

1st Session: Cross – border green deal: green entrepreneurship, sustainable development, circular economy



Cross-Border Area of Macedonia and Thrace
Cooperation and common environmental protection policy
The role of Ministry of Interior
(Sector Macedonia and Thrace) - Greece

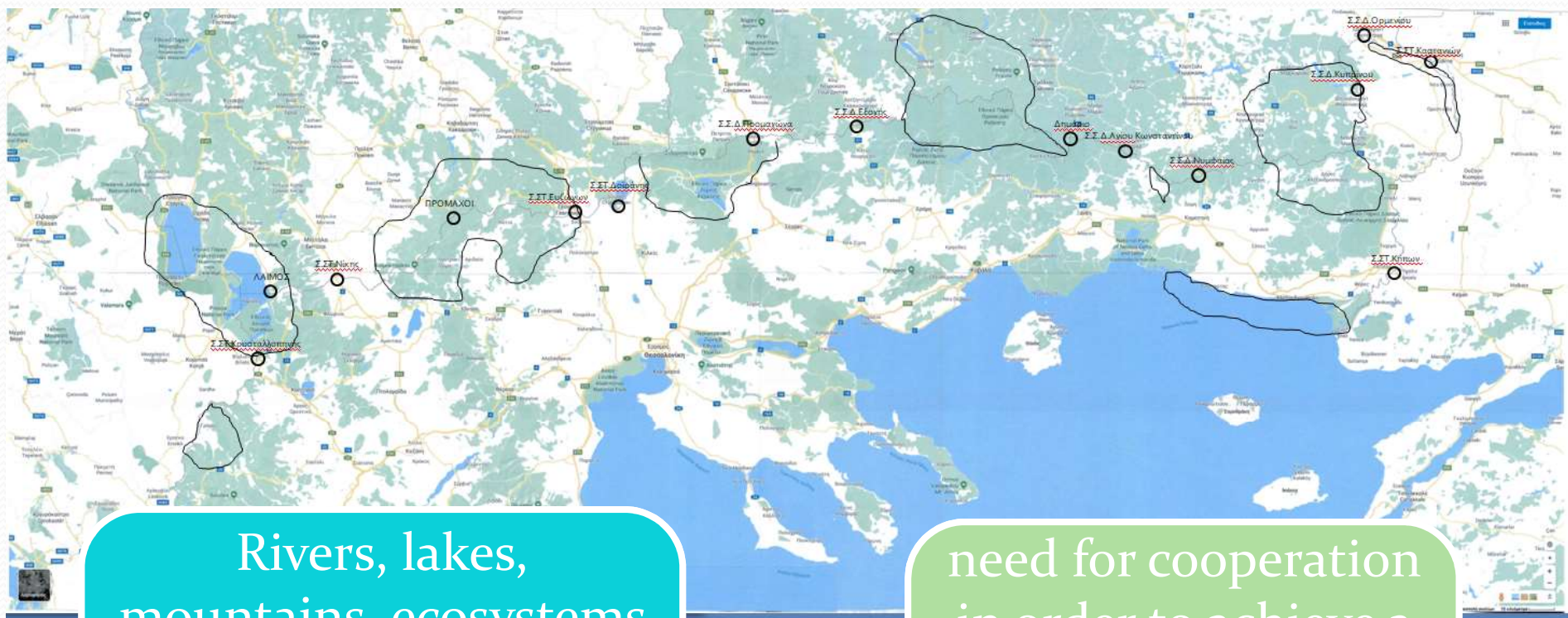
Protection of the environment - Sustainable Development



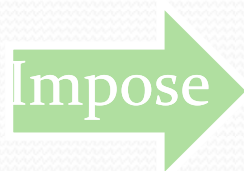
Effective management
of the environment,
natural resources and
protected areas
Contributes to

- reduce the effects of climate change,
- store valuable water resources,
- protect soil, crops and natural ecosystems,
- Preserve and promote **sustainable development**

Cross-border area of Macedonia and Thrace



Rivers, lakes,
mountains, ecosystems
belong **jointly** to
Greece and
neighboring countries



need for cooperation
in order to achieve a
common policy for
the protection of the
environment



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Ministry of Interior
Sector Macedonia and Thrace



24-25/9/2021

Transboundary Rivers

Evros - Maritsa



Aoos - Vjosa



Axios - Vardar



Strymonas - Struma



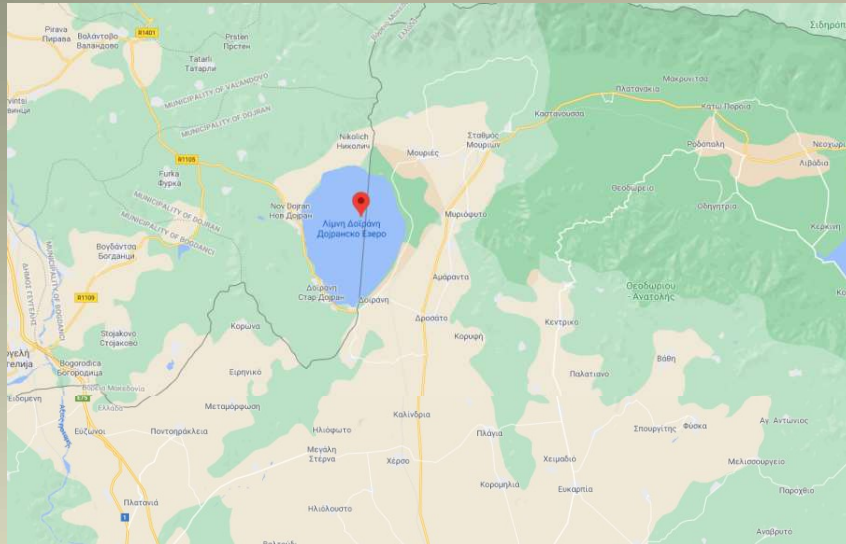
Nestos - Mesta



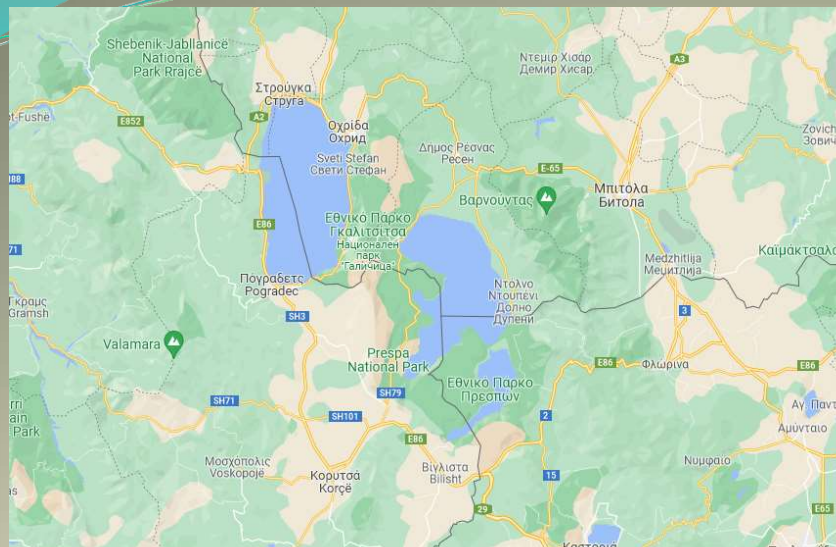
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Transboundary Lakes



