



Minutes from the eight Meeting of the
Stakeholders' Group for the
Cross-border Region of "Prespa"

November 25th, 2014
Royal L Hotel, v.Carev Dvor,



Municipality of Resen, Macedonia

Participants in the meeting:

The structure of participants in the 8th SHG meeting included 32 members and new appointed SHG as a new potential for the SHG Prespa region. The meeting was organized by the staff of the Project Management Unit.

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

ANNEX 1: Participants list of 8th Prespa SHG MEETING 25.11.2014

ANNEX 2: SCAN Participants list of 8th Prespa SHG MEETING 25.11.2014

The program of the meeting

09:30 - 10:00 **Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering**

10:00 – 10:10 **Welcome speech**

Mr. Goko Strezovski, Mayor of Resen

10:10 – 10:20 **Official address and introduction to the programme**

Mrs. Viola Bogdani, President of “Prespa” SHG

Mr. Naume Tashovski, Vice President of “Prespa” SHG

10:20 – 10:50 **Presentation of prepared promotional brochures for “Prespa”
Region and promotion of the region on other events**

Mr. Krste Micalovski, Municipality of Resen

Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Regional Coordinator – “Prespa” CBR

Mrs. Etleva Thimo, Technical Assitant – “Prespa” CBR

10:50 – 11:30 **Progress made regarding people to people actions and
discussion on next steps**

Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Regional Coordinator – “Prespa” CBR

11:30 - 12:00 **Coffee break and snack**

12:00 – 13:30 **Discussion about next phase of ABDA programme**

Ms. Irena Dzimrevska, SWG head of operations

13:30 – 14:00 **Wrap up and Conclusions of the meeting**

Mr. Damjan Surlevski, Regional Coordinator – “Prespa” CBR

14:00 - 15:00 **Lunch break**

15:00 **Departure**



Minutes of the meeting

The meeting started with the welcome speech of the Regional Coordinator of the CBR "Prespa" Mr. Damjan Surlevski, who warmly welcomed the participants and wished a fruitful collaboration between all stakeholders.

On behalf of the Municipality of Resen, the host municipality of this meeting spoke the mayor Mr. Goko Strezovski. He expressed his pleasure for the involvement in such important activities for the Region as well as the responsibility and maximum readiness of Resen Municipality for cooperation in the framework of ABDA program. In addition, Mrs. Viola Bogdani President of the SHG for Prespa Region and Mr. Naume Tashovski, Vice President for SHG of Prespa Region welcomed the participants and presented in details the program of the meeting focusing on each session of the program.

Session 1

Presentation of prepared promotional brochures for "Prespa" Region and promotion of the Region on other events.

The session began with the presentation of Mr. Krste Micalovski, on the promotion of Prespa Region in Euregia Fair 2014, in Leipzig, Germany. Focusing on the importance of Euregia fair, Mr. Micalovski gave detailed information about the visit and event. Participants in the fair were representatives from all Regions, and the main goal was to exchange experience and information in order to encourage cooperation between Regions. The participation in Euregia 2014 provided opportunities for the presentation of Area Based Development Approach in the Western Balkan countries, as well as the cross-border regions of "Prespa", "Shara", "Drina-Tara" and "Drina-Sava".

In addition, Euregia 2014 provided a platform for presentation of innovative ideas, concepts, research findings and best practice examples for local and regional development, as well as opportunities for establishment of cooperative ventures and new partnerships.

Afterwards Mr. Damjan Surlevski made a presentation about prepared brochures in order to promote the Prespa Region. Thus, he stressed the importance of collaboration with the SHG, their contribution, suggestions and comments for the preparation of the Brochures for the CBR of Prespa.

During the meeting stakeholders provided comments, suggestions and asked different questions. Thus, group members appreciated the work done on the elaboration of brochures, their importance on the promotion of the region, and there were given suggestions on translation of brochures into Albanian and Macedonian. It was also stressed the importance of an electronic version in order to post it in other web pages thus increasing its visibility as a good way to promote the Region.

So in addition to this idea, it was suggested to have a new page on social networks as Facebook, which have to be managed in coordination with "Prespa" PMU and



SHG Members. The main aim of this page is to promote all the work and activities realized by the SHG Members in cooperation with SWG.

In addition to activities for the promotion of Region it was suggested the organization of different presentations in various media related to the work and activities carried out in cooperation with SWG.

During the first session it was also suggested that the participation in these kinds of meetings have to be even greater, but this depends on the cost of transport which must be covered by the project, as it is the main problem for many actors to regularly attend these meetings. In response to comments and questions, the facilitators of the meeting thanked the participants for the discussions and provided support for future cooperation. They appreciated concrete ideas and comments stressing the support provided by the project.

During the meeting the discussions were focused on suggestions for increasing the cooperation for promotion of the Region. It was stressed the support for publishing the brochures in regional languages, Albanian and Macedonian. It was also provided support for the electronic version of the brochures and the possibility to print them by group members for promotional purposes.

