



## Minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Stakeholders Group for the Cross-Border Region of “Prespa”

**February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**Hotel “Milenium Palace”, Ohrid**

**Republic of Macedonia**



## Participants in the meeting:

The structure of participants in the 16<sup>th</sup> Stakeholder Group meeting included 35 participants from the Prespa Region. The meeting was organized and facilitated by the staff of the Project Management Unit, with the assistance of the President and Vice President of the Stakeholders Group for the Prespa cross – border region.

The full list of participants' contacts and details can be found at:

**ANNEX 1:** Participants list of 16<sup>th</sup> Prespa stakeholder group meeting 24.02.2017

**ANNEX 2:** PPP\_Prespa achievement and results December 2016 – February 2017

## Program of the meeting:

### 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Stakeholders Group for the Cross-Border Region of “Prespa”

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|---------------|---|
| 10:00 – 10:30 | <b>Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering</b>  |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | <b>Welcome speech</b><br><i>H.E. Stojan Karajanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia in the Republic of Albania</i><br><i>Ms. Viola Bogdani, President of SHG “Prespa” Cross-border Region</i><br><i>Mr. Naume Tashovski, Vice President of SHG “Prespa” Cross-border Region</i><br><i>Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Project Manager in SWG</i>   |
| 10:45 – 10:50 | <b>Introduction to the programme</b><br><i>Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Prespa” Cross-border Region</i>  |
| 10:50 – 11:10 | <b>Overview of the activities within the EU project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration”</b><br><i>Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Project Manager in SWG</i>  |
| 11:10 – 11:40 | <b>Overview of general and future activities related to implementation of ABDA in “Prespa” Cross-Border region (period December 2016 – February 2017)</b><br><i>Discussion on finished and upcoming calls for project proposals in the “Prespa” cross-border region, with an overview of IPA CBC</i><br><i>Ms. Etleva Thimo, Regional Coordinator of “Prespa” Cross-border Region</i> |



- 11:40 – 12:00      **Coffee Break**
- 12:00 – 12:30      **Discussion about future activities related to implementation of "People to People" actions in "Prespa" cross-border region**  
*Overview of the preapproved "People-to-People" activities:*
- *Improvement of waste management systems in the cross-border region of Prespa*
  - *Outdoor camp Lagadin*
  - *Agriculture Cooperatives in the Prespa Region - Workshop*
- Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of "Prespa" Cross-border Region*
- 12:30 – 13:00      **Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project**  
*Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of "Prespa" Cross-border Region*
- 13:00 – 13:30      **Conclusions and future activities**
- 13:30 – 15:00      **Lunch**
- 15:00                **Departure of the participants**

### **Minutes of the meeting**

The meeting started with the welcome speech of the President and Vice President of the stakeholder group for the Prespa cross-border region, Ms. Viola Bogdani and Mr. Naume Tashovski. They welcomed the participants and expressed their pleasure for the enlarged presence of the stakeholder group members in the 16<sup>th</sup> stakeholder group meeting. In addition, they stressed the importance of these meetings and confirmed the intensification of good cooperation between stakeholders in Prespa region through the organization of different activities and joint events supported under People to People program.

On behalf of the Macedonian Embassy in Albania - H.E. Stojan Karajanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia in the Republic of Albania, also welcomed the participants and confirmed the great value of these meetings, activities and the work done by the stakeholders in Prespa region. He expressed the maximum support of the Macedonian Embassy for future cooperation with the stakeholder group in Prespa and organization of different cross-border activities.

Also, the Project Manager in SWG, Mr. Damjan Surlevski welcomed the participants and wished a fruitful collaboration during the meeting.



After the welcome speech Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of Prespa cross-border region presented in details the program of the meeting, focusing on each session and the issues to be discussed.

