



## Minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Stakeholders Group for the Cross-Border Region of “Prespa”

**December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Municipality of Devoll, Bilisht**

**Republic of Albania**



## Participants in the meeting:

The structure of participants in the 15<sup>th</sup> Stakeholder Group meeting included 34 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 15<sup>th</sup> Prespa stakeholder group meeting 16.12.2016

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

## Program of the meeting:

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

10:00 – 10:30 Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering

10:30 – 10:45 Welcome speech

Mr. Bledjon Nallbati, Mayor of the Municipality of Devoll

Ms. Viola Bogdani, President of SHG “Prespa” Cross-border Region

Mr. Naume Tashovski, Vice President of SHG “Prespa” Cross-border Region

Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Prespa” Cross-border Region

10:45 – 10:50 Introduction to the programme

Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Prespa” Cross-border Region

10:50 – 11:30 Discussion on "People to People" actions in the "Prespa" cross-border region

*Overview of the finished and preapproved “People-to-People” activities:*

- Korca Apple Fest
- Prespa Business Forum
- Regional Directory of Agriculture Korca
- Destination Management Organization

Ms. Etleva Thimo, Regional Coordinator of “Prespa” Cross-border Region

Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Prespa” Cross-border Region

11:30 – 11:50 Coffee Break



- 11:50 – 12:10 Overview of general and future activities related to implementation of ABDA in “Prespa” Cross-Border region (period September 2016 – December 2016)  
*Discussion on finished and upcoming calls for project proposals in the “Prespa” cross-border region, with an overview of IPA CBC*  
Ms. Etleva Thimo, Regional Coordinator of “Prespa” Cross-border Region  
Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of “Prespa” Cross-border Region
- 12:10 – 12:30 Informative session on the outcomes of the Second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project  
Mr. Darko Buzarovski, Field Officer of “Prespa” Cross-border Region
- 12:30 – 13:00 Conclusions and future activities
- 13:00 – 14:30 Lunch
- 14:30 Departure of the participants

## **Minutes of the meeting**

The meeting started with the welcome speech by Mr. Sokol Hoxha, the Vice-Mayor of Devoll Municipality. On behalf of the Municipality he welcomed the participants and expressed his pleasure for hosting the 15<sup>th</sup> stakeholder group meeting for the first time in the Devoll municipality.

Also, Mr. Naume Tashovski, Vice President of stakeholders group for the Prespa cross-border region, welcomed the participants and stressed the importance of these meetings, wishing for a fruitful collaboration with all the stakeholders.

On behalf of the Macedonian Embassy in Albania - Ms. Atina Nichoska, Counsellor at the Macedonian Embassy in Tirana, also welcomed the participants and confirmed the great value of these meetings, activities and the work done by the stakeholders in Prespa region. She expressed the maximum support of the Macedonian Embassy for future cooperation with the stakeholder group in Prespa and the joint cross-border organization of activities.

In addition, Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager of Prespa cross-border region, thanked the host of the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting – Municipality of Devoll, for the warm hospitality and all the participants for their presence and wished a fruitful work and collaboration with all stakeholders. After the welcome speech she presented in details the program of the meeting, focusing on each session and the issues to be discussed.



## Session 1

### **Discussion on "People to People" actions in the "Prespa" cross-border region- Overview of the finished and preapproved "People-to-People" activities**

The session started with the presentation of Ms. Bojana Jovanovska, Regional Manager for "Prespa" cross-border region, who gave an overview of the performed People to People activities and the future organization of possible preapproved actions. During her presentation, she thanked the organizers and partners involved in the successful implementation of the last People to People activities of "Korca Apple Fest 2016" and "Prespa Business Forum" and invited the organizers for a brief presentation about the organization and the outcomes of the events.

Regarding the preapproved activities, the Director of the Regional Agriculture Directory of Korca gave a short presentation on the already suggested event, the organization of a joint workshop and a study tour to exchange experience about the establishment and operation of agriculture cooperatives in the Prespa region. The presentation focused on the situation in the region, emphasizing the importance and the need of such event, especially in the Korca region, where the process is still ongoing, while in Resen there has been a good progress and functional agriculture cooperatives have been established. This event will help the Agriculture Department staff in the Korca region to develop and exchange knowledge, but will also help farmers to create possible cooperation and exchange experience. During the open discussion regarding the organization of the activity, Resen Municipality really encouraged the idea and suggested to facilitate the partnership for the organization of the event with the agriculture cooperative in Resen. Also, the Director of the Regional Agriculture Directory of Korca confirmed that, after the consultation with the farmers and the staff, they will submit to the Project Management Unit the proposed draft agenda of the event till the end of December 2016. It is planned that the event will take place in Macedonia in March 2017. It has been agreed that the SWG team will support the Agricultural Directory in the organization of the event, especially regarding logistics.

Also, it was decided that, the organizers of all preapproved activities to send the draft applications for the organization of the events to the Project Management Unit till the end of December 2016.