Doiran : Greece – Republic of North Macedonia
NATURA 2000
Ramsar (R.N.M)



Lesser Prespa :

Greece
Albania

Great Prespa :

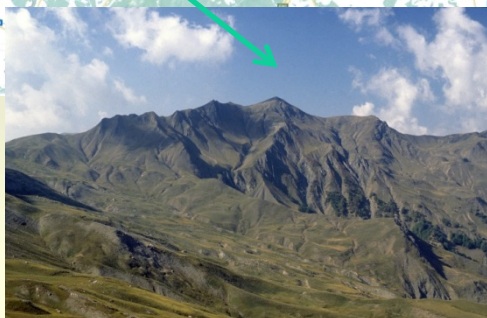
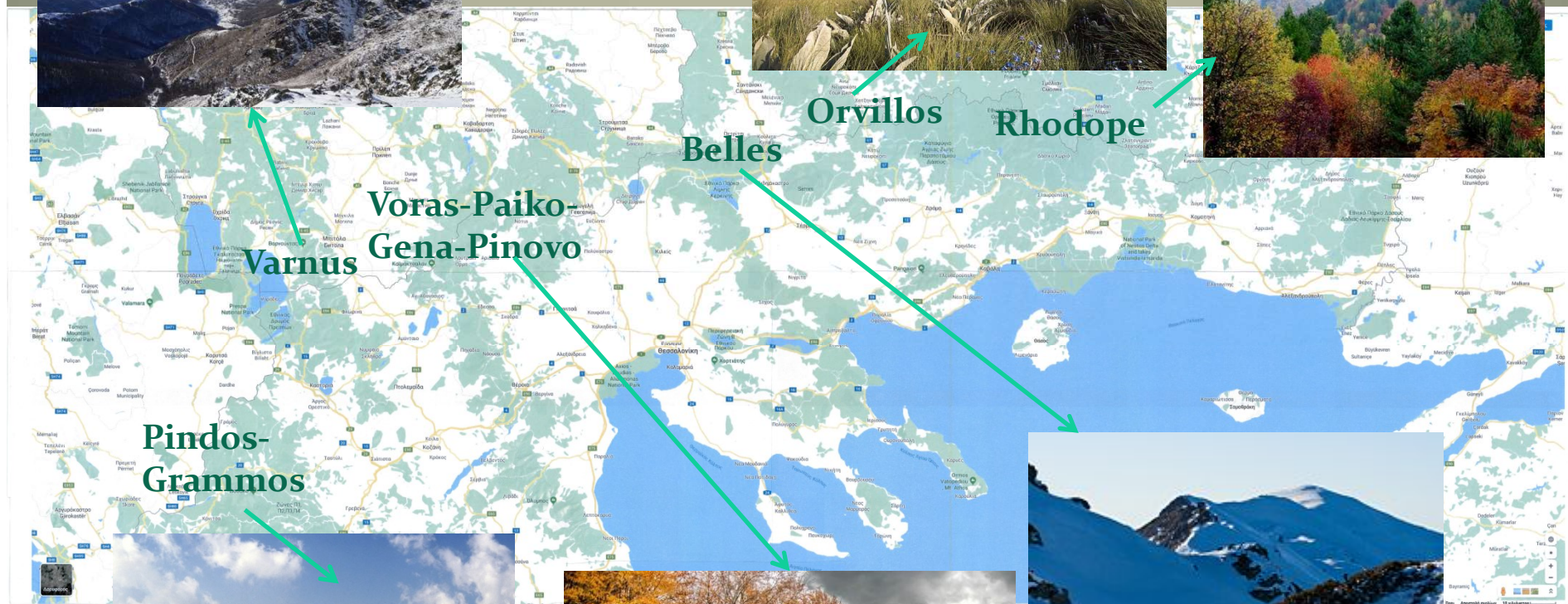
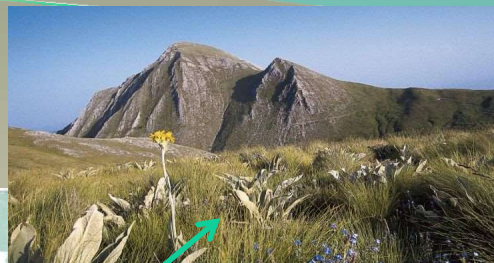
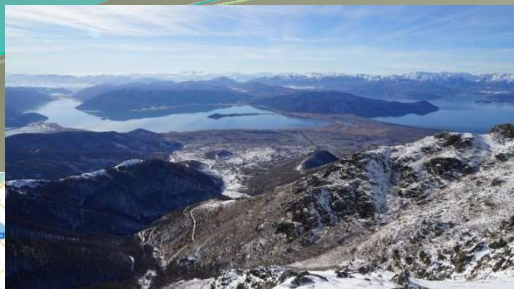
Greece
Republic of North Macedonia
Albania



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Mountains



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Sector Macedonia and Thrace

Protection of the Environment– International Agreements

the natural environment cannot
be restricted by human political
and administrative borders



all international treaties recognize
the importance of jointly managing
and protecting natural ecosystems



