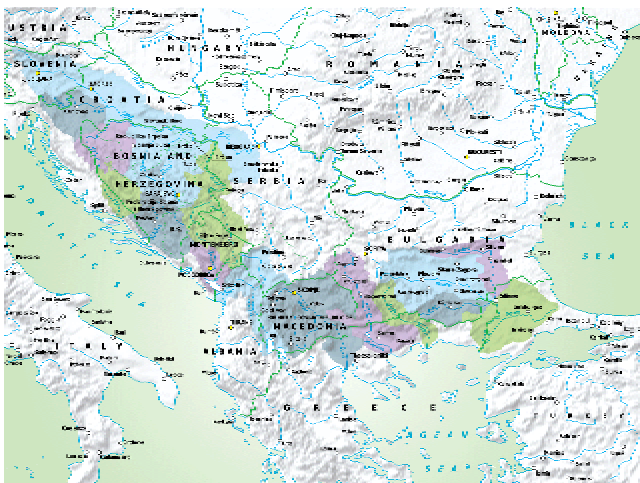


Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process for South Eastern Europe



*Facilitating transboundary
cooperation for the management of
shared water bodies and their basins
in
South Eastern Europe*

Visit:
www.watersee.net

The Petersberg Process - Phase II / Athens Declaration Process (Process) for South Eastern Europe (SEE) is jointly coordinated by Germany, Greece and the World Bank.

The "Petersberg Process", initiated in 1998, concerns cooperation on the management of transboundary waters. The Petersberg Process – Phase II is intended to provide support to translate into action the current developments and opportunities for future cooperation on transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwater management in the SEE. It is supported by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the World Bank.

The "Athens Declaration" Process concerning *Shared Water, Shared Future and Shared Knowledge* was initiated in 2003. It provides a framework for a long-term process to support cooperative activities for the integrated management of shared water resources in the SEE and Mediterranean regions. It is jointly supported by the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Bank.

The two processes progressively came together in order to generate synergies and maximize the outcomes for the benefit of the SEE region. The Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) is the technical facilitator of related activities.

The main **joint objective** is to build capacity and share experience on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), and to develop IWRM plans for shared water bodies as a response to the targets of the 2002 Johannesburg Summit.

The Process supports a series of complementary activities that provide a forum for transboundary water management issues in SEE. The activities revolve around the political, economic, social and environmental benefits that can be realized through effective cooperation in the management of transboundary waters. Activities focus on a set of key areas and take place at an increasingly local level to facilitate a broader range of participants.

Learning, knowledge sharing and dissemination are supported to strengthen capacity of cooperating parties at the institutional and individual level. Linkages to relevant GEF, EU and other initiatives are being made as appropriate.

Investments will not be directly supported but the exchange of ideas and experience will help to create conditions that enable investment in activities by public and private sources on the national and international level.

Within IWRM, priority themes of focus include the following:

- *Multi-Purpose Management of Water Resources.*
- *Transboundary Groundwater Management.*
- *Financing Joint Management.*
- *Water Governance, Public Participation and Civil Engagement.*

The Process complements the EU integration processes and other ongoing initiatives in the region. It contributes directly to the scope and objectives of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem.

Means of action

International Roundtables

1. "Protection and Sustainable Use of Transboundary Waters in South-Eastern Europe", Berlin, Germany 5-7 Dec. 2005
2. "Integrated Shared Lake Basin Management in South-Eastern Europe", Ohrid, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 12-14 Oct. 2006
3. "Principles for Multipurpose Management in the Sava River Basin", Zagreb, 15 - 17 Nov. 2006
4. "Integrated Management of Shared Groundwater in South-Eastern Europe", Slovenia 12 – 14 Nov. 2007
5. "Water and Climate Change in South-Eastern Europe: Understanding Impacts and Planning for Adaptation", Tirana, Albania, 24-25 Jun. 2008

