



## Small Grants – Final Completion and Impact Report

**Instructions:** CEPF requires that each grantee report on project results and impacts at the end of their grant. To monitor CEPF's global indicators, CEPF will aggregate the data that you submit with data from other grantees, to determine the overall impact of CEPF investment. The aggregated results of all grantees will be reported on in our annual impact report and other communications materials. Your Final Completion and Impact Report will be posted on the CEPF website.

**Ensure that the information provided pertains to the entire project, from start date to project end date.**

*Please complete all fields and respond to all questions listed below.*

**Organization Legal Name: Une, Gruaja (Me, the Woman), Albania**

**Project Title: Crossing Border for environment protection of Prespa - Ohrid region**

**Grant Number: CEPF-112614**

**Date of Completion of this Report: 9.01.2023.**

**CEPF Hotspot: Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot**

**Strategic Direction: 5: Strengthen the regional conservation community through the sharing of best practices and knowledge among grantees across the hotspot**

**Grant Amount: 11,243.00 USD**

**Project Dates: 1 November 2021 – 30 June 2022**

### PART I: Overview

#### **1. Implementation Partners for this Project (*list each partner and explain how they were involved in the project*)**

**The project's key stakeholders were the 20 most active members of LAG** engaged in ideas and suggestions for the continuation of previously agreed joint work towards the conservation of biodiversity and environment protection. The members of Local Active Groups (LAG) are UG staff, representatives from NGOs, associations of water use, fisheries, forests, local public administrations, specialists from the Municipality, working with water/environment/ territories, the Director of the Office for Projects in the Municipality of Pogradec, Mayor's advisor and the key contact person with UNESCO, staff from RAPA, local media, people active in the environment and others local actors with a stake on environmental issues.

**Through LAG activities, collaboration is ensured with the local government, local agencies, business partners** and the specialists for the environment/territory in the municipality of

Pogradec, as well as **RAPA**, which are important for the fulfillment of the project objectives and the sustainability of this action in the future.

**In addition, 8 environmental NGOs** /active groups in Ohrid and Struga as well as in Korca, Prespa and Tirana have been consulted and expressed their willingness and availability to join and contribute to the establishment of the transboundary network for biodiversity conservation in Prespa –Ohrid Region, furthermore they were contacted via email to send ideas for the continuation of the project and some small action to be supported by UG.

**Local communities** living along the protected area in Pogradec engaged in ecosystem conservation capacity-building activities.

**Media partners** – benefiting from capacity-building activities and stories produced by LAG, Transboundary Network members and community pilot interventions and initiatives.

**Watershed Management Committee** - UG was invited to participate in the Watershed Management Committee for the Ohrid Lake Special High-Level Committee Meeting and had the chance to meet in person with the members of the Committee and to advocate for the presence of the civil society in this Committee according to the Law.

## **2. Summarize the overall results of your project**

From **1 November 2021 – 30 June 2022**, the association “Une, Gruaja” implemented the project “Crossing Border for environment protection of Prespa- Ohrid region”, supported by PONT& CEPF. The project was implemented in the Lake Ohrid Region, the Pogradec Terrestrial/Aquatic Protected Landscape, a World Heritage extension property, and a buffer zone of 27 323ha. The primary purpose of the proposed project was **to strengthen local and regional community-based stakeholders and institutions to come together to safeguard and conserve local biodiversity**. Despite the situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic and freezing winter, UG managed to implement all the planned activities and successfully reached the objectives set in the project.

**Three capacity building and some coaching sessions** took place with LAG (Local Active Group) members to discuss biodiversity needs and concerns and awareness and advocacy actions.

**Twenty members of LAG have enhanced** their capacities on the importance of networking, benefits of biodiversity, and method of cooperation between members in the Ohrid-Prespa region:, unique values, and ecosystem services provided to humans and society; and advocacy for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation - techniques and methods to develop effective advocacy as a local action group. We succeeded in motivating and mobilizing them to join the action as multipliers of activities and advocates for the importance of biodiversity conservation during the project implementation period in our area.

**Good collaboration links are established with the local government** and the specialists for the environment/territory in the municipality of Pogradec, as well as RAPA, which are important for the fulfillment of the project objectives and the sustainability of this action in the future.

**Good collaboration links are established with 8 environmental NGOs** /active groups in Ohrid and Struga as well as in Korça, Prespa and Tirana. They have the will to join and contribute to the establishment of the transboundary network for biodiversity conservation in the Prespa – Ohrid Region.