## **Session 1**

### **Overview of the activities within the EU project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration”**

The session started with the presentation of Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Project Manager in SWG, who gave an overview of the general performed activities and achievements within the EU project “Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan countries in the process towards EU integration”. The presentation was focused on the facilitation of the economic development in the targeted cross-border regions through continuous dialogue, support and cooperation among the stakeholders, support to political and policy discussions on agriculture and rural development issues and update of the work progress in the three additional cross-border regions of “Pcinja”, “Neretva” and “Prokletije”. Concluding the presentation, Mr. Surlevski emphasized the importance of the integrated economic development as a platform for cooperation between the local population, business sector, farmer’s community and rural community actors in the cross-border region of Prespa, by organizing joint actions, sharing information on resources and marketing of the joint offers.

## **Session 2**

### **Overview of general and future activities related to implementation of ABDA in “Prespa” Cross-Border region (period December 2016 – February 2017) - Discussion on finished and upcoming calls for project proposals in the “Prespa” cross-border region, with an overview of IPA CBC**

The session started with the presentation of Ms. Etleva Thimo, Regional Coordinator for the “Prespa” cross-border region, who gave an overview of the performed activities and general achievements of the ABDA implementation for the period December 2016 – February 2017. The presentation was also focused on the progress and details of actions taken in the last three months, general achievements and information on consultancy support to the stakeholders for preparation of project proposals for different calls. Also, the presentation gave an overview of the call for IPA CBC Program Macedonia-Albania 2014-2020. In this context, the Project Management Unit facilitated the process of development for project proposals and provided support for the establishment of partnership for five applications submitted from members of the Prespa Stakeholder Group, three of which were pre-selected in the first phase of the project evaluation.



The second session was concluded with an open discussion and ideas for future activities in the Prespa region.

During the discussion regarding future activities, under the support of People to People programme was suggested the organization of a traditional fair in Pogradec for the promotion of regional products and the possible support of the yearly activity “Day of Ohrid Lake” promoting heritage values of the region.

In addition, the Executive Director of PONT Ms. Mirjam de Koning made a short introduction of PONT approach and program in Prespa region. She stressed that PONT was established in 2015 with funding from MAVA Foundation and the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), which is working through KfW to support the increasing environmental awareness for the Prespa-Ohrid region and respond to the lack of funding for conservation efforts. As a conservation trust fund, PONT will be able to provide long-term sustainable financing to the region’s national parks and local organizations. Initially PONT will focus its funding on the Prespa lake basin, including the six protected areas surrounding it. Stakeholders were welcomed to contact the Executive Director or visit the official webpage [www.pont.org](http://www.pont.org) for more detailed information.

At the end of the session, Ms. Bojana Jovanovska introduced the possibility for organizing capacity building trainings for the members of the SHG, as well as the grantees of the ABD Grant scheme. The organization of this training is supported by FAO and will include participants from two cross-border regions: Sharra and Prespa. The training will be organized at the end of April, 2017, and there will be an open call for participation during March, 2017. The main goal of the training will be introduction to value chains and presenting good practices for running and development of businesses. Therefore, the training is primarily intended for the business sector, as well as organizations and institutions supporting the development of businesses in the rural areas.

Also, the Project Management Unit and SWG will continue to serve as an information point where members of the stakeholder group will obtain the necessary information on new calls for proposals and programs. The official active web page and Facebook page for the Prespa cross-border region will be updated with relevant information in order to increase the visibility of the work done by the stakeholders. The stakeholders were encouraged and should send relevant information to the PMU to disseminate and increase awareness for the implemented actions and activities within the region. The Project Management Unit will continue to support the preparation of applications for different call for proposals and will provide possible partners for active IPA CBC programs in the region and also other active calls for proposals. Also, the PMU will continue the mapping and facilitate the networking between public and private parties interested to apply to different calls.



### **Session 3**

#### **Discussion about future activities related to implementation of "People to People" actions in "Prespa" cross-border region**

The session started with the presentation of Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager for "Prespa" cross-border region, who gave an overview of the future organization of the People to People activities by the end of this phase of the project. During her presentation, she thanked all partners involved for the organization of the events and invited the organizers for a brief presentation about the organization and the outcomes of the events.