Regarding the discussion on the future activities, the president of the NGO Muzicka Mladina, Mr. Ljupco Krstevski, suggested the organization of a workshop on networking of interested subjects on organic waste management, field demonstration and exchange of experiences between the interested parties in the cross-border region. The draft application for the organization of the event was agreed to be submitted to the Project Management Unit also till the end of December 2016.

In addition, during the session, presentations were given on the already finished People to People activities. So, Mr. Tomi Pikuli made a general presentation



regarding the organization of “Korca Apple Fest 2016”. The event was organized by the NGO AgriNet from Korca, Albania, in partnership with the Municipality of Korca and the Municipality of Resen, and was held on the 2nd of October, 2016 in Dvoran, Albania. The aim of this event was for participants to meet and exchange experiences, methodologies, on the overall apple production process, good positive practices and actions for optimal usage of pesticides in apple production, establishment and creation of network of partners, as well as to intensify the cooperation between the local governments of Resen and Korca.

Also, on behalf of the Municipality of Resen, Mr. Naume Tashovski made a presentation regarding the organization of the “Prespa Business Forum” People to people activity. The event was organized by the Municipality of Resen, in partnership with the Municipality of Korca and the Municipality of Pustec. The event was held from the 1-2 December, 2016 at the hotel “Lakeview” in Otesevo, Macedonia. The main goal of this regional event was to create an opportunity for achievement of greater and wider cooperation in the sectors of tourism, agriculture and food industry, as well as to initiate economic benefit for the local population in the cross-border region of Prespa. The presentations at the Forum were focused on the economic conditions, capacities and opportunities in the three municipalities of the cross-border region of Prespa and were conducted by the representatives from the business sector and the municipalities. The participants also had the opportunity to hold B2B meetings and propose measures and activities which were reflected in the conclusions needed for future action. The second day of the event was dedicated on a study tour where two companies operating in Resen were visited by the participants. Also, direct B2B meetings were organized, for the establishment of possible cooperation between the participants.

## **Session 2**

### **Overview of general and future activities related to implementation of ABDA in “Prespa” Cross-Border region (period September 2016 – December 2016)- 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 ABDA implementation for the period September 2016 – December 2016. 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. The presentation gave an overview of the call for IPA CBC Program Macedonia-Albania 2014-2020, which was closed in November, 2016. In this context, 4 applications have been submitted in which members of the Prespa Stakeholder Group have been one of the applicants. The presentation was concluded with an open discussion and ideas for future activities in the Prespa region.



Also, discussing about the preparation of project proposals, representative stakeholders of Resen Municipality, NGO Agrinet and the National Park Pelister gave an overview about the projects submitted under the IPA CBC Program Macedonia-Albania 2014-2020. During the open discussion stakeholders were encouraged to develop and send to the Project Management Unit further ideas about possible organization of regional events in the Prespa region.

At the end of the discussions it was concluded that 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 in order to disseminate and increase awareness for the implemented actions and activities within the region. 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.

One member of the Group suggested that, not questioning the work of the current presidency of the stakeholder group, the Group should consider future rotation of the presidency. This was suggested since the Operational Protocol has already been adopted and this refreshment of the Group could be more motivational and also productive for the members.

### **Session 3**

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

The session started with a short presentation by Mr. Darko Buzarovski, Field Officer of “Prespa” cross-border region. The presentation gave an overview of the second call of the ABD Grant Scheme for project proposals for integrated economic development. In addition, general information was given regarding the main outcomes of the second call for the Prespa cross-border region. The second call for proposals for the ABD Grant Scheme was officially closed on December 5th 2016 at 16:00 C.E.T. Hence, comparing with the first call, during the second call of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project, the interest, but most importantly, the number of applications has significantly increased. Also, additional information was given regarding the evaluation process and the following steps after the submission of the applications.



The session continued with an open discussion for suggestions and comments. Also, the stakeholders were encouraged to develop and share ideas in order to improve and increase the cooperation in the cross-border region.

## **Session 4**

### **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 new official web page for ABDA for 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 in order to disseminate and increase awareness for the implemented actions and activities within the region;
- Prespa Project Management Unit will continue to support the coordination and will facilitate the partnerships to develop actions for the organization of potential activities (Workshop on agriculture cooperatives in Prespa region and Organic waste management) and other events that can be supported by the People to people program;
- It was officially announced that the draft applications for the preapproved People to People activities should be send to the Project Management Unit by the end of December 2016;
- The stakeholder group should consider future rotation of the presidency;
- Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in South-East Europe in cooperation with GIZ within the project "Rural development through integrated forest and water resources management" (LEIWW), officially closed the Call for proposals on December 5th 2016 at 16:00 C.E.T.
- Comparing with the first call, during the new second call of ABD Grant Scheme, within the LEIWW project, the number of applications and interest was increased. The new second call of ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW



project will create a very good opportunity for Prespa region to show the capacities that the region has and also to contribute in the improvement of the integrated economic development of Prespa region.

**Prepared by:**

Etleva Thimo

Regional Coordinator for “Prespa” Cross-Border Region