**The first draft of the Memorandum of Collaboration is concluded.** It is in the course of discussion with the network members and will be finalized and signed during the continuation of the project, by the support of PONT.

- **Around 270 persons** (from the 180 persons planned) **were reached** through the awareness-raising activities with the target groups and broader community.

- **600 respondents completed a structured survey** with 19 questions focusing on the awareness of the community about environment protection and biodiversity conservation needs of the area, the root causes for these problems and the actions needed to be taken. The data generated by the surveys were analysed in a separate report.

- **A brochure** is designed and published with the results of the survey assessment.

The survey assessment was used to raise public activation and participation, design the Advocacy Plan and provided a very useful set of recommendations for UG and other stakeholders involved in biodiversity conservation.

- **A draft advocacy plan for NLAG (Network of Local Active Group) is prepared** (*to be adopted and implemented* during the continuation of the project, with the support of PONT).

- **The attention of wider communities was attracted through media** products and publications, TV spots and videos, posters, banners, informative/awareness brochures, etc.

The YouTube video aims to attract public attention to reduce the risks that threaten biodiversity, such as overgrazing, overusing forests for firewood, overfishing, uncontrolled urbanization, etc.

<https://youtu.be/nSINwqDXhCs>

**3. Briefly describe actual progress towards each planned long-term and short-term impact (as stated in the approved proposal)**

*List each long-term impact from your proposal*

a. Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
Establishment of the cross-boundary alliance with CSOs and management of Wider Prespa Ohrid Area improved	<p>Established cross-boundary collaboration with Local Action Group in Pogradec, 8 other <b>environmental NGOs</b> /active groups in Ohrid and Struga as well as in Korca, Prespa and Tirana who are willing and committed to join and contribute to the establishment of the transboundary network for biodiversity conservation in Prespa–Ohrid Region. It is a newly established structure. In the three coming years we will work altogether to expand the network, establish and consolidate the operational rules and procedures, raise the capacities of the group through trainings, joint actions, etc. A detailed plan is in place and will be followed in the coming period.</p> <p>Members of the network will join forces and work as a group as well as separately to gather and disseminate knowledge and information for the prior and the latest developments with positive or</p>

	<p>negative impact on biodiversity in the area. Together they will be a powerful voice and undertaking joint and separate initiatives which might be awareness raising, advocacy and lobby, concrete actions on the terrain, fundraising engagements, and so on in order to influence the community along with the decision makers for the protection and conservation of biodiversity in the targeted area.</p> <p>In a UNESCO site region with a constantly changing landscape, promoting and creating a culture of cross-border cooperation has never been more important. NGOs on both sides of Lake Ohrid and beyond in Prespa need more time to learn and build relationships with donors, to repair the image of the non-profit sector and to cooperate. Organizations that work in the protection of nature and what we inherit need time to grow. However, the seed has been planted and sustainable growth is just around the corner.</p>
<p>The local action group support by Une Gruaja</p>	<p><b>Network of Local Action Group (NLAG)</b> is composed of 20 members in total. They are active local actors with a stake on environmental issues, representatives from the local environmental non-governmental organizations, resource use associations, informal women and youth groups, RAPA experts, and local authorities. UG staff, representatives from NGOs (Association “Pylli i Blerte”, Local Forum of NGOs in Pogradec, association “Gruaja intelektuale Pogradec”, association Mali i Thate°, Organizata e Menaxhim Peshkimit), water use associations, fisheries, forests, local public administrations, staff from RAPA, and local media, and individuals active in the environment,</p> <p>The beginnings of the local action group in the Wide Ohrid region and the Prespa area was a successful initiative that is intended to be long-term as a model of community action for a more sustainable and improved well being and environmental conditions</p> <p>It follows a sustainable model involving a range of stakeholders. It is recognized that tourism,</p>

	agriculture and non-agriculture sectors need assistance and improvement.

b. Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
<p>1. Increase the capacities of NLAG to be active in preserving biodiversity and the environment in the protected areas in Ohrid-Prespa Region.</p>	<p>The NLAG becomes a significant partner of the Management bodies/authorities in the local, national and transboundary protected areas of LOR. The capacities of NLAG members increased on biodiversity issues, the importance of biodiversity conservation and its impact on socio-economic life, advocacy through networking of environmental actors to influence local government to address problems and take actions to reduce pressures on the lake, as essential prerequisites to accomplish its role in the future. Afterwards, the trained participants transmitted the gained knowledge to inform, educate and collect the community's needs in the awareness meetings they organised.</p> <p><b>Twelve (12) community meetings (focus groups) were held from April – May 2022</b> in the area's villages to assess the community's biodiversity and ecological concerns as well as their capacities and needs for advocating nature and biodiversity conservation. These meetings took place in the villages of Rëmënjë, Çërravë, Lumas, Piskupat, Gështenjas, Mëmëlisht, Çërravë, Udënisht, Alarup and Bletas (Bratomirë) reaching a total of <b>268 persons, out of 160 planed in the project proposal (224 men and 44 women).</b></p> <p><b>Four thematic awareness meetings</b> took place in Pogradec such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Pogradec city was held a meeting with the participation of 25 artisan women,</li> <li>• In the village of Çërrava was held a meeting with the presence of collectors of medicinal and aromatic plants in the cross-border municipal areas of Pogradec and Korca, and</li> <li>• Two meetings with fishermen of the Fisheries Management Organization for</li> </ul>

	Lake Ohrid (Albanian part) in the villages of Udënisht and Piskupat.
2. Establish and sustain an efficient transboundary network of environmental NGOs and other interested stakeholders in Ohrid-Prespa area.	<p>The transboundary network of CSOs is efficiently influencing policy-making in the protected area of both countries</p> <p>A partnership among transboundary NGOs and other interested stakeholders in the environment has been established. LAG members Pogradec: Local Development Agency in Struga, Enheleus Lihnid, Regional Green Center Ohrid, Cist Ohrid, Red Cross, PPNEA, Prespa Albania, AEEM, Tiranë. During the Exchange Workshop, the members of network shared best practices for conserving the environment in Ohrid-Prespa Region, and a Memorandum of Collaboration has been concluded between network members. An advocacy plan has been conducted by actively involving NLAG members and other NGOs in the LOR. By listing a range of issues and recommendations arising from the questionnaire and community meetings, a range of topics has been addressed with the Municipality of Pogradec and respective institutions according to the priorities that the transboundary network agreed.</p>
3. Raise Awareness of community towards sustainable environment through ecologist behavior.	<p>Local communities in transboundary area preserve biodiversity and challenge the threats.</p> <p>More than 50% of local communities living along the LOR has been sensitized on environmental and ecological behavior and innovative ways to contribute to the preservation of biodiversity and the environment in general. Through awareness meetings with community members, meetings with representatives from the businesses operating in the LOR, as well as the meetings organised with interest groups, and fishers' groups, in particular, the communities in these areas is more informed, more educated and able to raise issues and concerns to the relevant bodies.</p>

**4. Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?**

For the first time, UG was invited to participate in the Watershed Management Committee for the Ohrid Lake Special High-Level Committee Meeting and had the chance to meet in person with the members of the Committee and to advocate for the presence of the civil society in this Committee according to the Law. Thus the voice of civil society was conveyed to the Committee. UG and LAG will continue to advocate until they accept representatives from Civil Society in the committee.

UG was introduced with the Rules of procedure on the Watershed Management Committee of the Ohrid Lake Region between the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia. The Article 4 emphasizes that the Joint Committee should be composed among others with one representative from civil society.

Another important document that has been provided was the joint statement by the National Commissions for UNESCO of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Albania on the “the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region”- A World Heritage property.

UG raised capacities and diversified funds. During 11-14 April 2022, UG participated in “CEPF Project Design, Proposal Writing and Fundraising Training Information”. It was a beneficial training with ‘live’ classes with pre-recorded presentations, exercises, templates, and other supporting materials. The main training guide for this programme is the ‘fundraising manual’ entitled “Institutional Fundraising for Conservation Projects” by Maaïke Manten and Caroline Pridham. UG successfully started a communication with a new donor (We Effect) and was able to deliver a three year project proposal that is accepted and is in the process of its reviewing.

**PART II: Project Products/Deliverables**

**5. List each product/deliverable as stated in your approved proposal and describe the results for each of them:**

#	Deliverable Description	Deliverable Update
1	UG and the existing Network of Local Active Group (NLAG) have the capacities to play an active role in protecting biodiversity and the environment in the Ohrid-Prespa area.	A1. Training workshops to increase the capacities of the Network Local Active Group member <b>The 1st training workshop</b> was held on 25.02.2022, under the topic: “The Importance of Networking, Benefits, and Method of Cooperation between Members”, trainer Prof. Dr. Mihallaq Qirjo. The purpose of the training was to provide participants with knowledge on the functioning of a network (formal and informal), its importance and power, communication between network members and the motivation of its members. Attendees in training were 22 representatives (17 male and 5 female) from the NLAG. Participants gained a lot

of information and knowledge on the issue discussed and had the opportunity to share their experience, knowledge, thoughts and opinions, too. They were also involved in functional working groups for some problems.