climate change mitigation



effective management of
water resources

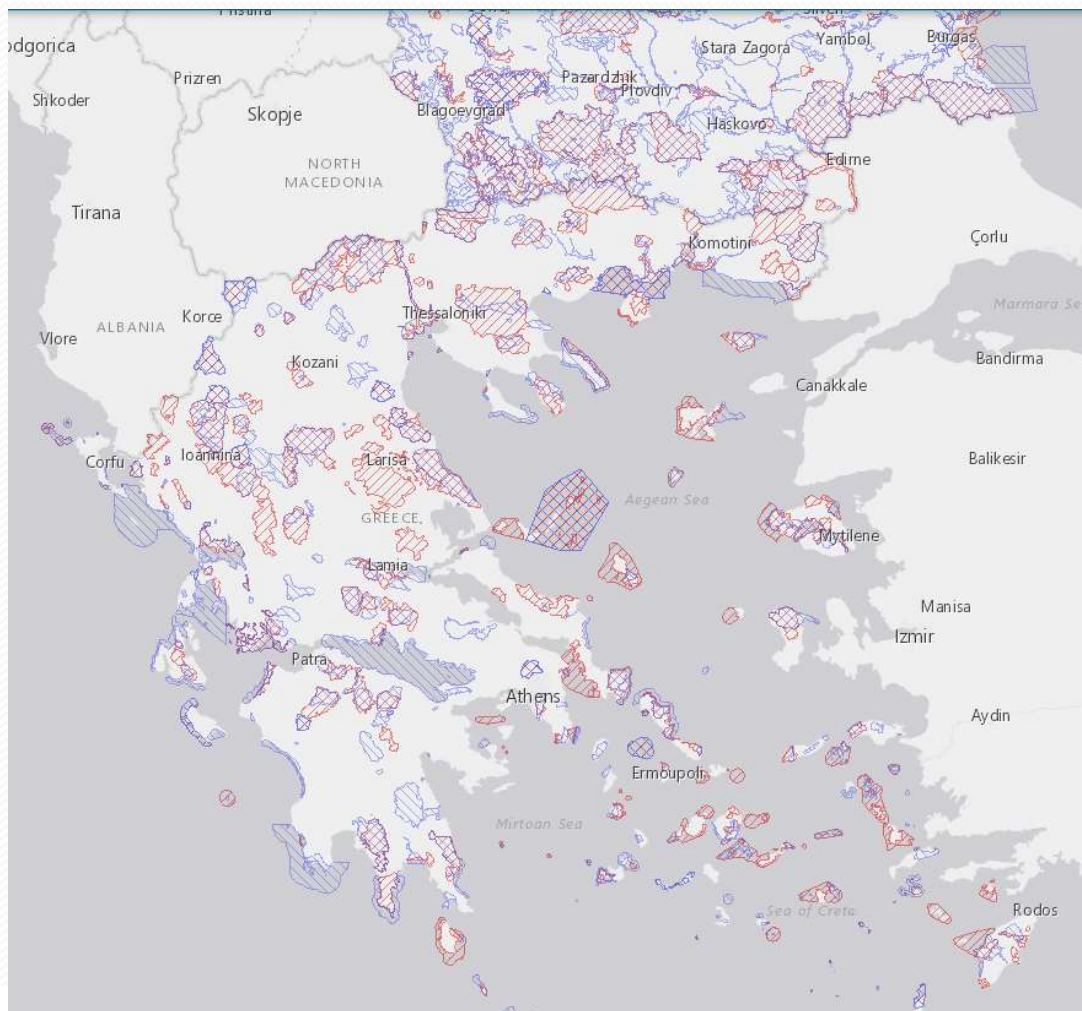


biodiversity conservation



sustainable development

European Natura 2000 Ecological Network



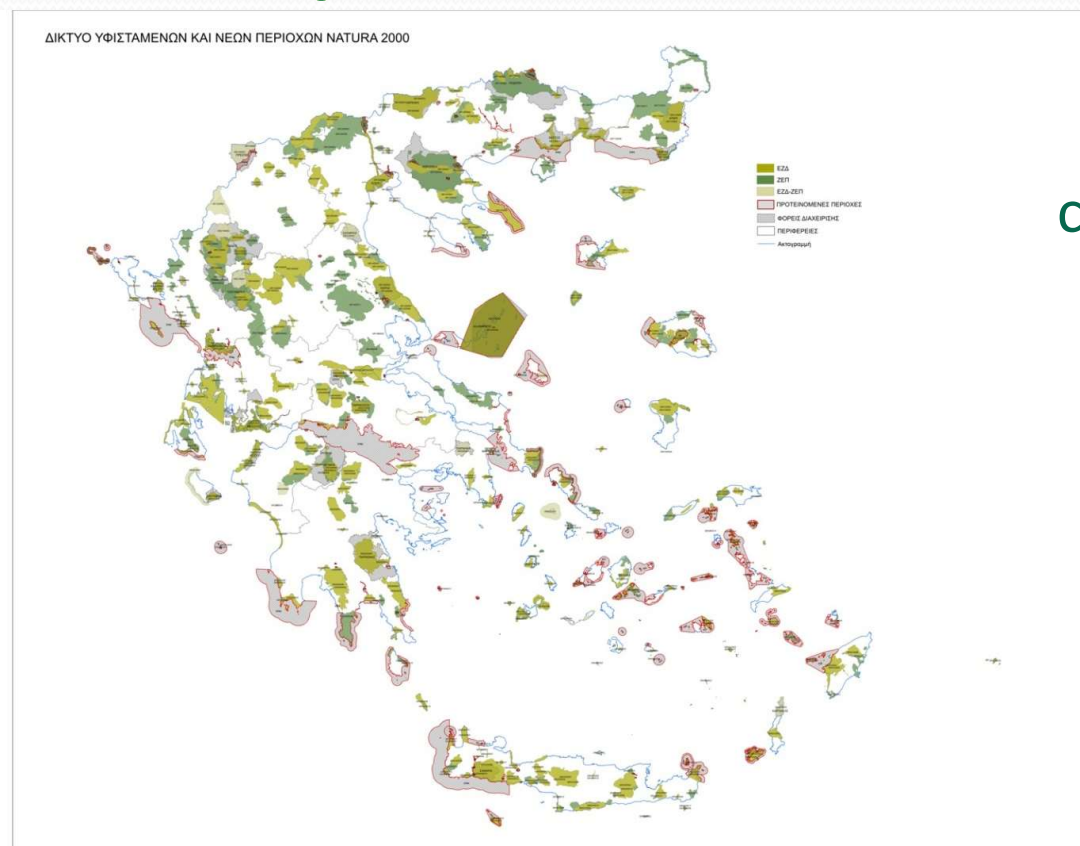
Greece - Bulgaria



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<https://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/#>

European Natura 2000 Ecological Network



A network of nature conservation areas throughout the Community



aim

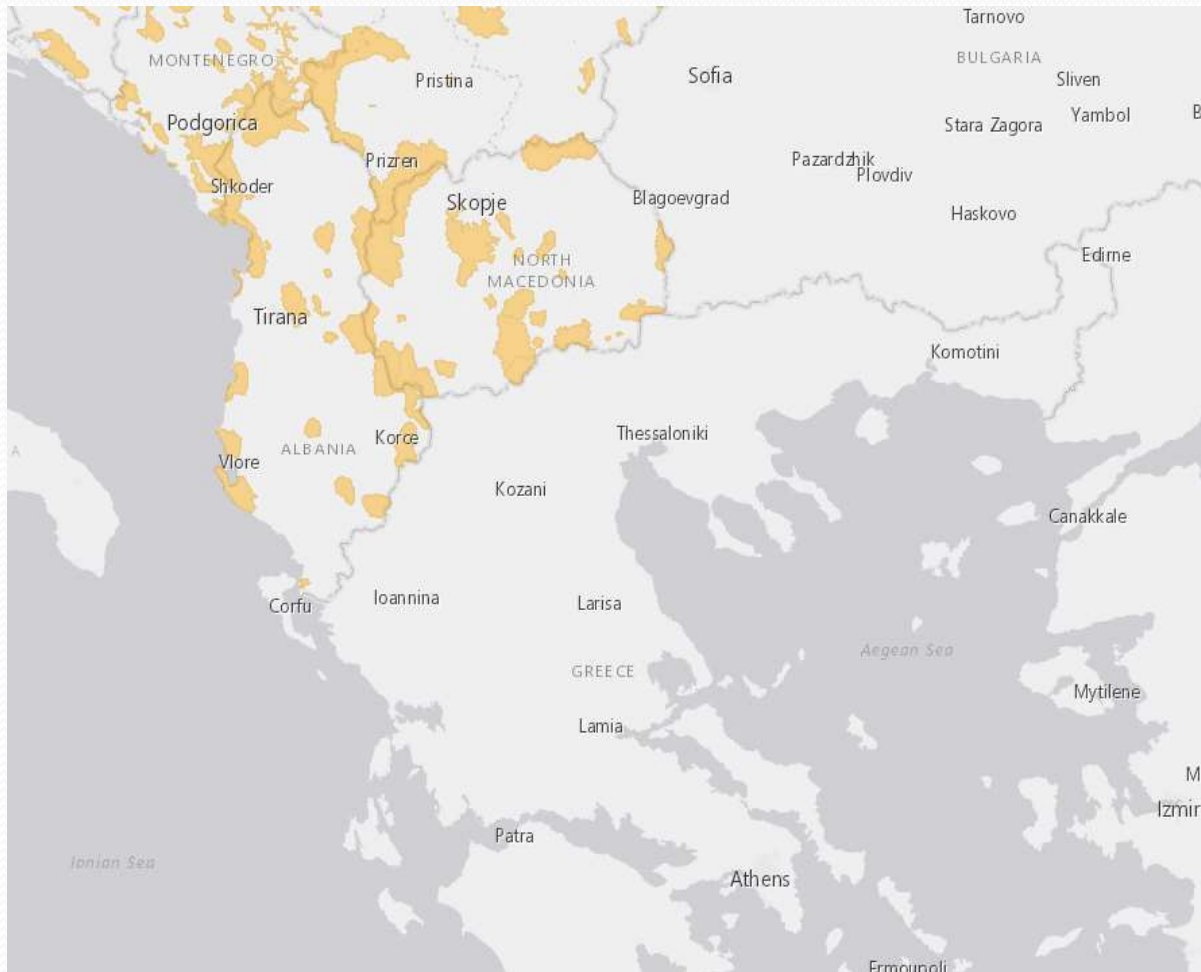
ensuring the long-term conservation of its most valuable and most endangered species and habitats at a satisfactory level

