



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

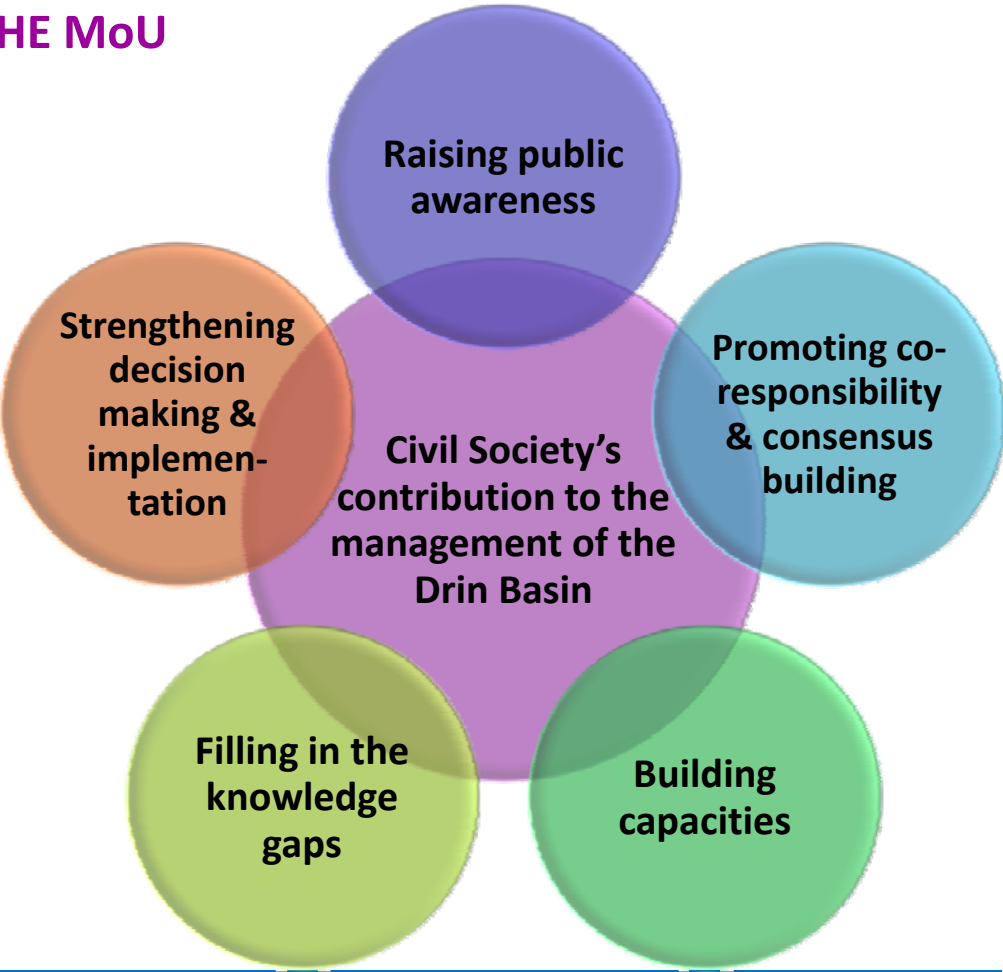
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**Drin Basin Multi-Stakeholders Conference**  
**10-11 December 2013, Tirana, Albania**

# NGOs' KEY ROLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MoU

NGOs within the wider civil society sector play an important role in promoting sustainable water resources management



# MIO-ECSD E's contribution to the Drin Dialogue and MoU implementation



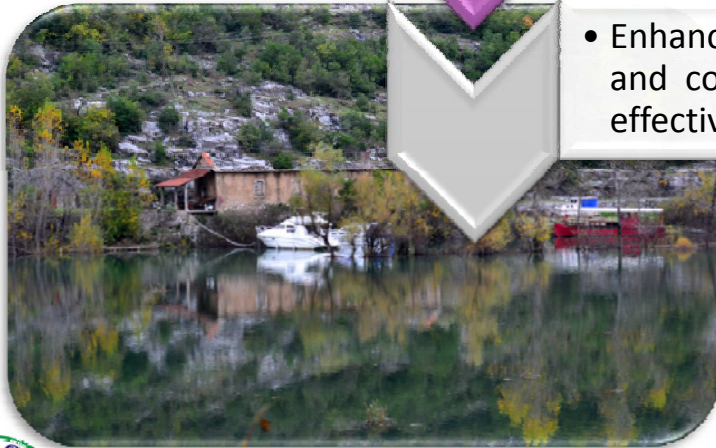
- Supporting the dialogue at regional level (politically, technically, through communication/awareness raising actions...);



- Contributing in establishing a common understanding and shared vision via the coordinated involvement of civil society, and particularly NGOs, in the Drin Dialogue;



- Enhancing the ability and capacity of its member and collaborating NGOs in order to act in an effective and constructive way.



