

*The Drin Basin:  
A Strategic Shared Vision*

## **Action Plan**

for the implementation of the

### **Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the Extended Transboundary Drin Basin**

May 2012 – December 2014

**Draft endorsed by the  
6<sup>th</sup> Drin Core Group  
May 2012**

**Prepared by the  
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## Introduction

### Background

The Drin Basin (Basin) comprises of the watersheds of the Prespa, Ohrid and Shkoder Lakes and Drin and Buna/Bojana Rivers, covering a geographical area that extends in Albania, FYR Macedonia, Greece, Kosovo and Montenegro. The Drin River is the “connecting body” of this complex water system, linking the international lakes, wetlands, shared rivers and other aquatic habitats into a single ecosystem.

Each of the Drin sub-basins is of ecological importance as it hosts unique biotopes with many indigenous species, which are important from a European and international conservation perspective.

The Basin encounters diverse and unsustainable management approaches; this leads to ecosystems’ degradation and inhibits sustainable development.

Some action towards Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) has been taken at national level, driven mainly by the EU accession prospect. Riparians are at various stages of transposition and implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD).

Legally binding agreements among the littoral countries form the basis for water resources and ecosystem management cooperation in each of the three international Lakes.

### The MoU for the Management of the Extended Transboundary Drin Basin

Coordinated action at the Drin Basin level has been absent until the development of the Shared Vision for the sustainable management of the Basin and the signing of a related Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (Tirana, Albania, 25 November 2011) by the Ministers of the water management competent ministries of the Riparians. The establishment of the Shared Vision among the Drin Basin Riparians was the outcome of a structured multi-stakeholders process at the national and transboundary levels, the so called Drin Dialogue (launched on 1 December 2009, in Podgorica, Montenegro), supported by UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med), with contribution by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Related activities were financed primarily by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, but also with contributions from UNECE as well as GWP-Med. Support activities were implemented in the framework of the Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process, the MAP UNEP GEF MedPartnership and the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI).

The MoU describes the Strategic Shared Vision for the management of the Drin and identifies key issues, along with short, medium and long term actions needed to develop an integrated management of the Basin in close cooperation among the Riparians.

The Drin Core Group (DCG), established through the Drin Dialogue, was given the mandate to coordinate actions for the implementation of the MoU. The Drin Core Group comprises of representatives of the (i) competent Ministries of the Riparians<sup>1</sup>, (ii) the joint structures already in

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, Albania; Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Greece; Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment, Montenegro; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Montenegro; Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Kosovo (*UN administered territory under UN Security Council resolution 1244*)

place<sup>2</sup>, (iii) UNECE, (iv) European Commission, (v) GWP-Med, and (vi) MIO-ECSDE. GWP-Med was appointed through the MoU as the Secretariat of the DCG.

According to the MoU, *“the decisions of the DCG will be taken by the representatives of the Parties on the basis of consensus”*.

### **Objective of the MoU (Shared Vision)**

The Parties committed 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.

### **Goals of the MoU**

The Parties to the MoU agreed to undertake concrete actions to address problems identified as affecting sustainable development in the entire Drin Basin or in one or more of the Sub-Basins:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) Establish conditions for a sustainable use of water and other natural resources;
- (iii) Develop cooperation and measures to minimise flooding especially in the lower parts of the Drin Basin;
- (iv) Improve management and appropriate disposal of solid wastes;
- (v) Decrease nutrient pollution deriving from untreated or poorly treated wastewater discharges and unsustainable agricultural practices;
- (vi) Decrease pollution from hazardous substances such as heavy metals and pesticides;
- (vii) Minimise effects of hydro-morphologic interventions that alter the nature of the hydrologic system and the supported ecosystems, resulting in their deterioration.

### **The Action Plan**

The MoU provides the framework for the work towards sustainable management of the Drin Basin. The Action Plan will guide this work to be undertaken by the Parties to the MoU with the facilitation of the Drin Core Group and its Secretariat.

A set of actions are proposed, and herewith described, to be implemented aiming to promote integrated water resources management at transboundary and national level, and facilitate the achievement of the aforementioned Goals. The Action Plan defines/describes activities, objectives, and institutions that will be responsible for the implementation of each activity, resources /experts to be involved, deliverables and a tentative timeframe.