Greece

- 207 Special Protection Areas – SPA
- 265 Special Areas of Conservation – SAC (SCI)

Macedonia and Thrace - 107

Emerald Network



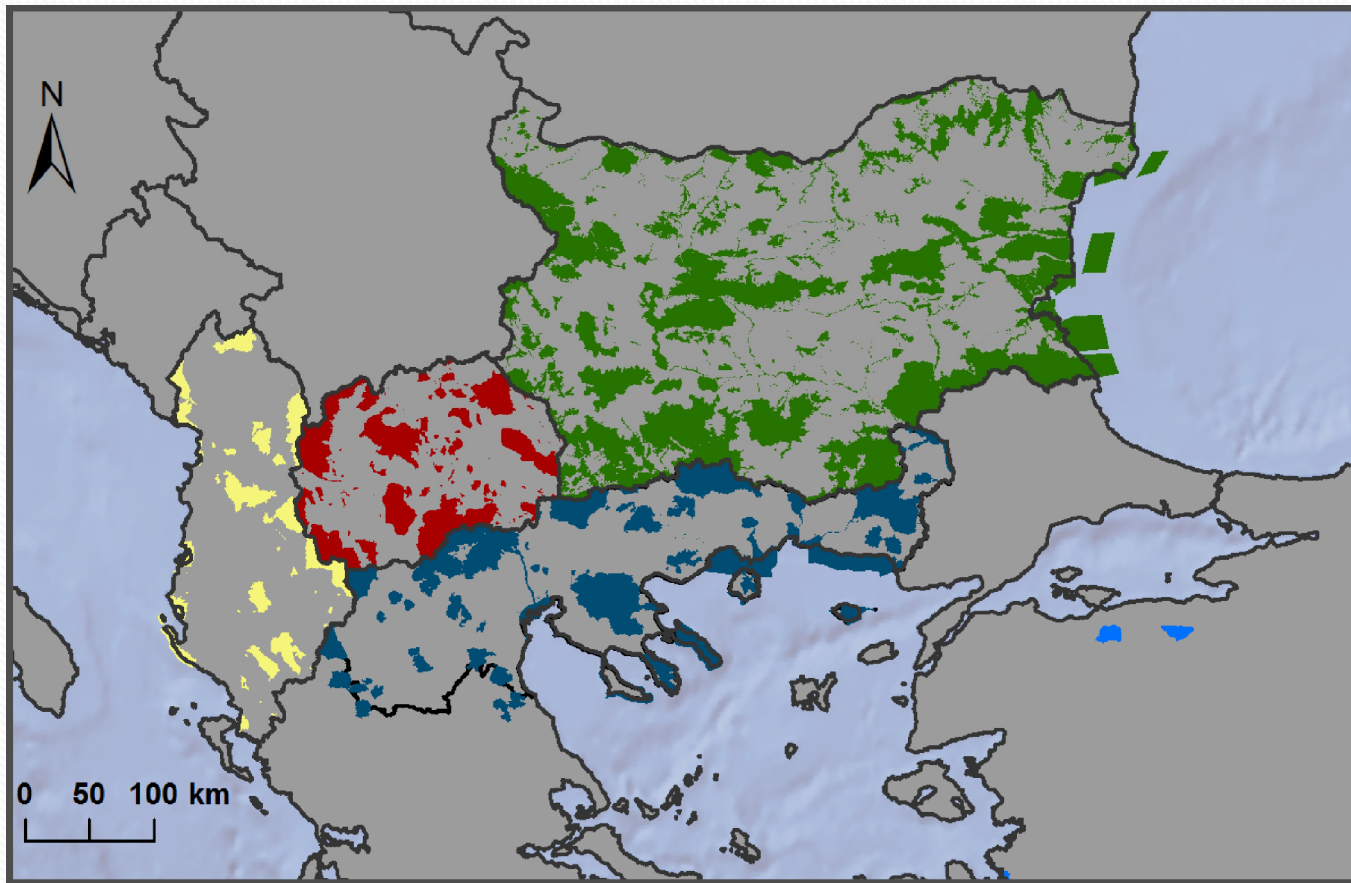
Established in 1989, but its practical form started in 1996 with the aim of complementing and expanding the NATURA 2000 network, on a similar basis



in order to develop common methodologies and synergies for the protection of the Environment inside and outside the European Union

