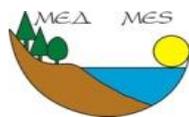




Raising public awareness,  
enhancing knowledge and  
empowering NGOs to protect and  
conserve freshwater ecosystems  
in the Drin River Basin



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**ACT 4**  
**DRIN**

Living well in harmony  
with the Drin

**Thomais Vlachogianni, PhD**  
MIO-ECSDE Programme Officer,  
Act4Drin Project Leader  
Member of the Drin Core Group & EWGs

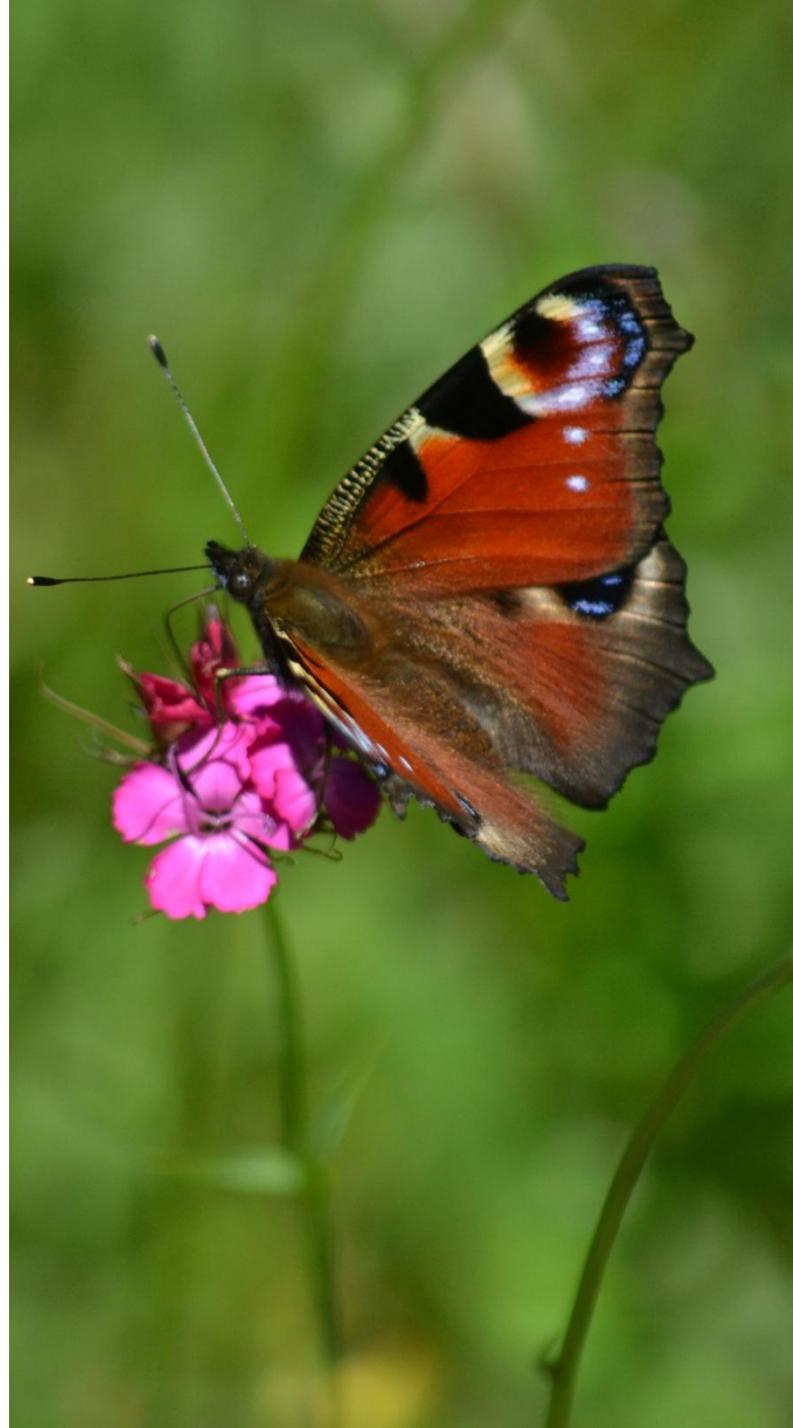
# NGOs key role in promoting environmental protection and sustainable development

Active participation of NGOs at local, national and transboundary level in all phases of projects and processes, contributes not only to **increased transparency, wide visibility** and **outreach** of the project or process, but also to **enhanced overall quality** and **increased ownership** of the project itself and its outcomes.



## Major gap identified...

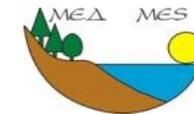
A series of initiatives are being implemented in the Drin River Basin and substantial investments are being made aiming to address key environmental challenges. Some of these initiatives entail to some extent **public participation and awareness raising** related components, however **the resources being invested for such activities are rather limited**. In addition, even in the cases where provisions have been made to involve NGOs in project activities the role of NGOs has been often perceived as **a less active and rather as a more passive one**.



