assists in the implementation of the following goals and objectives of the Drin SAP: Goal 2, Objective 2; Goal 3, Objectives 1 and 2, and will address barriers 2 and 4

Outcome 2: Effective cooperation among Drin Riparians and socio-economic sectors succeeded through the establishment of a transboundary institutional arrangement and the development of critical transboundary policy instruments.

The Component will provide support for the operation/establishment of a sustainable joint coordination body in the form of the current institutional arrangement or an evolved one -a Drin Commission- that may be the result of the successful negotiation and signing of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin. The Project will support the negotiation of the draft international agreement text by the Drin Riparians -that was developed through the foundational project- and its submission for signature and ratification to the relevant authorities of all Drin Riparians, should negotiations be successful. This major effort to strengthen transboundary cooperation will be complemented by the preparation, through broad consultative processes, and submission for adoption, of several policy tools aligned with the EU acquis: among others, a River Management Plan for the Drin Basin to be used to coordinate the riparian level prepared management plans, and other ancillary plans covering critical aspects of basin management such as floods, droughts and biodiversity. A Flood management plan for the Drin Basin (Drin FMP) -not covering Kosovo* is developed through the Adaptation Fund supported project ?Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans?. The proposed GEF Project will support actions aimed at including in the Drin FMP the results of on-going flood management planning in Kosovo*.

The following Gender related activities that are part of the Gender Action Plan (see CEO Endorsement Request document section ?Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment? and Annex G.8 ?Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan 3?) will be implemented under this Component/Outcome:
- 1.5 Ensure Stakeholder Engagement and gender balanced participation in national and regional dialogues/meetings and processes, as appropriate, at all levels under Outputs 2.3, 2.4 and 2.6.
- 3.1 Review of key documents under all Outputs of this Component, such as reports, surveys etc., through gender lenses to ensure gender mainstreaming in all key interventions.
- 4.1. Key policy documents under Outputs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6 at national and/or local level such as key strategies, plans or legal instruments integrate gender considerations.
- 5.1. Collect data, monitor the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, and share sex-disaggregated data with the stakeholders and project staff on an annual basis, to meet reporting requirements of the gender monitoring templates.

Outputs

2.1 - A legal instrument consolidating official cooperation among the Drin Riparians is finalised and considered for signing by the Riparians.

A draft legal instrument text for the management of the Drin Basin, will be finalized through a structured negotiation process among the Drin Riparians (including Greece) to be supported by the project[3][3]. The workplan for the negotiation of the legal instrument is included in Annex E. The work will be based on a related feasibility study developed through the foundational project. The final legal instrument text will be put forward -as appropriate and per its provisions- for signing and ratification by the Drin Riparians.

The legal instrument that the Drin Riparians may agree upon, will define the (the list may alter) form, nature, rules of operation, financing etc. of a joint coordination mechanism -in the form of a Drin Commission (DC)[4]4- that will be responsible for the implementation of this legal instrument.

UNECE will be engaged in the implementation of this Output, providing support to the PMU for facilitating the negotiations among the Drin Riparians in reaching an agreement regarding the signing of a legal instrument text for the management of the Drin Basin.

2.2 - Establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism.

The Project will provide support for the establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism in the form of a Drin Commission or the DCG if the Drin Riparians don?t reach an agreement for the signing of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin. The project will further support the Body to be defined under the legal instrument that will function as the secretariat of the joint coordination mechanism. Support will include development of the ToR for the staff of the Body and training, technical and administrative support, covering costs for purchasing part of the office equipment. During an adjustment period that will serve also as a capacity building period for the Body, it will be supported for the deliberation of its functions by GWP-Med that currently serves as the Secretariat of the DCG. The objective is that the Body be operational till the end of the Project.

UNECE will be engaged in the implementation of this Output, providing support to the PMU for the establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism; UNECE will be responsible for the operation of the EWG on Monitoring and Information Exchange or any body that the Drin Riparians may decide to substitute this EWG.

2.3 - A River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River prepared in accordance with the EU WFD, building on the findings of the Drin TDA, and on the enhanced knowledge achieved through Component 1 activities, including marine environment considerations and presented for adoption by the DCG.

All Riparians have developed or are in the course of developing River Basin Management Plans in accordance with the EU WFD and riparian level legislation, for most of the parts of the Drin Basin extending in their territory. Nevertheless, there hasn?t been any coordination for their development. The project will support the development of a coordinated Drin River basin management plan following the Source-to-Sea approach. The updated TDA and the scientific knowledge generated through Component 1 will be used as basis for the development of the Plan.

The Plan will not substitute riparian level RBM plans rather it will be used for the coordination of the implementation of existing RBM plans and their programme of measures and be used as a ?roof? document to enable the coordinated development of the next generation of the riparian level RBM plans in accordance with the EU WFD. The development of the Plan will undergo a stakeholder?s consultation process and be adopted by the DCG.

The joint coordination mechanism -or the DCG if the Drin Riparians don?t reach an agreement for the signing of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin- will be the body responsible to coordinate work for the implementation of the Plan in the future. The members of the DCG having also the responsibility of the implementation of the riparian level RBMPs will ensure coordination with riparian level activities as well as riparian level institutions in line with the Drin Riparian level legislative frameworks (Min of Planning, Finance, Agriculture, Water/sanitation).

2.4- Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin identified and integrated in the Drin Basin Flood Risk Management Plan.

Building on the results of the ongoing Adaptation Fund supported and UNDP implemented project entitled "Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans? that covers Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, and the ongoing activities in Kosovo* for the development of flood risk and hazard maps and the White Drin flood risk management plan[5][5], this activity will:

- Identify transboundary areas of concern in the White Drin basin / prepare related flood risk and hazard maps (using the same methodology of the Adaptation Fund supported project).

- Conduct an assessment to identify the applicable catalogue of measures for flood protection in transboundary areas of concern in the White Drin basin.

- Update the Integrated basin flood risk management Strategy and Plan for the Drin River Basin (IBFRMS&P; currently under development with the support of the Adaptation Fund) and submit these updated policy instruments to the DCG for adoption.

- Undertake a stakeholder consultation process.

2.5- Harmonization of management planning tools for adjacent nationally established protected areas in Skadar/Shkoder subbasin.

At present, there are transboundary water bodies, where the Riparians have established protected areas extending in their respective territory, examples being the three transboundary lakes and the Buna/Bojana basin. The management tools used by the Riparians are not coordinated jeopardizing the sustainability of protected ecosystems. This output will focus on Skadar/Shkoder Lake and Buna/Bojana River areas. Work will involve establishment of joint technical groups to discuss and reach an agreement for the harmonization of the zoning system and related regulations including on enforcement measures and monitoring of compliance.

2.6- A Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo* and North Macedonia developed in the context of the EU Water Framework Directive and presented for adoption.

Work done under the foundational projects revealed that water resources availability in 2050 under current climate change scenarios and with increased water consumption to satisfy socio-economic development needs will be such that water demands will be marginally satisfied or not be satisfied from June to August in dry years in the Lake Prespa and Black Drin River sub-basins. Under this scenario, needs in the White Drin River during July will be double the available resources (see Annex F Climate change effects on water balance and the coastal area). These areas extend into North Macedonia and Kosovo*; following related request by both, the Project will prepare drought management plans for the part of the Drin Basin extending in their territory.

Component 3*:* Drin Riparians implement actions addressing transboundary issues of concern.

This component is in line and assists in the implementation of the following goals and objectives of the Drin SAP: Goal 4, Objective 1; Goal 5, Objectives 1 and 2; Goal 6, Objective 1; Goal 7, Objectives 1 and 2, and will address barriers 1,2 and 3.

Outcome 3: SAP implementation is accelerated through regional, riparian and local solutions to address main causes of transboundary concern, promote sustainable water use and ensure ecosystem functioning and resilience.

This Component will assist in addressing main causes of water resources and environmental degradation in areas of the Basin identified as hot spots in the TDA, and will focus among others on: the reduction of nutrient pollution from agriculture; the management of urban liquid wastes; the control of erosion and sedimentation processes; the reduction of toxic emissions and discharges from industries and increase of water efficiency and reuse; the introduction of best agricultural practices. To achieve this objective, the Component will adopt a blend of on the ground actions, including small scale interventions as well as policy instruments, designed and field tested. In the case of nature-based solutions for wastewater management, the project will seek to replicate the results of successful demonstration activities of the foundational project. The locations of the Component?s interventions will reflect the TDA findings and will be agreed upon by all Drin Riparians. It is expected that the combined impact of all these actions and of the benefits derived from them, will set in motion a sustained and long-term commitment of all Riparians to the full-fledged implementation of the SAP. A description of the activities under each output along with the background against which are based as well as the geographical areas of implementation or criteria for the selection of geographical areas of implementation during the initial phase of the proposed project, are given in Annex G Description of activities under Component 3.

The following Gender related activities that are part of the Gender Action Plan (see CEO Endorsement Request document section ?Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment? and Annex G.8 ?Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan 3?) will be implemented under this Component/Outcome:
- 1.1 Activities under all Outputs will be used for the identification and engagement of gender equality stakeholders and creation of formal/informal partnerships to contribute to a Gender Equality Agenda in transboundary cooperation and integrated natural resources management in line with the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.
- 1.4 Enhance gender capacities and/or knowledge of stakeholders/community groups to promote GEWE in the water management sector, focusing both on women and men. This will be achieved through dedicated trainings under this Component.
- 1.5 Ensure Stakeholder Engagement and gender balanced participation in national and regional dialogues/meetings and processes, as appropriate, at all levels under all Outputs.
- 3.1 Review of key documents under all Outputs of this Component, such as reports, surveys etc., through gender lenses to ensure gender mainstreaming in all key interventions.
- 5.1. Collect data, monitor the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, and share sex-disaggregated data with the stakeholders and project staff on an annual basis, to meet reporting requirements of the gender monitoring templates.

Outputs

3.1- Nutrient reduction (rural) ? Support to the broader adoption of small-scale wastewater treatment plants for nutrient removal piloted in the foundational project, in small rural settlements not easily connected to main wastewater treatment systems.

The deterioration of water quality is a problem that affects all Drin Riparians. Excess nutrients concentrations are considered as a major issue in most parts of the Drin Basin. Inadequate or insufficient wastewater treatment from domestic sources contributes about 30 percent of the total nutrient load in the Basin (Drin TDA, 2020). More than half of this load comes from insufficiently treated or untreated sewage water from centralized collection systems of the large cities (particularly in the White Drin River and Lake Skadar/Shkodra sub-basins) and almost 40 % from diffuse pollution in areas where no

collection system exists[1]. The first is subject of long-term efforts and significant investments made by the Drin Riparians while the latter has not received yet the required attention. Wastewater pollution from rural areas is particularly important (regardless the magnitude of pollution) as in many cases it directly affects and endangers sensitive areas such as water supply sources, protected areas, sensitive ecosystems etc. The latter is obvious in figure 1; the highest levels of generated phosphorous and nitrogen comes from septic tanks in the area of transboundary lakes and the delta of the river in the Adriatic.

This activity aims to promoting affordable wastewater treatment in sensitive rural areas of the Drin Basin. It will pilot the design, establishment, operation and test of the cost-efficiency of a limited number of nature-based solutions in areas of high sensitivity in the Drin Basin (such as Lumi i Shales and Koman lake in Albania, Buna/Bojana river mouth, Delogozdi village, Struga in North Macedonia, Shtiqen in Albania and Raushiq in[2] Kosovo etc.).

Establishing cost-effective wastewater treatment systems is site specific and its technology/structure/components involves different investment and operation/maintenance costs, depends on the geographical location (elevation of villages, geographical position being near rivers or the sea), affordability to locals in terms of investment and maintenance, the existence or not of basic infrastructure (e.g., collection systems) etc. Moreover, the characteristics and (ecological among others) sensitivity of the effluents? recipient body should be considered along with associated risks/hazards.

In this regard, the exact locations and technology of the pilot system(s) to be tested will be decided during the initial phase of the project implementation by the Drin Core Group.

Two pre-feasibility studies for nature-based solutions in rural areas of the Drin basin were developed in the framework of the project ?Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in South-eastern Europe, Through the Use of the Nexus Approach? (ADA, GWP-Med, UNECE, 2022). Those two locations (Shtiqen in Albania and Raushiq in Kosovo) had been selected in consultation with the Riparian authorities. Further, two locations were identified after consultation with the Drin Riparians as additional potential areas for the implementation of this activity. These four preliminary identified locations (see Map 1 bellow) will be considered with priority along with other locations that may be proposed by the Drin Riparians -preferably with advanced technical documentation developed- based on a set of criteria (see the list below) to select those where the demonstration activities will take place.

Consultation and awareness raising of local communities in areas of implementation will take place aiming to succeed commitment and ownership of the process towards sustainability of results. Technical documentation will be developed to procure the activities. After the establishment of the wastewater treatment nature-based solutions, their efficiency and effectiveness will be monitored (including cost-efficiency / level of reduction of pollution); the results will be presented as lessons learned to foster replication. Advice to the Drin Riparians for policy and legal instruments development will be developed should results be positive. The Project will work with developmental partners to identify options and opportunities for scaling up the successful solutions.

Activities to be performed are as follows:

1. Consultation with Drin Riparians for the final selection of the sites; selection criteria (to be finalised during the initial phase of project implementation) will include among others:
    1. Whether the area that receives the effluent is a sensitive area (i.e., as water supply source, protected areas, sensitive ecosystem etc).
    2. The level of vulnerability of the natural and socio-economic components of the area that receives the effluents.
    3. Maturity of the case / existence of related technical documentation.
    4. Provision of land from local authorities/users for the installation of the wastewater treatment units.
    5. Level of applicability of existing technologies taking into consideration: technical feasibility, costs, quality of treated effluents in relation to the ecological characteristics of the receiving body.

6. Affordability of initial investment by the Project and capacity of the end user to maintain/operate the wastewater treatment unit.
7. etc.

2. Development of technical documentation needed for preparing the feasibility/design studies for the selected sites (i.e. preliminary technical drawings, geotechnical investigation, geodetic and affordability surveys, environmental impact assessment etc).
3. Full design of the nature-based solutions to be implemented (ready for tendering).
4. Implementation (construction works or/and equipment installation).
5. Capacity building, awareness raising and gender sensitive consultation process with local populations in selected sites.
6. Monitoring and evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of solutions implemented.
7. Regional report/guidelines related to on-site solutions for wastewater treatment in rural areas of the Drin Basin and dissemination of demonstration of results (lessons learned).
8. Working with donors and financing partners including banks to investigate options and opportunities for scaling up successful solutions.
9. Advice to the Drin Riparians for policy and legal instruments will be developed should results be positive.

---

[1] In the Drin basin there are 1320 settlements <2000 p.e. mainly in rural areas that generate 37 % of total pollution load to the Basin. None of them had -as of 2019- any form of wastewater treatment

[2] If not subject of connection to newly constructed WWTP Peja

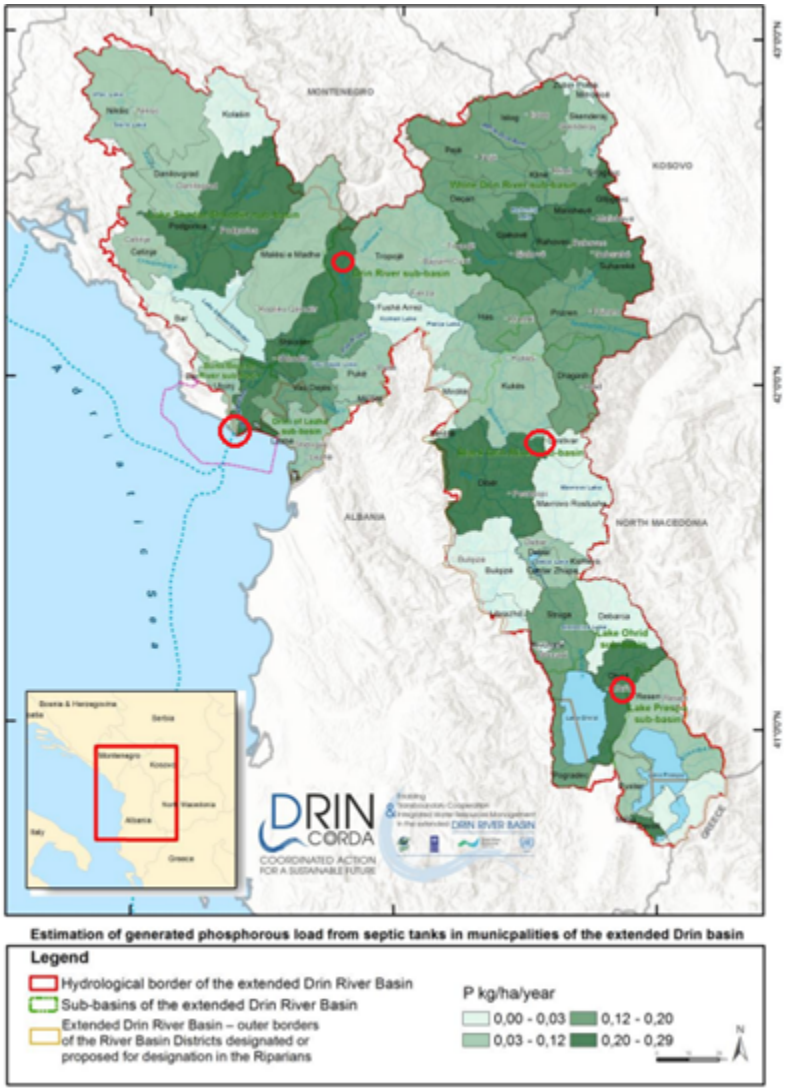


Figure 1: Estimation of the generated phosphorus load from septic tanks in Municipalities of the Drin basin, (green) and preliminary selected pilot locations (red circles)

3.2- Toxic emissions reduction, and water use efficiency and reuse ? Reinforcement, also by promoting the TEST approach, of the capacity of industries and SMEs in the reduction of toxic substances emissions to waterbodies and land, as well as reinforcement of their capacity in water use efficiency and reuse, and assessment of action and/or investment needs for the rehabilitation of toxic pollution from mines and quires (White Drin, Skadar/Shkoder Lake, and Ohrid Lake sub-basins).

Preliminary work for the identification of the level of pollution coming from industries and SMEs in the Drin Basin[1] revealed that, although the industrial is not the most significant economic sector, industries can be associated with significant pollution load. Industries that are largely using old technologies, coupled with low capacities in terms of environmental law enforcement leads to significant pollution risk. This is particularly important in areas of the Basin with increased ecological sensitivity or for water bodies that constitute sources of drinking water. At the same time, industries are associated with increased water usage that results in the creation of additional environmental issues e.g., lowering of the groundwater table etc.

In the Drin basin[2] apart from the ?historical? industrial pollution sites (i.e., Aluminium plant dump site in Podgorica, Montenegro, ex auto spare parts factory in Peje, Kosovo, etc.), food production, metallurgy and mining industries are identified as the ones having the higher risk to pollute. Registered increase of the Chemical oxygen demand (COD), heavy metals and in some locations priority substance pollution, can be considered as impacts of industrial activity. Heavy metals and priority substances are also an issue in groundwaters (for example, in the White Drin River) and in sediments (for example, in Lake Skadar/Shkod?r), (TDA, 2020). Water use, although it varies from facility to facility, it can be generally assessed as inefficient (as most enterprises use unregulated/unlicenced groundwater sources for own supply).

The current economic status of the large enterprises and the specific socio-economic conditions and institutional capacities in the Drin Riparians minimizes the chances in the short/medium term that industries would be able to align with environmental standards (in line with the EU requirements[3]); in many cases, full enforcement of the environmental standards would mean investments for changing the technology used, production process etc. making it very challenging from the financial standpoint. When it comes to smaller enterprises, further to the obsolete technologies used, it is the low awareness and knowledge of related legislation and/or good practices that would reduce pollution risk. The EU accession process is expected to contribute to altering in a positive way the institutional capacities in environmental law enforcement and providing the incentives (including financial ones) to the industrial sector to align with the environmental legislation. In the short/medium term there should be action taken though.

This activity aims to create the conditions for the decrease of the pollution loads and increase of the water use efficiency as well as to enable long-term planning of actions towards environmental compliance.

Action will be taken so as enterprises that will participate in this pilot are able to:
a) understand the legal requirements for full environmental compliance
b) understand the adverse effects to the environment and society created along with the associated mitigation costs
c) understand how the adoption and implementation of specific measures/changes in the production process can not only lead to increased environmental performance but also to reduction of overall production costs
d) select appropriate mitigation measures (related to reduction of pollution and efficient water use) and prepare a tailored-made implementation plan
e) be able to monitor, evaluate and replicate good practices/results in their business process as part of the wider long-term efforts for reaching environmental compliance and greening their business
The above would be achieved through the implementation of the TEST[4] methodology and related set of tools developed by UNIDO to help businesses improve their competitive advantage while adopting resource efficiency strategies and solutions. It is a systematic way of identifying and exploring the most feasible potentials for resource efficiency and continuous improvement of the use of materials, water, and energy within a company, building on its specific needs and internal capacities. It is implemented through predefined four steps (planning, support and operation, performance evaluation, and improvement) that would be modified to bring more focus on the resources linked to pollution or water use.

This activity will be implemented in the most industrialized parts of the Drin Basin (i.e., Niksic and Podgorica areas in Montenegro, Shkoder in Albania, Peja and Suhareka in Kosovo and Ohrid in North Macedonia, see Figure 2 bellow) targeting the main water pollution sectors and will be based on the modified UNIDO TEST approach.

In addition to the above the activity will assess of action and/or investment needs for the rehabilitation of toxic pollution from mines and quires.

The following actions will be implemented:

1. Initial screening (conducting a survey among potential partner enterprises) and assessment of status of selected mines and quarries (based on their level of pollution risk) with proposal of appropriate remediation actions.
2. Capacity building on TEST methodology (for enterprises posing water pollution risk in the Basin)
3. Selection of the enterprises to implement the TEST approach and MoUs signing.
4. Setting up focus areas within the management system and team set-up (in selected enterprises)
5. Options for improving the environmental management system is generated and feasibility analysis are developed; action plans are developed.
6. Targeted trainings on solutions to improve the environmental management systems.
7. Development of detailed technical documentation to implement resources efficiency measures.
8. Monitoring and evaluation.
9. Knowledge dissemination and lessons learned (for all enterprises with water pollution potential in the Basin).

A survey will be done among enterprises that pose a high-water pollution risk. The data with regard to the latter were collected and a preliminary cadastre was developed during the foundational Project (Drin TDA, 2020)[5]. Capacity building activities for the implementation of the TEST methodology will take place in each of the Drin riparians. The results of the initial survey and additionally collected background data will be used to formulate the list of enterprises to participate as well as the content of the capacity building activities. Additional criteria for the selection of enterprises to implement the TEST approach will be:

- level of interest and commitment shown during capacity building activities under 2
- their impact to the environment.

Actions 1-3 will be implemented during the initial phase of the pilot activity implementation.

In each of the selected enterprises there is going to be: additional training; selection of the management system focus areas to be improved; analysis of the options for the improvement of the targeted processes; formulation of the implementation team and plan. It is very important to establish effective working teams -aiming full ownership towards sustainability of achieved results- as implementation of step 7 (see the list above) is to be designed as internal process. Guidance, technical and consultative support to the team would be provided by the Project.

Performance and improvements resulting from the implementation of TEST approach actions would be compared to the initial baseline (identified and quantified during the planning step), allowing for internal management assessment and decision on necessary corrective actions.

Results of this activity and lessons learned would be prepared and disseminated to as many enterprises as possible in the Drin basin as means of continuation of the capacity building process.

---

[1] 137 industries and SME that can impact water quality in the Drin Basin are identified though the TDA/Thematic report on pollution (GEF Drin project, TDA 2020). More data and map available at dringis.org

[2] Although potential polluters are preliminary registered in all Drin Riparians, for Kosovo and Albania data where not sufficient to conduct preliminary analyses

[3] i.e., environmental emission limits and IPPC licensing requirements

[4] The TEST toolkit web interface was designed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) more information: https://www.test-toolkit.eu

[5] 137 existing enterprises with high potential for water pollution have been mapped across the Drin basin as part of the TDA development process: GIS map available at: dringis.org

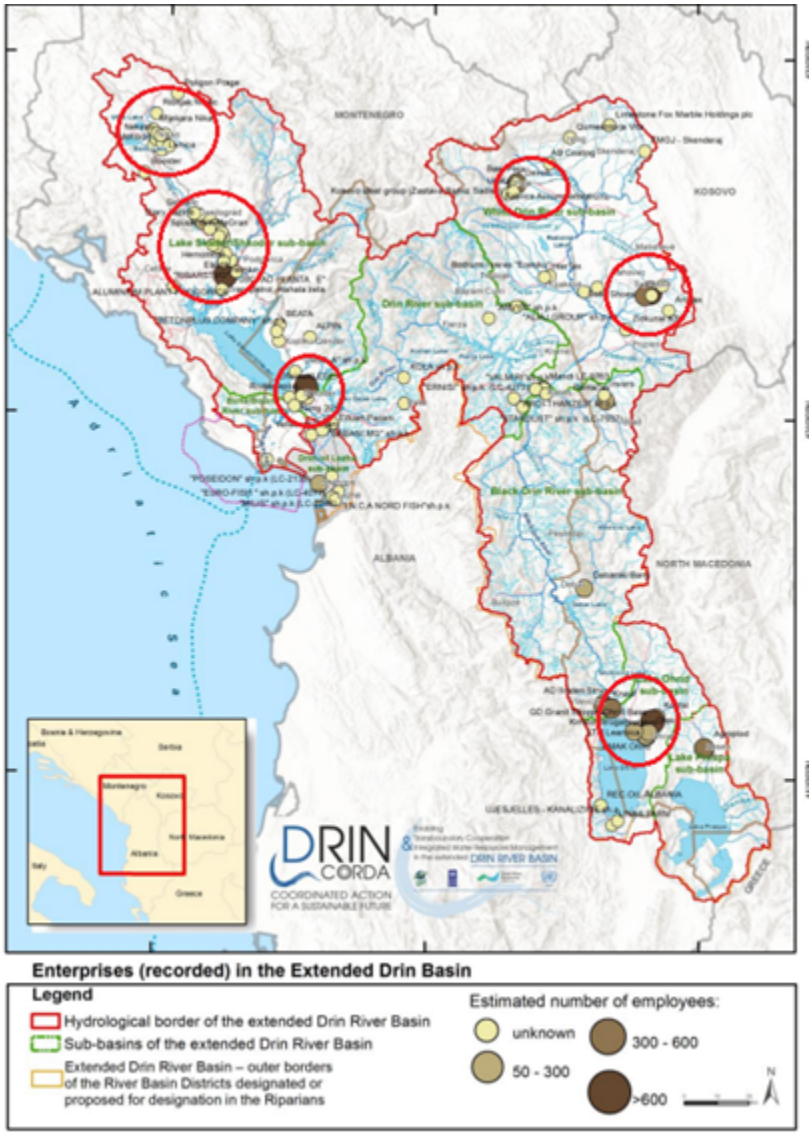


Figure 2 Potential polluters (industries and SME) recorded in the Drin basin (grey dots) and preliminary selected pilot locations (red circles)

3.3- Sustainable agricultural practices for nutrient and toxic pollution reduction, and soil conservation ? Promotion of: (i) Integrated Pest Management practices, (ii) the transition to tourism oriented organic farming, (iii) the use of Best Agricultural Practices (BAP, e.g. buffer strips, crop rotation, application of fertilizers, no-till, use of cover crops, IT solutions) to enhance soil conservation and reduce pollution, in

selected areas of the sub-basins of White Drin, Prespa and Ohrid, Black Drin and Buna/ Bojana, and Zeta plain.

Agriculture is a key livelihood for the basin?s largely rural population. The agricultural sector has a quite similar structure in the Riparians, characterized by the existence of predominantly small farms and small numbers of large ex-socialist holdings, that are now privatized, and transformed into large companies. Agricultural sector is shrinking and even subsistence farms are lacking the resources for economically viable production due to the inability to compete successfully on domestic or/and international food markets.

Overall, the areas with orchards and vineyards are very limited and exist in certain locations, especially in lake areas and along riverbanks. Significant portions of land are used for intensive vegetable production in Skadar/Shkod?r and Librazd and for intensive fruit cultivation in Prespa and Ohrid regions and Peshkopi. The main irrigation techniques applied in the basin are drip, furrow, and sprinklers - in their majority they could benefit by better management and maintenance. Although there is a perception (by end users) of water abundance, the agricultural sector is highly vulnerable to droughts. If current water management practices continue, under current climate change scenarios, water availability related risks to the agricultural production will significantly increase (TDA, 2020- Thematic Report on Hydrology and Hydrogeology).

In addition to inefficient water management there is overuse of pesticides and fertilizers etc.; arable land is identified as main source of nutrient load (53.3 percent of total load) in the Drin Basin (Drin TDA, 2020). The areas in the Drin Basin with the highest agriculture related nutrient emissions are depicted in Figure 3 below.

This reality compromises the sustainability and profitability of the agricultural sector as well as its attractiveness for young people, entrepreneurs, and innovators, at a time that the re-framing of agricultural development in the broader context of rural development stands out as a goal in all Riparian?s sectoral strategies. It also compromises the sustainability of both freshwaters supported and marine ecosystems.

Sustainable agriculture practices need to be introduced/promoted and scaled up.

This activity is designed to facilitate introduction of precision agriculture in key areas of the Drin basin as means to addressing excessive pollution -including from pesticides- and water use and soil deterioration.

Work will be done at two levels: level of small-farms and large agricultural producers.