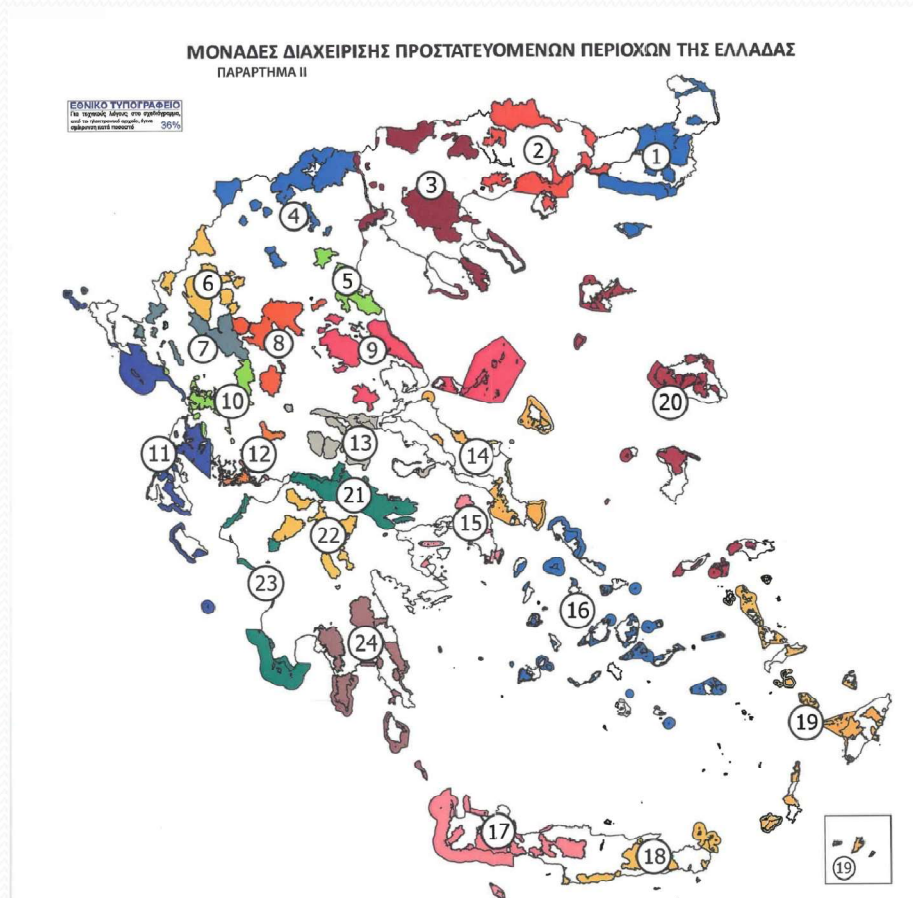
<https://emerald.eea.europa.eu/>

Cross Border Protected Areas



Mr. Mazaris Antonios, Associate Professor
Department of Biology
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

National framework in GREECE for the management of protected areas



Law 4685/2020

(environmental legislation) :

Establishment of " Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency (NECCA) (ΟΦΥΠΕΚΑ) - supervised by the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEEN)

36 Management Bodies of Protected Areas

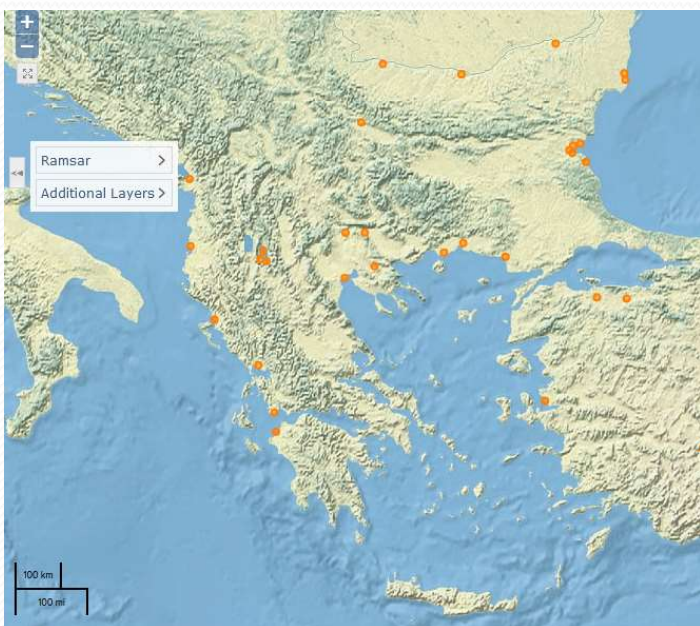
are merged and transformed into

24 Management Units of Protected Areas

L.4685/2020 – Annex II

Convention on Wetlands - Ramsar

- intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the **conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources**
- adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975
- almost 90% of UN member states, from all the world's geographic regions, have acceded to become “Contracting Parties”



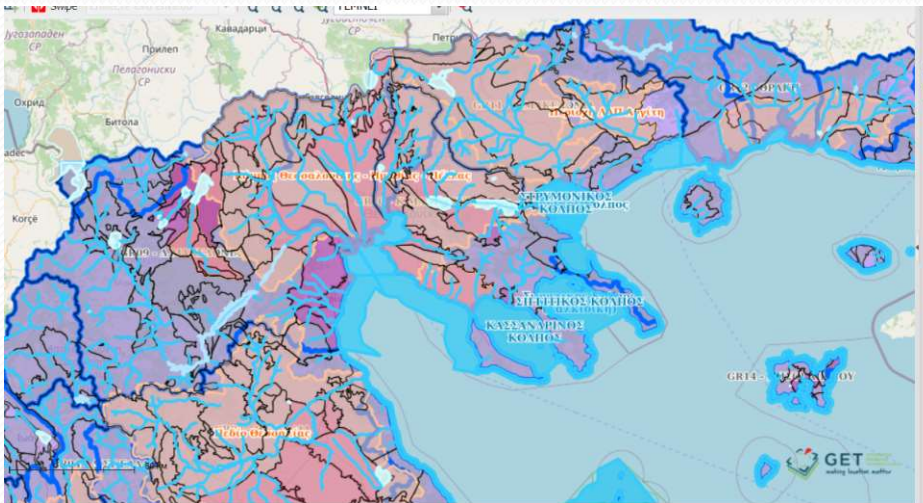
- Lake Mikri Prespa (Greece)- 60
- Prespa Lake (R.N.M.) - 726
- Prespa Lakes (Albania) - 2151
- Dojran Lake (R.N.M.) - 1735

Greece

1. Evros Delta - 54
2. Nestos delta & adjoining lagoons - 56
3. Artificial Kerkini Lake - 58
4. Axios, Loudias, Aliakmon Delta - 59

EU 60/2000 Water Directive

- establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy
- has applied since 22 October 2000 - EU countries had to incorporate it into national law by 22 December 2003
- sets out rules to halt deterioration in the status of European Union (EU) water bodies and achieve '**good status**' for Europe's rivers, lakes and groundwater
- combines qualitative, ecological and quantitative objectives for the protection of aquatic ecosystems
- integrated management at the geographical scale of the **River Basins**.



In **Greece** the consultation for the 2nd revision of the **river-basin management plans** is being implemented



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<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/LSU/?uri=CELEX:32000L0060>
<http://wfdver.ypeka.gr/el/consultation-gr/>



EU 60/2000 Water Directive

Article 3

Coordination of administrative arrangements within river basin districts

4. Member States shall ensure that the requirements of this Directive for the achievement of the environmental objectives established under Article 4, and in particular all programmes of measures are coordinated for the whole of the river basin district. **For international river basin districts the Member States concerned shall together ensure this coordination** and may, for this purpose, use existing structures stemming from international agreements.....

5. Where a river basin district extends beyond the territory of the Community, the Member State or Member States concerned shall endeavour to establish appropriate coordination with the relevant non-Member States, with the aim of achieving the objectives of this Directive throughout the river basin district. Member States shall ensure the application of the rules of this Directive within their territory.