# Act4Drin at a glance

The project seeks to:

- ✓ **Empower NGOs** in effectively and meaningfully promoting IWRM with a special focus on the protection, conservation and restoration of freshwater ecosystems.
- ✓ **Expand public awareness** on the intrinsic values of freshwater habitats and species of the region and to promote concrete, comprehensive and continuous actions towards the safeguarding the biodiversity of the Drin River Basin.



# Clusters of activities

1

- Increased capacities of local/national NGOs to promote IWRM and freshwater biodiversity conservation in transboundary settings

2

- Enhanced coordination, cooperation and networking NGOs working in the Drin River Basin and effective involvement of NGOs in the Drin related process

3

- Increased awareness of local communities and the wider public on the importance of the Drin River Basin and its freshwater ecosystems

# The Act4Drin NGOs workshop

**Mapping exercise** to identify all local/national NGOs interested in working on issues related to IWRM and freshwater biodiversity conservation in the region, as well as **a preliminary assessment** of their needs

The **Act4Drin collective and collaborative learning workshop**

28-29 April 2015, Lin, Albania



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# Taking stock of environmental NGO capacities in the Drin River Basin

- ✓ **Capacities to generate, use and share information and knowledge:** most NGOs have long standing experience in sharing/communicating environmental information and knowledge produced, less experienced in the fields of generating knowledge, including the assessment of the hydrological and physical/chemical characteristics of a water body; identification of pressures and impacts, assessment of ecosystem services; and/or assessing and making use of relevant information to diagnose and understand environmental problems and potential solutions.
- ✓ **Capacities to engage in policy analysis and dialogues:** most NGOs have a long standing experience in promoting common NGO positions and voicing collective views, direct involvement in policy debates, expert groups, consultations, etc. Advising decision-makers, not only in the policy formulation stage but also in the technical preparation phases by making use of environmental research results seems to be the area where their experience is more moderate.

# Taking stock of environmental NGO capacities in the Drin River Basin

- ✓ **Capacities to design, manage and implement projects:** most NGOs have a longstanding experience in designing/developing feasible project proposals, while 43% of the respondents stated their long standing experience in either executing projects aimed at promoting integrated water resources management approaches (carrying out studies for long-term development and management of water resources; implementing demand management measures to improve water use efficiency in all sectors; protecting and rehabilitating catchment areas; establishing processes/platforms for stakeholders' participation in water management decisions making; etc.) or projects aimed at freshwater biodiversity protection (monitoring of protected areas, enhancement of the natural environment, habitats management and restoration, consensus building and participatory processes, etc.). Executing projects at transboundary level yielded the lowest rate of longstanding experience. Last but not least, regarding the mobilization of resources, only 50% of the respondents assessed their experience as longstanding while some 43% assessed their experience as moderate.

# An inventory of freshwater biodiversity conservation and restoration examples

- ✓ Featuring a collection of **concrete NGO actions** on the ground that have contributed to the protection and conservation of freshwater ecosystems in the Mediterranean.
- ✓ It is an account of the **diversity, wide ranging scope and extent** of NGO involvement in promoting IWRM & biodiversity conservation.
- ✓ **Distils and captures lessons learned** and communicates acquired knowledge so as to ensure that beneficial information is factored into future NGO activities



# Act4Drin awareness raising campaign | key messages

- ✓ The 'Extended Drin River Basin' is a unique water body connecting the people of the five Drin riparians – it is our common natural heritage.
- ✓ The intrinsic value of the Drin Basin is priceless – it is beyond doubt one of the most important freshwater biodiversity hotspots in Europe.
- ✓ Whether we realize it or not, freshwater ecosystems together with every bit of biodiversity they support and the ecosystem services they provide, determine our quality of life and wellbeing.
- ✓ Every action or 'inaction' along the Drin Basin affects us all.
- ✓ The protection of our natural common heritage cannot be left only to governments, treaties, top-down regulations and other similar approaches. We, as individuals can make the real difference by simply caring, respecting the right of all beings to enjoy this planet and by taking a holistic 'life cycle' view on life based on a sustainable consumption of resources.



# The Act4Drin publication launched on the Worlds Rivers Day 2015



A concrete display of the commitment and solidarity of environmental NGOs of the region to protect and conserve the Drin River Basin



Act4Drin promoters



**CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIP FUND**

*This publication has been produced within the framework of the Act4Drin project funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. A fundamental goal of CEPF is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.*

# A wealth of events commemorated Act4Drin 2015!



**ACT 4 DRIN**  
Living well in harmony  
with the Drin

The natural wealth  
and legacy  
of the Drin River Basin:  
inspiring  
our collective actions

Act4Drin Day - 17 May 2015

**CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIP FUND**

**EDEN** Qendra Mjedisore për Zhvillim Ekonomik dhe Reputim

**GREEN HOME** program

\*\*The Act4Drin project is funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. A fundamental goal of CEPF is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.