The following activities will be implemented:

1. Two sets of awareness raising workshops (for large agricultural businesses /cooperatives and farmers) among others focusing on precision agriculture to improve efficiency and environmental footprint. The workshops will be implemented in the areas with the highest level of TN and TP diffuse emissions (see figure 3).
2. Consultation with large agricultural businesses /cooperatives and farmers to explore interest in undertaking an in-depth screening of their current management practices with the aim of improving these using precision agriculture. Potential areas of focus for Albania are described and preliminary identification of the technical solution for installing Precision Agriculture technologies in these areas are done in a study prepared in the framework of the Nexus Project supported by ADA (ADA, GWP-Med, UNECE, 2022).
3. Identify options for establishing cooperation with developmental and commercial banks for the development of micro-credit options/soft loans OR creation of donor scheme[1] to supplement the small-grant scheme for the purchase of precision agriculture related equipment (see below).
4. Selection of agricultural businesses / cooperatives and farmers to participate in the demonstration activity; these will receive a grant from the Project covering a percentage of the investment to be made. To ensure a fair distribution of available resources among large

agricultural business and small farms, for what concerns the large agricultural businesses /cooperatives the pilot actions will cover a part of the area they cultivate. An initial set of selection criteria is given below; the criteria will be finalised during the project implementation period in cooperation with Ministries responsible for agriculture:

- number of ha
- subsidies already received
- intended related investment size and own available funds or funds secured through other sources
- existing agricultural practices
- available market for products cultivated and existing synergies with other local businesses (i.e. being part of local tourism food supply chain)
- type of production in terms of scaling up potential (promoting organic production)
- pollution vulnerability in the areas where the cultivations are
- women lead agriculture businesses
- etc.

5. In-depth screening of agricultural processes and development of recommendations reports; the reports will among others quantify the economic and environmental aspects associated with the implementation of recommended precision agriculture activities (focusing on efficient use of water, fertilizers, and pesticides).
6. Development of an Action plan for the implementation of precision agriculture by selected partners. The Action plan would describe, as appropriate, technology to be used, activities, timeline, etc. for the implementation of innovative solutions such as smart irrigation systems, precision, and smart farming.
7. Implementation of pilot actions including:
    1. Procurement of the equipment and services needed
    2. Installation and training
    3. Cultivation using precision agriculture
8. Monitoring and evaluation of the results of the output, in terms of reduction of use of water, fertilizers and pesticides.
9. Identify options for establishing cooperation with developmental and commercial banks for the development of micro-credit options/soft loans OR targeted donors to upscale implementation of successful solutions.
10. Organisation of workshops to promote and disseminate knowledge and experience regarding implementation of precision agriculture techniques that proved to be most effective
11. Advice to the Drin Riparians for policy and legal instruments will be developed should results be positive.

---

[1] In cooperation with the existing riparian level subsidies schemes in existence (i.e. EU IPARD)

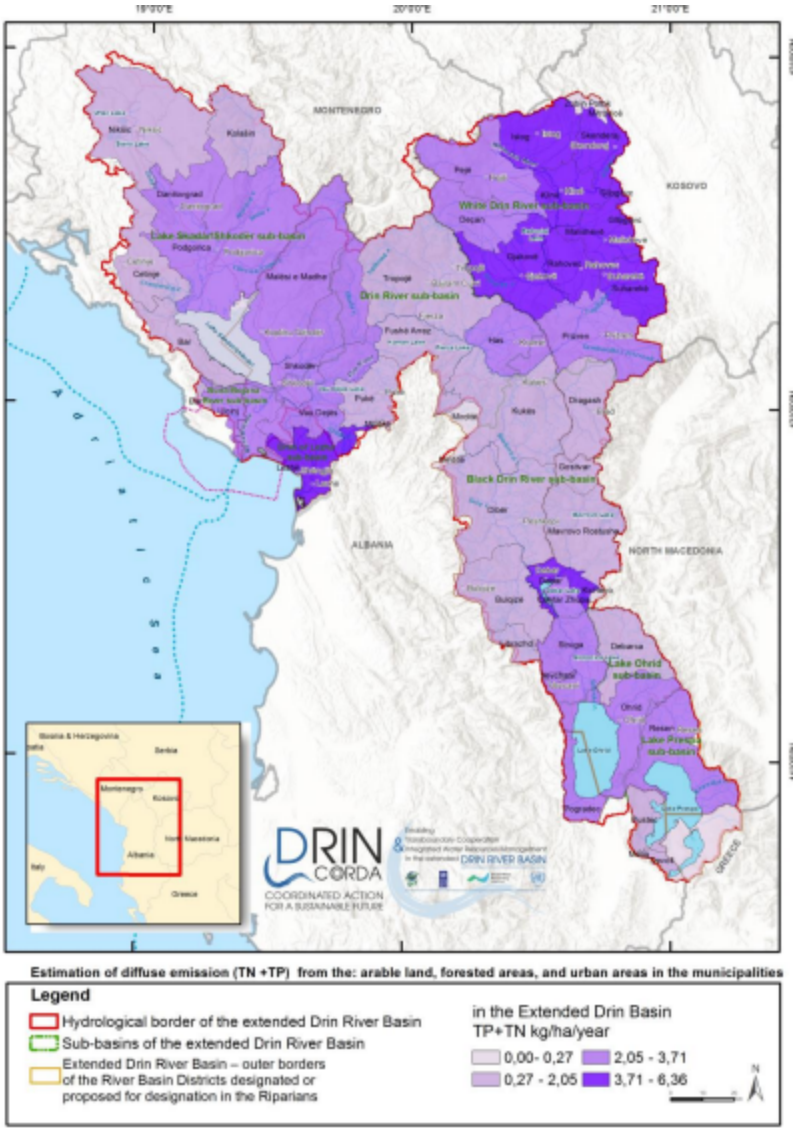


Figure 3: Estimation of the nitrogen emission loads (TN and TP) from arable land, forested areas, and urban areas in the municipalities of the Drin basin

3.4- Erosion control ? In priority areas (e.g.: the Debar Lake basin, the river Sateska sub- basin, the Adriatic coastal area) promoting reforestation, nature-based solutions, sustainable tillage and irrigation systems, etc.

As a result of specific relief and climatic conditions in the Drin Basin, soils are very prone to erosion (soils of the lake terraces and hilly relief forms represents 2/3 of the total, while the rest are mainly soils of the mountainous regions). This, coupled with socio-economic conditions (i.e. lack of appropriate mitigation measures or even exacerbation of the erosion process through extensive gravel extraction and inappropriate land use and farming practices[1]) result in intensified soil degradation processes and complex sedimentation patterns. In all Drin Riparians soil degradation is accelerating and is estimated that currently near half of the basin territory experiences medium to severe erosion.

This has an impact to the economies of the Drin Riparians in the sectors of electricity production (dam siltation), agriculture (fertility and soil loss), tourism (coastal changes) as well as in the reliability of the

drinking water supply sources (in terms of quality and quantity) and loss of ecosystems (impacting riparian ecosystems with extensive gravel extraction). Sateska and Buna/Bojana rivers within the Drin Basin are characteristic cases.

The Sateska river in North Macedonia was diverted from its confluence to the Black Drin, to Lake Ohrid to prevent river sediment deposition to the HPP accumulations in the Black Drin River. Running through agricultural and urban landscapes, it has since become a major source of pollution (brings 30 % of total phosphorus load ending up in the lake), solid waste, and sediment to Lake Ohrid bringing up to 129 tons of suspended material daily. After more than 5 decades, sediments from the Sateska are now slowly creating an artificial delta. Due to the devastating impact, the Government of North Macedonia with the assistance of UNDP implements the Sateska river restoration project[2] with the aim to bring the stream back into its original bed. Targeted sediment transfer prevention measures (construction of sediment traps) are being implemented in parallel. However, the project focus on the lower part of the Sateska river; erosion mitigation measures are necessary in the upper parts of the rivers? catchment area as well.

The Delta of Bojana River and ?big beach? in Montenegro along with the Buna River Velipoj? Protected Landscape in Albania created by extensive sediment transport (from the Drin River system), are marine resorts and significant touristic spots. The Buna/Bojana Delta was growing in area before the dams? construction on the Drin River upstream in Albania, with the most intense deposition occurring in the 1940s, with an average rate of about 45 m/yr. Human interventions in the basin (hydropower infrastructure) leading to the decrease of sediment reaching the coast, in synergy with other factors (coastal dynamics and climate change) caused a reversal of this trend and erosion phenomena. An effort was made to assess the erosion/sediment deposition trends in this area in the period 1950?2016. A comparison of the coastline in 1950 with that of 1984, indicates accumulation of sediment. However, if we compare the coastline in 1984 with that in 2016, erosion is obvious (Figure 4 & 5 below; Drin TDA[3] 2020). At present, the delta area is under intensive erosion.

While long term effects -including climate change impacts, dams operation, excessive/illegal quarrying in many of the rivers in the Drin Basin- are still being studied, it is evident that erosion mitigation measures should be implemented in the short term.

Activities under this Output will focus on the upper parts of the Sateska river (North Macedonia) and Bojana/Buna delta (Albania and Montenegro). Work will capitalize and build on the improved knowledge on erosion processes to be gained through the implementation of the activities under Output 1.4- (?*Assessment of sediment balance along the Drin Basin with focus on reservoirs siltation, land degradation hotspots and impacts on riverbed and coastal dynamics*?) and results of other projects[4].

With regard to the first, work will include assessment of sediment balance, reservoirs siltation, coastal bed dynamics etc. Knowledge on those interconnected topics and this to be gained through targeted assessments or/and feasibility studies for Buna/Bojana and upper Sateska rivers will be used to identify proposed measures to address gravel extraction and erosion in these two areas. This will be the basis for the development of tender dossiers for mitigation measures, implementation of these measures and assessment of their effectiveness. Two practitioners and stakeholders? workshops will be held as means to disseminate knowledge on the design of erosion mitigation measures and share related lessons learned. Advice to the Drin Riparians for policy instruments development will be prepared should results be positive.

The mitigation measures to be implemented should be of magnitude and scope that aligns with the available resources and with the Project?s timeframe and timeline of activities.

Activities under this activity are listed below:

1. Feasibility study for a set of ecosystem-based measures for reducing erosion/sedimentation transport in upper parts of Sateska River (e.g. by reforestation, creation natural sediment traps etc.) and erosion control at Bojana/Buna Delta (e.g. restoration and consolidation through vegetation and/or creation and protection dunes, creating temporary embankments etc.).

2. Development of the full design and preparation of the tender dossiers for implementing selected mitigation measures at the two locations.
3. Implementation of measures.
4. Monitoring and evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of measures implemented.
5. Gender inclusive workshops on selecting and implementing appropriate erosion control measures for practitioners and the decision makers and on the negative effects of current practices.
6. Working with donors and financing partners to investigate options and opportunities for scaling up successful solutions.
7. Guidelines on applicability of erosion control measures based on lessons learned in the two areas of focus.
8. Advice to the Drin Riparians for policy instruments will be developed should results be positive.

---

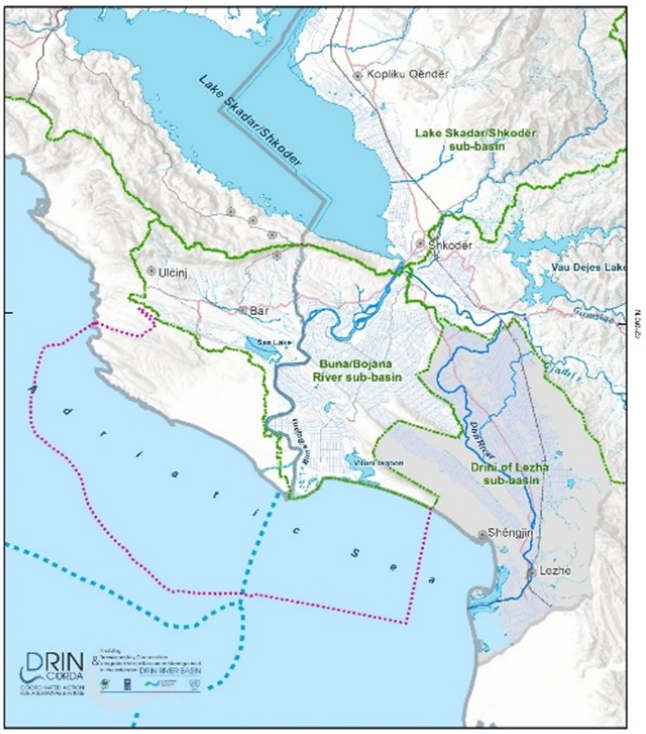
[1] Including: overgrazing, use of monocultures, limited application of organic materials, ploughing of steep slopes, lack of soil conservation tillage techniques

[2] Integrated Climate-Resilient Transboundary Flood RM

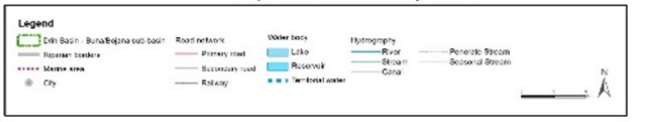
[3] Thematic Report on Hydrology-Hydrogeology

[4] E.g. Conservation and revitalization of Ada Bojana Review of the Study Final Report (COWI, 2022) and results of the project Integrated Climate-Resilient Transboundary Flood RM (UNDP-ongoing).

Figure 4: Coastal erosion and accumulation in the period 1984?2016 - Ada Bojana/Buna



Map of the delta of Buna/Bojana River



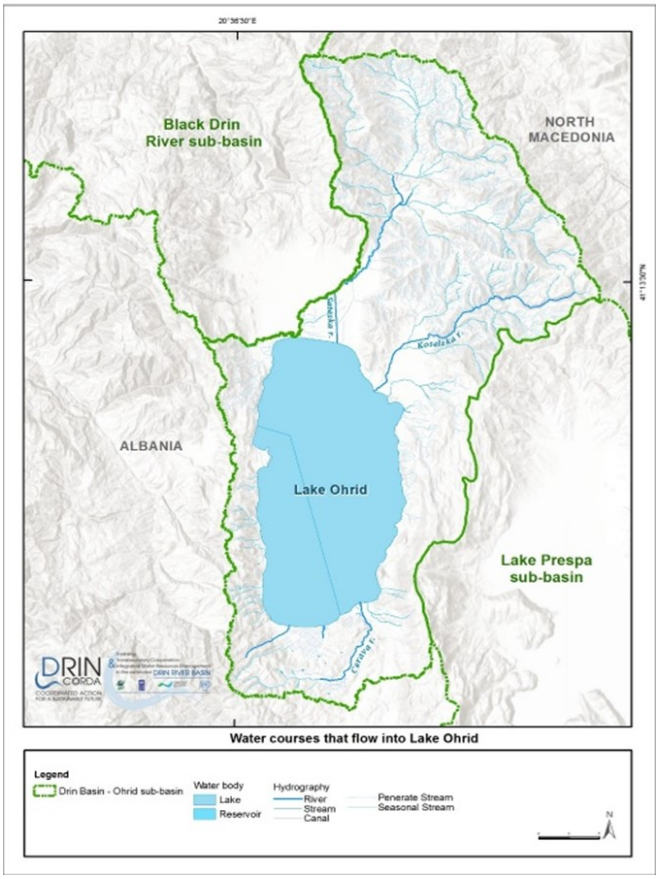


Figure 5: Map of the delta of Buna/Bojana river (left) and watercourses that flow into Lake Ohrid (right)

3.5 ? Support to SMEs and economic sectors (e.g.: tourism), in transboundary areas of ecological importance (e.g. Prespa Ohrid transboundary biosphere reserve Skadar/Shoder, Buna/Bojana, and White Drin source in Radavc), to facilitate transition of local economy towards sustainable natural resources management practices and green growth.

The strategic documents of the Drin Riparians[1] recognize the need for a transition to a green economy -to foster economic development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which human well-being relies on- offering opportunities for green investments by including new market-based incentives and mechanisms.

Overall, the project supports the green recovery efforts by enabling strengthened resilience of ecosystems and livelihoods as well as by conserving the natural capital and diverse waters and ecosystems in the Drin Riparians.

There are transboundary areas of ecological importance where touristic products have been already developed and that already attract significant share of the tourists arriving in the Drin Basin. The number of visitors in the parts of the Drin Basin extending in three Riparians (Montenegro, Albania and Nort Macedonia) has increased from 385,000 in 2012 to nearly 500,000 in 2016 (~30% increase), while the number of registered overnights has increased from 1.48 million to nearly 1.6 million over the same period (8% increase).

The basin has a very high potential for further development of tourism, given the current global tourism trends and taking into consideration the geography and variety of natural assets in the basin?s territory as well as the abundance of cultural and historical sites. The basin attracts -still- a low number of tourists

and has largely undisturbed natural characteristics that can support a high-value alternative (adventure) touristic product that extends in transboundary areas, in more than one Riparian.

This activity aims to facilitate greening the local economy in areas of ecological value and sensitivity, promoting touristic green business approaches, hence contributing to a transition to a -high value- local scale sustainable natural resources management. To this end, the Project will work with the private sector and the authorities in these areas. A green innovation challenge coupled with small grants program and possibly small-scale soft loans through credit lines from development banks will be used. This should catalyse innovation and possibly investment and have a positive effect also in terms of creation of green/blue jobs adding value to the local and riparian level economy.

Greening the tourism in protected areas of the Drin basin (Figure 6 indicates the protected areas in the Drin Basin) should be gender sensitive and be done through the involvement of the local community in the tourism value chain.

The following actions will be implemented:

1. Selection of transboundary protected areas of focus.
2. Capacity building on sustainable tourism for SMEs and managers of protected areas of focus.
3. Organising a ?Greening the tourism innovation challenge?. A call for the submission of ideas for new business concepts or greening of existing businesses that will receive a small grant covering up to 50% of the investment to be made. Eligible costs may include (the list will be finalised during project implementation in cooperation with local authorities, tourism champers and protected areas authorities ? and possibly donors/banks) purchase of specific services or equipment such as environmental certification, electric motors for boats, etc. Preparation of the call including the criteria for the selection of proposals. The criteria -that will be in line with the SES prerequisites[2]- will be finalised during the project implementation period in cooperation with local authorities, tourism champers and protected areas authorities (possibly banks/donors); an initial list is provided below:
    1. Level of innovation
    2. Extent to which the proposal is aligned with a set of ?green economy? criteria; these are related to the sustainable use of natural resources and as such should be specific to the geographical area of focus (to be decided during the project implementation).
    3. Level of investment
    4. Own funds or funds secured through other sources
    5. Sustainability potential of the business idea based on financial analysis
    6. Number of jobs to be created and number of years that these hob positions will be retained by the beneficiary
    7. etc.

4. Submission of the proposals by candidates and selection of ideas/businesses. Local authorities, tourism champers and protected areas authorities (possibly banks/donors) will participate along with the PMU in the selection of proposals.

5. Identify options for establishing cooperation with developmental and commercial banks for the development of micro-credit options/soft loans OR donors to participate in the effort, by supplementing the small grant scheme.
6. Implementation of selected actions.
7. Monitoring and evaluation of results.
8. Working with donors and financing partners including banks to investigate options and opportunities for scaling up successful solutions.
9. Promote successful cases and support replication in other parts of the basin and other SMEs in the tourism sector.
10. Advice to the Drin Riparians for policy and legal instruments will be developed should results be positive.

[1] E.g. Development Strategy of Albania and National sustainable development strategy of Montenegro

[2] UNDP will provide related technical expertise using experience from similar activities in other basins/geographical areas

Figure 6: Protected areas in the Drin basin (Drin TDA, 2020)

3.6 ? Sustainable transboundary fisheries management: (i) Capacity building and training for fish stock assessments to inform management (ii) promotion of best fishing practices among fishermen and their associations (iii) enhancement of illegal fishing monitoring and control capacities.

Fisheries is an important socio-economic sector in the Drin Basin generating income of local population; there are more than 1,500 registered fisherpersons in the Drin basin. Commercial fishery is present in all big freshwater lakes and in coastal parts of the Drin Basin and is almost exclusively artisanal fishery. Small part of the catch also comes from recreational fishery that is widespread, also on rivers.

The fishery sector related management framework at riparian level is complex and is coupled with week law enforcement leading to -the existing- unsatisfactory management practices. The proclamation of total moratorium on fishing activities in specific areas has been used as a last resort measure to prevent

the collapse of ichthyofauna[1]. In the case of transboundary lakes and rivers any management measure -including fishing bans - should be harmonised between/among the riparian states.

The activity will focus on the transboundary protected lakes, the White Drin, the Buna/Bojana river and the adjacent marine area. The Project will work with i) management authorities and ii) local fishermen.

The aim will be to facilitate action towards sustainable transboundary fishery management in the Drin River Basin by improving and harmonizing across the Riparians:
- knowledge and data generation/usage.
- management practices i.e. usage of artisan fishing tools.
- monitoring and control of illegal fishing in transboundary areas.

Activities will support the implementation of existing bilateral agreements[2].

The following activities will be implemented:

1. Review of available data on fish stock status and trends, focusing on vulnerable commercial species in transboundary areas, (using the results from Output 1.3):

a. Analysis of baseline data related to fish stocks and identification of data gaps for efficient fish stocks transboundary management. The project will also compare different methods applied in Drin Riparians for fish stocks related data collection and status assessments in the transboundary lakes/adjacent marine areas.
b. Propose the areas and methods for additional data collection on targeted (vulnerable) transboundary species (if necessary, focusing on non-invasive rapid techniques).
c. Assess management and fishing practices to identify/understand the extent to which these have an adverse effect and contribute to the deterioration of fish stocks in transboundary areas of focus; the assessment will identify threats and develop recommendations for sustainable management practices.

2. Capacity building / trainings for protected areas managers and local fisherman on fish stock data collection and assessment methods in transboundary areas. The trainings will include theoretical and hands-on activities on the implementation of small scale and targeted surveys (including targeted fish stock assessments, by e.g., using rapid non-invasive techniques[3]). The activity will be used to do limited scale data collection to cover some of the identified gaps identified under 1b and to assess impact to the fisheries from harmful fishing practices.
3. Establishment of joint technical groups comprising of experts appointed by the Drin Riparians to meet, discuss and agree on (i) fish stock data collection and assessment methods (ii) fishing related law enforcement measures that promotes best fishing practices and monitoring of compliance.
4. Riparians use the outputs of the work of the joint technical groups to develop joint protocols or equivalent on:
    1. fish stock data collection and assessment methods
    2. fishing monitoring compliance and control practices in transboundary areas including protocols of action in case of illegal fishing
5. Purchasing of necessary equipment (i.e. drones, IC cameras, protective equipment, boas, motors, etc.) and operational training for the managers based on the protocols adopted.
6. Monitoring and evaluation of the new monitoring and control schemes established and dissemination of results.
7. Promotional campaign of best fishing practices in transboundary areas among fishermen and their associations.

[1] During the period 2006 - 2013 total moratorium on fishing was implemented at Lake Prespa, both for commercial and recreational fishing, as well as during the period April 2004 ? September 2012 at Lake Ohrid.
[2]i.e. Fisheries management agreement on Lake Ohrid and Great Prespa between North Macedonia and Albania (2020) or Fisheries management agreement on Lake Skadar/Shkodra (in process of adoption)

[3] i.e., Fish abundance estimation with imaging sonar

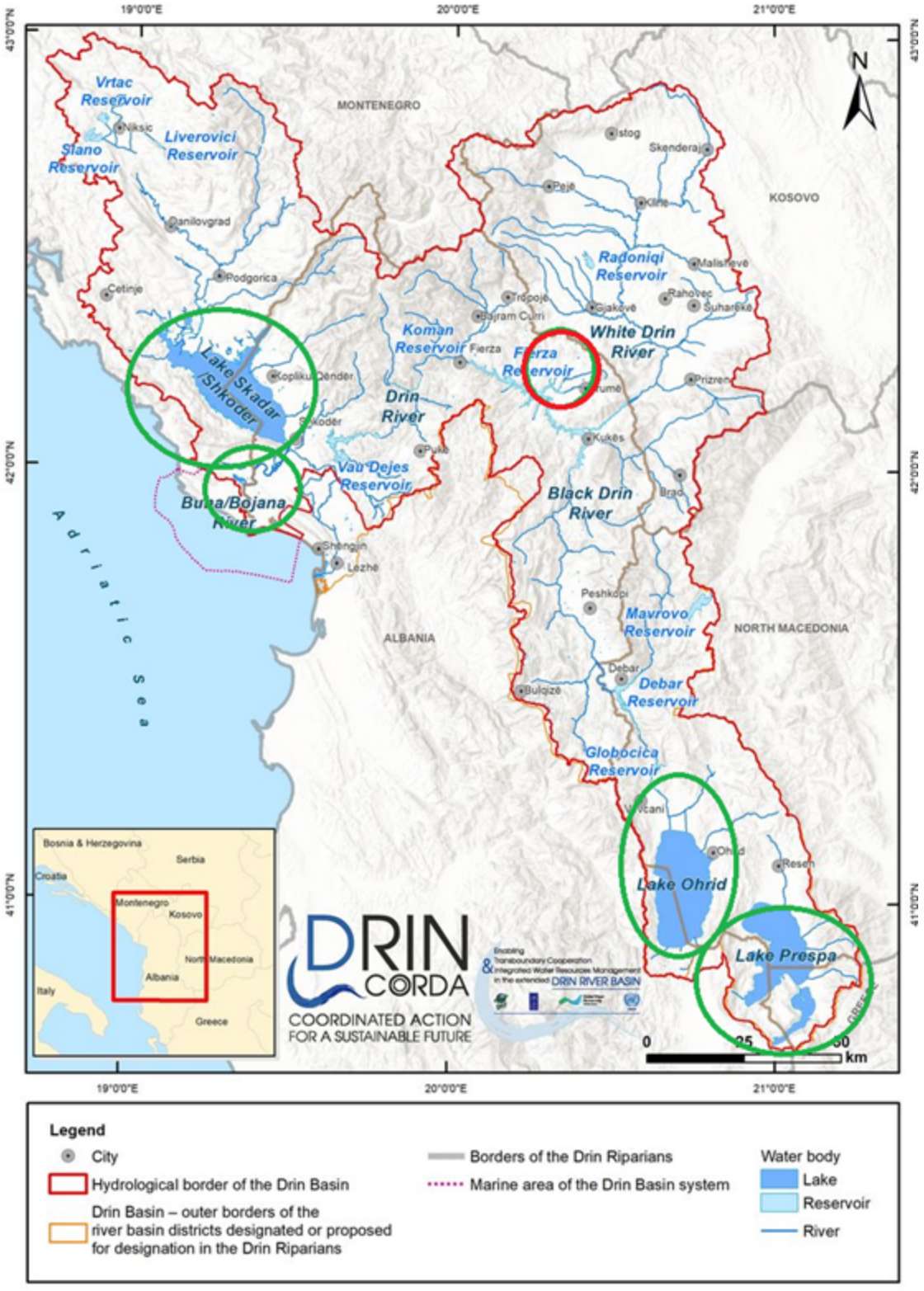


Figure 7: Transboundary protected areas and important fish habitats: Skadar/Shkodra lake, Prespa lake, Ohrid lake, Buna/Bojana delta (green circles) and transboundary Fierza Reservoir (red circle)

Component 4*:* Mechanisms for ensuring participation, gender consideration, coordination, and monitoring progress.

This component is in line and assists in the implementation of the goals and objectives of the Drin SAP, in particular Goal 2, Objective 4, and will contribute to addressing all four identified barriers.

Outcome 4: Long-term sustainability of achievements is enhanced through implementation of project mechanisms for stakeholder?s participation, gender mainstreaming, dissemination, coordination and monitoring progress.

The Component will support monitoring and evaluation related actions described in detail under the respective part of the Project Document.

Work will focus on putting in place mechanisms for systematic awareness raising, stakeholder?s participation, gender mainstreaming, towards the attainment of Outcome 4.

Equally important to the linkages among the project activities e.g. the outcomes of the updated TDA that will feed the preparation of the River Basin Management Plan etc., is the multilevel non-linear linkages among the groups of stakeholders, including the institutions, and the Drin Riparians, that are by default engaged in the management of the Basin and that concern the project activities: who, how, when, at what level is engaged in partnership with whom. The former will define the success of the project in terms of implementation of the activities while the latter will define the success of the project in terms of creating the conditions for sustaining its outcomes and achievements.

The structured involvement of the appropriate stakeholders at the appropriate level and time in the different project activities using suitable means will secure the creation of these linkages. A range of stakeholders? engagement activities will run horizontally the Project, pursuing the strengthening of the commitment of politicians, decision makers, users and other stakeholders at all levels as well as the public for a sustained cooperative effort among the Drin Riparians sharing the Basin for its sustainable management. Stakeholders engagement activities are factored in Components 1-3; stakeholders engagement activities that will benefit all Outputs, are included in this Component[7][6].

Further, a range of information and strategic communications, consultation and involvement activities will be implemented in concert with and in support of the engagement activities in order to foster: increased awareness regarding the Project and the Drin Coordinated Action Process; advanced understanding of the causes of transboundary issues as well as their solutions; understanding of the need for coordinated/cooperative action at transboundary level; the enhancement of awareness at the political level and among decision makers.

Participation to IWLEARN peer learning and cross-fertilization actions, will benefit the project in integrating lessons learned though other GEF IW investments around the globe; the project in turn, will be contributing with its experience and lessons generated to similar endeavours.

A Stakeholders Analysis and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (see Annex 7) provide the basis for the activities under the Outputs of this Component.