The Directive imposes the need for **joint management plans** with the **cooperation** of the neighboring countries **sharing the same river basin**, either if both or if only one is member of the European Union

Projects and actions for environmental protection of the cross border area and sustainable development



European Structural Funds programmes

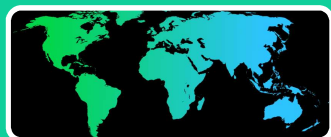
Interreg



The transnational (BalkanMed, Adriatic, MED ENI, Black Sea) and cross-border Interreg Programmes



National Programmes of the Balkan countries (Greece - Green Fund)



International Financing Programs - The World Bank, The United Nations Environment Programme

Combine2protect, BIO2CARE, e-OUTLAND, Plan Doiran, WetMainAreas, ForestLIFE and many others



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The case of PRESPA – unique cross border park shining example of protection and conservation through cross-border cooperation

Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable
Development of the Prespa Park Area (signed 2010)

- Greece
- Republic of North Macedonia
- Albania
- European Union



aim

comprehensive and effective protection of the
common natural and cultural values of the region
with the participation of its inhabitants



PRESPA

a single destination, 2 lakes, 3 countries, 4 National Parks

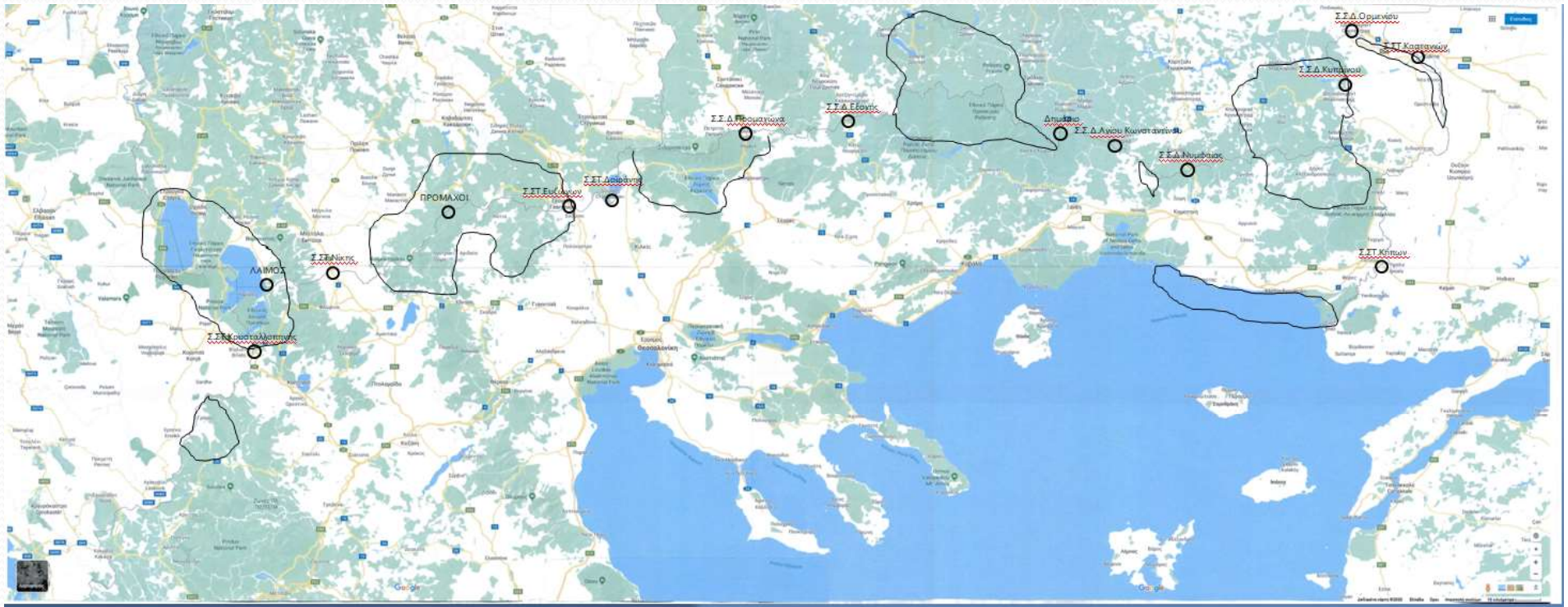
Society for the Protection of Prespa, <https://www.spp.gr>

- meetings of representatives of the three sides were held
- tripartite committees were appointed
- joint actions were planned
- cross-border environmental studies were carried out
- important decisions for the management of the waters of the region were taken
- Scientists began to exchange data
- joint environmental education programs – children learn the value of their place



the protection of the natural environment is not a limitation but an opportunity and a means for the progress of local communities and bridging differences and cooperation is a benefit for all.

Border Crossing Points – Macedonia and Thrace



- 12 road border crossing points
- 3 road BCP new (Laimos, Promahoi, Dimario)
- 2 railway border crossing points

New Border Crossing Points

significant intervention in strengthening ties between neighboring countries

strong developmental character

can lead to multiplier environmental, social and economic results for the benefit of the common cross – border and the wider area

The Ministry of Interior (Sector Macedonia and Thrace), due to the geographical proximity to the land borders of the country, but also according to its strategic goals is actively taking part in the efforts of the creation of the new BCPs



Representatives participate in the **Joint Expert Committees** for the new Established Border Crossing Points Laimos - Markova Noga and Promachoi - Majden

Joint Experts Committee

(article II and III of the agreement)

Determines the main technical parameters : connecting roads, infrastructure, buildings, control facilities, the regime of functioning, legal construction issues and all issues of common interest

Greece

Head Mr. Konstantinos Tsouvalas,
Secretary General for Public Order of the
Ministry of Citizen Protection

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Border Protection - Hellenic Police
- Sector Macedonia and Thrace, Ministry of Interior
- Regional Customs Authority, Independent Authority for Public Revenue
- Epirus-Western Macedonia Decentralized Administration
- Florina Regional Unit, Region of Western Macedonia
- Prespes Municipality

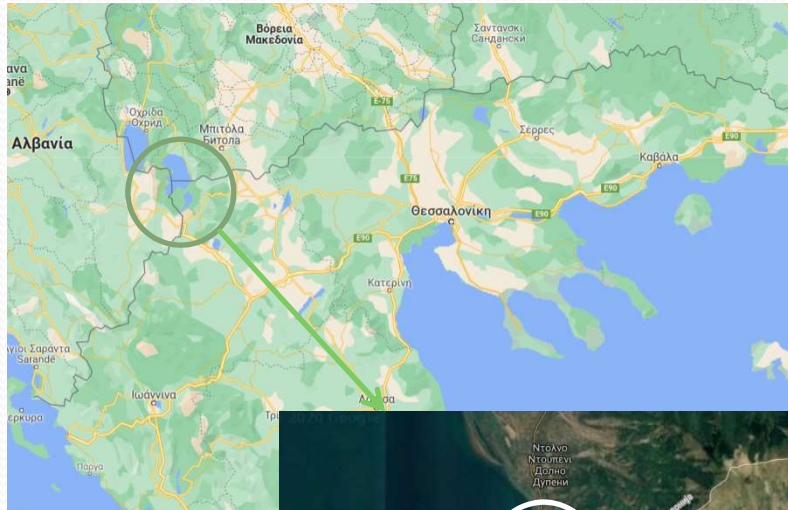
Republic of North Macedonia

Head Mr. Zoran Popov,
State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Transport and Communications
- Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
- Ministry of Finance
- Land Registry Office
- Customs Administration
- Ministry of Local Self Government