“Short term” actions are proposed in the Action Plan; their initiation and delivery of outputs is foreseen from the approval of the Action Plan by the Meeting of the Parties until the end of 2014. Concrete planning for “medium-term” actions is set to be made towards the end of 2014 on the basis of an assessment of the: (a) progress regarding the implementation of the actions and activities described herewith; (b) outcomes that will be achieved as direct or indirect effect of the implementation of the current action plan; (c) outcomes that will be succeeded by the Riparians through their efforts to address water related management issues.

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<sup>2</sup>Prespa Park Coordination Committee; Lake Ohrid Watershed Committee; Skadar/Shkoder Lake Management Commission

### **Structure of the document**

Six actions are described in this Action Plan. Each of the Actions break down in Activities which in turn break down in secondary activities/steps, i.e.:

- Actions
  - Activities
    - § Secondary Activities
      - Steps

The total or part of the following details are given, as appropriate, for each of the Actions and Activities: short description; objectives; who is primarily responsible for; what are the resources /experts to be involved; which other Action/Activity contribute to its implementation; to which other Actions/Activities it contributes to; what are the deliverables; what is the timeframe.

**Summary Table – Actions and activities for the implementation of the Drin MoU (2012-2014)**

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Activities</i>
1. Enhancement of coordination mechanisms among the Parties [page 6]	<p>1. Annual Meeting of the Parties to the MoU [page 6]</p> <p>2. Drin Core Group [page 7]</p> <p>3. Expert Working Groups on (i) Water Framework Directive; (ii) Monitoring and Information Exchange; (iii) Biodiversity and Ecosystems [page 7]</p> <p>4. Create conditions for the implementation of the MoU in the Mid term [page 7]</p> <p>5. Initiate work for the preparation of an Agreement about basin-wide cooperative management of the Drin Basin [page 8]</p>
2. Enhancement of the knowledge basis about the Drin Basin [page 8]	<p>1. Facilitate coordination for the characterization of the Drin Basin in accordance to the EU WFD and the preparation of a Drin River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) [page 9]</p> <p>2. Characterization of the “extended” Drin Basin [page 10]</p> <p>2.1 Preparation of Terms of Reference [page 10]</p> <p>2.2 Setting up of the team of experts [page 10]</p> <p>2.3.1 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Albania [page 10]</p> <p>2.3.2 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in FYR Macedonia [page 10]</p> <p>2.3.3 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Greece [page 11]</p> <p>2.3.4 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Kosovo [page 11]</p> <p>2.3.5 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Montenegro [page 11]</p> <p>2.4 Consolidated Characterization Report / Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis [page 12]</p>
3. Improvement of information exchange through the establishment of a system for regular exchange of relevant information among the competent authorities of each Party [page 12]	<p>1. Establishment of the mechanism of exchange of information [page 13]</p>
4. Enhancement of cooperation in the field of flood risk preparedness, management and mutual support [page 13]	<p>1. Ad-hoc expert working group work prepares options for flood management [page 14]</p>
5. Institutional strengthening in the field of integrated water resources management [page 14]	<p>1. Capacity Building activities [page 15]</p>
6. Promotion of public participation and stakeholders engagement [page 15]	<p>1. Implementation of "Overarching" communication Activities [page 16]</p> <p>2. Public Participation and Strategic Communication activities [page 16]</p>

## Action 1. Enhancement of coordination mechanisms among the Parties.

### A. Overall

**Short description:** In order to advance towards meeting the stated in the MoU objective and goals, there is need to establish operational working level structures.

The Drin Core Group (DCG) should reach a level of operational function so as to respond to:

(a) the mandate stemming from the MoU i.e. coordinate actions for the implementation of the MoU hence function as a *de facto* joint commission responsible for coordination and provision of advice to the Parties for the management of the Drin Basin. The establishment of Expert Working Groups (EWGs) has already been decided by the DCG to assist in the delivery of its work.

(b) additional, current or future, functions i.e.

(i) act as the steering committee / coordination body of on-going and future projects in the area e.g. the two projects financed by ENVSEC and SEPA respectively to support the DCG. Furthermore if accepted, the DCG could assist in the coordination of additional transboundary/regional projects financed by other donors;

(ii) be the governing body of the planned GEF funded project (if approved)).