The following Gender related activities that are part of the Gender Action Plan (see CEO Endorsement Request document section ?Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment? and Annex G.8 ?Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan 3?) will be implemented under this Component/Outcome:
- 1.1 Activities under Outputs 4.1- 4.3 will be used for the identification and engagement of gender equality stakeholders and creation of formal/informal partnerships to contribute to a Gender Equality

Agenda in transboundary cooperation and integrated natural resources management in line with the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.
- 1.2 Create a formal/informal partnership such as Gender Community of Practice and strengthen already existing women networks in decision making to promote GEWE in all Drin Riparians.
- 1.3 Engage institutional Gender Focal Points or other key gender institution representatives to regularly participate in the project activities and/or Gender Community of Practice.
- 1.4 Enhance gender capacities and/or knowledge of stakeholders/community groups to promote GEWE in the water management sector, focusing both on women and men through activities under Output 4.1.
- 1.5 Ensure Stakeholder Engagement and gender balanced participation in national and regional dialogues/meetings and processes, as appropriate, at all levels under Output 4.1.
- 2.1 Ensure gender is mainstreamed in the awareness raising annual events, campaigns of the project targeting local communities, NGOs, associations and actors from the private sector and schools, including a campaign with the central theme of ?Women in Water Management? under Outputs 4.1 and 4.3.
- 3.1 Review of key documents under all Outputs of this Component, such as reports, surveys etc., through gender lenses to ensure gender mainstreaming in all key interventions.
- 5.1. Collect data, monitor the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, and share sex-disaggregated data with the stakeholders and project staff on an annual basis, to meet reporting requirements of the gender monitoring templates.

Outputs

4.1- Awareness raising and participation actions held at local, national and regional levels to enable stakeholders engagement.

An Outreach and Communications Strategy/Plan will be developed during the initial phase of the Project to support the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). Such strategy/plan will provide the basis for the preparation of products and material to enhance the visibility of the project and ensure proper dissemination of results; a number of traditional storytelling means will be combined with creative approaches to increase dissemination and advocacy efforts.

By decision of the DCG, and since 2016, the Drin Day is celebrated each year on the 5th of May in all sub-basins of the Drin Basin under the auspices of the Drin CORDA and the Drin Core Group. The Drin Day celebration being an ?institution? awareness raising event that is established under the foundational project, will be implemented under this project as well on annual basis.

The Annual Drin Stakeholder Conferences have become another ?institution? being organized since 2011, allowing the stakeholders to be informed by and provide input to the DCG regarding the actions for the implementation of the Drin MoU and the SAP. The organization of the Conferences are in line with provisions of the Drin MoU and they comply with Article 5 Implementation and Monitoring, that indicates *?(?) understanding the need for the implementation of the Strategic Shared Vision to reflect the views of the stakeholders the Parties call for an annual meeting of stakeholders from the Drin Riparians (?)*?. Five Annual Stakeholders Conferences (ASC) will be organized.

The project will participate and contribute to global and ECE events as experiences and lessons learned from the Drin Project will be of relevance for a number of processes shaping polices related to transboundary water resources management. In turn, such processes are important for the Drin Project to align with riparian level, regional and global priorities.

4.2- Actions to mainstream Gender in project execution.

The Project is in line with the GEF?s and UNDP?s Policies on Gender Equality, and the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy. The project is also in line with SDG 5 on Gender Equality, and the empowerment of women and girls.

During the project?s PPG phase, a Gender Analysis and Action Plan (GAP; Annex 9) were prepared including indicators and a plan to monitor implementation, to ensure that gender considerations will

inform project formulation through a gender-responsive approach, and through specific activities directed to strengthen women?s participation in decision-making. All actions proposed under the GAP will be implemented by the PMU staff and a Gender Specialist.

The Project will identify and engage gender equality stakeholders and create formal/informal partnerships in the form of Gender Community of Practice (CoP), to contribute to a Gender Equality Agenda in transboundary cooperation and integrated natural resources management in line with the Stakeholders Engagement Strategy. The Gender CoP will be means to strengthen already existing women networks in decision making to promote ?gender equality and women's empowerment? (GEWE) in all Drin Riparians. Opportunities will be sought for Gender Focal Points to be appointed by the Drin Riparians or other key gender institution to regularly participate in the project activities and/or Gender CoP.

Capacity building workshops will be organized to enhance gender capacities and/or knowledge of stakeholders/community groups including these of the PMU. Action will be taken to ensure Stakeholder Engagement and gender balanced participation in riparian level and regional dialogues/meetings and processes, as appropriate, at all levels and that gender is mainstreamed in the awareness raising annual events, awareness campaigns of the project.

Key documents will be reviewed such as reports, surveys etc., through gender lenses to ensure gender mainstreaming in all key interventions and the same will be done for key policy documents at riparian level and/or local level such as key strategies, plans or legal instruments. Sex disaggregated data and information will be collected to monitor the indicators of the Gender Action Plan.

4.3- Actions to enable coordination with other ongoing initiatives and projects.

As a result of the work done under the foundational project, the DCG assumed the full range of responsibilities stemming from the Drin MoU being the responsible body to coordinate its implementation, and act as a (de facto) Joint Commission. In line with its mandate, the DCG has been the SC -in addition to the GEF Drin foundational Project- of projects that have been spin-offs of the Drin Project. The Project will continue supporting the role of the DCG -or the joint coordination mechanism that will be established should the draft international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin be signed and ratified by the Drin Riparians- providing a fertile hub for different partners to come together and synergize in addressing the causes of the transboundary management issues hence, in implementing the Drin SAP.

This will be addressed through the following activities implemented under this Output.

- Inception meeting: institutions and organizations implementing on-going projects (see Annex G.4: *Ongoing baseline projects and initiatives relevant to the objectives and activities of the project)* will be invited in the inception meeting to be informed about and discuss areas and level of potential collaboration and synergies.

- Organization of Donors Conference(s); should the donors response is positive, these could be held at annual basis: the Drin Riparians requested and publicly committed during the Partner?s Conference in 2021 -the closing event of foundational project- to have at least one DCG/Donors coordination meeting organized per year to enable synergies and avoid overlaps among donors, and to keep them informed on the SAP related priorities. The DCG with the assistance of the Project will lead the preparations and the organization of this annual coordination event. The event will be organized back-to-back with Annual Stakeholders Conference(s).

- Synergizing with projects that are linked to the management of the Drin basin: Projects and initiatives that contribute directly or indirectly to the sustainable management of the Drin Basin and its natural resources have been traditionally approached by the DCG to identify areas of cooperation and synergies. Such projects had been invited and participated in the DCG meetings. This practice will continue also during this project and furthermore, institutions and organizations implementing on-going

projects (see Annex G.4*)* will be invited annually for a meeting to take place back-to-back with the May DCG meeting[8]7 to facilitate coordination at the Drin Basin level.

4.4- Full participation to GEF IW LEARN activities and creation of a project website.

The results produced by the Drin SAP Project will substantially contribute to the GEF knowledge base and to relevant GEF IW processes, events and activities. To this end, the Project will closely collaborate with the GEF International Waters Learning and Resource Exchange Network (IW:LEARN) Project[9]8 to facilitate uptake of lessons learned and knowledge exchange.

Activities under this output include:
- Participation to the GEF International Waters Conferences[10]9 (landmark biannual events of the IW portfolio). Depending on the schedule decided by IW:LEARN, the Project will commit its contribution to at least two IW Conferences throughout the duration of the Project and will ensure the participation of representatives from the Riparians.
- Production of at least two Experience Notes to showcase worthy results to be disseminated through IW:LEARN channels and the Drin CORDA website.
- Participation to IW:LEARN Twinning with other GEF relevant projects and programs.
- Contribution to IW:LEARN.net with relevant content (i.e. multimedia material, data visualization, etc.), including to social media and newsletters;
- Participation to GEF Communities of Practice (CoPs), when relevant.

Moreover, the Project will continue to use the Drin CORDA website (http://drincorda.iwlearn.org/) hosted by the IW:LEARN platform to ensure continuity with the ongoing process as well as sustainability after project closure. At the same time, opportunities will be sought for the project website to undergo a relooking by adopting a modern content management system to upgrade in terms of user-friendliness its interface..

4) Alignment with GEF focal area strategies

The project is fully consistent with GEF-7 programming directions, in particular with objective 3 of International Waters Focal Area: Enhancing water security in freshwater ecosystems and its three strategic actions: 1) advance information exchange and early warning; 2) enhance regional and Riparian level cooperation on shared freshwater surface and groundwater basins; and 3) investments in water, food, energy and environmental security.

The project contributes to **advancement of information exchange** as it focuses on joint fact finding and development of knowledge and data regarding the components of the Drin Basin (water resources, sediment flows, ecosystems etc.) as well as on the pressures that lead to transboundary problems and concerns (pollution, erosion, water/energy production trade-offs etc.). The advancement of information and data exchange will be succeeded also by strengthening the capacity of the countries to (i) generate information in a harmonized manner through the establishment of the joint monitoring program and the work of the work of the DCG and its Expert Working Group on Monitoring and Information Exchange (ii) have this information and data available for use using the advanced information management system. Work on floods and drought risks will make use of the aforementioned advanced knowledge base and support the effort of the Drin Riparians on **early warning** systems and risk management.

These activities, implemented in the framework of the Drin CORDA, further enable the creation of conditions for the **enhancement of structured cooperation for the management of water resources** in the Drin Basin. Capitalizing on these activities, the results of the foundational project and the Drin CORDA, the project will support: (i) the establishment of permanent institutional and legal arrangements for the management of the Drin Basin in the form of an advanced/adjusted MoU or an international agreement, should the Drin Riparians agree on and sign the related draft agreement. The development of Drin level policy instruments (River basin, floods and droughts management plans etc.) will provide the tools for the coordinated management of the basin.

The **Nexus approach**, being one of the three approaches (River Basin management planning and Source to Sea, being the other two) that are applied through this project will be influencing all project activities. The Project includes also specific actions seeking to manage trade-offs and to build synergies among the **water, food, energy and ecosystems**.

Under component 1 the updated Drin TDA will further contribute to understanding the water-food-energy-ecosystems interlinkages/trade-offs notably the role of HPPs vis-?-vis water resources and ecosystem functioning, thus feed this information into the development of technical and policy tools/instruments at the national and transboundary levels (e.g. transboundary monitoring programme, river basin, flood and drought management plans etc.). It will further contribute to the discussions for the development of the transboundary legal instrument and feed the work of the DCG and its Expert Working Groups. Regarding the latter the EWG on Floods is the one that has the mandate to discuss water-energy related issues due to the existing interlinkages among water, energy production, floods and the related possible effects on socio-economy including agriculture, and on biodiversity.

The Project will continue the efforts initiated during the foundational projects for engaging the hydropower generation companies (HPPs) in Albania and North Macedonia as the cascade of dams they operate is of key importance for the management of the water, sediment and energy flows in the basin. Under Output 1.5 ?A dialogue to discuss scenarios for the operation of dams to enable optimization of water and flood risk management, and energy production? the Project will establish a dialogue among the HPP companies, other relevant authorities, and the DCG /Joint Coordination Mechanism (see under Output 2.2) to define the scope and level of cooperation among the companies and the stakeholders regarding the management of water resources in the basin. The project will work for the active engagement of the HPP companies in the work of the Expert Working Group on Floods.

Output *3.1* aims to promoting affordable (due low energy consumption) wastewater treatment in ecological sensitive rural areas of the Drin Basin. It addresses the water-energy-ecosystem nexus. Output *3.3* addresses the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus as it aims to test and upscale precision agriculture to decrease the cost for the farmers through reduced water use and energy consumption for irrigation as well as reduced fertilisers and pesticides use. The latter will contribute to reducing the diffuse pollution loads.

5) Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline

The current baseline conditions for water and other natural resources management in the Drin River Basin, basically consist of:

a. At the Drin Riparians Level

- Individual Riparian level economic development programs, which are under the responsibility of various levels of authorities and primarily focus on needs of individual riparians.
- Individual efforts of the Drin Riparians to reform the basin, water and natural resources management institutional and legal frameworks in line with the obligations stemming from the EU accession process / in line with the EU acquis.

•Sectoral efforts and activities for addressing issues related to water resources, pollution, ecosystems and protected areas, forestry, fisheries, etc. and related activities at the Riparian and local levels.
•Fragmented and insufficient monitoring and research efforts at the Riparian level.

b. At the Drin Riparians Level
•The cooperation effort under the Drin CORDA process.
•The results of the foundational GEF Project.

The GEF increment represents the resources and means that will supplement and enhance synergies among the many ongoing fragmented sectoral national and transboundary level baseline efforts, actions and conditions (baseline contributions), and will be used to overcome the barriers hindering regional coordination in the management of the Basin and impediments obstructing sustainable water and natural resources management at the transboundary level, such as limited knowledge of the Basin?s characteristics and functioning, lack of basin level technical and policy tools, lack of permanent coordination management mechanisms, frameworks and capacity etc.

Without the GEF increment actions -such as building a shared science-based knowledge in the Basin, developing transboundary technical and policy tools/instruments (monitoring programmes and enhanced information sharing systems, transboundary level basin/floods/droughts/protected areas management plans etc.), facilitating regional political and technical cooperation frameworks, introducing and seeking to upscale management approaches to address transboundary issues, fostering stakeholders? participation, women empowerment- would not be implemented in a coordinated way under the guidance of an existing transboundary institutional body (the Drin Core Group). Hence, without the GEF increment the actions and the means that are necessary for advancing coordination among the Drin riparians and their ability to work together using the existing baseline conditions and creating synergies among the many ongoing sectoral actions (baseline contributions) would not be implemented.

The GEF investment resulted in mobilizing 40,659,476 USD of co-financing. The project will make efforts during its initiation phase to attract additional co-financing by donors and on-going initiatives.

6) Global environmental benefits

This project will promote a coordinated and integrated approach that relies on consultative processes and community participation, to prevent environmental degradation and associated socio-economic issues from unsustainable management of water and other natural resources in one shared water ecosystem, the Drin, and the adjacent marine area in the Adriatic.

An updated TDA will provide the information and data necessary to develop transboundary policy and technical instruments. Further, the project will provide a basis for regional water resources management agreements and processes through its Component 2, while the cooperation mechanism that will be set up under the same Component, will facilitate (as appropriate) allocations among competing uses and equitable distribution of benefits and burdens. Results of Components 1 and 2 along with the results of Component 3, under which demonstration activities will be implemented to test and upscale management approaches, and in combination with the results of Component 4, will either lead to the implementation of important elements of or accelerate the implementation of the Drin SAP.

The project will additionally promote gender equality in the areas of management, governance, and policy development.

The Drin MoU constitute a regional legal agreement while the Drin Core Group (DCG) a regional management institution that coordinates the implementation of the first. The function of the DCG, serviced by GWP-Med -being its Secretariat- was supported during the foundational project. The activities planned under Component 2 is expected to upscale transboundary management and lead to the establishment of an organizational structure that will gradually assume responsibilities that currently GWP-Med has under its role as the DCG Secretariat. A legal document in the form of an updated MoU or an International agreement will be put forward for negotiation and signing to legally and operationally enable these changes.

Interministerial Committees were formulated during and as a result of the foundational project. There are also on-going processes for reforming water and natural resources management frameworks at the national level. The activities planned under the project are expected to contribute to these reforms through the generation of knowledge regarding the Drin Basin, the development of technical and policy tools, the development of transboundary institutional settings and policy instruments and the testing of novel management approaches that could be replicated/upscaled.

Knowledge will be captured and be communicated to the GEF IW community through IWLEARN in which the Drin project will be fully engaged.

The project will directly benefit 300.000 individuals (150,300 male and 149,700 female). That is the estimated population in the broad areas where the project will implement demonstration activities.

7) Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up. ?

a. Innovativeness

Under Component 3, the project will implement nature-based solutions, technologies, and agricultural practices novel to the region.

The Project will:

- make efforts to test Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for establishing a sustainable and effective system for environmental monitoring and improved decision making as well as enhanced trust among the Drin Riparians.

- be one of few globally -for the time being- implementing the source-to-sea approach in a transboundary basin. As such, the environmental and socio-economic needs and challenges in the coastal

and marine areas will be taken into consideration, in addition to those of the basin, for identifying and applying the appropriate freshwater related policy and management solutions.

- work with the private sector to address challenges -especially- in ecologically sensitive areas and biodiversity hot spots enabling business to adopt sustainable approaches.

The innovation within the Project will also derive from:

- The work for the identification of Nexus issues and related solutions towards Water, Food and Energy security; this will be based on the Nexus work during the foundational GEF projects that focused on the interrelations of water, energy and flood damage. In this regard the Project will continue the efforts initiated during the foundational projects for engaging the hydropower generation companies (HPPs) in Albania and North Macedonia as the cascade of dams they operate is of key importance for the management of the water, sediment and energy flows in the basin.

- The implementation of precision agriculture to address diffuse pollution and over-abstraction and reduce cultivation costs; the activity will be combined with capacity building and a small grants scheme.

-

b. Sustainability

The project will strengthen cooperation frameworks involving all riparians, and further build institutional capacity and expertise; the majority of the Project activities have value-added to capacity building and strengthening institutions. The sustainability of the Project?s results will be ensured through the continued operation of the Drin Core Group and its Expert Working Groups or the operation of a Drin Commission should the negotiations among the Riparians on the draft international agreement text result in its signing. The long-term application of the EU *Acquis* -and the EU Water Framework Directive more particular- in the beneficiary Riparians will contribute to sustaining the results.

The institutional and financial sustainability of the project outcomes will be ensured through the increased commitment of the Drin Riparians to implement the strategic and priority actions enshrined in the SAP. The long-term financial sustainability will be assisted through commitments made by the Riparians for the implementation of the EU *Acquis* through the EU accession process.

c. Potential for Scaling Up

-

Component 3 of the project is dedicated to the application and on-the-ground testing of (among others) nature-based and technology solutions and practices -many of these aimed to be of high efficiency and low cost- to reduce pollution of surface and groundwater and of degradation of freshwater and coastal ecosystems. Some of these will aim in parallel the creation of the conditions towards Green growth and green/blue employability. There is increased likelihood that authorities will seek to replicate successful results especially if those are accompanied by the creation of jobs. In the latter case the market will work as a mechanism of replication and up-scaling. Further, the project plans to work with specialized agencies, donors, financing institutes and commercial banks in an effort to create financing schemes for the upscaling of successful demonstration activities; the financing schemes will enable investments by socio-economic actors (e.g. farmers) to implement successful solutions.

It is also expected that the synergy with the Adaptation Fund/UNDP project ?Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans? and building on the results of the ADA funded project ?Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeastern Europe, through the use of Nexus approach? in the Drin Basin, will lead in increase acknowledgement of the interlinkages among hydropower production, water resources and flood risk management leading to policy creation, scaling up the management from sectoral to at least coordinated if not integrated bringing together energy production; water resources management; flood risk management.

It is also expected that the project will result in the elements that will form the connecting agents for coordinated basin, aquifer, coastal and marine management, implementing the source-to-sea approach. Doing so the upscaling of the results of management actions applied in unique spatial domains of management (basin; aquifer; coastal; marine) to the source-to-sea level is expected.

Further, the dissemination of the results of these experiences and of the progress towards achieving the desired impacts, will foster the scaling up and broader adoption of the successful practices promoted by the project to the level of the whole Basin.

---

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

[2] https://www.gwp.org/globalassets/global/gwp-med-files/list-of-programmes/gef-drin-project/drin-docs/tda_final.pdf

[3] It could be in the form of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin to be signed and put forward for ratification by the parliaments of the Riparians or an evolution of the current

Drin MoU to be signed at Ministerial level. In both cases it will be in line with the EU Water Framework Directive and the UNECE Water Convention.

[4] i.e. a joint coordination body in the form of the current institutional arrangement or an evolved one that may be the result of the successful negotiation and signing of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin.

[5] Supported by the EU.

[6] A description of the outputs is given in Annex G

[7] All stakeholder engagement activities, the means to be used and the related timeframe is described in the Stakeholders Engagement Strategy.

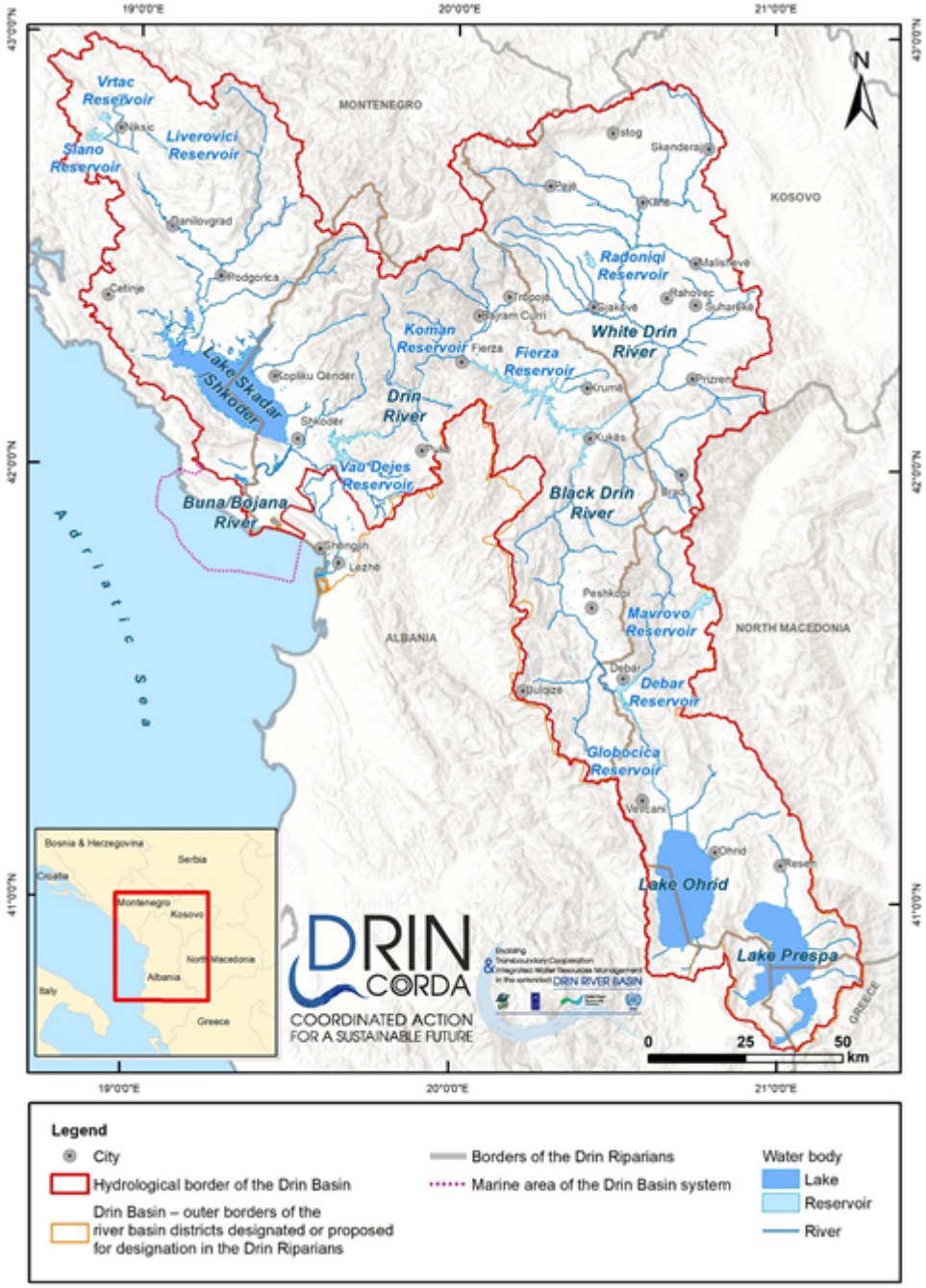
[8] As per the DCG ToR, DCG meetings take place twice per year the last Thursday of May and the fourth Thursday of November.

[9] More info at www.iwlearn.net

[10] More info on GEF IW Conferences: https://iwlearn.net/events/conferences

1b. Project Map and Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.



1c. Child Project?

If this is a child project under a program, describe how the components contribute to the overall program impact.

2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

Private Sector Entities Yes

If none of the above, please explain why:

Please provide the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent assessment.

A Stakeholders Engagement Plan is developed for the needs of the Project making use of a comprehensive Stakeholders Analysis (see Annex 7 of the Project Document and Annex G.7 of the CEO Endorsement Request document). The objective of the SEP is to create the conditions for structured and inclusive participation of relevant stakeholders at the appropriate level and time using suitable means throughout the project cycle. The SEP serves the following purposes:

? Identify, map and analyse stakeholders and their characteristics, including their priorities and needs, and ensure that the Project takes these into consideration in its design and implementation;

? Design and deploy stakeholder engagement modalities through inclusive consultations, targeted capacity reinforcement, effective knowledge management, information disclosure and communication, in meaningful and accessible ways throughout the project cycle;

? Provide enabling platforms for dialogue and decision-making on the sustainable management of the Drin Basin;

? Help mitigating identified risks related to possible marginalization of vulnerable groups, reproducing discrimination of women, and grievances from affected stakeholders;

? Describe resources, responsibilities, reporting and monitoring frameworks for the implementation of the SEP.

?Ownership? among the stakeholders of the project and the Drin CORDA process that the first supports, was established through the foundational project; it is envisaged that this ?ownership? will be supported also through the current project and -to the extent possible- be broadened.

Replicating good practices established during the foundational project (see terminal evaluation), interaction of the PMU with representatives of institutions and key stakeholders will be continuous, as part of the Project implementation. The representatives of the Drin Riparians to the DCG being the politically and operationally responsible persons for the Drin CORDA, will be also the focal points of the Project. The PMU officers based in the project beneficiary Riparians, will consult them as means to deliver the project activities in each of the Riparians.

In addition to the engagement activities described under Component 4, Table 4 of the SEP (Stakeholder Engagement Plan; see Annex 7 of the Project Document and Annex G.7 of the CEO endorsement request document) provides an overview of engagement activities under Components 1, 2 and 3; further, the SEP describes the financial resources earmarked in the project budget for these activities as well as responsibilities, monitoring and reporting arrangements.

In addition, provide a summary on how stakeholders will be consulted in project execution, the means and timing of engagement, how information will be disseminated, and an explanation of any resource requirements throughout the project/program cycle to ensure proper and meaningful stakeholder engagement

Stakeholders will be extensively engaged through focus groups meetings in all beneficiary Drin Riparians in the beginning of the process of the development of the updated Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (Output 1.1). An additional consultation process will be used to validate the draft updated TDA and discuss the vision with regard to the management of the Basin as basis for the development of the River Basin Management (RBM; see activities under Component 2). Stakeholders will be also consulted on

the RBM plan development including its Programme of Measures through the EWG meetings (see activities under Component 2) and Annual Drin Conferences (see activities under Component 4).

The scientific overview for the design of multi-purpose transboundary monitoring programs (Output 1.2), on the status of ecosystems (Output 1.3) and the assessment of the sediment balance (Output 1.4) will be provided by the Expert Working Groups of the Drin Core Group. The Riparians? institutions responsible for monitoring will be involved in the work under these outputs being consulted and/or providing scientific support and input. The same is true with regard to the work for the improvement of the Information Management System (Output 1.6).

A dialogue among the HPP companies, other relevant authorities, and the DCG with regard to operation rules of the dams to improve flow regulation and minimise negative effects will be established under Output 1.5. Output 1.7 focuses on training of staff of institutions and stakeholders on themes defined in the SAP.

The project will provide support for the operation/establishment of a sustainable joint coordination body in the form of the current institutional arrangement or in the form of a Drin Commission (Output 2.2) that may be the result of the successful negotiation and signing of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin (Output 2.1).

The development of the Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin and their integration in the Drin Basin Flood Risk Management Plan (Output 2.4) as well as the development of the Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo* and North Macedonia (Output 2.6) will be underpinned with stakeholders consultations. The responsible institutions will be guiding the process for the development of the plans hence the consultation process.

The harmonization of management planning for adjacent Riparian level established protected areas (Output 2.5) will be done by joint technical groups comprising of appointed representatives of the protected areas authorities and the competent institutions of the Riparians concerned. Consultation workshops with stakeholders in the protected areas at Riparian and transboundary levels will take place.

A stakeholder mapping/analysis in the selected sites will be done to inform the implementation of the demonstration activities under Component 3 and ensure appropriate engagement of local stakeholders (farmers, fisherpersons, private sector, local communities, industries/SMEs etc. depending on the nature and focus of each activity). Responsible ministries and local authorities will be involved in the selection of the sites that the demonstrations will focus on. Awareness raising among and consultation with local communities in areas of implementation will take place aiming to succeed commitment and ownership of the process towards sustainability of results. The project will work with donors and financing partners to investigate options and opportunities for scaling up solutions proven to be successful.

Overarching means and approaches under Component 4 will be used to serve all project activities and link the individual stakeholders engagement processes under the different Outputs. An Outreach and Communications Strategy will be developed to support the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and guide the development of key communications products and materials. Broad awareness raising and ownership will be fostered through the annual celebration of the Drin Day while the Annual Drin Stakeholder Conferences will be used to report back to the stakeholders and foster their input regarding project implementation and results.

Synergies with relevant Donors, will be sought seeking their inputs on project implementation and advice on co-designing approaches that jointly address causes of transboundary concern and their remedy actions. Annual meetings with the DCG / donors conferences will be held in this regard. Cooperation with projects and initiatives that contribute directly or indirectly to the sustainable management of the Drin Basin and its natural resources will be actively fostered.

The Project will support the role of the DCG -or the joint coordination mechanism that will be established should the draft international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin be signed and ratified by

the Drin Riparians- providing a fertile hub for different partners to come together and synergize in addressing the causes of the transboundary management issues hence, in implementing the Drin SAP.

Finally, there will be close collaboration with the GEF International Waters Learning and Resource Exchange Network (IW:LEARN) Project[1] to facilitate uptake of lessons learned and knowledge exchange.

---

[1] More info at www.iwlearn.net

Select what role civil society will play in the project:

Consulted only; Yes

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;

Co-financier;

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body; Yes

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain)

3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Provide the gender analysis or equivalent socio-economic assesment.

A Gender Analysis (see Annex 9 of the Project Document and Annex G.8 of the CEO Endorsement Request document) was undertaken during the PPG phase to gather and process information for the design of the strategies for stakeholder engagement and gender mainstreaming; the following means was used to collect information for this analysis:

- Web-based survey on stakeholder engagement and gender mainstreaming (July 2022);
- Gender Equality Survey (on the occasion of the 9th Drin Stakeholder Conference; 25-26 October 2022).