*Water adventures; networking events for NGOs & local communities; bird watching activities; contests of photos and paintings; school interventions; guided nature tours; biodiversity camp for students, volunteers and NGOs; ...*

# A wealth of events commemorated Act4Drin 2016!



**Drin Day 2016 - 5 May 2016**

**The Drin has its Day!**

Lets join the actions, activities & initiatives dedicated to the Drin River Basin

Photo: Milan Vucelja

A joint initiative of the Act4Drin project ([www.act4drin.net](http://www.act4drin.net)) and the Drin Project ([www.drin-corda.org](http://www.drin-corda.org)) financed by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) respectively. It is implemented in support and within the framework of the Drin Corda Process under the coordination of the Mediterranean Information Offices for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) and the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med).



# The 'Echoes from the Drin' short films triplet

1



**Echoes from the Drin - Part I | Whispers of Water**

by MIO - ECSDE

2



**Echoes from the Drin - Part II | Reflections of Life**

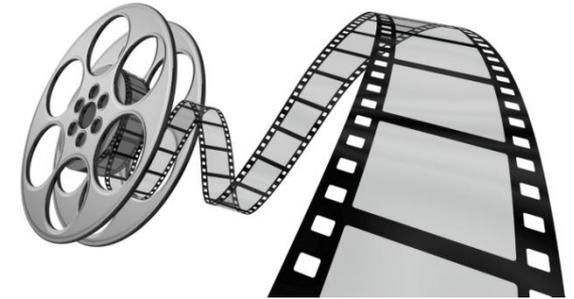
by MIO - ECSDE

3



**Echoes from the Drin - Part III | Impressions of Humans**

by MIO - ECSDE



**You**  **Tube**



# Act4Drin Spring School 2016



## Act4Drin Spring School 2016

The natural wealth and legacy of the Drin River Basin:  
from field observations and knowledge to collective actions towards protecting freshwater ecosystems

7-15 May 2016

7 May 2016 Saturday	8 May 2016 Sunday	9 May 2016 Monday	10 May 2016 Tuesday	11 May 2016 Wednesday	12 May 2016 Thursday	13 May 2016 Friday	14 May 2016 Saturday	15 May 2016 Sunday
	08.30-09.30 Breakfast			08.30-09.30 Breakfast		08.30-09.30 Breakfast		
	09.30-11.00 Introductory Session	06.30-13.00 Half Day Field Work (Golem Grad))	07.00-13.00 Half Day Field Work (Mavrovo National Park)	09.30-11.00 Coursework	09.30-11.00 Coursework	09.30-11.00 Coursework	08.00-13.00 Half Day Field Visit (Sasko lake & Ulchinj Slaterns)	08.00-13.00 Half Day Field Work (Buna/Bojana, river)
	11.00-11.30 Coffee break			11.00-11.30 Coffee break		11.00-11.30 Coffee break		
	11.30-13.00 Coursework			11.30-13.00 Coursework		11.30-13.00 Coursework		
Arrivals & registration								
	13.00-14.30 Lunch break		13.00-14.30 Lunch break		13.00-14.30 Lunch break		13.00-14.30 Lunch break	
	14.30-15.30 Free time	14.30-19.00 Half Day Field Visit (Galichica National Park & Prespa lake)	14.30-18.00 Half Day Field Visit (Black Drin)	14.30-17.30 Preassignments	14.30-15.30 Free time	14.30-18.30 Half Day Field Visit (Skhodra Lake)	14.30-15.30 Free time	14.30-15.00 Wrap up
	15.30-17.30 Preassignments & Field Work Introduction				15.30-17.00 Act4Drin Documentary		15.30-17.30 Coursework & Field Work Introduction	15.00-16.00 Closing Session
19.00-20.30 Welcoming Dinner	19.00-20.30 Dinner		19.00-20.30 Dinner		19.00-20.30 Dinner		19.00-20.30 Dinner & farewell party	Departures

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Act4Drin Partnership



# The Act4Drin Alliance launched on the World Wetlands Day 2016

13 NGOs from the five Drin riparians join forces to form the Act4Drin Alliance aiming to protect and conserve freshwater ecosystems in the Drin River Basin.



# NGO actions to protect and conserve freshwater ecosystems in the Drin Basin

## The CEPF Mediterranean Basin Storymap

The screenshot displays a storymap interface. At the top left, there are social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) and logos for BirdLife International and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. The title is "The Mediterranean Basin: the spice of life". Below this is a "Project Showcase" section with the heading "Contributing to science and conservation change". The text describes the importance of data collection for ecosystem protection and the value of local knowledge. An image of a lampbrush tongue is shown below the text. To the right is a map of the Mediterranean Basin with yellow circles indicating project locations. An overview map is visible in the bottom left of the map area. The map is powered by Esri.

**The Mediterranean Basin: the spice of life**

**Project Showcase**

**Contributing to science and conservation change**

Understanding everything that happens in an ecosystem is key for its protection - so data collection is often needed to provide the backbone of policies, legislation and management plans.

Local people can draw on lifetimes of experience to understand the complexities of local ecology, giving them greater success at mitigating threats.

**OVERVIEW MAP**

POWERED BY **esri**



Thank you!



For more info:

[www.act4drin.net](http://www.act4drin.net)

[www.mio-ecsde.org](http://www.mio-ecsde.org)

[vlachogianni@mio-ecsde.org](mailto:vlachogianni@mio-ecsde.org)

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