Overall, the DCG and its Expert Working Groups will facilitate coordination and cooperation among the Riparians, the international institutions, initiatives and donors active in the Basin including the European Commission, the UN agencies and programmes, IFIs and Banks and donor countries such as Sweden, Germany, etc.

**Objectives:** Enhance the operational capacity of the institutional structures for the implementation of the MoU for the management of the Drin Basin and ensure their sustainable functioning.

#### **Expected Results / Deliverables:**

a) Operational working level structures (primarily the DCG and EWGs) for transboundary cooperation and the implementation of the MoU.

b) Sustainable functioning of the DCG and its EWGs.

c) Annual Meeting of the Parties to review progress and guide the cooperation process.

**Responsible:** DCG, GWP-Med, UNECE

**This Action receives inputs from:** All Actions; Projects in the Drin Basin supported by international institutions and donor countries.

**This Action contributes inputs to the implementation of:** All Actions

### B. Activities

#### **1. Annual Meeting of the Parties to the MoU**

**Objectives:** The Ministers responsible for the management of water resources and/or environment of the five Parties to the MoU meet annually to review progress in the implementation of the MoU.

**Responsible:** Drin Core Group (DCG)

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med), in cooperation with the UNECE; Representatives of the Parties to the MoU to the DCG.

**Input from:** All Actions.

**Contributes to:** All Actions.

**Deliverables:** One Meeting per year, Background documents, Report.

**Timeframe:** October 2012 – December 2014

**Financial support:** Not secured.

**Work to be done:** Face to face meetings

## **2. Drin Core Group**

**Objectives:** Sustainable operation of the DCG to facilitate communication and cooperation among the Parties for the implementation of the provisions of the MoU.

**Responsible:** DCG

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** DCG; Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med), in cooperation with the UNECE.

**Input from:** All Actions.

**Contributes to:** All Actions.

**Deliverables:** At least two meetings per year and *ad hoc* meetings as appropriate.

**Timeframe:** May 2012 – December 2014

**Financial support:** Financial resources secured for one (1) meeting in 2012 - support provided by the ENVSEC. The DCG meeting is scheduled for 30 May 2012, in Ohrid.

**Work to be done:** Day-by-day running; Face to face meetings.

## **3. Expert Working Groups on (i) Water Framework Directive; (ii) Monitoring and Information Exchange; (iii) Biodiversity and Ecosystems**

**Objectives:** Establishment and sustainable functioning of the three EWGs to support the work of the DCG. EWGs key task would be: (a) Providing expert advice; (b) Directly coordinating actions of technical nature, under the guidance of the DCG. Each EWG will advice on issues of its expertise and competence.

**Responsible:** DCG

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Experts appointed by the Parties to the MoU; DCG; Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med), in cooperation with the UNECE.

**Input from:** Actions 2,3,5

**Contributes to:** Actions 2,3,4,6

**Deliverables:** Meetings (number to be defined by DCG - depending on the workload); Advice on issues; Technical reviews, assessments, reports, etc.

**Timeframe:** May 2012 – December 2014

**Financial support:** Financial support secured for three (3) meetings in 2012 (will focus on establishing the EWGs within 2012) - support is provided by the Swedish EPA and GEF MedPartnership through GWP-Med.

**Work to be done:** Establishment of the Expert Working Groups (EWG) including preparation of ToR and appointment of experts by the Riparians; Functioning of the EWGs; Preparation of EWGs Workplan; Preparing and Reviewing documents, studies and reports.

## **4. Create conditions for the implementation of the MoU in the Mid term**

**Objectives:** Facilitate common understanding on (i) the orientation, challenges and opportunities for an improved cooperation among the Riparians; (ii) action to be taken reflecting the guidance to be provided by the DCG in the next 3 years (2015-2017).

**Responsible:** DCG

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med), in cooperation with the UNECE; DCG.