The analysis of the surveys has shown that:

- While stakeholders tend to understand the importance of gender equality and although there is enough knowledge regarding gender issues and mainstreaming, they lack the resources and means to undertake the necessary steps to address related issues. Adequate human or financial resources, collection and analysis of sex disaggregated data and collaboration with gender knowledgeable partners often are missing.

- The two key areas that should receive more attention to ensure gender mainstreaming during project implementation is ?sustainable use of water and its supported ecosystems? and ?strengthening of the mechanisms to support management of water resources?. Giving a relevant priority to good collaboration

between men and women, and facilitating equal access is a positive entry point and will be taken into consideration when discussing gender equality in these sectors.

- Gender sensitive training and capacity building should be implemented; where possible and relevant, the project will keep in focus that especially men have an increased need in this regard, to understand gender issues and address inequalities. The areas and topics of interest for women would be economic empowerment and increased access and control on resources and budgets.

- As respondents consider the most effective approach towards gender equality to be, women participation/role in decision making, where relevant, women voices need to be taken in consideration during project implementation. Further, during project implementation some of the interventions should aim to contributing towards research or understanding of differences in access, control and benefit between women and men. In this respect the project should include actions for the identification, establishment and promotion of women network or women leaders' participation, and the collection of research data or other relevant disaggregated data.

The project will mainstream gender in all Components through revision of key documents produced where gender issues could be potentially introduced. Further, it is envisaged that the project will promote gender equality in the areas of management, governance, and policy development.

A Gender Action Plan (GAP; see Annex 9 of the Project Document and Annex G.8 of the CEO Endorsement Request document) is prepared to offer a clear vision and actions on how to mainstream gender in a practical and strategic manner providing indicators and means of verification.

The GAP is aligned with the ESMF contributing to addressing risks related to gender and excluded social groups; it further contributes to the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

The Gender Action Plan (GAP):

(1) Enables gender-responsive design, implementation, and monitoring of all project Components;
(2) Proposes gender sensitive actions to increase awareness, understanding, participation and empowerment of women in natural resources management;
(3) Provides gender sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data.

GAP?s overall aim is to accelerate progress on gender equality by supporting the empowerment of all women reducing inequalities and exclusion and leaving no one behind towards integrated natural resources management for sustainable development.

The GAP is designed to contribute towards improved water security, human and ecosystem health, and climate resilience in Drin Riparians for both women and men. It includes 5 envisaged outcomes:

1. Project key stakeholders have relevant knowledge on gender equality and promote gender equality effectively.
2. Gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) is a cornerstone of integrated natural resources management and governance.
3. Project implementation staff have relevant gender knowledge and promote gender equality effectively.
4. Key strategic documents, policies and plans integrate gender dimensions and are not gender blind.

Collection of sex-disaggregated data and knowledge exchange contribute to the achievement of SDG5 and other related SDGs.

Gender Action Plan

GAP Outcome 1: Project key stakeholders have relevant knowledge on gender equality and promote gender equality effectively							
Gender Actions	**Indicator**	**Baseline**	**Target**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**	**Source of Verification**	**Component and Output**
1.1 Identification and engagement of gender equality stakeholders and creation of formal/informal partnerships to contribute to a Gender Equality Agenda in transboundary cooperation and integrated natural resources management in line with Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.	Number of women organizations, networks, women activists, experts and gender responsible institutions in all Drin Riparians identified and are informed about the project	0	20 Women NGOs, networks, women led SME/ business, women activists, experts, Gender responsible institutions	By first year	Gender Specialist PMU	List of women organization networks, women activists, experts and gender responsible institutions identified and being informed about the project	**Component 3** All outputs **Component 4** Output 4.1 Output 4.2 Output 4.3
1.2 Create a formal/informal partnership such as **Gender Community of Practice** and strengthen already existing women networks in decision making to promote GEWE in all Drin Riparians.	Number of partnerships to promote GEWE in project implementation	0	At least one	By year 2 and ongoing on regular basis	Gender Specialist PMU	Established formal or informal networks	**Component 4**
1.3 Engage institutional Gender Focal Points or other key gender institution representative to regularly participate in the project activities and/or Gender Community of Practice.	Number of Gender Focal Points, key gender institution representative participating in the Gender Community of Practice	0	4	By year 2 and ongoing on regular basis	Gender Specialist PMU	Engaged Gender Focal Points or other key gender actors	**Component 4**

1.4 Enhance gender capacities and/or knowledge of stakeholders/community groups to promote GEWE in the water management sector, focusing both on women and men.	Number of representatives from local government bodies, organizations, NGOs, lobbying groups, or similar participating in and benefiting from gender capacity building activities	0	50	By Year 5	Gender Specialist PMU	List of participants disaggregated	**Component 1** Output 1.7 **Component 3** All outputs **Component 4** Output 4.1
1.5 Ensure Stakeholder Engagement and gender balanced participation in national and regional dialogues/meetings and processes, as appropriate, at all levels.	Percentage of women and men participating in national and regional dialogues, project activities etc.	0	Minimum 40% of underrepresented gender	On a regular basis	Gender Specialist PMU	List of participants disaggregated	**Component 1** Output 1.1 **Component 2** Outputs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6 **Component 3** All Outputs **Component 4** Output 4.1
GAP Outcome 2: Gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) is a cornerstone of integrated natural resources management and governance							
Gender Actions	**Indicator**	**Baseline**	**Target**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**	**Source of Verification**	

2.1 Ensure gender is mainstreamed in the awareness raising annual events, campaigns of the project targeting local communities, NGOs, associations and actors from the private sector and schools, **including a campaign with the central theme of ?Women in Water Management?**.	Qualitative evidence of gender mainstreaming in awareness raising and communications campaigns	No	Yes	On a regular basis	Gender Specialist PMU	Materials prepared for campaigns	**Component 4** Output 4.1 Output 4.3
GAP Outcome 3: Project implementation staff and stakeholders have relevant gender knowledge and promote gender equality effectively							
Gender Actions	**Indicator**	**Baseline**	**Target**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**	**Source of Verification**	
3.1 Review of key documents such as reports, surveys etc., **through gender lenses** to ensure gender mainstreaming in all key interventions.	Number of documents, reports, reviewed through gender lenses	0	10	Ongoing	Gender Specialist	Key documents reviewed	All Components
3.2 Enhance the gender capacity of project implementation staff to promote GEWE in water management, to increase understanding of gender roles and ability to integrate and implement gender activities as part of the project, by introducing GAP and other supporting tools and gender sensitive mechanisms.	Number of project implementation staff trained on gender in water management, disaggregated by sex, age and position	0	5	By Year 2	Gender Specialist PMU	Delivered training minutes, presentations	N/A
GAP Outcome 4: Key strategic documents, policies and plans integrate gender dimensions and are not gender blind							
Gender Actions	**Indicator**	**Baseline**	**Target**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**	**Source of Verification**	

4.1. Key policy documents at national and/or local level such as key strategies, plans or legal instruments integrate gender considerations**.**	Number of environmental policies, plans, strategies, and actions at the local, national, and regional levels integrate gender considerations	0	3	By Year 5	Gender Specialist PMU Project Partners	Key documents having gender considerations	**Component 2** Output 2.3 Output 2.4 Output 2.6
GAP Outcome 5: Collection of sex-disaggregated data and knowledge exchange contribute to the achievement of SDG5 and other related SDGs							
Gender Actions	**Indicator**	**Baseline**	**Target**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**	**Source of Verification**	
5.1. Collect data, monitor the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, and share sex-disaggregated data with the stakeholders and project staff on an annual basis, to meet reporting requirements of the gender monitoring templates	Gender monitoring reports with sex-disaggregated data submitted on an annual basis	No	Yes	On an annual basis	Gender Specialist PMU	Data collected and reported on annual basis	All Components

Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment?

Yes

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes

Improving women's participation and decision making Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services or women

Does the project?s results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

4. Private sector engagement

Elaborate on the private sector's engagement in the project, if any.

The project will seek the engagement of the private sector in the Drin Riparians -as necessary and applicable- for the implementation of project activities, creating value to the Riparian level and local economies. Joint ventures with international/foreign companies for activities that demand technical expertise and knowledge that may be missing in the Drin Riparians will leverage knowledge and create technical expertise. An example applicable to the latter is -possible- activities for the use of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for the establishment of sustainable environmental monitoring systems.

The project will work (as part of action under Component 3) with the private sector (SMEs and individual entrepreneurs) with the aim to enable business to adopt sustainable approaches to address challenges -especially- in ecologically sensitive areas and biodiversity hot spots thus. This will enable green growth fostering economic development, while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which human well-being relies. The private sector groups that will be the focus in this regard will be farmers, fishermen their associations and fishery companies, tourism SMEs. The Project will aim to catalyze innovation and possibly investment in an effort to underpin the aimed sustained growth and give rise to new economic opportunities, including through promotion of green/blue employability and entrepreneurship. Capacity building, small grants programs and possibly small-scale soft loans through credit lines from development banks, will be the means that the project will explore opportunities to test, to facilitate local economy in areas of ecological value promoting green business approaches, hence facilitating a transition to a -high value- local scale sustainable natural resources management. The engagement of local authorities to enabling the transition of local economy towards sustainable approaches and activities is of key importance, hence it will be sought.

The above is expected to have a positive effect also in terms of creation of jobs of added value for the local and Riparian level economy. Further the private sector, being an important stakeholder, will receive special attention during the implementation of the stakeholders engagement strategy.

5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Elaborate on indicated risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, the proposed measures that address these risks at the time of project implementation.(table format acceptable):

Table 1. Risks

#	**Description**	**Risk Category**	**Impact & Probability**	**Risk Treatment / Management Measures**	**Risk Owner**
	Enter a brief description of the risk. Risk description should include future event and cause. Risks identified through HACT, PCAT, SES, Private Sector Due Diligence, and other assessments should be included.	Social and Environmental Financial Operational Organizational Political Regulatory Strategic Other	Describe the potential **effect** on the project if the future event were to occur.	What actions have been taken/will be taken to manage this risk.	The person or entity with the responsibility to manage the risk.

1	Limited interest or involvement by target stakeholders, local communities and the inhabitants, leading to insufficient and/or less effective multi-stakeholder involvement from all Drin Riparians.	Strategic, Operational	Low L = 1 I = 3	Stakeholders engagement and awareness raising were among the successes of the foundational GEF project. This provides the basis on which the proposed project will operate. The low related risk will be addressed throughout project implementation through systematic communication activities to ensure further awareness raising, high levels of information and that knowledge is being shared among different stakeholders as well as through the use of engagement tools such as annual coordination events, roundtables, task forces, meetings of officers with stakeholders etc. to enable views of different groups being taken into consideration.	PMU
2	Lack of sustained political support to establishing transboundary cooperation frameworks.	Strategic, Political	Moderate L = 1 I = 5	The proposed project will continue the step-by-step progressive approach adopted through the foundational project, to further strengthening mutual trust based on joint fact finding, enhancing scientific understanding about the basin and the transboundary problems, and consultative processes. The DCG and its Expert working Groups will ensure effective communication with the political leadership of the responsible Ministries in the Riparians.	PMU, DCG

3	Riparian level processes ? particularly approvals for plans and legal mechanisms ? may be complex and lead to uneven progress among the Drin Riparians that may undermine different Rirarian?s interest/ engagement.	Strategic	Low L = 3 I = 1	While the project will facilitate institutional capacity building as well as knowledge sharing and provide guidance based on lessons learned and other similar experiences, it is possible that Riparians will move at difference paces on the basis of Riparian level interests. When necessary, direct discussions with the political leadership and informal discussion forums (e.g. regional workshops) will be used as means to alleviate related risks.	PMU, DCG

4	Covid-19 pandemic persists leading to -as experienced also during the foundational project- effects linked to COVID-19 containment measures including: Delays from Riparians counterparts providing feedback for the preparation of studies (provision 5of information and data; input for the development of studies; approval of studies) due to home confinement; Difficulty/inability in reaching out to stakeholders for the implementation of demonstration activities and to acquire information and data for the preparation of studies. The execution of the following types of project activities may be adversely affected: Meetings; Consultations; Studies; Field activities (demonstration activities, study visits, awareness activities etc.). Overall, project the implementation timeline may be affected.	Operational	Low L = 2 I = 2	According to current projections the COVID-19 pandemic will persist till at least end-2022 ? mid-2023 while it is still not certain when life is expected to gradually return to a normal COVID-free pace. In the scenario that COVID-19 pandemic persists the project will use the ?know-how? developed and same means used during the foundational project: on-line meetings of the steering committee, conferences etc. using, overall, virtual, modes of interaction with stakeholders. The project implementation arrangements will include one project officer/ Riparian coordinator based in each of the project beneficiaries allowing ?in-situ? interaction with Drin Riparian counterparts and stakeholders for the implementation of all activities and especially the pilot interventions. The above-mentioned means assisted in the successful implementation of the foundational project during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following elements established through the foundational project will enable using such ?alternative? means for carrying out the project activities: the existence of the Drin CORDA process - that is owned by the Drin Riparians- as the overarching framework under which the project will be implemented; institutional continuity in terms of membership in the Drin Core Group (or the body that will succeed this should the international agreement be signed by the Drin Riparians) that will be the steering committee of the project; partnerships with all groups of stakeholders established during the foundational project and the subsequent Riparian level ownership. Depending on the	PMU

				course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project timeline of actions/planning will incorporate provisions that will allow response to the effects of the pandemic mitigation measures; timeline adjustments that may become necessary during project implementation, will be discussed by the Steering Committee.	

5	Marginalized and vulnerable groups, may not have the capacity to claim their rights or may be otherwise excluded from Component 3 activities that could benefit them. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Moderate** I = 3 L = 3	A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement plan prepared during the PPG phase based on a thorough Stakeholders Analysis, include specific mitigation measures to address such exclusion risks that may arise both during the capacity building activities, relevant planning processes and the implementation of pilot projects under Component 3. These consultation processes have been designed with the aim to facilitate the engagement of decision-makers and stakeholders, including these with the potential of being marginalized, to ensure a common understanding and secure broad support for their implementation as well as to enable sustainability of project results. Comprehensive stakeholder consultations will be also supported through Activity 4.1 (Awareness raising and participation actions at local, Riparian and regional levels to enable stakeholders? engagement). For specific risks and arrangements related to the meaningful and equitable participation of women and men and gender-responsive delivery of this project please see Risk 2 below. Risk 3 addresses potential grievances from project affected stakeholders. *Note: Risk Treatment / Management Measures as per SESP and ESMF*	PMU, DCG

6	Component 3 activities may potentially reproduce discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in 7design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Low** L = 2 I = 2	To mitigate this risk, an updated Gender Analysis and Action Plan have been prepared during the PPG phase. The Gender Action Plan is designed to ensure that the implemented activities address both women?s and men?s needs, interests and concerns and do not discriminate against women or girls or reinforce gender-based discrimination. Risk mitigation has also been fully integrated into project design under Output 4.1, which focuses on creating Water and Gender Actions Plans, and supporting related gender-responsive indicators, as well as capacity building. Gender disaggregated targets (based on the GAP) will be incorporated into the project?s M&E framework during the project inception phase. These activities will be monitored with progress reported annually in the PIR. *Note: Risk Treatment / Management Measures as per SESP and ESMF*	PMU, DCG

7	There is a risk of grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders during the implementation of Output 3 and measures proposed in plans for basin-, drought-, and flood-management. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Substantial** I = 3 L = 4	To mitigate any risk, a Stakeholder analysis and accompanying Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared to understand the characteristics of the stakeholders (stakes, importance, awareness/knowledge, influence etc.) and includes activities to ensure the timely and meaningful engagement of stakeholders in the different stages of strategic/management documents development to enable that the latter will reflect at the best possible way the views and concerns of stakeholders. The project has also designed to ensure through the Drin Core Group (that will be the SC of the project) that the Riparian level legislation in relation to the development of policy/strategic/management documents is implemented and especially the provisions related to public participation. Also, a Grievance Resolution Mechanism (GRM) is provided for in the ESMF (prepared during the PPG) and will be established during the initiation phase of the project. Furthermore, stakeholders will have access to the UNDP Stakeholder Response Mechanism, and the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU). *Note: Risk Treatment / Management Measures as per SESP and ESMF*	PMU, DCG

8	Plans for basin management, drought management and flood management proposed under Component 2 may have adverse cumulative impacts on biodiversity. These risks arise ? albeit on smaller scale ? also in demonstration projects in Component 3. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Substantial** I = 4 L = 4	Most of these risks are context-specific ? i.e. they depend on the nature of the interventions proposed that will be known only during the development of the basin-flood- and drought plans and the selection of the geographical areas for and the implementation of the demonstration projects under component 3. The preparation of the following outputs will therefore involve SESA processes that will be an integral part of the relevant planning exercises: ? Output 2.3- A River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River ? Output 2.6- A Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo* and North Macedonia Each of these SESA processes will meet the combined requirements of applicable Riparian level regulatory frameworks, the UNDP SES Policy - specifically, the UNDP SES Policy requirements related to SESA process management, stakeholder consultations and accountability, as well as specific Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8.	PMU, DCG
9	Interventions in relevant basin-, flood- and drought-management plans will be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Moderate** I=3 L=3		
10	Pilot projects under the Component 3 may have temporary adverse impacts on water quality. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Moderate** I=3 L=3		

11	Project activities located in proximity of internationally protected cultural heritage sites may have potential adverse impacts on their conservation objectives. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Moderate** I=3 L=2	In addition, the preparation of the Output 2.4. Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin will involve targeted assessment of the cumulative and synergistic risks and impacts associated of proposed flood management actions and identify measures that may be taken in order to avoid, minimize or offset any adverse impacts. In addition, the dialogue on operation of dams to enable optimization of water and flood risk management (Output 1.5) will propose to the participating stakeholders to address discussion topics related to the potential impacts of the operation of the dams in the cascade on ecological flows, fish passage, sediment transport, floods and droughts and other climate-change concerns. Last, pilot projects implemented within the following outputs will be screened for their potential impacts on UNDP SES Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8: ? Output 3.1- Nutrient reduction (rural) ? Output 3.3- Sustainable agricultural practices ? Output 3.4- Erosion control ? Output 3.6 ? Sustainable transboundary fisheries management Any activity that will be screened to have potential substantial or high risk or that will require EIA or targeted assessments under the Riparian level legislation (e.g. Natura 2000 assessment regime for	

				interventions that may have impacts on Emerald network sites), will be subject to relevant assessment processes. The implementing entity will also ensure that all project outputs fully adhere to the relevant UNDP SES Standards from the outset of their design to their completion and will notify UNDP of detailed implementation modalities taken in this regard. The implementing entity will also provide adequate support for the above-described assessments and will perform the quality assurance function during their implementation. The implementing entity will also update UNDP on the progress made in the application of these arrangements during the project implementation (through annual PIR, MTR and TE, and also project M&E system as well as on an ad hoc basis depending on project developments). *Note: Risk Treatment / Management Measures as per SESP and ESMF*	

12	Some interventions for drought management and flood management proposed under Component 2 may lead to economic displacement. These risks arise ? albeit on smaller scale ? also in demonstration projects in Component 3. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Moderate** I=3 L=2	All these risks are site-specific and currently unknown. To this end, specific actions proposed in Outputs 2.3, 2.4, 2,5, 2.6, and also in Outputs 3.1, 3.4, and 3.6 will be screeded for potential physical and economic displacement risks. Any action proposed within these outputs posing moderate, substantial, or high displacement risks will be subject to further assessment to examine the specific risks and determine locally appropriate options for avoiding, and where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating them as per the UNDP SES Policy Standard 5. The implementing entity shall ensure that GEF resources will not be used for any activities that will cause the physical displacement. If any economic displacement would need to take place, the design of the relevant actions will include Livelihoods Action Plans that will stipulate the measures for restoring livelihoods of any displaced persons through compensation at full replacement costs and other assistance. *Note: Risk Treatment / Management Measures as per SESP and ESMF*	

13	Duty-bearers may not have the capacity to meet their environmental obligations. *Note: Risk as per SESP and ESMF*	Social and Environmental	**Moderate** I = 2 L = 5	The project will conduct prior examination for activities for which initial screening indicates that further action should be taken, to check the applicable UNDP SES standards and determine the appropriate arrangements for the integration of relevant SES concerns into the formal EIA and SEA processes (during their screening/scoping phase) and/or into the relevant assessment and documentation prepared for applicable permits. To this end, Output 2.2: Establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism will create opportunities for suitably engaging the Riparians? EIA/SEA focal points to facilitate the applicable environmental assessments and streamline any related consultations that may need to be conducted within the basin. In addition, Output 1.7: Training of staff of institutions shall include basic introduction to requirements for EIA and SEA processes and transboundary consultations between the Riparians within these processes that arise from the Riparians? obligations under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA (and their future EU accession requirements related to the implementation of the EU EIA and SEA Directives). *Note: Risk Treatment / Management Measures as per SESP and ESMF*	

COVID-19 opportunity analysis

The COVID-19 pandemic disruption to the economy provides opportunities to remediate the approaches related to the use of natural resources by the society including for economic activities. The project represents a considerable incremental investment that can assist towards this direction. It is considered that this can be

done at two levels; further consultations will be carried out with relevant parties to ensure that COVID-19 opportunities are taken into account at the start of the project:

- Increased efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness in delivering project results.
Continuing the application of working modalities with authorities and stakeholders established through the foundational project as a result -among others- of the pandemic imposed restrictions, there will be a continuation of the use of internet-based tools of communication and monitoring; this allows: Having a PMU with Officers stationed in all Beneficiary Drin Riparians; Additional -to the one scheduled- Drin Core Group meetings/Steering Committee meetings per year to discuss/address emerging issues (three/four DCG meetings per year were held in total during the foundational project); meetings of the PMU with stakeholders, other projects, authorities, donors etc. to discuss project issues and opportunities; broader participation of stakeholders in conferences/workshops by allowing both on-the-spot and on-line presence. The latter will increase transparency and inclusiveness as it will allow participation of stakeholders having higher risk of being excluded, as well as participation of higher numbers of stakeholders overcoming related project budgetary restrictions.

- Contribution to the effort of the Drin Riparians to recover their economies and rebuild from the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in a better and greener way.
The project aims to collaborate with authorities and stakeholders to enhance scientific and technical knowledge. Management tools will be developed and institutional settings will be established at the regional level to combat transboundary issues and environmental degradation. Point source and diffuse pollution from industry and unsustainable wastewater management (point source) and unsustainable agricultural practices (diffuse pollution), sediment flows, floods and droughts, water/energy production interactions, will be the focus of actions. This will enhance the capacity of the authorities to manage water and other natural resources in a more sustainable way at both the transboundary and Riparian levels. The increase of resilience of vulnerable populations to climate change will also be sought. Additionally, the project will facilitate green growth in ecologically sensitive areas, promoting economic development while preserving natural assets and environmental services that support human well-being. Pilot interventions will be carried out with industries, farmers, SMEs, and fishermen to transition the local economy towards sustainable approaches. The project aims to empower the private sector and local authorities through green entrepreneurship promotion and foster innovation and investments while creating economic opportunities.

6. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

Describe the institutional arrangement for project implementation. Elaborate on the planned coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.

UNDP will be the implementing agency. GWP will be the implementing partner. UNECE will be a responsible partner executing specific activities as described below.

GWP will establish a project management unit (PMU) to coordinate day-to-day activities.

Implementing Agency: UNDP will be responsible for overall project supervision and oversight through CSO execution modality with GWP. UNDP will be represented at the Project Board by Resident Representative or Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Albania who can delegate this role to the UNDP/ GEF International Waters Regional Technical Advisor. Project Quality Assurance from the Albania Country Office will be provided by the Senior Programme Coordinator.

UNDP is accountable to the GEF for the implementation of this project. This includes overseeing project execution undertaken by the Implementing Partner to ensure that the project is being carried out in accordance with UNDP and GEF policies and procedures and the standards and provisions outlined in the Delegation of Authority (DOA) letter for this project. The UNDP GEF Executive Coordinator, in consultation with UNDP Bureaus and the Implementing Partner, retains the right to revoke the project DOA,

suspend or cancel this GEF project. UNDP is responsible for the Project Assurance function in the project governance structure and presents to the Project Board and attends Project Board meetings as a non-voting member.

Executing Entity: The Implementing Partner for this project is Global Water Partnership.
The Implementing Partner is the entity to which the UNDP Administrator has entrusted the implementation of the project document along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of resources and the delivery of outputs, as set forth in the project document.

The Executing Entity is responsible for executing this project. Specific tasks include:
•Project planning, coordination, management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. This includes providing all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary. The Implementing Partner will strive to ensure project-level M&E is undertaken by Riparians? institutes and is aligned with Riparian level systems so that the data used and generated by the project supports Riparian level systems.
•Overseeing the management of project risks as included in this project document and new risks that may emerge during project implementation.
•Procurement of goods and services, including human resources.
•Financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets.
•Approving and signing the multiyear workplan.
•Approving and signing the combined delivery report at the end of the year; and,
•Signing the financial report or the funding authorization and certificate of expenditures.

? Risk management as outlined in the Project Document.

Responsible Parties
UNECE will be a responsible party.

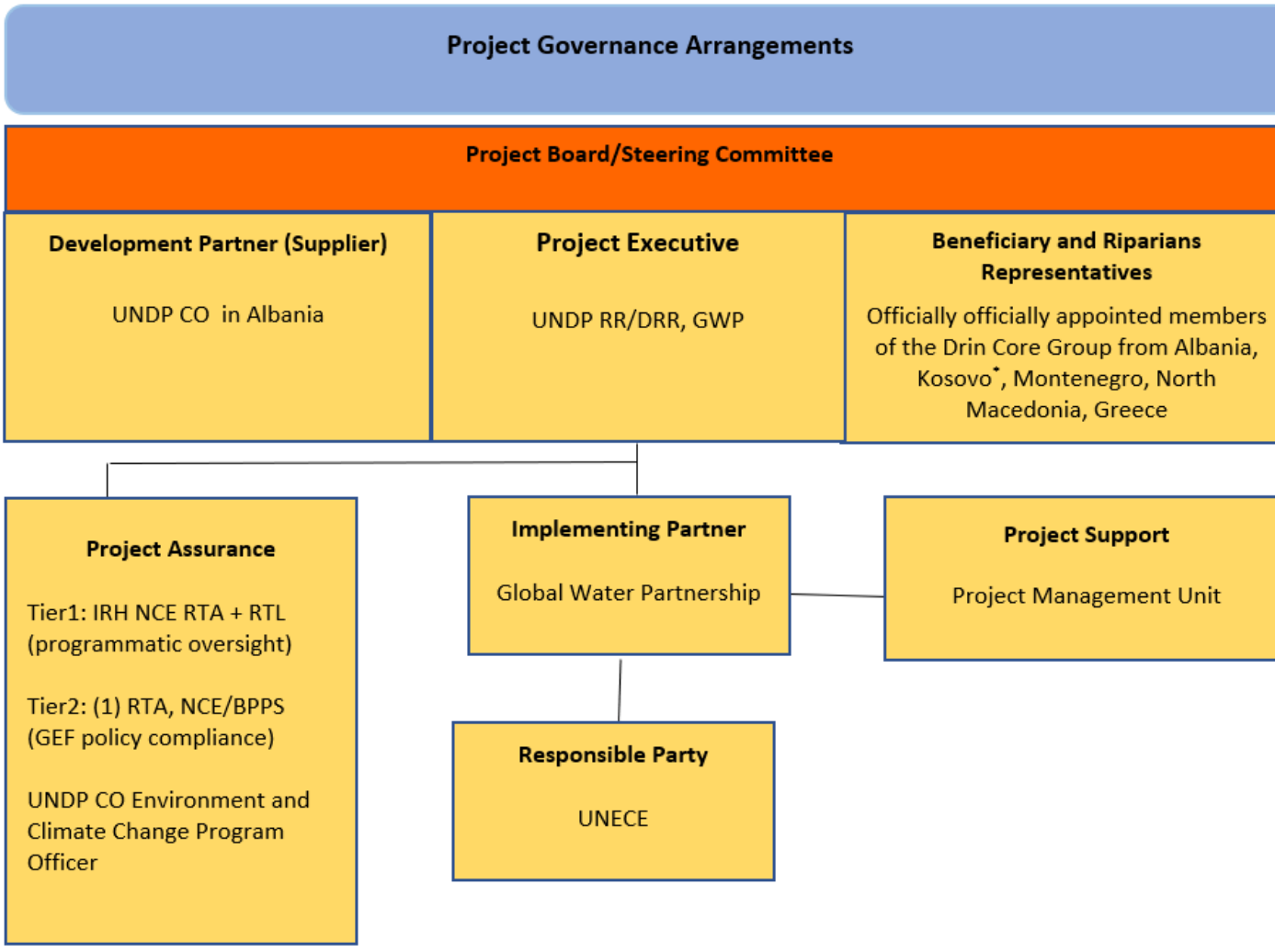
UNECE will:
(i) Be fully responsible for the implementation of Output 1.2 apart for the logistical organization of meetings under this Output;
(ii) Provide services for the implementation of Outputs 2.1.and 2.2. More specifically UNECE will provide technical support to the PMU for facilitating the negotiations among the Drin Riparians in reaching an agreement regarding the signing of a legal instrument text for the management of the Drin Basin. UNECE will participate in and assist in facilitating meetings, provide services for the development of the legal text etc. UNECE will also provide support to the PMU for the establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism; in this regard, UNECE will be responsible for the operation of the EWG on Monitoring and Information Exchange or any body that the Drin Riparians may decide to substitute this EWG. The project will take advantage of UNECE?s specialized skills on transboundary monitoring and the establishment and operation of international agreements and joint bodies for the management of transboundary waters.