Laimos - Markova Noga

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW BORDER CROSSING POINT IN THE PRESPA LAKE AREA



Greece - the Republic of North Macedonia

it will provide direct connection - now needs 130 km, via Niki BCP

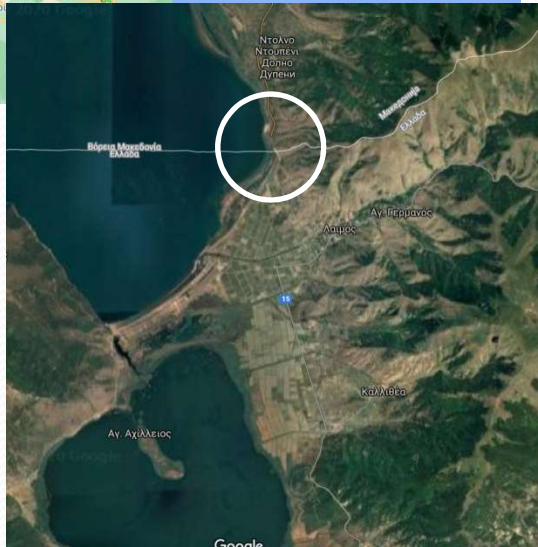
referred in the Prespa Park agreement and in the Strategic Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of Prespa Park

will further strengthen and promote regional cooperation between the two States aiming to create the most favorable conditions for its development

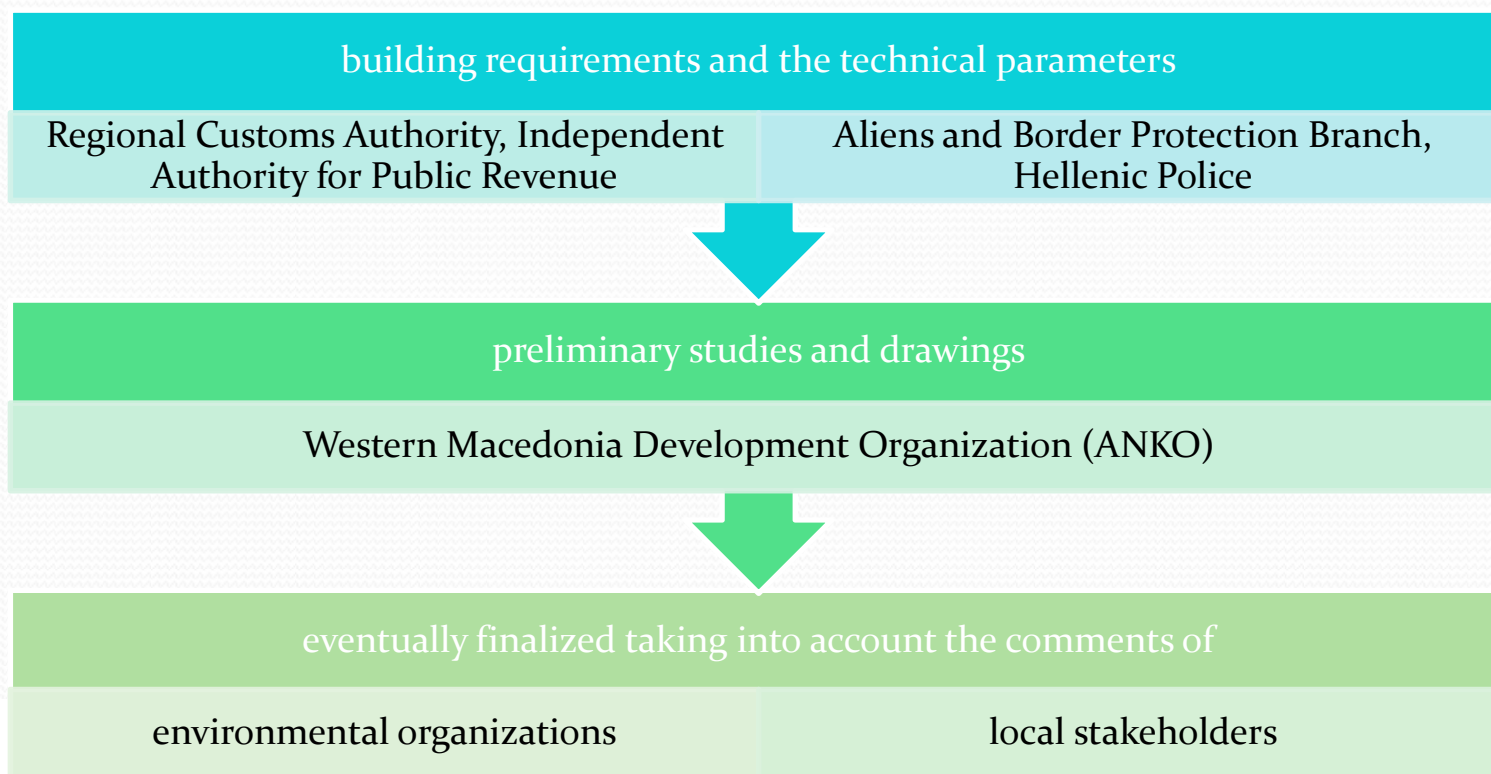
will encourage across the borders cooperation among the two countries

will contribute to the development of sustainable tourism in the Prespa Lake and to the enhancement of the friendly relations of their peoples

agreement signed in Skopje 8.3.2019



The Ministry of Interior (Sector Macedonia and Thrace) contributes since 2018 by taking part, supporting or organizing and coordinating technical and administrative preparatory works, in situ meetings, teleconferences, cooperation and exchange of technical parameters between representatives from both countries and meetings with the managing authority of Interreg.



Background and history of the project

	Title	Place	Date
	Agreement between Hellenic Republic and Republic of North Macedonia for the establishment of one border crossing point in the Prespa Lake Area	Skopje	08/03/2019
1	Technical Meeting for the Strategic Project for the opening of the Prespa border crossing point	Thessaloniki	05/03/2019
2	1 st Meeting of the Joint Experts Committee	Skopje	31/01/2020
3	6 th Monitoring Committee Meeting (CBC Programme Greece – Republic of North Macedonia) – decision for the project to be financed	[Held via Videoconference]	24/11/2020
4	2 nd Meeting of the Joint Experts Committee	[Held via Videoconference]	20/01/2021
5	Meeting of the technical department of the Joint Experts Committee	Border Crossing point	24/02/2021
6	3 rd Meeting of the Joint Experts Committee	Thessaloniki	28/05/2021

A proposal is to be submitted for funding the studies required as 1st phase of the whole project

The 2nd phase –works will be financed by next programming period 2021-2027

Work Packages are included assigned to the corresponding authorities:

WP1 :	Project Management and Coordination - <i>Regional Authority of Western Macedonia</i>
WP2:	Communication and Dissemination - <i>Ministry of Interior (sector Macedonia and Thrace)</i>
WP3:	Maturation of border crossing works, access road to border installations at the Greek side in the Municipality of Prespes - <i>ANKO Western Macedonia S.A. / Organization for Local Development</i>
WP4:	Maturation of border crossing works at the Republic of North Macedonia side in the Municipality of Resen - <i>Ministry of Interior, R. North Macedonia</i>