**Input from:** All Actions.

**Contributes to:** the implementation of the MoU.

**Deliverables:** Mid term Action Plan.

**Timeframe:** April 2014 – November 2014

**Financial support:** Not secured.



**Work to be done:** Preparation of a Mid term Action Plan for the Implementation of the MoU.

### **5. Initiate work for the preparation of an Agreement about basin-wide cooperative management of the Drin Basin**

**Objectives:** Cooperation is further supported through the preparation of a draft Agreement document about basin-wide cooperative management of the Drin Basin.

**Responsible:** DCG.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** DCG, GWP-Med and UNECE.

**Input from:** All Actions.

**Contributes to:** -

**Deliverables:** Draft Agreement document.

**Timeframe:** April 2014 – December 2014.

**Financial support:** Not secured.

**Work to be done:** Preparation of Draft Agreement

## **Action 2. Enhancement of the knowledge basis about the Drin Basin**

### **A. Overall**

**Short description:** Enhancement of the knowledge basis about the Drin Basin will allow better cooperation among the Parties and more sustainable management of the Basin. Furthermore, it will facilitate meeting the legal requirements at national level with regard to water resources management, i.e. the implementation of the EU WFD (each Riparian is in a different stage regarding the transposition of related provisions in its legal system).

Due to the EU orientation of the Riparians, such an enhancement of the knowledge basis should build on the characterization of the Drin Basin in accordance to the EU WFD including analysis of the hydrological patterns across the Drin basin (from the Lake Prespa to the Adriatic Sea); identification of significant pressures and impact of human activity on the status of surface water, groundwater and ecosystems, and; economic analysis of water.

In this regard, the following special characteristics of the area should be taken into consideration: (i) the karstic nature of large sections of the Drin Basin; (ii) the surface/groundwater interaction patterns and conjunctive uses throughout the Drin Basin; and (iii) the coastal ecosystems, transitional waters and shallow marine environment. Furthermore, future work should concretely build on (i) the results achieved in the Three Lake Areas (Ohrid, Prespa, Shkoder/Skadar) through previous and on-going GEF funded projects, and; (ii) the results of other on-going and past relevant projects.

The characterization of each Sub-Basin could be done either (a) at the national level, separately in each country, and then coordinated at transboundary level or (b) directly at transboundary level, with national inputs. In both cases, existing agreements among the Parties concerning the management of each Sub-Basin should provide the legal background for advancing with the characterization.

#### **Objectives:**

– Facilitate achievement of science based consensus among countries, through joint fact finding, on: (i) key transboundary concerns, including climate change and variability (ii) the implications of

the shared nature of the Basin's water resources;; (iii) need for harmonized monitoring and reporting on common indicators.

- Facilitate the implementation of the EU WFD in the Riparians.
- Facilitate the development of a water balance in the Drin Basin.
- Facilitate the preparation of coordinated RBM plans, as needed according to the sub-basins, in each of the Riparians.
- Enable the preparation of an RBM plan at Basin Level (next step would be to define and decide the programme of measures).

**Expected Results / Deliverables:**

- a) A study for the actions and steps necessary to be taken by the Riparians for the preparation of coordinated RBM plans for the parts of the Drin Basin extending in their territory, including governance-related needs.
- b). Characterization report for the Drin Basin in accordance to the EU WFD including analysis of the hydrological patterns across the Drin basin (from the Lake Prespa to the river outflow at the Adriatic Sea); identification of significant pressures and impact of human activity on the status of surface water, groundwater and ecosystems; economic analysis of water. The report should be prepared in a way that can be used also for the needs of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (in accordance of the GEF methodology).

**Responsible:** DCG with the assistance of the Secretariat (GWP-Med) and the UNECE.

**This Action receives inputs from:** Past and on-going projects implemented in the Drin Basin.

**This Action contributes inputs to the implementation of:**

- Past and on-going projects implemented in the Drin Basin.
- Implementation of the Article 4 of the MoU "Priority Actions at national, bilateral and/or multilateral levels", Point 2, a. "Achievement of a science based consensus, among the Drin Riparians, on key (Drin Basin) transboundary priorities including climate change scenarios, and also main drivers of change and indicators of sustainable development for the basin, based on the knowledge basis established", and Point 2, b. "Preparation of an elaborated water balance for the Drin Basin as a useful decision support tool at national and transboundary levels.