On behalf of the JKP "Proleter", Mr. Naume Tashovski gave an overview regarding the organization of the People-to-People event "Improvement of waste management systems in the cross-border region of Prespa" planned to be organized on 6<sup>th</sup> of March, 2017. He stressed that this event will catalyse the realization of the strategic goals in the cross-border region of Prespa, in terms to increase the cooperation in the field of waste management, organic agriculture and tourism and encourages economic and environmental benefits for the local population in the cross-border region.

Regarding the preapproved activity of the workshop "Agriculture cooperatives in the cross-border region of Prespa", Ms. Bojana Jovanovska informed the stakeholders that the event will take place in Resen, Macedonia in 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, 2017 and as agreed, the SWG team will support the organization of the event, especially regarding logistics issues. The activity is planned to be organized in cooperation with the Korca Regional Directory of Agriculture and the Resen Municipality. This event will especially be useful for the Agriculture Department staff from the Korca region to develop and exchange knowledge, but will also help farmers to create possible cooperation and exchange experience.

The session was concluded with the short presentation of Ms. Iлина Arsova about the organization of "Outdoor cam Lagadin" in Ohrid, planned to be organized in partnership with the Prespa Nation Park on 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> of March, 2017. The "Outdoor camp Lagadin" in Ohrid is an educative weekend camp activity for 15-20 teenage children aged between 14-16, with the main goal to learn and practice skills in nature and mountain according the environmental principles in the Prespa cross-border region.

### **Session 4**

#### **Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project**

In the fifth session, Ms. Bojana Jovanovska presented some unofficial statistical data regarding the application process for the second call of the ABD Grant scheme in the cross-border region of Prespa. She gave a step by step explanation of the whole



process of evaluation of the submitted applications, starting from Analysis 1, Analysis 2, on - spot control and the final decision. She stated that it is expected the evaluation process to be complete by the end of February, 2017, while the applicants will be informed on the outcomes in the beginning of March, 2017. It is expected that the official signing of the grant contracts with the grantees to be realised latest by mid of March, 2017.

She presented some figures regarding the project applications, mentioning that the expectations for the second call in the cross-border region of Prespa have been achieved. In total, there were nineteen (19) project applications submitted, from which nine (9) project applications from Albania and ten (10) from Macedonia. She gave an overview of the current state of the evaluation process, with eleven (11) project applications which are still in the competition. She also stated that the on-spot control is already in the field and the final results are soon to be known.

## **Session 5**

### **Conclusions and future activities**

In the last session the following conclusions were drawn:

- Prespa PMU and SWG will continue to serve as an information point where members of the stakeholder group will obtain the necessary information on new calls for proposals and programs. They will continue to support the preparation of applications for different call for proposals and will provide possible partners for active IPA CBC programs in the region and other open calls;
- The official active web page, Facebook page and the official web page for ABDA for the Prespa cross-border region will continuously be updated with relevant information in order to increase the visibility of the work done by the stakeholders. The stakeholders should also send relevant information to the PMU to disseminate and increase awareness for the implemented actions and activities within the region;
- The Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia in the Republic of Albania confirmed the great value of the activities and the work done by the stakeholders in the Prespa region and expressed the maximum support from the Macedonian Embassy for future cooperation with the stakeholder group in Prespa;
- PONT will support the increasing environmental needs of the Prespa—Ohrid region and respond to the lack of sufficient funding for conservation efforts.



Stakeholders were welcomed to contact PONT or visit the official webpage [www.pont.org](http://www.pont.org) for more detailed information;

- Prespa Project Management Unit will continue to support the coordination and the development of actions for the organization of three People to People activities: “Agriculture cooperatives in the cross-border region of Prespa”, “Outdoor camp Lagadin” and “Improvement of waste management systems in the cross-border region of Prespa”;
- Project Management Unit will inform stakeholders to submit expression of interest for their participation in the capacity building training for the members of the SHG, as well as the grantees of the ABD Grant scheme which will be organized end of April 2017;
- It is expected the evaluation process of the ABD Grant scheme applications to be complete by the end of February, 2017 while the applicants will be informed on the outcomes in the beginning of March, 2017. It is expected that the official signing of the grant contracts with the grantees to be realised latest by mid of March, 2017.

**Prepared by:**

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Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager for “Prespa” cross-border region