Session 2

Progress made regarding people to people actions and discussion on next steps

In his presentation Mr. Damjan Surlevski stressed the importance of activities regarding "People to People" actions, focusing on the progress and actions realized so far. The performance of this program is directly linked with the importance of cooperation between main actors. All of the undertaken actions have been a good opportunity to promote the "Prespa" Region, giving to the main actors and target groups the opportunity to share knowledge and information by promoting and trading products in the regional market. Thus the Festival of wine and cheese, as well as Apple Harvest Festival is a good example realized through "People to People" program. These festivals have brought together producers and organizations giving the opportunity to promote traditional food, agricultural products, and handicrafts as well as to establish and enhance regional cooperation.

In various discussions conducted by the stakeholders it was stressed the importance of agriculture development and utilization of the resources in the Region. There were also given suggestions regarding the implementation of workshops or economic forums along with the support of SWG and other institutions as the Municipality of Resen and Korca in order to apply for promotion activities in the Region.

There was also another comment connected to the importance of intervention in infrastructure, which directly impacts on tourism development and promotion of the Region.

So to summarize the discussions and comments, facilitators of the meeting evaluated as very valuable the ideas shared at the meeting and reassured their



support in the implementation of various forums and workshops. Also in the framework of the improvement of road infrastructure, taking in consideration the financial inability of the Communes to intervene, a good possibility can be IPARD II program which is in the stage of preparation and can be a concrete opportunity that can be exploited by regions in need.

Session 3

Discussion about next phase of ABDA programme

At the beginning of this session, Ms. Irena Dzimrevska made a presentation of SWG organization, focusing on the priorities and cooperation of cross-border regions in the Western Balkans.

She presented the main issues of preparatory activities for implementation of ABDA in the Western Balkan countries; test in practice of ABD and implementation of integrated economic development approach in the “Drina - Tara” and “Drina - Sava” cross-border regions; Implementation of integrated economic development approach in the “Drina - Tara” and “Drina - Sava” cross-border regions and ABDA pilot grant scheme as well as the perspective of the program. Regarding the current situation it was discussed on fundamental changes in the IPA management approach towards large-scale projects or funding operations through large Financing Institutes and Facilities. Afterwards the presentation continued with information about Agricultural Policy Forum 2014 (APF), and rural economic development in cross-border regions where ABD methodology is implemented. APF also recommends continuing capacity development activities enhancing the ABD approach, to search for alternative funding, including IPARD and the CBC programmers, to establish cooperation with other initiatives for joint activities and urge the Ministries of Agriculture to include the ABD principles in national rural development policies. At the end it was stressed that the structures are established and are operational, the programming documents are prepared and submitted to EC, the regional stakeholders are expecting the start-up of the implementation phase; the ABDA is included in the strategy paper for 2014-2020 but currently the financial resources are not allocated for the funding of ABDA projects.

In discussions conducted on the third session members of the group stressed that although the prospects for the future were not as expected they were motivated to stay together as a group even in the future. Thus it was suggested that in the future the SWG Head Office and “Prespa” PMU but even SHG members need to identify potential donors in order to apply on new programs. It also stressed the difficulty



faced by some group members to apply to IPA projects. They expressed the need for capacity building on writing project proposals.

In response to comments, the facilitators of the meeting appreciated the suggestions of participants and supported their comments on future cooperation.

Session 4

Conclusions of the meeting

In the last session after a review on the program and discussed issues there were given the following conclusions:

- Prepared promotional brochures for “Prespa” CBR to be distributed electronically and efforts to be made each of the SHG to promote the brochures on their existing web pages of other media.
- The brochures to be translated into local languages (Macedonian and Albanian) on suggestion by the SHG Members;
- Each of the SHG Members will receive certain quantity of the prepared promotional materials in relation to the field of interest and operating area;
- “Prespa” PMU will support discussions and ideas and will help in the matching of the potential actions that could be supported under “People to People” program;
- In order to promote the activities and work done by the “Prespa” SHG, creation of platform for exchange of information is needed. Also establishment of Facebook page will be done in order to easily disseminate the information and news to the SHG Members;
- “Prepsa” PMU to make efforts in emphasizing the importance of reconstruction of the local road infrastructure in “Prespa” region in meetings with relevant authorities;
- “Prespa” PMU office and SWG could serve as an information point where SHG members can obtain information for open calls for projects and programs and could facilitate the process of matching and cooperation in the realization of joint projects and activities in the Region;
- Increased visibility of the activities within ABDA programme is needed and this will be supported by the SHG Members with additional promotion on local level;



- Regarding the Upcoming Tourism Fair in Belgrade which will be great opportunity to promote the Region, the “Prespa” SHG Members will be involved in the process of selection of representative for participation on this Fair.

Prepared by:

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