**The 2nd training workshop** was held on 28.02.2022, trainer Prof. Dr. Ferdinand Bego, under the topic: “Biodiversity in the Ohrid-Prespa region: hotspots, unique values and services ecosystems provide to humans and society”. The purpose of the training was to equip participants with the knowledge and familiarize them with the concepts of Biodiversity, the sixth massive extinction that is happening, its causes and consequences, and why we should conserve biodiversity. What are ecosystem services, and how do they save, preserve, and restore biodiversity? Which are the unique values of the Biodiversity of the Ohrid-Prespa region (Biosphere Reserve)? Main hotspots, goals, and challenges of biodiversity conservation of the Ohrid-Prespa region and how Local Active Group (LAG) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) can contribute towards achieving those goals. Participants in the training were 20 persons (10 male and 10 female) representatives from NLAG.

**The 3rd training workshop** was held on 11.03.2022 (trainer Eldisa Zhebo, under the topic: “Advocacy for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation - Techniques and methods to develop an effective advocacy as a local action group”. The purpose of the training was to define key concepts such as policy, advocacy and policy change, distinguish between policy advocacy and other similar concepts; basic policy development steps and when advocacy activities can be involved to influence the process; identifying 2-3 issues, exploring them and determining the path to the most appropriate solution; defining primary and secondary target audiences (allies and opponents) and using a power map to illustrate their positions on specific policy advocacy objectives; setting up an action plan. Participants in the training were 20 persons (11 male and 9 female), representatives from NLAG.

2	<p>An efficient transboundary network of NGOs and other interested environmental stakeholders is established and sustained at the Ohrid-Prespa area.</p>	<p>A2.1. Foster partnership in the Prespa-Ohrid Region and conclude the Memorandum of Collaboration.</p> <p>The draft of the Cooperation Memorandum for the network, prepared by UG. The draft was prepared both in Albanian and Macedonian languages. The discussion for the draft is in process. The suggestions and recommendations will be reflected in the draft until its finalization and will be signed in December 2022.</p> <p>A2.2. Exchange Workshop for sharing best practices on conservation of the environment in the Ohrid-Prespa Region.</p> <p>UG organized the workshop “Sharing of best practices in environmental conservation in the Ohrid-Prespa region” on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Participants in the training were 30 persons, 14 women and 16 men. LAG members and representatives from CSOs in Ohrid, Struga, Prespa, and Tirana. The workshop's main focus was on sharing the best practices for biodiversity conservation of the environment in the Ohrid-Prespa Region and creating an efficient transboundary network of environmental NGOs and other interested parties in this area to undertake joint initiatives for the conservation of its biodiversity. Presentations were given by UG, PPNEA, Regional Green Center Ohrid, Enheleus Lihnid, Ohrid, Cist Ohrid, LDA, Struga, and AEEM, Tiranë.</p> <p>A2.3. Advocacy in Action – influencing Local Government and institutions on the protected area of the Ohrid-Prespa Region</p> <p>Throughout the project implementation period, the UG project staff was in regular contact with the NLAG members and other project stakeholders through group meetings, individual meetings, and training sessions, during which they presented the problematic issues in LOR. UG prepared a list of</p>

		<p>advocacy issues from all these communications, which was shared with the trainer, E. Zhebo, who facilitated the third training, “Advocacy for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation - Techniques and methods to develop an effective advocacy as a local action group”. After the training, the advocacy expert continued to be in contact with the staff for the project and the NLAG leading the process for the development of the advocacy action plan, <b>“Advocacy in Action – influencing stakeholders on the protected area of Ohrid-Prespa Region”</b>. This document presents an overview of findings related to awareness needs, biodiversity characteristics of the area from the community respondents’ point of view, concerns about activities that harm biodiversity, proposed community interventions for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation, lessons learned and recommendations arising from capacity building meetings with NLAG members, advocacy priorities and actions as well as monitoring and reporting measures.</p>
3	<p>The local Community of the protected area and the large public and businesses of Pogradec Municipality are aware of the importance of a sustainable environment and ecological behaviour.</p>	<p>A3.1. Awareness-raising meetings with interest groups and the community to expand the knowledge/information and identify problematic issues</p> <p><b>Twelve (12) community meetings (focus groups) were held from April – May 2022</b> in the area's villages to assess the community's biodiversity and ecological concerns as well as their capacities and needs for advocating nature and biodiversity conservation. These meetings took place in the villages of Rëmënjë, Çërravë, Lumas, Piskupat, Gështenjas, Mëmëlisht, Çërravë, Udënisht, Alarup and Bletas (Bratomirë) reaching a total of <b>268 persons, out of 160 planed in the project proposal (224 men and 44 women)</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>600 respondents completed a structured survey</b> with 19 questions focusing on the awareness of the community about environmental protection and biodiversity conservation needs of the area, the root causes for these problems and the actions needed to be taken. The data generated by</li> </ul>