MINISTRY OF INTERIOR (Sector Macedonia and Thrace)

Focusing its efforts to develop programs in the Balkan, Black Sea and Mediterranean area in the sectors of :

Business innovation and networking

PDO local products

cultural and architectural heritage

environmental protection

promoting the **sustainable management** of natural resources and renewable energy resources in our common and beyond borders: rivers, lakes, mountains and seas with our neighbor regions and countries



MINISTRY OF INTERIOR (Sector Macedonia and Thrace)

Advantages - Strengths

Due to the **geographical proximity** to the land borders of the country, **collaborations** and **ties** have been developed with the neighboring countries, especially during the last years through :

- the implementation of **territorial cooperation programs**,
- the organization of the **annual Balkan Forum** in Thessaloniki,
- participation in the **monitoring committees** of the **Interreg** programs,
- participation in the **Joint Experts Committees** of the new **border crossing points**,
- cooperation with the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and the **managing authority** of territorial cooperation programs

Projects in the Cross Border Area

Interreg 
EUROPEAN UNION

Greece-Bulgaria

BORDERLESS CULTURE

European Regional Development Fund

Interreg - IPA CBC 



CCI 2014 TC 16 I5CB 009

HELP

Interreg - IPA CBC 

Greece - Republic of North Macedonia

TERRA VINO

Interreg - IPA CBC 

Greece - Republic of North Macedonia

BENEFIT

Interreg - IPA CBC 

Greece - Republic of North Macedonia

ALTER TRIP

Department of Co-funded Programs
and Regional Development

Directorate of International
Relations and Regional Policy



Aiming at the economic, environmental,
cultural development of Macedonia and
Thrace and the transnational cooperation

To be proposed

Interreg - IPA CBC 

Greece - Republic of North Macedonia

BoRPres



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Ministry of Interior
Sector Macedonia and Thrace



Experience : Actions Grant Programs



Department of environment,
culture and sport
Directorate of environment, culture
and cultural heritage and sport

- support vulnerable social groups and strengthen social cohesion
- promote sustainable management through environmentally friendly technologies, products and services
- support the certification process and promote PDO products
- environmental awareness, training on upgrading recycling, sustainable development and adaptation to climate change

Experience : Protection of Architectural and Cultural Heritage



Department of Traditional
Settlements and Listed Buildings
Directorate of environment, culture
and cultural heritage and sport



Responsible for the protection of

- 3000 listed buildings
- 70 traditional settlements
- 20 landscapes of particular natural beauty

Over 30 years of continuous work



in order to preserve their particular historical,
urban, architectural, folklore, social and
aesthetic physiognomy



Conclusions

- **synergies and collaborations among neighboring countries** are **crucial and valuable** for the **protection of the environment** in the cross border area and for promoting the **sustainable touristic, cultural and economic development**
- A lot of great initiatives have already taken place, but the efforts need to continue in the future
- need for involvement and collaboration of :
 - Ministries (Environment, Foreign Affairs, Tourism, Agricultural Development, Interior)
 - Decentralized Administrations, Regions and Municipalities
 - OFYPEKA and management units of protected areas
 - Environmental NGOs
 - Scientific Community, Universities, Research Institutions
 - Productive and professional organizations and technical, commerce chambers
 - Touristic agencies
 - cultural associations
 - Schools – students
 - Citizens

Suggestions - Actions

- support the efforts for the transnational agreement for **Rhodope Transboundary Park** (taking into consideration the experience of Prespa Park)
- encourage **alternative tourism** in the cross border area, as more friendly and compatible with the principles of sustainable development, especially in protected areas (ecotourism • agro tourism • cultural and religious tourism)
- organize meetings in the cross-border area for **dissemination of knowledge and experience** (good practices, problems) from previous efforts and programs regarding the cross-border protection of the environment- participation of management units of protected areas, environmental NGOs, local stakeholders
- Create of **interactive maps** promoting the rich biodiversity, cultural heritage and PDO products in the cross border area
- environmental education programs, student exchanges with neighboring countries, participation in activities and festivals in protected cross-border areas to strengthen cooperation ties and raise awareness for joint nature protection
- Awareness-raising and informative and environmental education activities



Summarizing

The Ministry of Interior (Macedonia and Thrace Sector), with **respect to international treaties** and national legislation, **utilizing its staff and experience** gained through the implementation of programs and actions and the experience of participating in synergies and transnational committees, **can play an active role in the cross border area** so that the long term goals of **protection of the ecosystem** and the prosperity of societies can be achieved

Conclusions

Enhancement of the role of the Ministry of Interior (Macedonia and Thrace Sector) by

- participation in **management committees** of the management units of protected areas in the cross border area
- participation in **monitoring committees** of the European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) programs

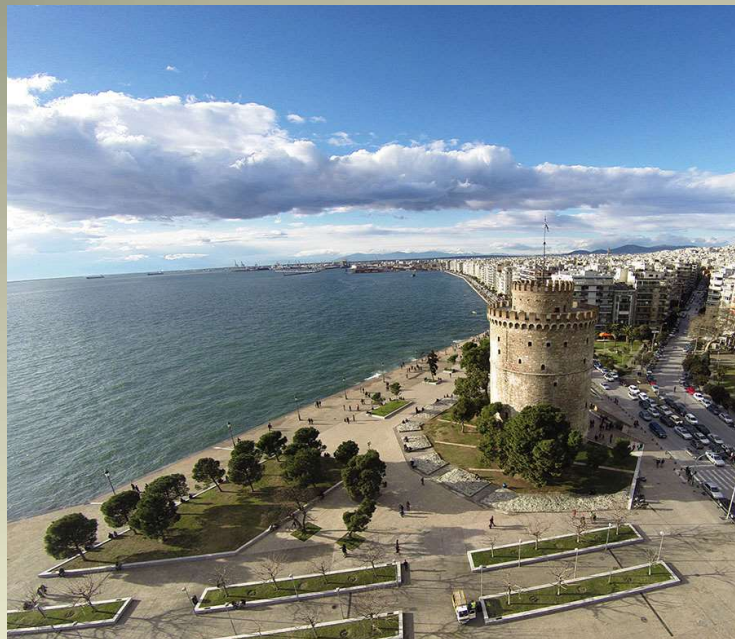
Development of projects in common with the neighboring countries, with the aim to :

- **protect the rich biodiversity** especially in protected areas (natura, ramsar)
- **increase of tourist inflows**, highlighting and utilizing the rich biodiversity, the architectural heritage and the PDO products of the region
- disseminate good practices and experiences



will further strengthen the territorial cooperation and promote the protection of the environment and the sustainable development of the cross – border area of Macedonia and Thrace

Thank you for your attention



Konstantia Dimitrakoudi

Civil Engineer MSc

Department of Co-funded Programs and Regional Development

Directorate of International Relations and Regional Policy

Ministry of Interior (Sector Macedonia and Thrace)

Thessaloniki, 24-9-2021

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Sector Macedonia and Thrace