## ENHANCING SYNERGIES AND IMPACT

To enhance impact, MIO-ECSDE's actions in support of NGOs and the Drin Dialogue were included under the umbrellas of the 2 biggest regional initiatives in the Mediterranean it participates in:

The MedPartnership

Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem

MedPartnership

Horizon 2020 Capacity  
Building/Mediterranean  
Environment Programme

Horizon2020

# LESSONS LEARNED SO FAR...

- Need to **engage** NGOs throughout the process from the planning to the implementation phase.
- In order to ensure a meaningful, coordinated and effective participation of NGOs in the transboundary water resources management cycle, there is a need to **enhance their abilities and capacities** to act throughout these processes.
- Considerable amount of time and resources are needed in order to create an atmosphere of **cooperation and trust** but the investment definitely pays back!
- In order to keep NGOs motivated and engaged in the process opportunities should be sought to **jointly develop concrete outputs**.
- **Collaboration and exchange of experiences** among NGOs at national and sub-regional level can help to effectively replicate successful approaches.

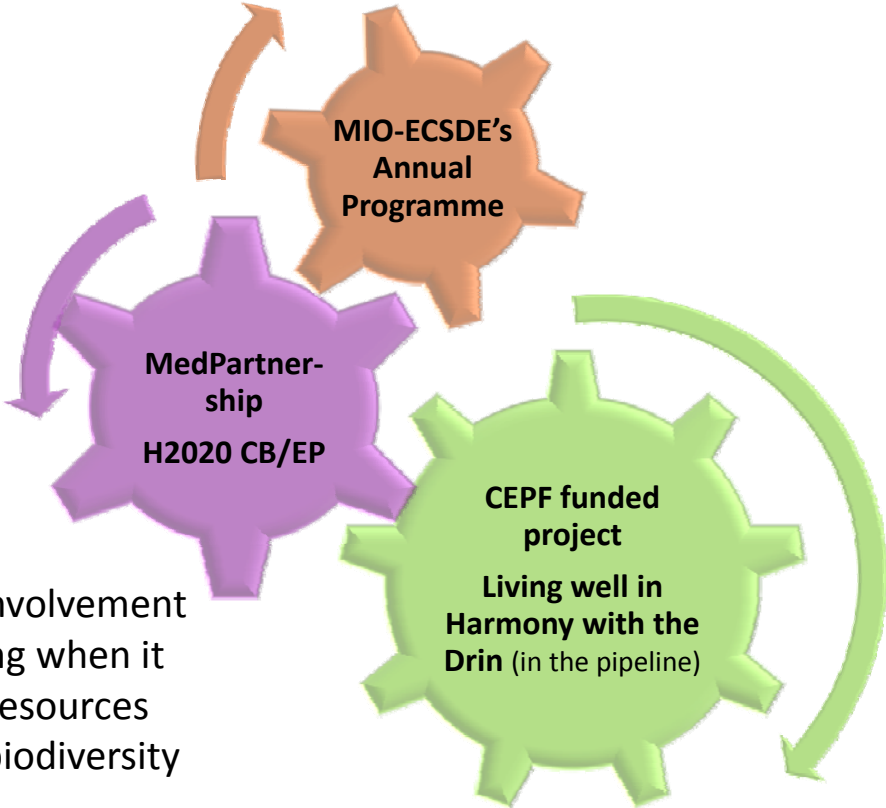




# KEY CHALLENGES

- There is lack of, or weak coordination/collaboration between national/local NGOs.
- Not enough financial resources have been earmarked for the proper implementation of NGO involvement and information dissemination activities within on-going projects.
- NGOs have not been involved in all cases from the first phases of transboundary water resources management processes, resulting in low engagement and weak commitment. In addition, information on most processes is scattered and it is therefore difficult for NGOs to keep track of developments.
- Continued momentum must be maintained even though some processes take a lot of time to evolve/progress. In this respect, additional resources for communication must be invested including interim activities and resources must be allocated to NGOs for small scale pilot/demo projects/activities, eliciting considerably strengthened ownership of the processes.

# MIO-ECSDE's PLANNED ACTIVITIES (2014-2015) TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES



Public participation and NGO involvement at the heart of decision-making when it comes to sustainable water resources management and freshwater biodiversity conservation