Responsible parties are directly accountable to the implementing partner in accordance with the terms of their agreement or contract with the implementing partner.

Given that responsible parties play an execution role and are directly accountable to the implementing partner, responsible parties should never serve on the Project Board to avoid a conflict of interest.

Project stakeholders and target groups: The officially appointed members of the Drin Core Group (DCG) or the officially appointed members of a body that may succeed this should the draft international agreement text is signed and ratified by the parliaments of the Drin Riparians, will be members of the Project Board/Steering Committee so as it is ensured that the DCG and the SC actions are aligned.

The project governance structure is shown in Figure below.



GWP will supervise activities with the aim of achieving project outcomes and for the effective use of UNDP resources. It will have the responsibility to secure the establishment and supervision of the Project Management Unit (PMU).

UNDP BPPS NCE assumes full responsibility and accountability for oversight and quality assurance of this Project and ensures its timely implementation in compliance with the GEF-specific requirements and UNDP?s Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP), its Financial Regulations and Rules and Internal Control Framework. A UNDP BPPS NCE representative will assume the assurance role and will present assurance findings to the Project Board, and therefore attends Project Board meetings as a non-voting member.

Project Management Unit

The Project Management Unit will comprise the following members:

- *Project Manager/ Chief Technical Advisor*: The PM/CTA will be responsible for the overall management of the project, including the mobilization of all project inputs, supervision over project staff, consultants and sub-contractors and reporting. In this role, the PM/CTA will also fulfil the responsibilities of a chief technical advisor in terms of providing substantive inputs and support to project activities.
- Officers /Drin Riparian Coordinators: The four Officers /Drin Riparian Coordinators will report to and work closely to the CTA/PM. They will be responsible for day-to-day project operations and technical work

in their respective Drin Riparian as well as in the Drin Basin, and liaison work in each of their respective Drin Riparians.
- Project Assistant who will be responsible for overall support to the PM, the Officers and project implementation.
- Project Financial Officer; the Officer will be responsible for the day-to-day financial aspects of the project, including financial reporting, procurement paperwork, and maintenance of the project?s administrative and financial records.
- Environmental and Social Safeguards Officer: One of the Officers /Drin Riparian Coordinators will undertake the role of the Environmental and Social Safeguards Officer. Under the overall supervision and guidance of the CTA/PM, the Environmental and Social Safeguards Officer will have the responsibility for the implementation of the environmental and social management plan/framework.
- Communications and Knowledge Management Officer who will be responsible for developing the project Communications Strategy and coordinating its implementation. The Officer will be also responsible for implementing the knowledge management approach and providing suggestions on specific knowledge products and on the hardware, software, and interfaces that will comprise the KM system.
- Gender Specialist who will have the responsibility for the implementation of the Gender Action Plan.

Co-operation with regional bodies: The project will co-operate with the Lake Ohrid Committee and the Lake Prespa Commission. Cooperation will be also pursued with the UNEP/MAP (Mediterranean Action Plan).

Coordination with other GEF projects and non-GEF initiatives; more information is provided in the section ?*Proposed alternative scenario - description of expected outcomes and components of the project*? under Component 4**:** The project will work closely with IW:LEARN to participate in regional and global workshops to ensure that the results of this project are available to the wider IW community of projects.

A list of planned and ongoing projects and activities (GEF and non-GEF; see under section ?Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects?) that contribute directly or indirectly to the aims and objectives of the project and the sustainable management of the Drin Basin and its natural resources, was created for the needs of the Project. Updating the list of projects and activities will be a continuous activity throughout the project implementation to ensure that the full potential for synergies will be available for use.

The project will seek cooperation with these projects and initiatives to ensure that there are no overlaps, to achieve synergies and enable their inputs on project implementation and advice on co-designing approaches that jointly address causes of transboundary concern.

Appropriate mechanisms will be used in this regard.

The Outreach and Communications Strategy/Plan that will be developed during the initial phase of the Project to support the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will include activities that are tailored to serve the needs of appropriately coordinating with the donors/projects/initiatives group of stakeholders. These tailored activities will assist in the communication with management units of projects and initiatives as well as donors and entities that support these, to be established and interaction with them to be ?institutionalized?,

The role of the four Officers (each one stationed in one of the four beneficiary Drin Riparians) will be crucial in this regard, ensuring frequent meetings with this group of stakeholders.

Further to the above the project will foster the participation of this group of stakeholders in the following events:
- Project Inception meeting
- Annual Drin Stakeholder Conferences
- Annual meetings with the DCG to facilitate programmatic alignment among the donors and the DCG, the latter being responsible for the implementation of the SAP and being the de facto SC of the Project.
- Donors conference(s).

7. Consistency with National Priorities

Describe the consistency of the project with national strategies and plans or reports and assesments under relevant conventions from below:

NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

The proposed SAP implementation project is aligned with the relevant legislation and strategic documents of the Drin Riparians and responds to the priorities indicated therein. It will also promote (i) the full adherence with the EU Water Framework Directive and the Acquis Communautaire, (ii) compliance with the Convention on the Protection and use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia) and with the Protocol on Water and Health (Albania, Montenegro), (iii) the achievement of relevant SDG targets.

A short description of the water related legislation as well as the legal and governance frameworks for natural resources management and environmental protection in the Drin Riparians is provided in *Part ii: Project justification; a. Project Description. Section 2) Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects*.

Annex D of the Project Document and Annex G.3 of this CEO endorsement request document includes a detailed list of strategic documents relevant for the project (policies, strategies, plans etc.), including the ones that are developed under conventions.

8. Knowledge Management

Elaborate the "Knowledge Management Approach" for the project, including a budget, key deliverables and a timeline, and explain how it will contribute to the project's overall impact.

The Knowledge management approach is part of the Stakeholders Engagement Plan (see Annex 7 of the Project Document and Annex G.7 of the CEO Endorsement Request document). Knowledge is considered a critical asset of the GEF Partnership (policy recommendations emanating from the GEF-7 replenishment[1]) and its diverse portfolio of projects and programs. The Project KM approach follows the GEF guidance[2] on knowledge management as well as established principles and practices by IAs and EAs. The call for more investments in knowledge management systems and practices also stems from recent GEF OPS (Overall Performance Studies) which have found that ?the relevance of knowledge management to the GEF mandate has been increasingly recognized, and efforts to improve knowledge management in the partnership have been made on several fronts?. The GEF2020 Strategy emphasizes ?strategically generating knowledge? as a priority. The policy recommendations in the GEF-6 Replenishment Document similarly emphasized ?the importance of developing a knowledge management (KM) system that aims to improve the GEF partnership?s ability to learn by doing and thereby enhance its impact over time?.[3]

The GEF International Waters Focal Area has been pioneering a portfolio-wide knowledge management mechanism to share experiences and lessons learned across the freshwater and marine transboundary projects supported by the GEF: the IW:LEARN Project[4]. Since 2000, IW:LEARN strengthens transboundary water management around the globe by collecting and sharing best practices, lessons learned, and promotes learning among project managers, riparian level officials, implementing agencies, and other partners.

The Project will contribute to these efforts as recipient of support from the IW funding envelope and will make use of the learning opportunities offered by the IW:LEARN services to improve project delivery and capacity of involved stakeholders.

Project Knowledge Management Cycle and Objectives

The Project?s Theory of Change includes the ?implementation of project mechanisms for stakeholder?s participation, gender mainstreaming, dissemination, coordination and monitoring progress? among the key causal pathways designed to address the multidimensional nature of transboundary water cooperation in the Drin Basin and to enhance long-term sustainability of achievements. In this sense, KM does not have a separate Project output, but it is mainstreamed throughout the Project design and implementation as a crucial supporting mechanism to achieve expected results, offering a methodology based on existing literature and best practices to improve project operations and the knowledge base underpinning the Drin Coordinated Action process. Given the collaborative nature of the Project, a ?gluing? mechanism to managing knowledge and keeping Project stakeholders active and committed is key particularly in the update of the TDA, the development of basin-wide policy tools and the implementation of actions to achieve the objectives included in the politically negotiated SAP.

The objective of the Project KM Approach is to support stakeholder engagement and assist in sustaining and upscaling the achieved results through a structured and integrated process to leverage and systematically share knowledge assets generated by the Project with the intended beneficiaries and partners. In doing so, it will contribute to maximising the Project impact by:
•Strengthening project coordination and operational coherence;
•Improving monitoring and reporting to assess progress to impact;
•Reinforcing capacities and skills of Project Partners and staff on KM;
•Enhancing joint learning across sectors and actors;
•Fostering incremental innovation and enrich the knowledge base of GEF Partners and Beneficiaries.

Informed knowledge-sharing will encourage a two-way informed dialogue among all stakeholders and foster a stronger culture of learning and cooperation. It will also facilitate a transparent exchange on challenges encountered and barriers. The learning aspect of KM will improve operations through peer-learning and capitalization of lessons learned.

The Project KM cycle described in the Figure below, shows how project activities are linked and contribute to knowledge- and information-sharing across Components 1-4, thus reinforcing overall project implementation. This circular approach does not go in a single direction and outputs are often contributing to one of more stages in the process which strengthens the creation, capture, storage, leverage, dissemination and sharing of the knowledge products and services generated by the project.

---

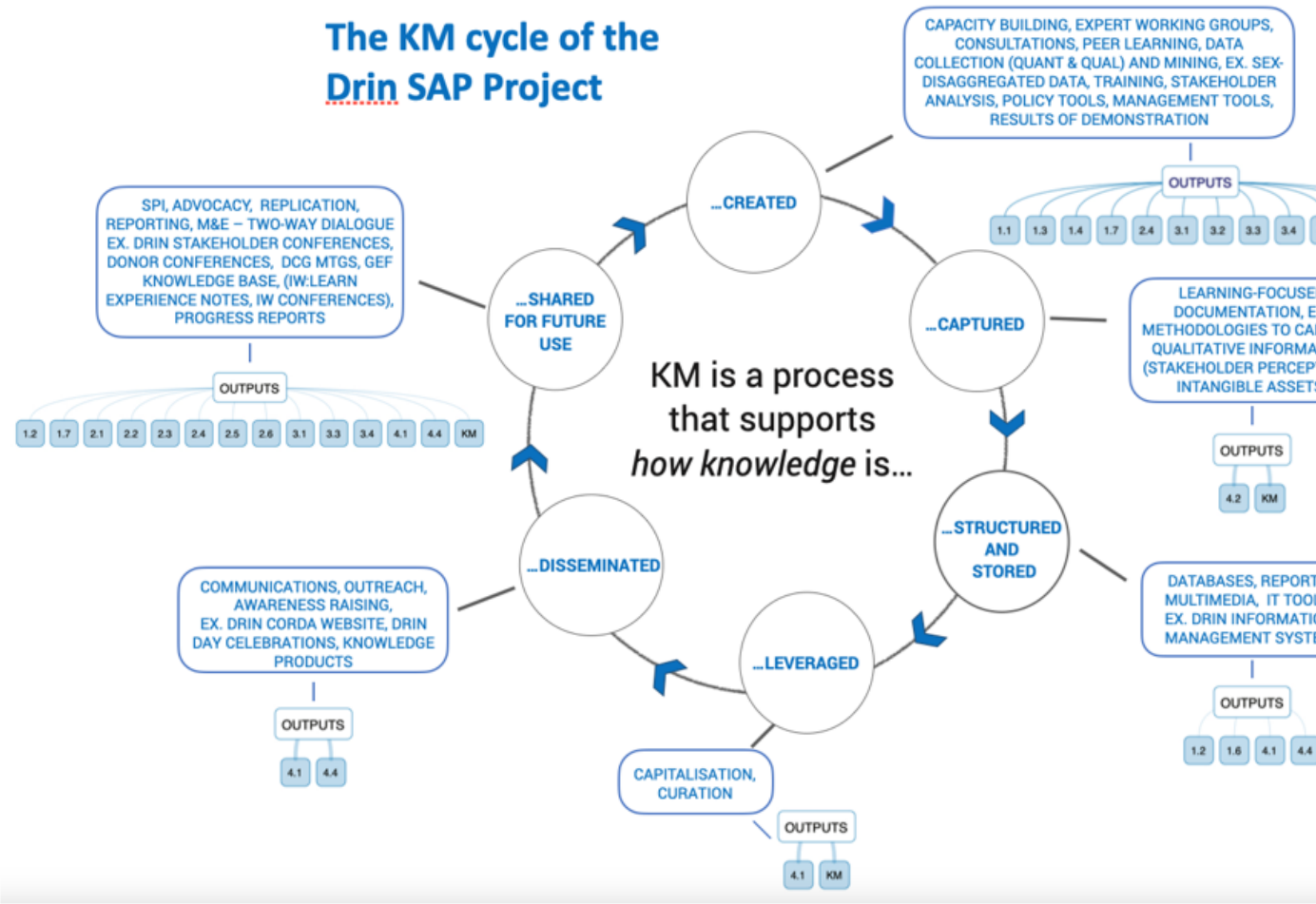
[1] Ref. GEF-7 Replenishment, Policy Recommendations, Fourth Meeting for the Seventh Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, GEF/R.7/18, p.9, www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/gef-7-policy-recommendations

[2] At the time of the PPG phase (May-November 2022) final GEF guidelines on KM were not yet available. However, due consideration of provisions contained in the GEF Knowledge Management Approach Paper (2015, https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/EN_GEF.C.48.07.Rev_.01_KM_Approach_Paper.pdf) and other relevant documents was taken into account when preparing this .-KM approach

[3] Ref. Global Environment Facility Independent Evaluation Office (GEF IEO), OPS6 Final Report: The GEF in the Changing Environmental Finance Landscape. Washington, DC: GEF IEO, 2018, p. 147 www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/council-meeting-documents/GEF.A6.07_OPS6_0.pdf

[4] IW:LEARN is the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network. More info at: www.iwlearn.net

Figure: the KM cycle of the Drin SAP Project



Enhancing transboundary cooperation in the Drin Basin will require sustaining consensus among Riparians on priority actions and strengthening the science-policy interface for their implementation, including identifying sustainable financing mechanisms to implement these priority actions. This ambition largely relies on strong cooperative frameworks and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders; both are fostered through the project design, thus in this sense most of the Project outputs can be ?knowledge assets?, both tangible and intellectual in nature (as per Definitions on KM under Box 1). The table below provides an overview per output grouped in knowledge systems, knowledge products and knowledge-sharing services. This overview will be used also to monitor progress and facilitate reporting on knowledge-sharing efforts.

Project Knowledge Management Timeline

Activities covering all different stages of the KM cycle, already being part of the project design, are listed in the figure above and the text below and ?allocated? among the three stages of the Project making sure that ?the right knowledge is available for the right people at the right time?:

? **Inception phase** - among others: The identity of the Project is reinforced through enhanced visual identity as well as clear presentation of issues at stake and rationale for the project (messages, positions, objectives are prepared to introduce the project and facilitate participation). Stakeholder engagement plans are refined. Specific action plans for communications, awareness raising and capacity building activities are prepared. The indicators to monitor the stakeholders engagement and knowledge approach are defined. The Inception workshop will coincide with the first Drin Annual Stakeholders Conference[1] and will inaugurate the start of the Project to build momentum, inform stakeholders about planning and engage new partners and media about the renewed endeavour among the Riparians.

? **Implementation:** Activities are executed, and project results are packaged and shared with the intended beneficiaries using appropriate channels and means. Emphasis is given to documentation and sharing of lessons learned in line with the Project KM Cycle including for example the preparation of knowledge products such as publicly accessible summaries of Technical Reports; Guides and toolkits; Fact sheets etc. which are particularly relevant to capture and share findings and results under Component 3. Agreements on protocols and data management are reached to pave the way for scientific collaboration and information sharing; Stakeholders, data analysts and web designers are involved to improve the Drin IMS, the project website and the other IT tools foreseen by the project. Data and information are captured, visualized and translated through the various systems and knowledge exchanges described in the KM cycle. Storytelling is enhanced and communications about the project is fully operational. The mid-term evaluation represents an important moment to assess the impact of the KM approach. As KM will be still an evolving exercise within the GEF portfolio, the innovation and progress made by the Drin SAP Project on knowledge-sharing efforts can benefit from other experiences within the portfolio (for example through learning exchanges facilitated by IW:LEARN) and offer valuable insights on how this KM approach has accelerated transboundary cooperation in the Drin River Basin.

? **Closing and sustainability:** the end-phase of the Project focuses on harvesting results, preserving legacy and increase dissemination of lessons learned and replicability and upscaling options. A specific package of closing deliverables is suggested by IW:LEARN so that continuous outreach and sharing of knowledge generated by the Project can continue beyond the project life. Possible final deliverables could include: a standard ppt with full script in relevant languages; short movies with sub-titles (suitable for use in ppt, social media, short screening, exhibits, etc.); printable outreach material available for download (flyer, poster, cards, fact sheets, infographics, ...); updated website (w/dedicated closing pages); final messages and recommendations (ready to use, relevant, focused); list of contacts (people, permanent URLs). A last Drin Annual Stakeholder Conference will serve as official closing of the project, celebrating achievements and partnerships created throughout the project life and to ensure future ownership of results.

---

[1] It would be the 10th Conference since its start.

Table 2: Overview and timeline of knowledge products, services and KM systems embedded in the Drin SAP project?s component

Drin Project - Timeline and budget for KM and Comms activities (SEP)																						
		Inception				Implementation															Closing	
		Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5				
Output	**Description of activity**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**		
Cross-cutting	Project identity reinforced and Stakeholder Engagement Plans refined (**C,KS**)																					
Cross-cutting	Communications Plan prepared (**C**)																					
Cross-cutting	Inception workshop and first Drin Annual Stakeholder Conference (**C,KS**)																					
1.1	Updated TDA (**KP,KS**)																					
	Summary of technical report																					
1.3	Analysis of freshwater dependent ecosystems and fisheries (**KP, C**)																					
	Factsheet																					
1.4	Assessment of sediment balance in the Drin Basin (**KP**)																					
	Summary of technical report																					
1.5	Scenarios for dams operation to optimize water/flood risk management, and energy production (**KP, KS**)																					
	Factsheet, Infographics																					
1.6	Improved system for data/information management and sharing (IMS) to support transboundary basin management (**KMS, KS, KP, C**)																					
	Data-mining-sharing-visualization																					
1.7	Training on critical areas for the coordinated management of the Drin Basin (**KS**)																					
2.1	Preparation of a legal instrument consolidating official cooperation among the Drin Riparians (**KP, KS, C**)																					

2.2	Operationalisation of a joint coordination mechanism **(KS)**																					
2.3	Preparation of a River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River prepared in accordance with the EU WFD, including marine environment considerations **(KP, KS, C)**																					
	Summaries of technical reports, factsheets																					
2.4	Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin, to be integrated into the Drin Basin Flood Risk Management Plan **(KP, KS, C)**																					
	Summary of technical report, factsheet																					
2.5	Harmonization of management planning for adjacent nationally established PAss in Skadar/Shkoder, Ohrid and Prespa sub-basins (technical meetings, consultations) **(KP, KS)**																					
	Summary of technical report, factsheet																					
2.6	Development of a Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo and North Macedonia **(KP, KS)**																					
	Summary of technical report, factsheet																					
3.1	Support to the broader adoption of small-scale wastewater treatment plants for nutrient removal in small rural settlements **(KP, KS, C)**																					
	Summary of technical report /guidelines / lessons learned																					
3.2	Reinforcement of the capacity of industries and SMEs in - the reduction of toxic substances emissions to waterbodies and land as well as in water use efficiency and reuse, and -assessment of action and/or investment needs for the rehabilitation of toxic pollution from mines and quires (White Drin, Skadar/Shkoder Lake, and Ohrid Lake sub-basins) **(KS, C)**																					
	Training material, Summary of technical report / lessons learned																					

3.3	Promotion of sustainable agricultural practices for nutrient and toxic pollution reduction, and soil conservation in selected areas of the sub-basins of White Drin, Prespa and Ohrid, Black Drin and Buna/ Bojana, and Zeta plain **(KP, KS, C)**																				
	Summary of technical report /guidelines / lessons learned																				
3.4	Promotion of reforestation, nature-based solutions, sustainable tillage and irrigation systems, etc. for erosion control in priority areas (e.g.: the Debar Lake basin, the Sateska basin, Adriatic coastal area) **(KP, KS, C)**																				
	Summary of technical report																				
3.5	Support transition of local economy (e.g.: tourism) in transboundary areas of ecological importance (e.g. Prespa, Ohrid, Skadar/Shoder and Buna/Bojana) towards sustainable NRM practices and green growth **(KS, C)**																				
3.6	Sustainable transboundary fisheries management **(KMS, KS, C)**																				
	Summary of technical report, factsheet																				
4.1	Awareness raising and participatory events held at local, national and regional levels to facilitate the engagement of stakeholders **(KMS, KP, KS, C)**																				
Cross-cutting	Project results packaged and shared with the intended beneficiaries using appropriate channels and means. Documentation and sharing of lessons learned in line with the Project KM Cycle (knowledge products such as publicly accessible summaries of Technical Reports; Guides and toolkits; Fact sheets etc.) 2 experience notes **(KMS, KP, KS, C)**																				
4.2	Water and Gender Action Plans, indicators and capacity building **(KS, KP)**																				
4.3	Annual events for the coordination with other ongoing initiatives, and the monitoring of progress **(KS)**																				
4.4	Contribution to the GEF International Waters portfolio-wide Knowledge Management mechanism (IW:LEARN) with findings and best practices from the Drin Basin Project and Drin CORDA website **(KMS, KP, KS, C)**																				
Cross-cutting	Increased dissemination of lessons learned and replicability and upscaling options. Package of final deliverables. **(KP, KS, C)**																				
Cross-cutting	Closing Drin Stakeholder Conference **(C)**																				

Legend:
KMS: Knowledge Management System; **KP**: Knowledge Product; **KS**: Knowledge Service; **C**: Communications

***Budget:** overall resources available for the execution of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), KM and comms activities, are aggregated and presented by component. A communications plan will be prepared during the project initiation period hence detailed budget allocation per activity will be developed during the first months of project execution. Budget for Summary of technical reports, factsheets, guidelines, experience notes etc. is presented separately.

Budget allocated to Stakeholder Engagement, Communications and KM (Components 1-4)

Component	Activities	Budget (USD; *tentative*)
1	Training, focus group meetings, consultations under Component 1	173,500
2	Training, focus group meetings, consultations, scientific support, negotiations (RBM plan, Information Management System, legal agreement) under Component 2	209,000
3	Training, focus group meetings, consultations, stakeholder analysis (demonstrations) under Component 3	150,000
4	Stakeholder engagement, communications, KM including summary of technical reports, factsheets, guidelines, experience notes etc. (Knowledge management and Communications specialist, and production costs)	561,676
	Total	1,094,176

Project Knowledge Management Monitoring and Reporting

Explicit knowledge (publications, data, mails, etc.) can be counted, but intangible aspects like knowledge creation or behavioural change are harder to quantify. Nevertheless, capturing and evaluating the qualitative aspects of the desired change is as important as tangible and quantifiable results. In fact, the STAP recommends that ?knowledge management progress indicators should be included in the GEF Results-Based Management System?[1] .

In order to complement a quantitative analysis of progress, the evaluation of KM efforts will make use of flexible tools to capture subjective perceptions, such as user satisfaction levels or perceived usefulness of training material. The PMU and the Coms/KM Specialist will define a list of indicators during the inception phase of the Project and include this in the Project Inception Report An example of a related indicators could be these to analyse the level of user satisfaction with the Project IT-based tools (Drin CORDA website, Information Management System) and how these impact the user?s work could look at: User friendliness of the tool from 1 to 5 (e.g. interface, design, navigation, etc.); Technical quality of the tool from 1 to 5 (features, speed, etc.); Overall level of satisfaction from 1 to 5; The extent to which it has facilitated collaboration within Project Stakeholders from 1 to 5.

Means/sources of verifications for qualitative indicators could range from direct interviews, in-person and online surveys, focus groups, peer-learning activities, rating sheets ? scoring statements on a numerical scale in order to obtain comparable figures. Satisfaction surveys provide a vehicle for users/stakeholders to suggest improvements, (virtual) meetings, and actively participate in the shaping of the project in a structured manner.

---

[1] Stocking, M. et al. 2018. Managing knowledge for a sustainable global future. Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel to the Global Environment Facility. Washington, DC. p. 5

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Describe the budgeted M and E plan

Project results, corresponding indicators and mid-term and end-of-project target will be monitored and evaluated periodically during project implementation to ensure that the project achieves the expected results. Baseline data for some indicators that are not yet available will be collected during the first year of project implementation. The Monitoring Plan below details the roles, responsibilities, and frequency of monitoring project results.

Project-level monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken in compliance with UNDP requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP (including guidance on GEF project revisions) and UNDP Evaluation Policy. The UNDP Albania as the Lead Office is responsible for ensuring full compliance with all UNDP M&E requirements, including project monitoring, UNDP quality assurance, quarterly risk management, and evaluation requirements.

Additional mandatory GEF-specific M&E requirements will be undertaken in accordance with the GEF Monitoring Policy and the GEF Evaluation Policy and other relevant GEF policies[1]. The M&E plan and budget included below will guide the GEF-specific M&E activities to be undertaken by this project.

In addition to these mandatory UNDP and GEF M&E requirements, other M&E activities deemed necessary to support project-level adaptive management may be agreed -including during the Project Inception Workshop- and will be detailed in the Inception Report. These activities may include UNDP guidance regarding adoption of remote monitoring approaches and M&E procedures should the COVID-19 pandemic continue throughout project implementation.

The pandemic might pose risks during project execution to project staff and beneficiary stakeholders. The project will take steps to (i) minimize these risks such as travel to or from areas where COVID-19 is prevalent, and training on pandemic-related guidance for project staff and stakeholders during the inception phase, and (ii) monitor project operations and ensure that they are in conformity with UNDP agency policies regarding travel, risk reduction, and other areas regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The Project Manager will report on compliance to the Project Board and take any necessary steps to protect the health of staff, consultants/contractors, and beneficiaries required by the situation.

Oversight and monitoring responsibilities

Project Manager: The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day project management and regular monitoring of project results and risks, including social and environmental risks and of the staff and the team of the project. The Project Manager will ensure that all project staff maintain a high level of transparency, responsibility and accountability in M&E and reporting of project results. The Project Manager will inform the Project Steering Committee and the UNDP-GEF RTA of any delays or difficulties as they arise during implementation so that appropriate support and corrective measures can be adopted.

The Project Manager will develop annual work plans to support the efficient implementation of the project. The Project Manager will ensure that the standard UNDP and GEF M&E requirements are fulfilled to the highest quality. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring the results framework indicators are monitored annually in time for evidence-based reporting in the GEF PIR, and that the monitoring of risks and the various plans/strategies developed to support project implementation (e.g. gender strategy, knowledge management strategy etc.) occur on a regular basis.

Project Board / Project Steering Committee (PSC): The PSC will take corrective action as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. The PSC will hold project reviews to assess the performance of the project and appraise the Annual Work Plan for the following year. In the project?s final year, the PSC will hold an end-of-project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to

highlight project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences. This final review meeting will also discuss the findings outlined in the project terminal evaluation report and the management response.

Project Executing agency (GWP): The Implementing Partner is responsible for providing all required information and data necessary for timely, comprehensive and evidence-based project reporting, including results and financial data, as necessary and appropriate. The Implementing Partner will set annual targets, ensures they are on track and report them on regular basis in line with the M&E requirements for the project. GWP, as the Implementing Partner will regularly provide and retain all M&E records for this project for up to seven years after project operational closure in order to support ex-post evaluations undertaken by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) and/or the GEF IEO.

UNDP Albania: The Albania CO will provide oversight to the Project and ensure that the standard UNDP and GEF M&E requirements are fulfilled to the highest quality. This includes ensuring the UNDP Quality Assurance Assessment is undertaken in line with the Monitoring Policy of UNDP; that annual targets at the output level are developed and monitored and reported using UNDP corporate systems; the regular updating of the ATLAS risk log (in line with the risk management policy); and, the updating of the UNDP gender marker on an annual basis based on gender mainstreaming progress reported in the GEF PIR. Any quality concerns flagged during these M&E activities (e.g. annual GEF PIR quality assessment ratings) must be addressed by the UNDP Albania CO and the Project Manager. UNDP will retain all M&E records received from GWP for this project for up to seven years after project financial closure in order to support ex-post evaluations undertaken by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) and/or the GEF IEO.

UNDP-BPPS/NCE-VF Unit: Additional M&E and implementation quality assurance and troubleshooting support will be provided by the UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor.

Minimum project monitoring and reporting requirements as required by the GEF:

Inception Workshop and Report

A project inception workshop will be held within 2 months from the First disbursement date, with the aim to:

1. Familiarize key stakeholders with the detailed project strategy and discuss any changes that may have taken place in the overall context since the project idea was initially conceptualized that may influence its strategy and implementation.
2. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of the project team, including reporting lines, stakeholder engagement strategies and conflict resolution mechanisms.
3. Review the results framework and monitoring plan.
4. Discuss reporting, monitoring and evaluation roles and responsibilities and finalize the M&E budget; identify riparian level /regional institutes to be involved in project-level M&E.
5. Update and review responsibilities for monitoring project strategies, including the risk log; SESP report, Social and Environmental Management Framework and other safeguard requirements; project grievance mechanisms; gender action plan; knowledge management plan, and other relevant management plans/strategies.
6. Review financial reporting procedures and budget monitoring and other mandatory requirements and agree on the arrangements for the annual audit.
7. Plan and schedule Project Board meetings and finalize the first-year annual work plan. Finalize the TOR of the Project Board.
8. Formally launch the Project.

GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)

The annual GEF PIR covering the reporting period July (previous year) to June (current year) will be completed for each year of project implementation. UNDP will undertake quality assurance of the PIR before submission to the GEF. The PIR submitted to the GEF will be shared with the Project Board. UNDP will

conduct a quality review of the PIR, and this quality review and feedback will be used to inform the preparation of the subsequent annual PIR.