## **B. Activities**

### **1. Facilitate coordination for the characterization of the Drin Basin in accordance to the EU WFD and the preparation of a Drin River Basin Management Plan (RBMP)**

**Objectives:**

- Facilitate coordinated Characterization of the Drin Basin (as described above under Action 2, Short description) and preparation of a Drin RBMP.

**Responsible:** GWP-Med in cooperation with the UNECE.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Med EUWI service contract, GWP-Med, UNECE.

**Input from:** Action 1, Action 3

**Contributes to:** Action 2, Activity 2.1

**Deliverables:**

- Study (assessment of the legal and regulatory framework of river basin management for each Riparian; assessment of the implementation of relevant elements of the legal and regulatory framework for each Riparian including assessment of preparation of an RBM plan in accordance to the EU WFD for the part of the Drin extending in its territory; assessment of the data and information available in each Riparian for the implementation of river basin management;

assessment of the institutional framework for decision-making in river basin management; assessment of options including mechanisms among the Riparians for transboundary monitoring and information exchange; comparative description of river basin management organisation in all its aspects in the five Riparians; Terms of Reference for activities contributing to a coordinated Characterization of the Drin Basin -as described above under Action 2, Short description- and the preparation of a Drin River Basin Management Plan).

**Timeframe:** May 2012 – December 2014.

**Financial support:** Med EUWI service contract / European Commission.

**Work to be done:** Preparation of a study.

## **2. Characterization of the “extended” Drin Basin**

**Objectives:** Characterization of the “extended” Drin Basin in accordance to the EU WFD including analysis of the hydrological patterns across the Drin basin (from the Lake Prespa to the Adriatic Sea); identification of significant pressures and impact of human activity on the status of surface water, groundwater and ecosystems; economic analysis of water.

**Responsible:** DCG; the EWG EU WFD will be supervising the exercise with the assistance of the Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med) and UNECE.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** DCG; EWG EU WFD; Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med); UNECE; international experts.

**Input from:** Past, on-going and planned projects in the Basin.

**Contributes to:** Implementation of the Article 4 of the MoU “Priority Actions at national, bilateral and/or multilateral levels”, Point 2, a. “Achievement of a science based consensus, among the Drin Riparians, on key (Drin Basin) transboundary priorities including climate change scenarios, and also main drivers of change and indicator of sustainable development for the basin, based on the knowledge basis established”, and Point 2, b. “Preparation of an elaborated water balance for the Drin Basin as a useful decision support tool at national and transboundary levels.

**Deliverables:** Characterization Report.

**Timeframe:** September 2012 – July 2014 (subject to change depending on the financial support available)

**Financial support:** Not secured.

**Work to be done:**

### **2.1 Preparation of Terms of Reference (ToR)**

### **2.2 Setting up of the team of experts**

#### **2.3.1 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Albania**

**Objectives:** Characterization of the part of Drin Basin extending in Albania.

**Responsible:** Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, Albania; World Bank; SIDA.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, Albania; World Bank; SIDA; SIWI; International Experts.

**Input from:** To be prepared through a project coordinated by the World Bank and supported by SIDA; this project has among its outputs the preparation of an RBM plan for the part of Drin Basin extending in Albania.

**Contributes to:** Consolidated characterization report – see Activity 2.4.

**Deliverables:** Report.

**Timeframe:** March 2012 - ?

**Financial support:** Supported by SIDA.

#### **2.3.2 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in FYR Macedonia**

**Objectives:** Characterization of the part of Drin Basin extending in FYR Macedonia.

**Responsible:** Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, FYR Macedonia; Directorate for Crn Drim River Basin District, FYR Macedonia.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, FYR Macedonia; Directorate for Crn Drim River Basin District, FYR Macedonia; GWP-Med; UNECE; International Experts

**Input from:** GEF Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin of Albania, FYR-Macedonia and Greece; Work done for the implementation of the WFD (characterization under Article 5 of the EU WFD - with the assistance of the GIZ) - Level of work done to be assessed through the study to be prepared under Action 2, Activity 1.

**Contributes to:** Consolidated characterization report – see Activity 2.4.

**Deliverables:** Report.

**Timeframe:** May 2013 – December 2013 (subject to change depending on the financial support available)

**Financial support:** Not secured.

### **2.3.3 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Greece**

**Objectives:** Characterization of the part of Drin Basin extending in Greece.

**Responsible:** Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Greece.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Greece; GWP-Med; UNECE.