# CEPF FUNDED PROJECT IN THE PIPELINE

**Living well  
in harmony with the Drin**

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

## **Other funding sources:**

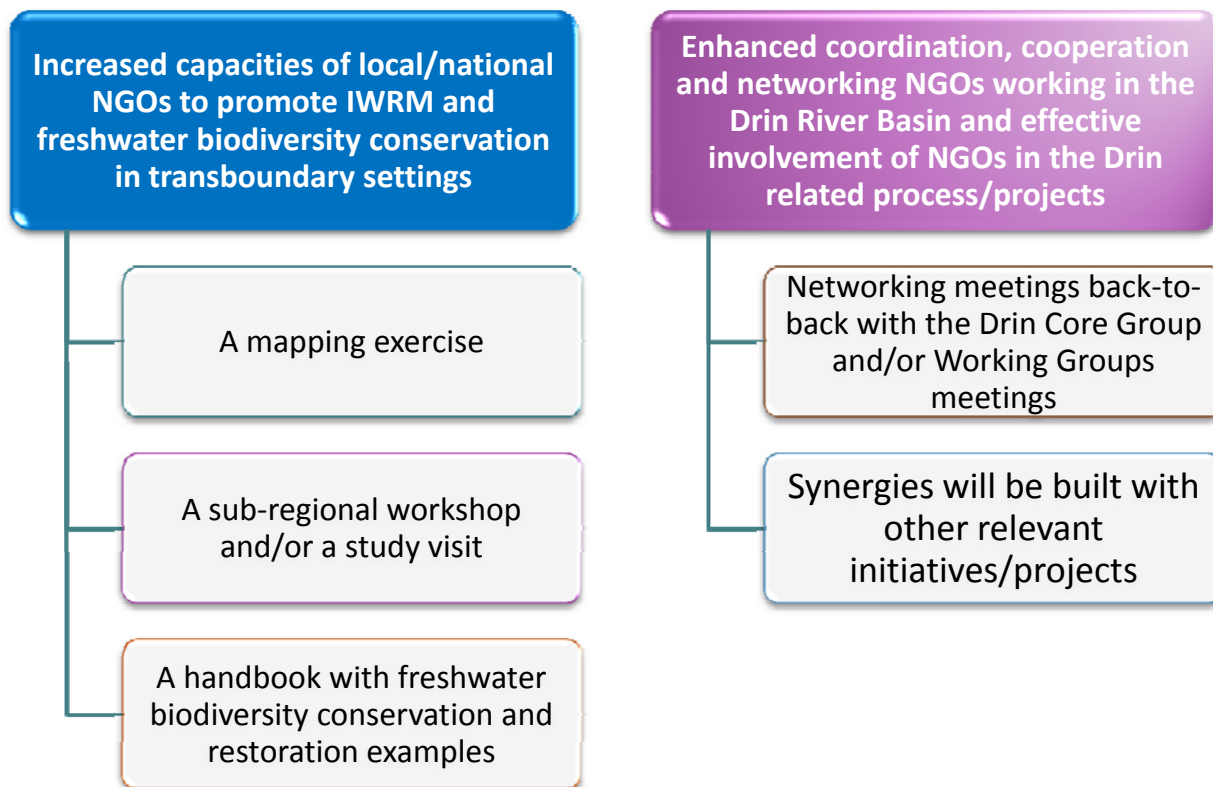
- The MedPartnership
- EC

## **Overall budget:**

~315.000 \$



# PROJECT COMPONENTS (I)



# PROJECT COMPONENTS (II)

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

- An awareness raising campaign facilitated by the appropriately media channels and targeted tools
- Six (6) Drin Action Day awareness raising events (2 per each country)
- An experiential workshop bringing together 20 youth and educators
- A documentary & 3 smart TV spots

**Increased knowledge on the status/trends of biodiversity and demonstration of best practice(s) related to IWRM and freshwater biodiversity conservation  
The Jablanica demo project (Lead Partner: MES)**

- Assessment on the status, load and determination of favourable conservation status of the priority water ecosystems in Jablanica Mt.
- Identification of most important and most threatened species
- Identification of most important threats affecting species and habitats
- Identification of the most important conservation interventions
- Assessment of the sustainability of timber extraction from the stream watershed below the glacial lakes/bogs



# SHORT-TERM IMPACTS

- ✓ Increased capacities of grassroot and national NGOs from the project areas/countries in promoting sustainable water resources management and freshwater habitats and species.
- ✓ Enhanced cooperation and networking among and between regional, national and grassroot NGOs in the region working on sustainable water resources management and biodiversity protection/conservation.
- ✓ Enhanced activity/mobility of local and national NGOs in designing concrete, relevant and feasible action and eventually securing funding opportunities.
- ✓ Increased awareness of local communities and the wider public, on the vital benefits that watershed bodies provide in maintaining healthy freshwater ecosystems and their rich biodiversity, as well as their corresponding ecosystem services.
- ✓ Higher awareness and sense of ownership of local communities and the wider public for their common natural heritage, the Drin River Basin.
- ✓ Increased public awareness on the key threats and pressures to freshwater ecosystems in the Drin River Basin and on ways to address them. Increased knowledge on the status and trends of in Jablanica Mountain, as well as deepened understanding of the underlying hydrological processes of its glacial lakes and streams.
- ✓ Enhanced protection of biodiversity and strengthened sustainable management of water resources in the surrounding area of Jablanica Mountain.

Thank you!

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*Living well in harmony with the Drin*