GEF and/or LDCF/SCCF Core Indicators

The GEF Core indicators, included as Annex E, will be used to monitor global environmental benefits and will be updated for reporting to the GEF prior to MTR and TE. Note that the project team is responsible for updating the indicator status. The updated monitoring data should be shared with MTR/TE consultants prior to required evaluation missions, so these can be used for subsequent ground truthing. The methodologies to be used in data collection have been defined by the GEF and are available on the GEF website.

Independent Mid-term Review (MTR)

An independent mid-term review process will begin after the second PIR has been submitted to the GEF, and the MTR report will be submitted to the GEF in the same year as the 3rd PIR.

The terms of reference, the review process and the final MTR report will follow the standard UNDP templates and UNDP guidance for GEF-financed projects available on the UNDP Evaluation Resource Center (ERC).

The evaluation will be ?independent, impartial and rigorous?. The evaluators that UNDP will hire to undertake the assignment will be independent from organizations that were involved in designing, executing or advising on the project to be evaluated. Equally, the evaluators should not be in a position where there may be the possibility of future contracts regarding the project under review.

The GEF Operational Focal Point and other stakeholders will be actively involved and consulted during the evaluation process. Additional quality assurance support is available from the BPPS/NCE-VF Directorate.

The final MTR report and MTR TOR will be publicly available in English and will be posted on the UNDP ERC. A management response to MTR recommendations will be posted in the ERC within six weeks of the MTR report?s completion.

Terminal Evaluation (TE)

An independent terminal evaluation (TE) will take place upon completion of all major project outputs and activities. The terms of reference, the evaluation process and the final TE report will follow the standard templates and guidance for GEF-financed projects available on the UNDP Evaluation Resource Center. TE should be completed 3 months before the estimated operational closure date, set from the signature of the ProDoc and according to the duration of the project. Provisions should be taken to complete the TE in due time to avoid delay in project closure. Therefore, TE must start no later than 6 months to the expected date of completion of the TE (or 9 months prior to the estimated operational closure date).

The evaluation will be ?independent, impartial and rigorous?. The evaluators that UNDP will hire to undertake the assignment will be independent from organizations that were involved in designing, executing or advising on the project to be evaluated. Equally, the evaluators should not be in a position where there may be the possibility of future contracts regarding the project being evaluated.

The GEF Operational Focal Point and other stakeholders will be actively involved and consulted during the terminal evaluation process. Additional quality assurance support is available from the BPPS/NCE-VF Directorate.

The final TE report and TE TOR will be publicly available in English and posted on the UNDP ERC. A management response to the TE recommendations will be posted to the ERC within six weeks of the TE report?s completion.

Final Report

The project?s terminal GEF PIR along with the terminal evaluation (TE) report and corresponding management response will serve as the final project report package. The final project report package shall be discussed with the Project Board during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lesson learned and opportunities for scaling up.

Agreement on intellectual property rights and use of logo on the project?s deliverables and disclosure of information

To accord proper acknowledgement to the GEF for providing grant funding, the GEF logo will appear together with the UNDP logo on all promotional materials, other written materials like publications developed by the project, and project hardware. Any citation on publications regarding projects funded by the GEF will also accord proper acknowledgement to the GEF. Information will be disclosed in accordance with relevant policies notably the UNDP Disclosure Policy[2] and the GEF policy on public involvement[3].

---

[1] See https://www.thegef.org/gef/policies_guidelines

[2] See http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/transparency/information_disclosurepolicy/

[3] See https://www.thegef.org/gef/policies_guidelines

Table 3: GEF M&E requirements and M&E budget

Monitoring and Evaluation Budget for project execution:		
GEF M&E requirements to be undertaken by Project Management Unit (PMU)	**Indicative costs (US$)**	**Time frame**
Inception Workshop and Report	30,000	Inception Workshop within 2 months of the First Disbursement
M&E required to report on progress made in reaching GEF core indicators and project results included in the project results framework	*None*	Annually and at mid-point and closure.
Preparation of the annual GEF Project Implementation Report (PIR)	*None*	Annually typically between June-August
Monitoring of indicators in project results framework, SESP and ESMF	*None*	On-going.
Supervision missions	*None*	Annually
Learning missions	*None*	As needed
Independent Mid-term Review (MTR):	15,000	Between 2nd and 3rd PIR, by 10 June 2026.
Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE):	20,000	At least three months before operational closure, 30 August 2028.
Project Steering Committee meetings	50,000	
TOTAL indicative COST	USD 115,000	

10. Benefits

Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels, as appropriate. How do these benefits translate in supporting the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)?

The Drin Riparians have put in place recovery programs and measures. UN with Technical leadership of UNDP COs have supported Socio-economic Recovery and Response Plans including short term measures, to minimize, manage and mitigate the adverse, most pressing, and urgent impacts of COVID-19 on the lives and livelihoods of the people including their access to essential services and fundamental rights as well as medium to long term measures, to ensure a structural response -focusing more on sustainable development and ?building back better? than before- to address the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. The plans highlighted the amplified vulnerabilities and widening inequalities during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the existing critical capacity gaps that are hampering adequate responses, focusing largely on health equipment and PPE in the short term.

The short- and medium-term recovery opportunities that this proposed project will support are aligned with: 1) Access to basic services; 2) Restoration of economic activities and livelihoods; 3) Security, rule of law, social cohesion. The project is fully aligned with the medium post COVID-19 recovery opportunities by supporting communities? recovery through application of local, riparian and regional solutions for sustainable water use, ecosystem functioning and climate resilience.

The project will include interventions to improve institutional capacities for enhanced management of natural resources on which society and economy in the basin depend on, and alleviate pressures that have an adverse effect to humans as well as to socioeconomic activities: decrease point and diffuse pollution pressures from industrial and other activities, unsustainable management of liquid waste as well as unsustainable agricultural practices leading to toxic substances and -predominately- nutrient pollution; address the issue of erosion, droughts and floods. Apart from the basin, these interventions will alleviate pressures to the adjacent coastal and the receiving marine environment. In some more detail the project following a source-to-sea approach, will:

- Assist informed decision making and governance on water and environment issues, at the Riparian and transboundary levels, enhancing -in parallel- the environment in which multiple socio-economic sectors function, and contributing to climate resilience. This will be achieved by supporting applied research for enhanced knowledge and understanding of the (i) hydrological and hydrogeological conditions in the Drin Basin, including interaction with the receiving sea, incorporating climate change projections; (ii) sediment balance and flows, the pressures that lead to their disturbance and the interrelation to riverbed and coastal erosion; (iii) biodiversity trends; (iv) climate vulnerability and risk for nature and socio-economy.
- Assist in building harmonised policies and instruments for environmental and socioeconomic sectors of importance that use shared resources, such as fisheries in international lakes. Using the results of all aforementioned actions, support: (i) the development of River Basin Management Plan at the Drin Basin level to prioritise interventions towards good ecological status of water bodies; (ii) planning and measures for improved and coordinated management among Riparians for flood and drought risk management/reduction that will contribute towards the protection of livelihoods and socioeconomic activities from natural disasters.
- Apply local, riparian and regional solutions for sustainable water use, ecosystem functioning and climate resilience under Component 3 to decrease point and diffuse pollution pressures from industrial activities, unsustainable management of municipal liquid waste as well as unsustainable agricultural practices leading to toxic substances and -predominately- nutrient pollution. There will be also interventions to address the issue of erosion and unsustainable fishing practices. These interventions will directly benefit 300,000 inhabitants of the areas where these solutions will be tested as they will have a direct positive effect to natural resources (water, forests, land, fisheries etc.) that the inhabitants are using for their social and economic activities (drinking water, leisure, agriculture, forestry, fishing, tourism, industry etc.). Apart from the basin,

these interventions will alleviate pressures to the adjacent coastal and the receiving marine environment. Cumulatively, reduced pressures will result in alleviating the impacts to the society and the economic activities the operation of which is depended on natural resources.

In the long term the project will support the green recovery efforts by enabling strengthened resilience of ecosystems and livelihoods, as well as conserving the natural capital and diverse waters and ecosystems in Drin Riparians.

Practically, through the above, while leading to Riparian level benefits, the project will facilitate producing global benefits: enhanced transboundary cooperation in the management of the transboundary water resources of the Basin promoting also regional stability; improved sustainable use of the services provided by the Basin ecosystems, with focus on adaptation to climate variability and change, and on the protection of freshwater biodiversity, through a coordinated and integrated, gender balanced, approach that relies on consultative processes and community participation.

11. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification*

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
High or Substantial	High or Substantial		

Measures to address identified risks and impacts

Elaborate on the types and risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and impacts (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and any measures undertaken as well as planned management measures to address these risks during implementation.

Project Information

Project Information	
1. Project Title	Implementing the Strategic Action Programme of the Drin Basin to Strengthen Transboundary Cooperation and Enable Integrated Natural Resources Management

2. Project Number (i.e. Atlas project ID, PIMS+)	6300
3. Location (Global/Region/Country)	Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia
4. Project stage (Design or Implementation)	Design (PPG)
5. Date	November 2022

Part A. Integrating Programming Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

QUESTION 1: How Does the Project Integrate the Programming Principles in Order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?
Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams the human rights-based approach

The project?s is designed to enhance cooperation among four countries for the sustainable Transboundary Water Resources Management in the shared aquifers and basins in the Drin Basin in accordance with the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) endorsed by those countries.

The project mainstreams the human-rights based approach, as it:

? Supports interventions to ensure sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources from the source-to-the-sea (implementing the respective approach). The project?s activities will contribute towards water, food and energy security (water, food and energy being the basic resources for sustaining livelihoods for all people).

? Supports no discrimination and supports meaningful participation and inclusion of all stakeholders, including marginalized individuals and groups, in processes that may affect them including design, implementation and monitoring of the project. The project will include regional and local stakeholders in capacity building and creating an enabling environment for participation (consistent with participation and inclusion human rights principles).

? A comprehensive Stakeholders Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared so that local communities and affected populations that may be directly or indirectly affected by the planned activities can raise and voice their concerns and/or grievances during planning and implementation of project interventions (consistent with accountability and rule of law human rights principle)

? Enhances the availability, accessibility and quality of benefits and services for potentially marginalized individuals and groups, and increases their inclusion in decision-making processes that may affect them (consistent with the non-discrimination and equality human rights principle).

? Supports women's full and effective participation and equal opportunity to leadership in the project area, as well at the national level through the institutions that are to be supported by the project (see section below).

The Project will build on the legacy of stakeholders? engagement that commenced in 2006 and has been sustained ever since. Annual Conferences that have been the means to establish a Shared Vision for the coordinated management of the Drin Basin, validate and or consult technical documents, focus groups meetings, policy dialogues backed up by stakeholder?s analysis, awareness and communication and stakeholder?s engagement strategies will be the means to use also in this Project (Component 4).

Briefly describe in the space below how the project is likely to improve gender equality and women?s empowerment

The project will be aligned with the GEFs and UNDPs Policies on Gender Equality, and the GEF Gender Implementation Strategy. The project is also in line with SDG 5 on Gender Equality, and the empowerment of women and girls, and it will strive to improve the participation of women in decision-making. In addition to this, the project will provide examples on how to integrate gender considerations into projects and interventions dealing with natural resource management, creating lessons on gender-related indicators. During the project?s PPG phase, a Gender Analysis and Action Plan was prepared including indicators and a plan to monitor implementation, to ensure that gender considerations will inform project formulation through a gender-responsive approach, and through specific activities directed to strengthen women?s participation in decision-making. The project will be fully in-line with and supportive of both the GEF?s and UNDP?s gender mainstreaming policies. The thematic and geographic scope of the project provides a range of opportunities for the engagement of women, and possibilities for supporting gender mainstreaming through the direct involvement of women in all the Drin decision making processes and expert groups as well as through the on the ground interventions.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams sustainability and resilience

The project will strengthen cooperation frameworks involving all riparians, and further build institutional capacity and expertise. The majority of the Project activities have value-added to capacity building and strengthening institutions. The sustainability of the Project?s results will be ensured through the continued operation of the Drin Core Group and its Expert Working Groups or the operation of a Drin Commission should the negotiations among the countries on the draft international agreement text result in its signing. The long-term application of the EU *Acquis* -and the EU Water Framework Directive more particular- in the beneficiary countries will contribute in sustaining the results. The institutional and financial sustainability of the project outcomes will be ensured through the increased commitment of the two countries to implement the strategic and priority actions enshrined in the SAP. The long-term financial sustainability will be assisted through commitments made by the countries for the implementation of the EU *Acquis* through the EU accession process. The Drin basin is a geographical area that will be benefited as part of the Drin riparian countries from the ?9-billion EU Economic and Investment Plan[1] for the Western Balkans -the actions related to environment- that seeks to stimulate the national economies, while bringing the region up to the levels of the EU?s environmental standards and climate objectives.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project strengthens accountability to stakeholders

The Project will build on the legacy of stakeholders? engagement that commenced in 2006 and has been sustained ever since. Annual Conferences that have been the means to establish a Shared Vision for the coordinated management of the Drin Basin, validate and or consult technical documents, focus groups meetings, policy dialogues backed up by stakeholder?s analysis, awareness and communication and stakeholder?s engagement strategies will be the means to use also in this Project (Output 4.3). The project will strive to set an example and a higher standard of stakeholder involvement practice in water and natural resources management, which is considered an essential element of the success of the project itself.

Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks? *Note: Complete SESP Attachment 1 before responding to Question 2.*	**QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks?** *Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 6.*			**QUESTION 6: Describe the assessment and management measures for each risk rated Moderate, Substantial or High.**
Risk Description ***(broken down by event, cause, impact)***	***Impact and Likelihood (1-5)***	***Significance*** ***(Low, Moderate Substantial, High)***	***Comments (optional)***	***Description of assessment and management measures for risks rated as Moderate, Substantial or High***

Risk 1: Marginalized and vulnerable groups, may not have the capacity to claim their rights or may be otherwise excluded from Component 3 activities that could benefit them. Human Rights Principle (P.3) Accountability Principle (P.13)	I = 3 L = 3	**Moderate**	This risk arises especially in Component 3 activities. Vulnerable groups generally lack knowledge and self-confidence to articulate their own issues and needs. These barriers are evident especially in population groups living in rural areas. -	A comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement plan prepared during the PPG phase based on a thorough Stakeholders Analysis, include specific mitigation measures to address such exclusion risks that may arise both during the capacity building activities, relevant planning processes and the implementation of pilot projects under Component 3. These consultation processes have been designed with the aim to facilitate the engagement of decision-makers and stakeholders, including these with the potential of being marginalized, to ensure a common understanding and secure broad support for their implementation as well as to enable sustainability of project results. The relevant authorities and the local community consultation and engagement arrangements described in Annex G of the Project Document and the Stakeholders Engagement Plan will be implemented in such way to: ? ensure transparency through provision of timely, accessible and functional information on supported activities, including on potential environmental and social risks and impacts and management measures (e.g. though public disclosure of SES documents, and soliciting regular feedback from stakeholders), ? facilitate active local community engagement and participation particularly targeted at those at risk of being left behind (through e.g. stakeholders mapping that will lead to the identification of and the facilitation of engagement of any marginalized groups in the geographical areas that the pilot projects will be implemented etc.), ? ensure effective results monitoring and reporting on implementation of social and environmental safeguard risk management measures (including through annual PIR, MTR and TE, and also project M&E system).

				Comprehensive stakeholder consultations will be also supported through Activity 4.1 (Awareness raising and participation actions at local, national and regional levels to enable stakeholders? engagement). For specific risks and arrangements related to the meaningful and equitable participation of women and men and gender-responsive delivery of this project please see Risk 2 below. Risk 3 addresses potential grievances from project affected stakeholders.
Risk 2: Component 3 activities may potentially reproduce discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits. Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment Principle (P.12)	I = 2 L = 2	**Low**	This risk arises especially in Component 3 activities. While the project plans to work inclusively with all stakeholders, there is a risk that women could be underrepresented during the project implementation and may not be fully involved (or otherwise discriminated against) when it comes to the use of services provided through these project outputs. -	To mitigate this risk, an updated Gender Analysis and Action Plan have been prepared during the PPG phase. The Gender Action Plan is designed to ensure that the implemented activities address both women?s and men?s needs, interests and concerns and do not discriminate against women or girls or reinforce gender-based discrimination. Risk mitigation has also been fully integrated into project design under Output 4.1, which focuses on creating Water and Gender Actions Plans, and supporting related gender-responsive indicators, as well as capacity building. Gender disaggregated targets (based on the GAP) will be incorporated into the project?s M&E framework during the project inception phase. These activities will be monitored with progress reported annually in the PIR.

Risk 3: There is a risk of grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders during the implementation of Output 3 and measures proposed in plans for basin-, drought-, and flood-management. Accountability Principle (P.14)	I = 3 L = 4	**Substantial**	This risk arises especially in Output 3.4 on erosion control in priority areas (e.g.: the Debar Lake basin, the Sateska basin, the Adriatic coastal area) but may also materialize in other pilot projects under Component 3. In addition, it arises in decisions related to Drin River Basin Management Plan (Output 2.3), flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin (Output 2.4), the drought management plans in parts of the Drin Basin extending to Kosovo and North Macedonia (Output 2.6). -	To mitigate any risk, a Stakeholder analysis and accompanying Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared to understand the characteristics of the stakeholders (stakes, importance, awareness/knowledge, influence etc.) and includes activities to ensure the timely and meaningful engagement of stakeholders in the different stages of strategic/management documents development to enable that the latter will reflect at the best possible way the views and concerns of stakeholders. The project has also designed to ensure through the Drin Core Group (that will be the SC of the project) that the national legislation in relation to the development of policy/strategic/management documents is implemented and especially the provisions related to public participation. Also, a Grievance Resolution Mechanism (GRM) is provided for in the ESMF (prepared during the PPG) and will be established during the initiation phase of the project. Furthermore, stakeholders will have access to the UNDP Stakeholder Response Mechanism, and the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU).

Risk 4: Plans for basin management, drought management and flood management proposed under Component 2 may have adverse cumulative impacts on biodiversity. These risks arise ? albeit on smaller scale ? also in demonstration projects in Component 3. Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management (1.1-1.4, 1.11, and 1.14)	I = 4 L = 4	**Substantial**	The basin includes numerous protected areas under both national and international environmental protection regimes ? Ramsar sites, areas of Special Conservation Interest designed for protection under the Council of Europe?s Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats and other habitats protected under the national legislation. It also hosts critically endangered fish species and threatened bird species. There should be extra caution so as these biodiversity assets are not cumulatively affected by interventions proposed for drought management and flood management that will be integrated into the basin-wide management plan. GWP-Med experience suggests that for instance, narrow focus on flood control, drought prevention and hydropower generation may not integrate aspect of water management to account for water availability to wetlands or minimal ecological flows.	Most of these risks are context-specific ? i.e. they depend on the nature of the interventions proposed that will be known only during the development of the basin- flood- and drought plans and the selection of the geographical areas for and the implementation of the demonstration projects under component 3. The preparation of the following outputs will therefore involve SESA processes that will be an integral part of the relevant planning exercises: ? Output 2.3- A River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River ? Output 2.6- A Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo and North Macedonia Each of these SESA processes will meet the combined requirements of applicable national regulatory frameworks, the UNDP SES Policy - specifically, the UNDP SES Policy requirements related to SESA process management, stakeholder consultations and accountability, as well as specific Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8. In addition, the preparation of the Output 2.4. Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin will involve targeted assessment of the cumulative and synergistic risks and impacts associated of proposed flood management actions and identify measures that may be taken in order to avoid, minimize or offset any adverse impacts. In addition, the dialogue on operation of dams to enable optimization of

			In addition, outputs related to some of the pilot projects may also pose site-specific risks for biodiversity and natural resource management. Any measures proposed in proximity to important birding and spawning areas, and protected areas (such as the diversions of channels and river flows, dredging and de-stilting) may e.g. disturb critical habitats and/or sensitive species.	water and flood risk management (Output 1.5) will propose to the participating stakeholders to address discussion topics related to the potential impacts of the operation of the dams in the cascade on ecological flows, fish passage, sediment transport, floods and droughts and other climate-change concerns. Last, pilot projects implemented within the following outputs will be screened for their potential impacts on UNDP SES Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8: ? Output 3.1- Nutrient reduction (rural) ? Output 3.3- Sustainable agricultural practices

Risk 5: Interventions in relevant basin-, flood- and drought-management plans will be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change. Standard 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks (2.1-2.3)	I=3 L=3	**Moderate**	Interventions that may be part of the measures under the basin- flood and -drought management plans and their respective results may be vulnerable to disaster risks and climate change. Any physical structures to be proposed under these plans may e.g. exacerbate existing bank erosion processes and hydraulic regimes that may lead to maladaptation. Systemic risks associated with the changing climatic conditions also arise in the relevant planning processes since the current measures typically do not account for future projections of floods, exacerbated by climate change: ? 2.3- A River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River ? 2.4- Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin ? 2.6- A Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo and North Macedonia It will be important to ensure that these plans do not include interventions that ? while increasing	? Output 3.4- Erosion control ? Output 3.6 ? Sustainable transboundary fisheries management Any activity that will be screened to have potential substantial or high risk or that will require EIA or targeted assessments under the national legislation (e.g. Natura 2000 assessment regime for interventions that may have impacts on Emerald network sites), will be subject to relevant assessment processes. The implementing entity will also ensure that all project outputs fully adhere to the relevant UNDP SES Standards from the outset of their design to their completion and will notify UNDP of detailed implementation modalities taken in this regard. The implementing entity will also provide adequate support for the above-described assessments and will perform the quality assurance function during their implementation. The implementing entity will also update UNDP on the progress made in the application of these arrangements during the project implementation (through annual PIR, MTR and TE, and also project M&E system as well as on an ad hoc basis depending on project developments).

			local resilience to the climate change ? lead to maladaptation in other areas. -
Risk 6: Pilot projects under the Component 3 may have temporary adverse impacts on water quality. Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Security (3.1) Standard 8: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency (8.1)	I = 3 L = 3	**Moderate**	Some of the Component 3 activities (e.g. Output 3.4: Erosion control) will undertake earth works to possibly restabilise areas and redesign existing river courses. These activities may move sediment or may lead to overland flow during intensive rain events thereby reducing water quality. The detailed features and the exact locations of the specific activities are currently unknown.

Risk 7: Project activities located in proximity of internationally protected cultural heritage sites may have potential adverse impacts on their conservation objectives. Standard 4: Cultural Heritage (4.1)	I=3 L=2	**Moderate**	The basin (Radavc, Ohrid and Prespa, Skadar) include numerous cultural monuments. Of specific concern is Lake Ohrid region which is a registered as mixed World Heritage property since 1979. Also, Prespa lakes area is recognized by UNECSO as having Outstanding Universal Value. Some of Component 3 activities located in proximity of these and other cultural heritage sites as well as interventions proposed in flood management and drought management plans may potentially have adverse impacts on their integrity and protection and management requirements.	

Risk 8: Some interventions for drought management and flood management proposed under Component 2 may lead to economic displacement. These risks arise ? albeit on smaller scale ? also in demonstration projects in Component 3. Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement (5.2)	I=3 L=2	**Moderate**	A related project in the basin found out that it hosts a fluctuating, albeit small population of marginalized Roma community members (difficult to obtain official figures but estimated at ~1% of beneficiary population) that are settled in the highly vulnerable areas of the Drin flood basin with no fixed shelter or access to services. These marginalized communities may be potentially affected by the following outputs: ? 2.4- Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin ? 2.6- A Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo and North Macedonia In addition, economic displacement risks for rural population (not necessarily including minority groups) arise also in Output 2.5 on the harmonization of management planning for adjacent nationally established protected area and ? to a smaller degree ? also in demonstration/priority projects on erosion control (Output 3.4) and sustainable	All these risks are site-specific and currently unknown. To this end, specific actions proposed in Outputs 2.3, 2.4, 2,5, 2.6, and also in Outputs 3.1, 3.4, and 3.6 will be screeded for potential physical and economic displacement risks. Any action proposed within these outputs posing moderate, substantial, or high displacement risks will be subject to further assessment to examine the specific risks and determine locally appropriate options for avoiding, and where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating them as per the UNDP SES Policy Standard 5. The implementing entity shall ensure that GEF resources will not be used for any activities that will cause the physical displacement. If any economic displacement would need to take place, the design of the relevant actions will include Livelihoods Action Plans that will stipulate the measures for restoring livelihoods of any displaced persons through compensation at full replacement costs and other assistance.

			transboundary fisheries management (Output 3.6).	
Risk 9: Duty-bearers may not have the capacity to meet their environmental obligations.	I = 2 L = 5	**Moderate**	The analysis of the legal and policy frameworks that apply to the project points out that the EIA processes and relevant permitting processes in the region also do not *a priori* require the due consideration of all concerns stipulated in the UNDP SES standards. Also, while undertaking a SESA for new plans and programmes related to water management (including flood and drought management) is required by all riparians, these obligations are yet to be fully put into practice. The project therefore cannot assume that the plans and programmes will be subject to appropriate SESA/SEA processes in the respective national jurisdictions.	The project will conduct prior examination for activities for which initial screening indicates that further action should be taken, to check the applicable UNDP SES standards and determine the appropriate arrangements for the integration of relevant SES concerns into the formal EIA and SEA processes (during their screening/scoping phase) and/or into the relevant assessment and documentation prepared for applicable permits. To this end, Output 2.2: Operationalization of a Joint Coordination Mechanism will create opportunities for suitably engaging the national EIA/SEA focal points to facilitate the applicable environmental assessments and streamline any related consultations that may need to be conducted within the basin. In addition, Output 1.7: Training of staff of institutions shall include basic introduction to requirements for EIA and SEA processes and transboundary consultations between the riparian countries within these processes that arise from the countries? obligations under the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA (and their future EU accession requirements related to the implementation of the EU EIA and SEA Directives).
	QUESTION 4: What is the overall project risk categorization? *Note: Project categorization is determined by the highest level of significance of identified risks across all potential risk areas (as rated in Question 3).*			

Low Risk	**?**		
Moderate Risk	**?**		
Substantial Risk	**X**		
High Risk	**?**		

QUESTION 5: Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, what requirements of the SES are triggered? (check all that apply)

Question only required for Moderate, Substantial and High Risk projects.

Is assessment required? (check if ?yes?)	**X**			***Status? (completed, planned)***
if yes, indicate overall type and status		**X**	Targeted assessment(s)	Completed during PPG: Stakeholder analysis, Gender analysis. Targeted site-specific assessments and - depending on the results of initial screening- accompanying scaled ESMP will be conducted during implementation of pilot projects 3.1, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6[2] and for Output 2.4: Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin.

			?	ESIA (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment)	ESIA may be required under local legislation during the implementation of Component 3 activities (depending on their design parameters)
			X	SESA (Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment)	Planned for implementation of the River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River (output 2.3) and Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo and North Macedonia (output 2.6)
	Are management plans required? (check if ?yes)	**X**			
	If yes, indicate overall type		**X**	Targeted management plans (e.g. Indigenous Peoples Plan, Resettlement Action Plan, others)	Completed during PPG: Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Gender Action Plan

			X	ESMP (Environmental and Social Management Plan)	Planned for implementation following targeted assessments for 2.4 and relevant Component 3 projects as prescribed above and when required by the case-by-case screening of these Component 3 projects.
			X	ESMF (Environmental and Social Management Framework)	Completed during PPG. Additional ESMFs will be developed for outputs 2.3 and 2.6 as part of the aforementioned SESA processes for these plans.
	Based on identified <u>risks</u>, which Principles/Project-level Standards triggered?		**Comments (not required)**		
	Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind	---			
	Human Rights	**x**			
	Gender Equality and Women?s Empowerment	**x**			
	Accountability	**x**			
	1. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management	**x**			

	2. Climate Change and Disaster Risks	x	
	3. Community Health, Safety and Security	x	
	4. Cultural Heritage	x	
	5. Displacement and Resettlement	x	
	6. Indigenous Peoples	?	
	7. Labour and Working Conditions	?	
	8. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	x	

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1811

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_20_1819

[2] Activity 3.2 and 3.5 have been assessed on the basis of description provided in Annex G of the Project Document

Supporting Documents

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title	Module	Submitted
6300 GEF Drin Social and Environmental Screening 20230125	**CEO Endorsement ESS**	
PIMS 6300 SESP Template 2021_GEF Drin II-resubmission clean	**Project PIF ESS**	

ANNEX A: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste here the framework from the Agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found).