**Input from:** GEF Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin of Albania, FYR-Macedonia and Greece; Work done for the implementation of the WFD (characterization under Article 5 of the EU WFD - preparation of RBM plans for River Basin Districts).

**Contributes to:** Consolidated characterization report – see Activity 2.4.

**Deliverables:** Report.

**Timeframe:** May 2013 – December 2013 (subject to change depending on the financial support available)

**Financial support:** Not secured.

### **2.3.4 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Kosovo**

**Objectives:** Characterization of the part of Drin Basin extending in Kosovo.

**Responsible:** Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Kosovo.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Kosovo; GWP-Med; UNECE, International Experts.

**Input from:** Work done for the implementation of the WFD - Level of work done to be assessed through the study to be prepared under Action 2, Activity 1.

**Contributes to:** Consolidated characterization report – see Activity 2.4.

**Deliverables:** Report.

**Timeframe:** May 2013 – December 2013 (subject to change depending on the financial support available)

**Financial support:** Not secured.

### **2.3.5 Preparation of the study for the part of Drin extending in Montenegro**

**Objectives:** Characterization of the part of Drin Basin extending in Montenegro.

**Responsible:** Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Montenegro; Water Directorate, Montenegro; Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, Montenegro.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Montenegro; Water Directorate, Montenegro; Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, Montenegro; GWP-Med; UNECE, International Experts.

**Input from:** Work done for the implementation of the WFD - Level of work done to be assessed through the study to be prepared under Action 2, Activity 1.

**Contributes to:** Consolidated characterization report – see Activity 2.4.

**Deliverables:** Report.

**Timeframe:** May 2013 – December 2013 (subject to change depending on the financial support available)

**Financial support:** Not secured.

## **2.4 Consolidated Characterization Report / Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis**

The characterization reports for the parts of the Drin Basin extending in the 5 Riparians will be consolidated in a single Characterization report. Having already identified in each of the aforementioned reports the significant pressures and impact of human activity on the status of surface water, groundwater and ecosystems, the DCG, with the assistance of the EWG EU WFD and the team of experts (see Action 2, Activity 2.2.), will work to agree on the priority pressures at the Drin Basin level hence, form the basis for the negotiation and agreement, at a later stage, of a programme of measures. The consolidated Characterization Report and the programme of measures will form the River Basin Management Plan.

**Objectives:** In addition to those described under “Action 2, Overall”, lay the ground for the identification of jointly agreed Programme of Measures being part of a Drin River Basin Management Plan.

**Responsible:** DCG, EWG EU WFD

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** DCG; EWG EU WFD; Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med); UNECE; International experts.

**Input from:** see above under sections 2.3.1-2.3.5.

**Contributes to:** see above under “Action 2, Overall”.

**Deliverables:** Characterization (as described above under Action 2, Short description) Report for the Drin Basin.

**Timeframe:** January 2014 – July 2014 (subject to change depending on the financial support available)

**Financial support:** Not secured.

## **Action 3. Improvement of information exchange through the establishment of a system for regular exchange of relevant information among the competent authorities of each Party.**

### **A. Overall**

**Short description:** A mechanism for the exchange of information will facilitate the enhancement of trust among the Parties to the MoU and set the basis for the coordination of management activities among them at the Basin and the sub-basin level (where absent). The mechanism will lay the ground and contribute to the establishment of a Monitoring Programme later on should such a decision is taken by the Parties.

#### **Objectives:**

- Facilitate improved management of the Drin Sub-basins in each of the Riparians as an outcome of enhanced availability of information about the state of the Drin water bodies.
- Enhance coordination and trust among Parties to the MoU.
- Enhance coordination among scientific institutes in the Riparians and synergies leading to improved information and data about the state of the water bodies.
- Lay the ground for the establishment of a joint Monitoring Programme later on.

**Expected Results / Deliverables:**

- Agreement on the set of data and information to be shared among the Parties.
- A functioning mechanism for exchange of information based on agreed by the Parties Rules of Operation.