Capacity Building Workshops – Study Visits

1. "Stakeholder involvement in TWRM", 25-28 Mar. 2008, Podgorica, Montenegro;
2. "Integrated Management of Shared Lakes Basins", 16-18 Jul. 2008, Ohrid, FYR Macedonia;
3. "Integrated Water Resources Management in the extended Drin River Basin", 25-27 Nov. 2008, Shkodra, Albania.
4. "Shared Groundwater Resources Management", 2– 4 Dec. 2008, Postojna, Slovenia
5. Study visit of the Lake Skadar/Shkoder (Albania – Montenegro) Commission members to the Lake Constance/Bodensee (Austria-Germany–Switzerland) – 15-20 Nov. 2009

Multi-stakeholders Dialogues

- Mesta/Nestos River Basin: Two consultation meetings at national level, in Bulgaria and Greece, and one at transboundary level (Sofia, Bulgaria, 15-16 Apr. 2008)
- Drin River Basin: to be initiated in a meeting of the key stakeholders on 1 Dec. 2009, Podgorica, Montenegro (until now: "Drin Transboundary Consultation Meeting", Tirana, Albania, 24 Nov. 2009; Strategic meeting of the key partners, Sarajevo, 18 May 2009)

Working in partnership towards enhanced transboundary cooperation...

The partners to the Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process are working in partnership with the countries of the region as well as a number of donor countries, UN agencies and GEF in pursuit of synergies towards one common goal: *enhanced transboundary cooperation for shared water resources management in South Eastern Europe*

...by bringing up the benefits of cooperation through dialogue and stakeholders interaction

An on-going regional dialogue on technical issues of transboundary water resources management was launched in 2005 assisting in bringing up the benefits stemming from transboundary cooperation as well as from the involvement of the stakeholders in the management of shared water basins. Cross-fertilization and hands-on experiences from SEE and EU shared water basins is offered to participating stakeholders.

...by enhancing capacities

Capacity building activities such as workshops and study visits aim to enhance institutional and individual capacities as well as to complement the dialogue on technical issues thus further assisting the understanding of the benefits stemming from transboundary cooperation.

...by initiating multi-stakeholders dialogues towards the development of a shared vision for the management of the transboundary basins

The Process has facilitated multi-stakeholder dialogues in:

The *Mesta/Nestos River Basin* shared by Bulgaria and Greece (2007-2008). It was the first time that stakeholders from the two parts of the Basin discussed together in a systematic way issues of common concern and expressed aspirations regarding the management of the shared Basin; they identified the need for enhanced communication and transparency in activities related to the management of the Basin; they proposed the creation of a trans-national multi-stakeholder Forum (platform of dialogue and cooperation among the stakeholders) as means for the enhancement of the cooperation for the integrated management of the Basin in the context of EU WFD.

The *Drin River Basin* shared by Albania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, and Montenegro. Based on a decision taken in the first "Drin Transboundary Consultation Meeting" (Tirana, Albania, 24/11/08) and follow up actions within 2009, the key stakeholders in the Drin Basin will convene again in Podgorica, Montenegro on 1/11/09, to continue their dialogue towards a Shared Vision for the Management of the Extended Drin Basin. The Dialogue Process, a series of consultation meetings at national and transboundary levels, is expected to last until 2011. Technical assessments and a Strategic Shared Vision document on the management of the Basin will be among the key outputs of the multi-stakeholders dialogue setting the basis for action on the ground to follow.

In partnership with the GEF IW:LEARN and in cooperation with the:

- *Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, Albania*
- *Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment, Montenegro*
- *Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*
- *Ministry for the Environment and Spatial Planning, Slovenia*
- *International Sava River Basin Commission*
- *Lake Ohrid Watershed Committee*
- *Lake Skadar/Shkoder Commission*
- *Region of the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Greece*
- *Society for the Protection of Prespa*
- *GWP-Bulgaria*
- *MIO-ECSDE*
- *Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*

Jointly with the UNECE and with the financial support of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

In coordination with GEF and UNDP