This project will contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goal (s): *SDG 6 and 14*				
This project will contribute to the following country outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD, GPD):				
	Objective and Outcome Indicators	**Baseline**	**Mid-term Target**	**End of Project Target**
Project Objective:	Advance integrated natural resources management and sustainable development in the Drin River Basin and its coastal and marine areas by supporting the implementation of the Strategic Action Program (SAP) agreed upon by the Riparians.			
	Indicator 1: # direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individual people)			Total: 300,000 Women: 150,300 Men: 149,700
	GEF Core Indicator: 7: Number of shared water ecosystems (fresh or marine) under new or improved cooperative management			1: Drin River Basin
	7.1: Level of Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Program (TDA/SAP) formulation and implementation	*2*	*Na*	4
	7.2: Level of Regional Legal Agreements and Regional Management Institutions to support its implementation	*2*	*3*	4
	7.3: Level of riparian level /Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministerial Committees	*1*	*2*	3
	7.4: Level of engagement in IWLEARN through participation and delivery of key products	*1*	*4*	4

	Indicator 2: Drin Riparians? level of engagement to, and agreement on reforms consolidating transboundary cooperation and enhancing institutions sustainability and their capacity to implement integrated natural resources management adopting the ?source to sea approach?	At present, Drin Riparians lack a full understanding of the basin ecosystem functioning, harmonized policies and monitoring protocols, and a permanent transboundary institution based on an international agreement.	The Drin Core Group endorses technical tools needed for the management of the Drin Basin.	Drin Riparians consider signing a legal instrument consolidating transboundary cooperation and the DCG adopts the Drin River Basin Management Plan.
Project Component 1	Enhancing the capacity of key institutions and stakeholders to effectively implement integrated natural resources management in the transboundary Drin Basin			
Outcome 1 Sustainable and climate-resilient management of the Basin?s resources enabled through development of technical and policy tools, and filling gaps in the understanding of the Drin Basin ecosystems functioning.	Indicator 3: An updated TDA, and a design of transboundary monitoring programme endorsed by the DCG.	Drin Riparians lack sufficient knowledge, and the policies and technical tools needed to implement sustainable and climate resilient management of the Basin and the adjacent marine area.	#1 tool: Status and trends of Drin Basin biodiversity for priority areas and sediment balance are being developed.	#2 tool: Updated TDA considering climatic scenarios and ?source to sea? interdependencies endorsed by the DCG. #3 tool: System for the management and sharing of data and information among riparians, is improved. #4 tool: Design of Basin-wide transboundary monitoring programme endorsed by the DCG.
	Indicator 4: Staff of relevant institutions and selected stakeholder groups with improved basin management capacity.	Relevant institutions of beneficiary Drin Riparians not fully prepared to harness the potential of new methods and tools introduced by the project.	Gender responsive and inclusive training developed and rolled out at the appropriate scale leading to 50 staff successfully completing training.	Gender responsive and inclusive training developed and rolled out at the appropriate scale leading to 100 staff successfully completing training.

Outputs to achieve Outcome 1	1.1? An updated TDA presented for adoption by the DCG, including: (i) the conceptual model of the hydrology (surface water and groundwater) of the Basin, taking in consideration climate change scenarios, and interactions with the shallow marine environment and (ii) marine environment considerations. 1.2- A design of multi-purpose transboundary monitoring programs (surface water and groundwater, sediment loads, water living resources, etc.) developed based on an assessment of monitoring capacities, gaps and needs across the Basin and presented for adoption by the DCG, along with enhanced capacities to implement these. 1.3- Analysis of the status of freshwater dependent ecosystems and fisheries and of the impacts on near shore marine ecosystems of freshwater flows (surface water and groundwater), as well as assessment of minimum ecosystem flows, to inform management planning in accordance with the EU WFD. 1.4- Assessment of sediment balance along the Drin Basin with focus on reservoirs siltation, land degradation hotspots and impacts on riverbed and coastal dynamics. 1.5- A dialogue to discuss scenarios for the operation of dams to enable optimization of water and flood risk management, and energy production . 1.6- An improved information management system to support transboundary basin management is established. 1.7- Training of staff of institutions and other stakeholders on areas that are critical for the coordinated management of the Drin Basin.			
Project Component 2	Consolidating the Drin Basin transboundary institutional, policy, and legal frameworks			
Outcome 2 Effective cooperation among Drin Riparians and socio-economic sectors succeeded through the establishment of a transboundary institutional arrangement and the development of critical	Indicator 5: A Legal instrument for the management of the Drin Basin is negotiated and should agreement be reached, submitted for signature by the Drin Riparians. - -	Drin Riparians have decided to upscale and enhance the level of cooperation arrangements set through the Drin MoU (2011) that established the Drin Core Group, which acted as Steering Committee of the previous GEW IW project and will continue to do so during the present one.	Draft Legal Agreement negotiated by Drin Riparians.	Legal Agreement -should agreement be reached- submitted for signature of Drin Riparians? authorities.
	Indicator 6: A Joint Coordination Mechanism in the form of a Drin Commission or other is operational.		A Joint Coordination Mechanism in the form of a Drin Commission or other, is proposed.	A Joint Coordination Mechanism in the form of a Drin Commission or other, made operational.

transboundary policy instruments.	Indicator 7: Drin Core Group (DCG)/Joint Coordination Mechanism adopts key transboundary policy instruments.	Transboundary cooperation in the basin lacks policy instruments for coordination, basin management planning, hazards mitigation and ecosystems protection.	Transboundary policy instruments under development.	Policy instruments developed and adopted by the DCG/Joint Coordination Mechanism.
Outputs to achieve Outcome 2	2.1- A legal instrument consolidating official cooperation among the Drin Riparians is finalized and considered for signing by the Riparians. 2.2 Establishment/operation of the joint coordination mechanism. 2.3- A River Basin Management Plan for the Drin River prepared in accordance with the EU WFD, building on the findings of the Drin TDA, and on the enhanced knowledge achieved through Component 1 activities, including marine environment considerations, presented for adoption by the DCG. 2.4- Flood risk management actions for the White Drin sub-basin identified and integrated in the Drin Basin Flood Risk Management Plan. 2.5- Harmonization of management planning tools for adjacent nationally established protected areas in Skadar/Shkoder subbasin. 2.6- A Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo* and North Macedonia developed in the context of the EU Water Framework Directive and presented for adoption.			
Project Component 3	Drin Riparians implement agreed SAP actions addressing priority transboundary issues of concern			
Outcome 3 SAP implementation is accelerated through regional, riparian and local solutions to address main causes of transboundary concern, promote sustainable water use and ensure ecosystem	Indicator 8: Small rural communities in the four riparians test /are aware of the benefits and potentials for the ecosystems and health to be derived from the construction of small-scale wastewater treatment solutions.	The foundational IW project demonstrated the feasibility, replicability and cost-effectiveness of this method.	Demonstration activities implemented in the four Drin Riparians.	Two wastewater treatment solutions in rural communities are constructed leading to the reduction of 15 tons of BOD5 and 1 ton of nutrients annually. Lessons learned reach at least 25 communities in the four Drin Riparians.

functioning and resilience.	Indicator 9: Industries and SMEs in the Basin considering adoption of Environmentally Sound Technologies.	Industries and SMEs in the basin lack experience and capacity to reduce toxic discharges and improve water use efficiency.	Demonstration of/capacity building activities on the TEST approach conducted in the four Drin Riparians.	At least 20 industries and SMEs are capacitated on and at least 5 of these implement the TEST approach leading to at least 15 % reduction in material/resources use and/or reduction of at least 15 % of pollutant emissions in each industry/SME.
	Indicator 10: Sustainable agricultural practices are introduced in the Basin.	Best Agricultural practices including precision agriculture have limited application in the region.	Demonstration activities conducted in selected areas in the sub-basins.	At least 2 agricultural businesses and 5 small farms test sustainable agricultural practices leading to the reduction of 50 tons of fertilizer and 600kg of pesticides annually. Lessons learned reach at least 50 small farms and agricultural business.
	Indicator 11: Nature based solutions for erosion control applied in high priority areas.	Measures to combat erosion in critical areas are presently limited.	Demonstration activities conducted in selected affected areas in the four Drin Riparians.	At least two nature-based solutions for erosion control implemented in the basin. A total of 220 hectares are subject to erosion control measures.

	Indicator 12: Transition of local economy towards green growth fostered in areas of ecological importance.	Present socio-economic development trends exploiting valuable freshwater ecosystems are presently unsustainable.	Demonstration/capacity building events conducted in selected areas in the four Drin Riparians.	At least 5 local tourism businesses improve their business model using ?green? approaches. Lessons learned reach at least 50 businesses.
	Indicator 13: Improved management capacities and monitoring of compliance for commercial fisheries in transboundary lakes.	The freshwater fisheries sector in the Drin Basin is poorly regulated, and institutional coordination and enforcement capacities are missing, as are effective monitoring of fish populations.	Gender responsive, inclusive and appropriately scaled capacity building and consultations with fisherpersons and relevant authorities on the introduction of best fishing practices and fishing monitoring and control.	At least 4 authorities with enhanced capacities for sustainable fishery management. At least 200 fisherpersons engaged in best fishing practices capacity building and awareness raising activities.

Outputs to achieve Outcome 3	3.1- Nutrient reduction (rural) ? Support to the broader adoption of small-scale wastewater treatment plants for nutrient removal piloted in the foundational project, in small rural settlements not easily connected to main wastewater treatment systems. 3.2- Toxic emissions reduction, and water use efficiency and reuse ? Reinforcement, also by promoting the TEST approach, of the capacity of industries and SMEs in the reduction of toxic substances emissions to waterbodies and land, as well as reinforcement of their capacity in water use efficiency and reuse, and assessment of action and/or investment needs for the rehabilitation of toxic pollution from mines and quires (White Drin, Skadar/Shkoder Lake, and Ohrid Lake sub-basins). 3.3- Sustainable agricultural practices for nutrient and toxic pollution reduction, and soil conservation ? Promotion of: (i) Integrated Pest Management practices, (ii) the transition to tourism oriented organic farming, (iii) the use of Best Agricultural Practices (BAP, e.g. buffer strips, crop rotation, application of fertilizers, no-till, use of cover crops, IT solutions) to enhance soil conservation and reduce pollution, in selected areas of the sub-basins of White Drin, Prespa and Ohrid, Black Drin and Buna/ Bojana, and Zeta plain. 3.4- Erosion control ? In priority areas (e.g.: the Debar Lake basin, the river Sateska sub-basin, the Adriatic coastal area) promoting reforestation, nature-based solutions, sustainable tillage and irrigation systems, etc. 3.5 ? Support to SMEs and economic sectors (e.g.: tourism), in transboundary areas of ecological importance (e.g. Prespa, Ohrid, Skadar/Shkoder and Buna/Bojana), to facilitate transition of local economy towards sustainable natural resources management practices and green growth. 3.6 ? Sustainable transboundary fisheries management: (i) Capacity building and training for fish stock assessments to inform management (ii) promotion of best fishing practices among fishermen and their associations (iii) enhancement of illegal fishing monitoring and control capacities.			
Project Component 4	Mechanisms for ensuring participation, gender consideration, coordination, and monitoring progress.			
Outcome 4 Long-term sustainability of achievements is enhanced through implementation of project mechanisms for stakeholder?s participation, gender mainstreaming, dissemination, coordination	Indicator 14: Gender mainstreaming and promotion of gender equality implemented throughout project lifetime.	Principles of stakeholder involvement and gender equality, while recognized by the riparian level laws in all project beneficiary Drin Riparians, are not yet translated into daily practice and at all levels ? the water sector being no exception.	*NA*	20 Women NGOs, networks, women led SME/ business, activists, experts, gender responsible institutions or alike are identified and informed about the project. A formal/informal partnership such as Gender Community of Practice is established. 40% of underrepresented gender participate in riparian level and regional dialogues.

and monitoring progress.	Indicator 15: Awareness among stakeholders raised through a Communications Strategy/Plan developed and implemented.	Awareness among stakeholders in the Drin Basin regarding the transboundary management issues is at acceptable level; this level needs to be sustained or even increased especially among the decision makers, as means to trigger action towards sustainable basin management.	Outreach and Communications Strategy/Plan. 2 communications media (brochure/publication or equivalent) developed. 2 awareness raising activities are implemented.	4 communications media (brochure/publication or equivalent) developed. 4 awareness raising activities are implemented.
	Indicator 16: Number of Annual Stakeholder Conferences organized and delivered.	Annual stakeholders conferences are being organised since 2011 as a forum of participation and discussion regarding the Drin MoU implementation and addressing transboundary management issues and contributed in raising ownership of related action among stakeholders.	2 Annual Stakeholder Conferences organized, each one attended by at least 50 stakeholders.	At least 4 Annual Stakeholder Conferences organized each one attended by at least 50 stakeholders.

	Indicator 17: Donors? and other Projects active in the Drin Basin interest to participate in a dialogue and synergise for the sustainable management of the Drin Basin.	Strategies of donors that are active in the Drin Basin are not coordinated and the same is true for the projects and initiatives they support.	At least one Donors meeting organized attended by at least 5 Donors. Representatives of projects and initiatives active in the Drin Basin participate in 1/4 of the DCG/Joint Coordination Mechanism meetings.	At least two Donors meetings organized each one attended by at least 5 Donors. Representatives of projects and initiatives active in the Drin Basin participate in 1/4 of the DCG/Joint Coordination Mechanism meetings.
	Indicator 18: Number of IW:LEARN Experience Notes.	-	One Experience Note	Two experience Notes
Outputs to achieve Outcome 4	4.1- Awareness raising and participation actions held at local, national and regional levels to enable stakeholders? engagement. 4.2- Actions to mainstream Gender in project execution. 4.3- Actions to enable coordination with other ongoing initiatives and projects. 4.4- Full participation to GEF IW LEARN activities and creation of a project website (at least 1% of project budget is allocated to IW:LEARN activities).			

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

Part I: Project Information	**Response**		
GEF ID	10881		
Project Title	Implementing the Strategic Action Programme of the Drin Basin to Strengthen Transboundary Cooperation and Enable Integrated Natural Resources Management		
Date of Screening	7 November 2021		
STAP member screener	Blake Ratner		
STAP secretariat screener	Virginia Gorsevski		

STAP Overall Assessment and Rating	**Minor.** Proposed project builds upon a SAP recently endorsed in April 2020, and calls for an ?updated TDA? to incorporate interactions with the marine environment, along with support to the legal / regulatory framework and pilot investments. Lack of detail on expected results. For example, a target is 418,243.00 ha of marine protected areas under improved management; this seems implausible, and there is no information on where or how this will take place. Coordination on the Drin Basin is ongoing several projects have been successfully implemented in the partner countries. What have been the lessons learned and how will these lessons inform this project?		
Part I: Project Information **B. Indicative Project** **Description Summary**	**What STAP looks for**	**Response**	
Project Objective	Is the objective clearly defined, and consistently related to the problem diagnosis?	Yes, but the objective lacks specificity.	As described in the PIF the shared vision is established already in 2011. It is the basis for the MoU that was signed the same year and is the underlying basis for the SAP adopted in 2022. The project is

		The stated objective of this project is to ?Advance integrated natural resources management and sustainable development in the Drin River Basin and its coastal and marine areas by supporting the implementation of the Strategic Action Program (SAP) agreed upon by the Riparians.? This is an overarching objective which responds to the generic problem that plagues many transboundary water basins ? that is, lack of shared vision and management necessary for coordinated country-specific action to reduce pollution, prevent loss of biodiversity, etc.	designed to implement SAP actions that were identified by the Drin Core Group (the joint body established by the Drin MoU to coordinate its implementation) in their official meetings as priority. These actions create the prerequisites and basis (in the form of knowledge, policy instruments, technical tools, transboundary institutional capacity etc.) for enhanced cooperation for the management of the basin i.e. for achieving the stated Objective. These actions are described under, populate and detail the Outputs described in the Project Document. These details provide more clarity on how the *de facto* generic (as it is overarching) will be accomplished hence they substantiate the Objective.
Project components	A brief description of the planned activities. Do these support the project?s objectives?	Yes.	

Outcomes	A description of the expected short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention. Do the planned outcomes encompass important adaptation benefits?	Re adaptation, climate change impacts are acknowledged and in theory the achievement of a flood management plan would result in adaptation benefits. However, this is not well articulated in the project design. There is a disconnect between information on climate change, proposed interventions, and beneficiaries.	Climate change scenarios will be taken into consideration for the development of the updated TDA (Output 1.2) that will result in an updated hydrologic and hydrogeologic conceptual model. The latter will inform the development of the work for Sediment balance (Output 1.4), Scenarios for the operation of the Dams (Output 1.5), River Basin Management Plan (output 2.3), Flood risk management for the White Drin (Output 2.4), Drought management work (Output 2.6). All the above instruments will result in adaptation related benefits that will have a positive effect to the total of the population in the Basin.
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits likely to be generated?	One of the indicators is 418,243ha of better managed MPAs. Is this an error? The identified marine area of the basin is a fraction of this size. Without information about where or how this will occur it is not clear if the GEBs will be achieved.	Yes, it is an error, it was a remnant in the form from a previous submission; there are no plans for the establishment of a MPA. It is now removed/corrected.

Outputs	A description of the products and services which are expected to result from the project. Is the sum of the outputs likely to contribute to the outcomes?	Yes. There are several strong outputs including an updated TDA, monitoring programs, scientific analyses of the water and adjacent ecosystems, management plans, flood risk management actions, demonstration projects, etc. Combined, they contribute to the general outcomes and ultimate objective of promoting improved transboundary management of the Drin catchment area.	
Part II: Project justification	A simple narrative explaining the project?s logic, i.e. a theory of change.		
1. Project description. **Briefly describe:**	Is the problem statement well-defined?	Yes, the problems affecting the Drin Basin are well known and not uncommon for shared water basins (poor water quality, etc.)	

1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed (systems description)			

	Are the barriers and threats well described, and substantiated by data and references?	There is information on barriers hindering regional cooperation such as ?limited knowledge of the Basin?s characteristics and functioning, lack of permanent coordination management tools/mechanisms, frameworks and capacity.? However, it would be good to know what the barriers are to actual implementation of improvements on the ground that could substantially improve water quality and biodiversity (the main problems listed in the PIF). These will likely vary from country to country but still some general information could help to frame the technical assistance envisioned in Component 3.	The respective barriers are articulated in the TDA (https://www.gwp.org/globalassets/global/gwp-med-files/list-of-programmes/gef-drin-project/drin-docs/tda_final.pdf) and its Thematic Reports (specifically on the (i) Water quality (ii) Institutional and legal setting. These provide the basis for the SAP that in turn provide the basis for the project. The barriers are now described in the section Part II, 1.a Project Description, *Global environmental and adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed* along with their causes (linked mainly with the sectoral - and non-coordinated- organization of the government and the insufficient institutional, human, financial and technical capacities that are reflected in insufficient and non-coordinated policies and management actions etc.; described in section *Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects*). Four lists of institutional, managerial and knowledge related issues that constitute impediments for the sustainable management of the Drin Basin at the national and transboundary level are provided in Part II, 1.a Project Description, *Global environmental and adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed*, one under each of the four transboundary problems (Deterioration of water quality, Variability of the hydrological regime, Biodiversity degradation, Variability of the sediment transport regime). The listed impediments, that substantiate the barriers, are codified in four groups of impediments that the project should address; addressing these, the project will contribute to lifting the barriers, including

			deterioration of water quality and biodiversity.
	For multiple focal area projects: does the problem statement and analysis identify the drivers of environmental degradation which need to be addressed through multiple focal areas; and is the objective well-defined, and can it only be supported by integrating two, or more focal areas objectives or programs?	N/A	
2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects	Is the baseline identified clearly?	Yes, with regards to TDA and country specific information on legal / policy frameworks.	
	Does it provide a feasible basis for quantifying the project?s benefits?	Yes, based upon recent TDA. Good summary of institutional context and related investments.	
	Is the baseline sufficiently robust to support the incremental (additional cost) reasoning for the project?	Yes.	
	For multiple focal area projects:		
	are the multiple baseline analyses presented (supported by data and references), and the multiple benefits specified, including the proposed indicators;	N/A	

	are the lessons learned from similar or related past GEF and non-GEF interventions described; and	N/A	
	how did these lessons inform the design of this project?	N/A	
3) the proposed alternative scenario with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project	What is the theory of change?	The PIF describes the rationale for focusing on institutional strengthening for technical and political cooperation but the ?simplified theory of change? figure provided is primarily a restatement of the project components.	ToC is revised to include: the envisaged Goal; the barriers that should be lifted to achieve the Goal; the Outcomes that will be used for lifting the barriers; the Outputs to achieve the Outcomes; underlying assumptions in relation to the conditions that should be in place for the Outcomes to be achieved and the barriers to be lifted.

	What is the sequence of events (required or expected) that will lead to the desired outcomes?	The general sequence is to enhance capacity and refine the TDA consolidate transboundary institutional, policy and legal frameworks, implement demonstration projects (which presumably would come out of the TDA; however, appear to be known a priori ? perhaps as a result of SAP or earlier TDA?); and general awareness raising, conferences, gender action plan, etc.	The demonstration activities are selected by the Drin Riparians from a list of actions included in the endorsed Drin SAP, to address priority issues (part of the four transboundary problems) and introduce means and instruments that will contribute in accelerating the SAP.
	What is the set of linked activities, outputs, and outcomes to address the project?s objectives?		

	Are the mechanisms of change plausible, and is there a well-informed identification of the underlying assumptions?	As this project follows on from earlier efforts, assumptions may be known to the project designer but are not well articulated in this PIF. Mechanisms of change are plausible; however, it is not clear if the actions are simultaneous or sequential. A revised TOC would be very helpful for clearly articulating the underlying assumptions and causal pathways. See STAP Primer on Theory of Change for more information.	ToC is revised to include underlying assumptions and causal pathways. Some of the actions will be simultaneous and some sequential; in addition to the ToC this is substantiated in the Annex 3 of the Project Document ?Multi Year workplan?: Output 1.3 Analysis of the status of freshwater dependent ecosystems and Output 1.4 Assessment of sediment balance will contribute in the development of (Output 1.1) updated TDA and Output 1.5 Scenarios for the operation of dams. The development of the (Output 1.1) updated TDA will contribute in Output 1.2 Multi-purpose transboundary monitoring programs. The information collected through these will be feeding the Output 1.6 Information management system. Output 1.7 Training of staff of institutions will be taking place throughout the project implementation. The updated TDA will be used for the development of the Output 2.4 Flood risk management actions for the White Drin, Output 2.5 Protected areas Harmonization of management planning, Output 2.6 Drought Management Plan for Kosovo and North Macedonia and all to the development of the Output 2.3 Drin River Basin Management Plan. Output 2.1 A legal instrument consolidating official cooperation, Output 2.2 Operationalization of a joint coordination mechanism, will be implemented in parallel with the above and Outputs under Components 3 and 4.

	Is there a recognition of what adaptations may be required during project implementation to respond to changing conditions in pursuit of the targeted outcomes?	Not explicit.	These are recognized in Risk Analysis and in Social and Environmental Screening (Annex 6) and the Project Document Annex8: Environmental Social Management Framework. These are further acknowledged in the design of Component 4 activities that provide for stakeholders engagement activities to track changes in the socio-economic environment that the project will be implemented for the latter to appropriately react. The implementation arrangements (see Insitutional Arrangements and Conditions section) provide for the DCG officially appointed - by the Drin Riparian- members to be members of the SC; this will further contribute in the project to be timely informed about- so as to timely react to possible changes.
5) incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEF trust fund, LDCF, SCCF, and co- financing	GEF trust fund: will the proposed incremental activities lead to the delivery of global environmental benefits?	Yes.	
	LDCF/SCCF: will the proposed incremental activities lead to adaptation which reduces vulnerability, builds adaptive capacity, and increases resilience to climate change?	N/A	
6) global environmental benefits (GEF trust fund) and/or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF)	Are the benefits truly global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits, and are they measurable?	Yes the benefits are global and in theory measurable.	

	Is the scale of projected benefits both plausible and compelling in relation to the proposed investment?	Yes	
	Are the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits explicitly defined?	Yes however, see prior comment regarding anticipated ha or MPAs to be created or better managed.	See related comment above - it was an error; there are no plans for the establishment of a MPA. It is now removed/corrected.
	Are indicators, or methodologies, provided to demonstrate how the global environmental benefits/adaptation benefits will be measured and monitored during project implementation?		
	What activities will be implemented to increase the project?s resilience to climate change?		

7) innovative, sustainability and potential for scaling-up	Is the project innovative, for example, in its design, method of financing, technology, business model, policy, monitoring and evaluation, or learning?	Use of artificial intelligence to support monitoring could be innovative, particularly if tools are transferable to other regions. There is mention of working with the private sector as an innovation but with no concrete actions or detail it is difficult to see how this will be innovative. Similarly, there is mention of business incubators but not information about what these would address.	See comment below. Incubators are not any longer part of the Project activities.
	Is there a clearly-articulated vision of how the innovation will be scaled-up, for example, over time, across geographies, among institutional actors?	Not convincing.	There was not enough detail in the PIF. Now there is detail included in all Outputs of Component 3 where concrete steps and actions are described for the engagement of authorities, Donors and IFIs/Banks for identifying options to scale up successful approaches.

	Will incremental adaptation be required, or more fundamental transformational change to achieve long term sustainability?	The approach appears incremental; it is unclear how this will address the pace of change in the basin.	The pace of (transformational) change is predominately defined by (as in all transboundary basins) the socio-economic conditions and institutional capacities in the riparian states and entities; it can only be influenced by projects. In the case of Drin (see under Section 7 Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up) effort will be put to influence/address the pace of change and pursue long term sustainability through: (1) Establishing a permanent institutional arrangement for the joint management of the basin hence, the increased commitment of the Drin Riparians to implement the strategic and priority actions included in the SAP. Increased cooperation will influence and be influenced by the national level actions for the implementation of the EU acquis (that is an on-going process_. (2) Testing of novel management approaches under Component 3. There is increased likelihood that authorities will seek to replicate successful results especially if those are accompanied by the creation of jobs. In the latter case the market will work as a mechanism of replication and up-scaling.
1b. Project Map and Coordinates. Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.		A map is included.	

2. Stakeholders. Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase: Indigenous people and local communities; Civil society organizations; Private sector entities. If none of the above, please explain why. In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.	Have all the key relevant stakeholders been identified to cover the complexity of the problem, and project implementation barriers?	The PIF refers to extensive consultations leading to the current SAP. Yet, successful uptake of innovations will require new strategies to shift the incentives of local communities, NGOs and the private sector. It is not clear that the regulatory lever alone will be adequate to bring about the necessary shifts. A more detailed stakeholder plan with concrete actions to engage these critical groups would be very helpful.	Indeed; an updated/detailed Stakeholders Analysis (Annex 7) has been prepared to understand the needs and design: a comprehensive Stakeholders Engagement Plan (Annex 7) and Gender Action Plan (Annex 8); communication strategy (to be developed in the initiation phase of the project. A local stakeholders analysis is an action described under Component 3 activities (pilot demonstrations) to understand better the local conditions and appropriately adjust local stakeholders engagement and communication activities.
	What are the stakeholders? roles, and how will their combined roles contribute to robust project design, to achieving global environmental outcomes, and to lessons learned and knowledge?		

3. Gender Equality and **Women?s Empowerment.** Please briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis). Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Ye s/no/ tbd. If possible, indicate in which results area(s) the	Have gender differentiated risks and opportunities been identified, and were preliminary response measures described that would address these differences?	Gender issues are mentioned throughout the PIF; however, there is a lack of clear response measures outlined. For example: A terminal evaluation for the projects upon which this one builds states that one of the lessons is that ?Gender strategies are effective if they are developed in early stages of the project in order to guide gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process.? And yet, the PIF proposes a gender plan will be developed as part of Component 4. Why not in the PPG phase so that mainstreaming can occur in the early stages of the project implementation? Given the prior analyses already referenced in the PIF, this would seem feasible.	There is a Gender Action Plan (GAP) prepared as part of the PPG (Annex 7). The GAP is based on a gender analysis done (included in the GAP). Gender actions are part of the outputs described under the *Alternative Scenario* section.

project is expected to contribute to gender equality: access to and control over resources; participation and decision- making; and/or economic benefits or services. Will the project?s results framework or logical framework include gender- sensitive indicators? yes/no /tbd			
	Do gender considerations hinder full participation of an important stakeholder group (or groups)? If so, how will these obstacles be addressed?		

5. Risks. Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design	Are the identified risks valid and comprehensive? Are the risks specifically for things outside the project?s control? Are there social and environmental risks which could affect the project? For climate risk, and climate resilience measures: ? How will the project?s objectives or outputs be affected by climate risks over the period 2020 to 2050, and have the impact of these risks been addressed adequately? ? Has the sensitivity to climate change, and its impacts, been assessed? ? Have resilience practices and measures to address projected climate risks and impacts been considered? How will these be dealt with? ? What technical and institutional capacity, and information, will be needed to address climate risks and resilience enhancement measures?	Apart from COVID-19 considerations, the risks and responses identified are very preliminary.	The risks are analyzed in the Risk Analysis and in Social and Environmental Screening (Annex 6) and the Project Document Annex8: Environmental Social Management Framework.