**Responsible:** DCG with the assistance of the EWG on Monitoring and Information Exchange.

**This Action receives inputs from:** Action 1, Activity 3 “Expert Working Group Monitoring and Information Exchange”, Action 2, Activity 1 “Facilitate coordination and cooperation for the characterization of the Drin Basin in accordance to the EU WFD and the preparation of RBM Plan(s)”.

**This Action contributes inputs to the implementation of:** Article 4, Point 2 c. “Establishment of a harmonized Drin Basin Water Monitoring Program compatible with the UNECE Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, the relevant provisions of the EU WFD, and the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) of the EEA” and d. “Making use of the efforts described under 4.1.c., establishment of an Information Management System (IMS) that will enable authorities to collect, store and share data and information produced through the Drin Basin Water Monitoring Program”.

**B. Activities****1. Establishment of the mechanism of exchange of information**

**Objectives:** Facilitate information exchange among the Riparians aiming enhanced management of the Drin Basin and its sub-basins.

**Responsible:** DCG; the EWG on Monitoring and Information Exchange will be supervising the exercise with the assistance of the Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med) and UNECE.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** EWG on Monitoring and Information Exchange, DCG, DCG Secretariat (GWP-Med) (GWP-Med), UNECE.

**Input from:** Action 2, Activity 1.

**Contributes to:** -

**Deliverables:**

- Concept note elaborating on the aim, objectives and scope of work.
- Rules of Operation.
- Appointment of focal points.

**Timeframe:** April 2013 – December 2014

**Financial support:** Not secured.

**Work to be done:** Agree on objectives and scope of the mechanism of exchange of information; Preparation of Rules of Operation; Appointment of Focal Points in each Party to the MoU – the mechanism of exchange of Information functions.

## **Action 4. Enhancement of cooperation in the field of flood risk preparedness, management and mutual support.**

### **A. Overall**

**Short description:** Floods are of importance for the Drin Basin, given the magnitude of the impacts of such events in some of the Riparians. Basin wide action, that complements the activities already implemented at national level, is deemed necessary. Different options for the establishment of cooperation at technical level in this regard will be prepared by a working group comprising of representatives of the competent authorities of the Parties under the coordination of the Drin Core Group. Cooperation at technical level should aim in the formulation of action for the mitigation of flood hazards, management of hydraulic infrastructure and hydropower generation schemes, and erosion control. The respective actions should be formulated on the basis of the results of the Characterization Report (see under Action 2) as well as additional analytical work as necessary.

**Objectives:** Create the conditions for Basin wide cooperation and action in the field of transboundary flood risk management, including early warning.

**Expected Results / Deliverables:** Options for cooperation at technical level among Riparians in the field of flood management, prepared by a transboundary ad-hoc expert working group.

**Responsible:** DCG with the assistance of the DCG Secretariat (GWP-Med) and UNECE, Line Ministries of the Riparians.

**This Action receives inputs from:** Action 2

**This Action contributes inputs to the implementation of:** -

### **B. Activities**

#### **1. Ad-hoc expert working group work prepares options for flood management**

**Objectives:** Facilitation of the establishment of technical cooperation on flood management.

**Responsible:** DCG, line ministries of the Riparians.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** Experts appointed by the Parties to the MoU, International experts, DCG, GWP-Med, UNECE.

**Input from:** Action 2

**Contributes to:** -

**Deliverables:** Meetings (number to be defined by DCG - depending on the workload), Reports.

**Timeframe:** February 2014 – December 2014

**Financial support:** Not secured.

**Work to be done:** Establishment of an ad-hoc expert working group for flood management under the DCG; Study on options for the establishment of cooperation at technical level.

## **Action 5. Institutional strengthening in the field of integrated water resources management.**

### **A. Overall**

**Short description:** Targeted capacity building activities will be realized to improve the capacities of institutions and organizations to successfully implement actions under the MoU. Priority will be given to those institutions and organizations that are directly involved in the implementation of the MoU. Later on, the group of beneficiaries should be enlarged (targeting managers, practitioners, relevant officers of national, regional and local authorities, other stakeholders etc.).

**Objectives:** Support the work for the implementation of the MoU.

#### **Expected Results / Deliverables:**

- Capacity building workshops.
- Improved functioning of the working level structures established for the implementation the MoU.
- Enhanced capacities of institutions and organisations from the Riparians involved in the implementation of the MoU.