6. Coordination. Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other related initiatives	Are the project proponents tapping into relevant knowledge and learning generated by other projects, including GEF projects?	This project builds on past work in this Drin basin and also mentions a few other related projects that it will work with (UNDP Adaptation project). While a terminal evaluation is provided from the prior GEF project for this basin, it is not clear that the lessons from that evaluation have been directly applied in the formulation of this project.	The foundational project terminal evaluation indicated the following lessons (in *Italic fonts*); actions to incorporate these in the design of the new project is provided under each lessons learned: *? Project has clear and achievable objectives followed by a rational design of project?s components, outcomes and outputs. The design simplicity is an essential prerequisite for a successful implementation of the project.* A ?simplicity in the design? is a principle followed in this project. Output 1.3 Analysis of the status of freshwater dependent ecosystems and Output 1.4 Assessment of sediment balance will contribute in the development of (Output 1.1) updated TDA and Output 1.5 Scenarios for the operation of dams. The development of the (Output 1.1) updated TDA will contribute in Output 1.2 Multi-purpose transboundary monitoring programs. The information collected through these will be feeding the Output 1.6 Information management system. Output 1.7 Training of staff of institutions will be taking place throughout the project implementation. The updated TDA will be used for the development of the Output 2.4 Flood risk management actions for the White Drin, Output 2.5 Protected areas Harmonization of management planning, Output 2.6 Drought Management Plan for Kosovo and North Macedonia. All these will be feeding with information and measures the development of the Output 2.3 Drin River Basin Management Plan. Output 2.1 A legal instrument consolidating official cooperation, Output 2.2 Operationalization of a joint coordination mechanism, will be implemented in parallel and use the above in enhancing cooperation in the basin. The coordination mechanism will be benefited by and use the results of Component 3 that will test tools and methods for addressing the main

			transboundary problems and include activities for upscaling the demonstration actions? results. Under Component 4, Stakeholders engagement, communication, gender mainstreaming activities and activities to ensure coordination with on-going and planned initiatives and project will contribute to the achieving and sustaining the results of each one of the Components and overall the Project. *? All project stakeholders have to be actively involved in the implementation of the project. Well-developed stakeholder engagement and integration mechanisms significantly contribute to better countries? buy-in of the project and its overall success.* An updated/detailed Stakeholders Analysis (Annex 7) has been prepared to understand the needs and design: a comprehensive Stakeholders Engagement Plan (Annex 7) and Gender Action Plan (Annex 8); communication strategy (to be developed in the initiation phase of the project. A local stakeholders analysis is an action described under Component 3 activities (pilot demonstrations) to understand better the local conditions and appropriately adjust local stakeholders engagement and communication activities. *? Successful communication and information strategy and a well-developed management information system make the project?s implementation transparent, increase trust in project actors and contribute to countries? support to the project and implementation of its results increasing, thus, its sustainability level.* See response above. *? Gender strategies are effective if they are developed in early stages of the project in order to guide gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process.*

			A Gender Analysis and a Gender Action Plan (Annex 8) have been prepared in the PPG phase of the project. *? Efforts to deliver more results than initially envisaged improves the project?s catalytic/replication effect. Catalytic effect of the project is enhanced by examples presented through demonstration projects.* The project was designed to achieve the same. *? The committed project implementation team is key ingredient of the project?s success. This project has shown that the team has spared no time to engage in frequent and fruitful consultation with a variety of project partners. Its long-standing experience in dealing with stakeholders? participation and gender mainstreaming made this aspect the backbone of the project contributing thus to its overall success.* The composition of the project team in terms of roles is the same as in the foundational project. Stakeholders engagement plan includes actions by the Officers that will be stationed in each one of the beneficiary Drin Riparians. *? Capable project implementation team is essential element to successfully confront unexpected changes in the project?s environment, such as political events, economic crises, pandemics etc. This also contributes to the increased project?s effectiveness and efficiency.* The composition of the project team is designed to replicate the success of the foundational project in this regard. *? Capacity building (individual as well as institutional) at national and transboundary levels are key factors for sustaining results.* Output 1.7 is dedicated to Capacity Building. CB activities are included also in Component 3.

	Is there adequate recognition of previous projects and the learning derived from them?	Not explicit.	The project builds on a foundational GEF project and the resulting SAP. See also response to the comment given above.
	Have specific lessons learned from previous projects been cited?		
	How have these lessons informed the project?s formulation?		
	Is there an adequate mechanism to feed the lessons learned from earlier projects into this project, and to share lessons learned from it into future projects?		
8. Knowledge **management.** Outline the ?Knowledge Management Approach? for the project, and how it will contribute to the project?s overall impact, including plans to learn from relevant projects, initiatives and evaluations.	What overall approach will be taken, and what knowledge management indicators and metrics will be used?	Component 4 includes general KM activities such as ?awareness raising? and annual events, as well as participation in IW:Learn. This element of the project could be much improved.	A KM approach and is part of the Stakeholders Engagement Plan (Annex 8).
	What plans are proposed for sharing, disseminating and scaling-up results, lessons and experience?		

Notes

STAP advisory response	**Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed**	
1. Concur	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. The proponent is invited to approach STAP for advice at any time during the development of the project brief prior to submission for CEO endorsement.	
	* In cases where the STAP acknowledges the project has merit on scientific and technical grounds, the STAP will recognize this in the screen by stating that ***?STAP is satisfied with the scientific and technical quality of the proposal and encourages the proponent to develop it with same rigor. At any time during the development of the project, the proponent is invited to approach STAP to consult on the design.?***	
2. Minor issues to be considered during project design	STAP has identified specific scientific /technical suggestions or opportunities that should be discussed with the project proponent as early as possible during development of the project brief. The proponent may wish to:	
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised;	An online discussion with representatives of the STAP and the GEFSEC took place on 14/6/2022 (during Project Development). The actions indicated in the responses to the comments provided above constitute agreed course of action during the aforementioned discussion.
	(ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development, and possibly agreeing to terms of reference for an independent expert to be appointed to conduct this review.	UNDP provides a review of the ProDoc developed by GWP, among others, on the basis of the STAP comments
	The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.	

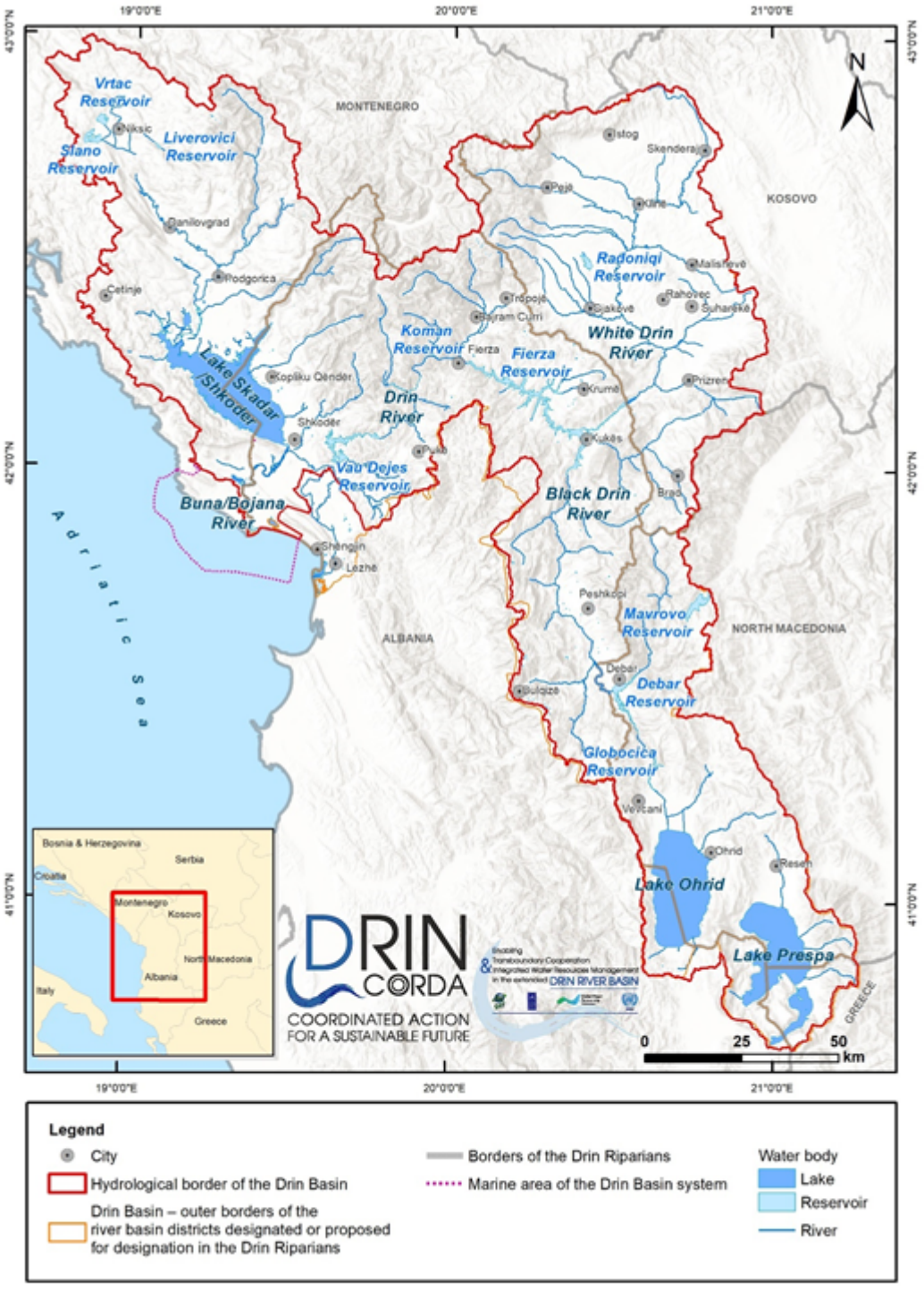
3. Major issues to be considered during project design	STAP proposes significant improvements or has concerns on the grounds of specified major scientific/technical methodological issues, barriers, or omissions in the project concept. If STAP provides this advisory response, a full explanation would also be provided. The proponent is strongly encouraged to:	
	(i) Open a dialogue with STAP regarding the technical and/or scientific issues raised; (ii) Set a review point at an early stage during project development including an independent expert as required. The proponent should provide a report of the action agreed and taken, at the time of submission of the full project brief for CEO endorsement.	

ANNEX C: Status of Utilization of Project Preparation Grant (PPG). (Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

PPG Grant Approved at PIF:			
Project Preparation Activities Implemented	***GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)***		
	Budgeted Amount	***Amount Spent To date***	***Amount Committed***
Component A - Technical Studies and Reviews	72,320.00	58,326.69	12,864.19
Component B - ProDoc, CEO Endorsement Request and Mandatory and Project Specific Annexes	61,320.00	49,474,69	10,718.19
Component C - Validation Workshop	66,360.00	68,616.24	0,00
Total	**200,000**	**176,417.62**	**23,582.38**

ANNEX D: Project Map(s) and Coordinates

Please attach the geographical location of the project area, if possible.



ANNEX E: Project Budget Table

Please attach a project budget table.

Expenditure Category	Detailed Description	Component (USDeq.)						
		Component 1	*Component 2*	*Component 3*	*Component 4*	*Sub-Total*	*M&E*	
Equipment	IT equipment for the office of the Body to be defined under the legal instrument, that will function as the secretariat of the Joint Coordination Mechanism.		10,000			10,000		
Equipment	Equipment needed for implementation of the actions from action plans. -Small grants scheme - Equipment to be procured on the basis of the action plan. -Purchase of the equipment for monitoring by using rapid non-invasive techniques and enforcement of protection (i.e. drones, IC cameras, protective equipment, boas, motors, etc.).			294,000		294,000		
Equipment/ Vehiches	Equipment for the office of the Body to be defined under the legal instrument, that will function as the secretariat of the Joint Coordination Mechanism.		10,000			10,000		
Contractual Services – Company	Update of socioeconomic /water uses, and water resources and basin governance parts of the TDA developed through the foundational Projects to include related information since their development and marine related information. -Update of Drin Basin hydrological map as per WFD and update of hydrogeological map including transboundary aquifers in the Drin Basin. -Review of existing climate change scenarios along with existing data on water uses/demand per sector including agriculture, industry, energy, domestic etc. to feed hydrologic models. Update and increase precision of: water balance prepared through the foundational project using additional data coming from other on-going projects and newly developed hydrological model; water stress under different climate change and developmental scenarios for the Drin sub-basins; interactions of freshwater with the shallow marine environment. -Develop riparian level/sub basin water quality pollution risk maps and inventory of hotspots (regarding hazardous substances, heavy metals, pesticides, etc.) and identify potential sites for early warning of accidental release monitoring/warning, to inform policy making/guide necessary managerial action. Develop recommendations of priority actions to be undertaken. Assess marine pollution and related pressures. Assess marine ecosystems. -Editing, developing of the layout of the report to be ready for printing. -Assess: (i) existing monitoring programs and capacities at the Riparians' level and (ii) required needs and procedures for the Riparian to perform monitoring in the Drin Basin at the transboundary level, in accordance with EU directives and strategic guidance from the Water Convention. -Development of an agreement on a Drin transboundary monitoring program, including (the list is to be finalized during project implementation) locations of monitoring stations building on riparian level networks, and joint monitoring guidelines for Riparians based on international guidance and standards for implementing monitoring protocols. -Determination of the status and trends of Drin Basin biodiversity -key habitats and species- for priority areas in terms of (the list is indicative) among others: fish stocks in lakes and rivers; condition of coastal/marine ecosystems and marine fisheries etc. -Determination of minimum ecological flows for the Drin basin. -Identification of pressures along with their causes and impacts, on sediment balance/transport (including in relation to reservoirs siltation, land degradation hotspots and impacts on riverbed) by a review of existing data and using sediment transport model(s). Further, update understanding of sediment balance trends and its impacts on coastal erosion /deposition processes as means to develop key recommendations for policy making, law drafting and management actions, relating amongst others, the identification of areas for the exploitation of riverbed material and the development of criteria and standards for extraction. -Calibrate the energy model and couple it with the hydrology model and further: work for the identification of scenarios regarding different levels of cooperation/coordination among the HPP companies for the operation of the dams; testing these scenarios using the aforementioned hydrologic and energy models; develop recommendations regarding operation rules for each one of the dams under different scenario. -Identification of compensation schemes for HP companies to be used for utilizing the dams as floods mitigation mechanism and development of feasibility study to assess the scope and level of cooperation. -Consultancy to work for the following: Identification of the status of existing relevant Riparian Information Management Systems (IMS) and analysis of historical Drin data for incorporation in the IMS; Definition of additional Drin data management requirements; Agreement on data processing procedures and exchange formats at the regional level; Agreement on specifications of data exchange protocols; Preparation of functional and technical requirements to develop and test data exchange mechanisms/procedures among Riparians; Digitization of historic monitoring data; Development, implementation and testing of the updated Transboundary Drin Basin Information Management System (Drin IMS v2); Training of staff of responsible institutions. - Consultancy for the development, operation and maintenance of Transboundary Drin Basin Information Management System of the fully-fledged regional IMS.D10.Preparation of material for CB workshops and train stakeholders.F14UNECE being responsible for the implementation of Output 1.2, and providing support for the implementation of Outputs 2.1. ($220,000)	984,000				984,000		
Contractual Services – Company	Development of a River Basin Management Plan. -Company to draft the update of the IBFRMS&P including collection of the data for the hydrological model update, record existing flood protection measures, propose applicable new measures and assess their sustainability and potential socio-economic effects (including various experts, as per requirements). -Field research related to the ecosystems and biodiversity to fill in existing knowledge gaps. -Development of a Drought Management Plan for the parts of Drin extending in Kosovo* and North Macedonia. -UNECE providing support for the implementation of Outputs 2.1 and 2.2. ($220,000) -Consultancy for Environmental and Social Safeguards activities ($200,000)		470,000			470,000		
Contractual Services – Company	Full design of the solutions to be implemented. Implementation (construction works or/and equipment installation). -a) awareness-raising of best environmental practices (BEP) for industry b) recommendation on applying BEP to specific industry/sectors and development of enterprise specific feasibility studies/technical documentation c) support implementation of BEP (Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies (TEST) UNIDO in selected enterprises. -Provide advise/training to Agri businesses and farmers to implement the action plans; implementation of the Action Plans. -Prepare feasibility studies for a set of ecosystem-based measures for reducing erosion/sedimentation transport in upper parts of Sateska River and erosion control at Bojana/Buna Delta; Development of full design and preparation of the tender dossiers for implementing selected mitigation measures at the two locations; Oversee the implementation of measures in the two locations. -Implementation of erosion control and sedimentation transport measures and constructions in Sateska River and Buna/Bojana Delta. -Small grants - Implementation of selected actions on the basis of the "Greening of the tourism innovation challenge". -Review available data on fish stock, vulnerable species, and ecosystems status characterization including: a. Analysis of baseline data related to fish stocks and identification of data gaps for efficient fish stocks transboundary management. b. Propose the areas and methods for additional data collection on targeted transboundary species c. Assess management and fishing practices to identify/understand the extent to which these have an adverse effect. -Consultancy for Environmental and Social Safeguards activities ($100,000)			895,000		895,000		
Contractual Services – Company	Drin Day - NGO Grants. -Awareness raising materials. -Revisiting the structure and content of the Drin CORDA site.				109,000	109,000		

International Consultants	Chief technical advisor- providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities. Communication expert to develop communication strategy, communication material and implement communication campaigns. Gender expert to provide guidance on the implementation of the gender plan and indicators. Project Assistant Environmental and Social Safeguards Expert. Logistical arrangements and support for the implementation of activities.-International expert to develop updated TDA using also results of Outputs 1.3-1.5 (assume 40 days @ $600/day). -Pollution, hydrology and biodiversity experts to advise on quality assurance of products (assume 60 days each @ $600/day). -Hydrologist/hydrogeologist to advise on quality assurance of products (assume 18 days @ $600/day). -Hydrologist/hydrogeologist to advise on quality assurance of products (assume 18 days @ $600/day). -Hydrologist/hydrogeologist to calibrate the hydrologic model and couple it with the energy model and further: work for the identification of scenarios regarding different levels of cooperation/coordination among the HPP companies for the operation of the dams; testing these scenarios using the aforementioned hydrologic and energy models; develop recommendations regarding operation rules for each one of the dams under different scenario (assume 20 days @ $600/day). -Trainers for capacity building activities (Assume 7 events 6 days each @ $600/day).	574,182				574,182		
International Consultants	Chief technical advisor- providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities.-International waters management specialist to facilitate negotiation process and meetings and contribute to the development of the final legal agreement text (assuming 33 days @ $600/day). -International water law expert to facilitate discussion during negotiation meetings and prepare final legal agreement text (assuming 45 days @ $600/day). -International waters management specialists to provide support for the deliberation of the functions of the DCG or the Body to be defined under the legal instrument, that will function as the secretariat of the Joint Coordination Mechanism providing technical and administrative support for the operation to the JCM. (assuming ~33 days per year @ $600/day). -International water law expert to provide training to the staff of the Body to be defined under the legal instrument, that will function as the secretariat of the Joint Coordination Mechanism (assuming 8 days @ $600/day). -Development of the ToR for the preparation of a River Basin Management Plan in accordance with the WFD 5 days @ $1,000 /day. - International socio/conomic and finance specialist to do water related socioeconomic and finance analaysis for the Basin Management Plan (assuming 61 days @ $600/day). -International expert to prepare flood risk and hazard maps for the transboundary areas of white Drin (KS) and to guide on update of the IBFRMS&P (assume 60 days @ $600/day). -Review existing information and data, identify knowledge gaps, prepare the ToR for any additional research is necessary and guide the implementation of this research, review existing management plans, facilitate the work of the joint technical working groups that will elaborate and discuss harmonized management tools for the adjacent protected areas and prepare the documentation in relation to the harmonized management tools to be agreed by the Protected Areas Authorities (assuming days 90 @$600/day). -Hydrology expert to advise on quality assurance of products (assume 15 days @ $600/day). -Communication expert to develop communication strategy, communication material and implement communication campaigns. -Gender expert to provide guidance on the implementation of the gender plan and indicators. - Project Assistant -Environmental and Social Safeguards Expert. -Logistical arrangements and support for the implementation of activities.		693,720			693,720		

International Consultants	Chief technical advisor- providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities.-Wastewater treatment expert(s) (hydrologist, civil engineer or similar) for: (1) selection of the sites for the design/construction of wastewater treatment solutions including: finalization of the list of selection criteria; preliminary assessment of costs in each potential site etc. (2) Development of the technical documentation needed for preparing the feasibility/design studies; (3) prepare design of the solutions to be implemented (ready for tendering); (4) Monitoring and assessment of activity (5) prepare lessons learned report along with advice to the Drin Riparians for policy and legal instruments (assume 45 days @ $600/day). -International expert for: Initial screening and assessment of status of selected mines and quarries (based on their level of pollution risk) with proposal of appropriate remediation actions; Capacity building on TEST methodology (for enterprises posing water pollution risks in the Basin); Selection of the enterprises to implement the TEST; Lead development of feasibility analysis and action plans; Monitoring and evaluation; Knowledge dissemination and lessons learned. Coordination of experts, quality assurance. (assume 65 days @ $600/day). -International expert on application of Precision agriculture to: Conduct awareness raising workshops; Support consultation with large agricultural businesses and farmers to explore interest in participating in the activity; Support discussions with banks and donors in upscaling activities; Finalize the selection criteria and support selection of the agricultural businesses/farmers to work with; Screen agricultural processes and development of recommendations reports; Develop of action plans/recommendation report for the implementation of activities; Develop ToR for equipment; Monitor and evaluation of results; Develop advice to the Drin Riparians for related policy and legal instruments (assume 65 days @ $600/day). -Erosion expert to: Support the work with donors and financing partners to investigate options and opportunities for scaling up successful solutions; Develop regional report/guidelines on applicability of erosion control measures; Develop advice to the Drin Riparians for policy and legal instruments regarding erosion control (assume 40 days @ $600/day). -Tourism expert to: Develop an assessment of the touristic potential in the protected areas of focus; Finalize the list of criteria for the selection of the successful proposals of the "Greening the tourism innovation challenge" and develop the call; Provide advice to selected companies to implement the measures selected; Monitor and assess results; Do capacity building on sustainable tourism trends and opportunities for SMEs in tourism sector (assume 50 days @ $600/day). -One international fishery experts to: support establishment and operation of joint technical groups to work on fish stock data collection and assessment methods and fishing related law enforcement measures; undertake capacity building and training activities; organize and coordinate implementation of joint data collection, and development of protocols or equivalent on fish stock data collection and assessment methods and fishing monitoring compliance and control practices in transboundary areas including protocols of action in case of illegal fishing ; do monitoring and evaluation of demonstration activity (assume 40 days @ $600/day). -Environmental and Social Safeguards Expert for SESA/ESMP. -Communication expert to develop communication strategy, communication material and implement communication campaigns. -Gender expert to provide guidance on the implementation of the gender plan and indicators. -Project Assistant. -Environmental and Social Safeguards Expert. -Logistical arrangements and support for the implementation of activities.			704,045		704,045		
International Consultants	Chief technical advisor- providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities. -Communication expert to develop communication strategy, communication material and implement communication campaigns. -Gender expert to provide guidance on the implementation of the gender plan and indicators. - Project Assistant -Environmental and Social Safeguards Expert. -Logistical arrangements and support for the implementation of activities.				42,726	42,726		
International Consultants	PM/CTA Managing project, Finance Officer and PMU					-		

Local Consultants	Project Officers/Drin Riparians Coordinators to support the CTA/PM in coordinating the work of the international and riparian level consultants engaged for project implementation and providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities.-Local experts to provide input for the development of the transboundary monitoring program (assume 12 experts 20 days each @ $200/day). -Local experts to provide input for the: determination of the status and trends of Drin Basin biodiversity for priority areas; determination of minimum ecological flows for the Drin basin (assume 8 experts 15 days each @ $200/day). -Local consultants to digitize historic hydrometeorological data to be added in the Drin IMS database (assume 4 experts 10 days each @ $200/day).	269,085				269,085		
Local Consultants	Project Officers/Drin Riparians Coordinators to support the CTA/PM in coordinating the work of the international and riparian level consultants engaged for project implementation and providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities.-Water resources management specialists to provide support for the deliberation of the functions of the Expert Working Groups of the DCG and the DCG or the Body to be defined under the legal instrument, that will function as the secretariat of the Joint Coordination Mechanism providing technical and administrative support for the operation to the JCM. (assuming 40 days per year @ $200/day). -Protected areas experts to participate in joint technical working groups that will elaborate and discuss harmonized management tools for the adjacent protected areas (assume 12 experts with 14 days @$200/day).		231,170			231,170		
Local Consultants	Project Officers/Drin Riparians Coordinators to support the CTA/PM in coordinating the work of the international and riparian level consultants engaged for project implementation and providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities.-Wastewater treatment expert(s) (hydrologist, civil engineer or similar) for: (1) selection of the sites for the design/construction of wastewater treatment solutions including: finalization of the list of selection criteria; preliminary assessment of costs in each potential site etc. (2) Development of the technical documentation needed for preparing the feasibility/design studies; (3) prepare design of the solutions to be implemented (ready for tendering); (4) Monitoring and assessment of activity (5) prepare lessons learned report along with advice to the Drin Riparians for policy and legal instrument (assume 4 experts 20 days @ $200/day). -Local consultants for various expertise (waste water and, chemical management, water use and irrigation , IT solutions) to provide support for international expert (assume 4 experts 30 days @ $200/day each). -4 local consultants to support international consultant (assume 10 days each@ $200). -Local tourism experts (one per Riparian) to support the international expert (assume 20 days each@ $200). -4 local experts (one per Riparian) to support work of international expert and conduction of limited targeted ecosystem surveys (assume 20 days each @ $200).			300,600		300,600		
Local Consultants	Project Officers/Drin Riparians Coordinators to support the CTA/PM in coordinating the work of the international and riparian level consultants engaged for project implementation and providing substantive/technical inputs and support to project activities.				63,030	63,030		
Local Consultants	Managing locally project activities, interaction with stakeholders and institutions					-		

Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	6 workshops (one in each of the Riparians apart from Albania where three will be implemented to geographically cover the area) to discuss the perceptions of stakeholders with regard to managerial issues and expectations from the project @ $2,000/workshop. -Meetings of the EWGs (assume 3 meetings at $10,000/meeting). -Meetings among the Energy responsible ministries the DCG and the HPPs from N. Macedonia and Albania to discuss dams operational rules and related cooperation scheme and agreement (assume 4 meetings @ $1,000 /meeting). -Meetings of the EWGs and officials to agree on the parameters of the IMS (assume 3 meetings in total @ $10,000 per meeting). -Capacity Building events, assume 7 CB events @ $12,500 each. Participation of stakeholders in international CB events.	173,500				173,500		
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	4 meetings to negotiate the legal instrument @ $10,000 / meeting. -4 consultation meetings between the facilitators and the Riparians with the aim to reach consensus on points of disagreement or concern @ 1000 / meeting. -One meeting of the Drin Core Group or the Joint Coordination Body to be established per year @ $10,000 / meeting. -One meeting of the 4 EWGs of the Drin Core Group or the Joint Coordination Body to be established per year @ $15,000 / meeting. -6 workshops (one in each of the Riparians apart from Albania where three will be implemented to geographically cover the area) to discuss results of component 1 perceptions of stakeholders with regard to managerial issues under the light of updated TDA and vision with regard to the management of the Basin as basis for the development of the River Basin Management Plan / introduce the stakeholders in the RBM plan development process @ $2,000/workshop. -Two riparian level stakeholders workshops for consultation and presentation for the IBFRMS&P each @ $3,000 USD. -7 meetings of the Joint Expert Working Groups @ $1,000 each. -One workshop to consult on the management measures in each of the Riparians @ $1,000 each. -One workshop to consult on the management measures at transboundary level @ $3,000 each. -Two multi-stakeholders consultation workshops in each of North Macedonia and Kosovo*, the first to present the project and understand the needs and perceptions and the second to present and validate the analysis and consult on the program of measures @ $2,000 each.		209,000			209,000		
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	4 consultation meetings with local population @ $1000 each. -4 trainings for enterprises each @ $1,000. -One regional capacity building workshop @ $10,000. -Two Riparian awareness raising workshops each four Riparians to promote and disseminate knowledge each @ 4000 USD. -4 riparian level workshops each @ $1,000. -Awareness raising workshop on the negative effects of erosion related practices (agriculture and extractive practitioners) @15000 USD. -One regional workshops @ $25,000. -One regional training @ $10,000. -8 meetings of the technical working groups @ $1,000 each.			112,000		112,000		
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	4 Annual multi-stakeholders conferences and donors conferences/coordination events @ $45,000 each -Inception Workshop (part of the M&E) -One meeting of the Drin Core Group or the Joint Coordination Body to be established per year @ $10,000 / meeting - one meeting per year also under Output 1.2 (part of the M&E)				190,000	190,000		

Trainings, Workshops, Meetings	Inception meeting ($30,000) and steering committee meeting costs ($50,000) to be administered by GWP					-	80,000	
Travel	Travel of international and local consultants.	29,500				29,500		
Travel	Travel of international and local consultants.		33,000			33,000		
Travel	Travel of international and local consultants.			30,000		30,000		
Travel	Travel in the annual stakeholders conferences and Drin Day activities. -Travel costs to participate in global events. -Participation in IW biannual conferences.				62,000	62,000		
Professional services	Spot checks ($35,000) – to be administered by UNDP.				35,000	35,000		
Other Operating Costs	Editing, developing of the layout of the report to be ready for printing.		35,000			35,000		
Other Operating Costs	Audio-visual material.			30,000		30,000		
Other Operating Costs	Petrol, small equipment and lunch for hands-on fishermen training.			3,000		3,000		
Other Operating Costs	Audio-visual material.				60,000	60,000		
Other Operating Costs	Mid-term and terminal evaluation ($35,000) – to be administered by UNDP.					-	35,000	
Other Operating Costs	Audit expenses for implementing partner (GWP)					-		
Grand Total		**2,030,267**	**1,691,890**	**2,368,645**	**561,756**	**6,652,558**	**115,000**	

ANNEX F: (For NGI only) Termsheet

Instructions. Please submit an finalized termsheet in this section. The NGI Program Call for Proposals provided a template in Annex A of the Call for Proposals that can be used

by the Agency. Agencies can use their own termsheets but must add sections on Currency Risk, Co-financing Ratio and Financial Additionality as defined in the template provided in Annex A of the Call for proposals. Termsheets submitted at CEO endorsement stage should include final terms and conditions of the financing.

ANNEX G: (For NGI only) Reflows

Instructions. Please submit a reflows table as provided in Annex B of the NGI Program Call for Proposals and the Trustee excel sheet for reflows (as provided by the Secretariat or the Trustee) in the Document Section of the CEO endorsement. The Agencys is required to quantify any expected financial return/gains/interests earned on non-grant instruments that will be transferred to the GEF Trust Fund as noted in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy. Partner Agencies will be required to comply with the reflows procedures established in their respective Financial Procedures Agreement with the GEF Trustee. Agencies are welcomed to provide assumptions that explain expected financial reflow schedules.

ANNEX H: (For NGI only) Agency Capacity to generate reflows

Instructions. The GEF Agency submitting the CEO endorsement request is required to respond to any questions raised as part of the PIF review process that required clarifications on the Agency Capacity to manage reflows. This Annex seeks to demonstrate Agencies? capacity and eligibility to administer NGI resources as established in the Guidelines on the Project and Program Cycle Policy, GEF/C.52/Inf.06/Rev.01, June 9, 2017 (Annex 5).