**Responsible:** DCG, Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med), UNECE

**This Action receives inputs from:** Possibly projects financed by the EC, such as RENA, H2020

**This Action contributes inputs to the implementation of:** All actions for the implementation of the MoU.

### **B. Activities**

#### **1. Capacity Building activities**

**Objectives:** Enhance capacities of individuals and institutions involved in the implementation of the MoU.

**Responsible:** DCG, Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med), UNECE.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** DCG, Secretariat of the DCG (GWP-Med), UNECE.

**Input from:** Stakeholders Analysis at the Transboundary level (see under Action 6, Activity 2.1).

**Contributes to:** All Actions.

**Deliverables:** Capacity building activities.

**Timeframe:** May 2012 – December 2014.

**Financial support:** Not secured.

**Work to be done:** Tailored Capacity Building Workshops; Capacity building activities organized by other institutions and projects; International experts work with experts from Riparians to conduct activities described in the current Action Plan.

## **Action 6. Promotion of public participation and stakeholders engagement.**

### **A. Overall**



**Short description:** A set of public participation and strategic communication activities will support “horizontally” the range of activities under this Action Plan. A Public Participation and Strategic Communication Strategy (PPSCS) will be prepared to guide the implementation of related activities aiming to strengthen the commitment of politicians, decision makers and key stakeholders at all levels for a sustained cooperative effort among the countries sharing the Drin Basin for its sustainable management. It will describe the information, strategic communication, consultation and involvement activities, the target audiences; the related timeframe; and the capacity/resources needed. The basis for the preparation of the PPSCS will be a Stakeholders Analysis that will be elaborated first.

**Objectives:**

- Raise awareness among Stakeholders and the Public about the values of the Drin water bodies in order to appreciate the resource, understand the involved issues and the value of cooperation for its management, facilitating: enhanced understanding of the expected outcomes of the “business as usual” and the “taking action” options thus, improving their ability to chose and act.
- Raise awareness about the Process for the enhancement of cooperation for the management of Drin and provide information to facilitate: understanding of its benefits; understanding about issues addressed with priority within the Process and possible solutions; stakeholders and the wider public participating; transparency regarding decision making within the Process.
- Facilitate the process to sustain political support, stakeholder engagement and donors interest.

**Responsible:** DCG with the assistance of the Secretariat

**This Action receives inputs from:** All Actions.

**This Action contributes inputs to the implementation of:** All Actions.

**Deliverables:** Stakeholders Analysis Report, Public Participation Strategic Communication Strategy, Printed material, newsletters, other awareness raising activities, Workshops.

## **B. Activities**

### **1. Implementation of "Overarching" communication Activities**

**Objectives:** Implementation of information and strategic communication activities until the PPSCS is ready.

**Responsible:** DCG.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** DCG, DCG Secretariat (GWP-Med).

**Input from:** All Actions.

**Contributes to:** All Actions.

**Deliverables:** Website, visual identity of the DCG supported cooperation enhancement process, information note, printed material, newsletter, targeted information activities.

**Timeframe:**

**Financial support:** Not secured.

**Work to be done:** Establish website; Build the Visual Identity of the DCG supported cooperation enhancement process; Prepare Information Not; Prepare Brochure, Leaflet; Newsletters/“flash news” on the basis of Project’s developments and milestones; Activities to reach out targeted audiences.

## **2. Public Participation and Strategic Communication activities**

**Objectives:**

- Identify information, strategic communication, consultation and involvement activities and develop a workplan for implementing these.
- Implementation of strategic communication and public participation activities to succeed the objectives described under Action 6 "Overall".

**Responsible:** DCG.

**Resources / Experts to be involved:** DCG, DCG Secretariat (GWP-Med).

**Input from:** All Actions.

**Contributes to:** All Actions.

**Deliverables:** A number of public participation and strategic communication activities.

**Timeframe:**

**Financial support:** Not secured

**Work to be done:** Stakeholders Analysis at the Transboundary level; Preparation of a Public Participation and Strategic Communication Strategy (PPSCS); Implementation of the PPSCS.