		<p>the surveys were analyzed in a separate report.</p> <p>A.3.2. Offline and online Public Campaign on the protected area with citizens of Pogradec and beyond A TV spot was produced focusing on biodiversity conservation, telling people how to reduce the risks that threaten biodiversity, such as overgrazing, overusing forests for firewood, overfishing, uncontrolled urbanization, and pollution from mines and quarries. The spot was published on YouTube of UG, shared on FB and Instagram, and broadcasted on local TV SOT7. The link to the video can be found <a href="#">HERE</a>. Three TV chronicles were broadcasted on the local TV SOT7.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- FB and Instagram posts with information and educational materials were prepared and published online. The posts were about biodiversity issues, consequences of pollution to human health, flora and fauna of Lake Ohrid and rivers, tourism and economy, etc. All the activities were carried out throughout the project, and their photos were published.</li><li>- A Findings &amp; Recommendations brochure was designed, published, and disseminated to the broader community, CSOs, stakeholders, etc. The brochure contains information on the project, its goal, objectives, findings, and recommendations from the questionnaire.</li></ul> <p>A3.3. Visibility of the action To ensure the visibility of the project, two banner roll-ups were printed and used during the project's activities. The banner contains the message: "Bring Change-Protect life, Preserve biodiversity" and the respective logos. In addition, the t-shirts (100 pieces) and eco bags (100 pieces) with the same design and message were printed. During the project period, UG organized or participated in several public events on the occasion of Environmental Days, like World Water Day on 22nd March, Earth Day on 22nd April, World Biodiversity Day on 22nd May, European Day of Parks on 24th May, World Environment Day on 5th June, etc. These Days UG collaborated with the Municipality of Pogradec, Youth Center, Local Education Office,</p>
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		<p>some schools in Pogradec, Bucimas, Cerrave, Lin, etc. Participants were young people, representatives from civil society, local government, teachers, and the wider community, around 850 people. The local media, SOT7- TV and social media covered the events, reaching about 10 000 people.</p>
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**6. Please describe and submit any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.**

- Work Plan on development and maintenance of the network
- Two banner roll-ups printed.
- Questionnaire and survey assessment.
- A brochure designed and published with the results and recommendations from the survey assessment.
- T-shirts printed with the message “Bring Change-Protect life, Preserve biodiversity”.
- Eco –bags printed with the message “Bring Change-Protect life, Preserve biodiversity”.
- Advocacy action plan: **“Advocacy in Action – influencing stakeholders on the protected area of Ohrid-Prespa Region”.**
- Promotional Spot on biodiversity

**PART III: Lessons, Sustainability, Safeguards and Financing**

**Lessons Learned**

**7. Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building.**

“Lessons learned” are experiences you have gained that you think would be valuable successes worth replicating or practices that you would do differently if you had the chance. Consider lessons that would inform project design and implementation, and any other lessons relevant to the conservation community. CEPF Lessons Learned Guidelines are available here: <https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/cepf-lessons-learned-guidelines-english.pdf>.

*Lesson learned 1:*

UG staff and LAG members have enhanced the capacities on the importance of networking, benefits of biodiversity, method of cooperation between members of network in the Ohrid-Prespa region, techniques and methods to develop effective advocacy as a local action group. In 2020 UG initiated the establishment of the **Network of Local Action Group (NLAG)** composed of 20 members in total. They are active local actors with a stake on environmental issues. We succeeded in motivating and mobilizing the main stakeholders of the project to join the action as multipliers of activities and advocators for the importance of biodiversity conservation during the project implementation period in our area. A synergy was created as a result of different experiences and skills the members of LAG brought in place.

Beginnings: Local actors decide to start a joint effort and form an informal group, without any legal basis, but with motivated members. LAG is an active and sustainable mechanism to influencing the attitude of the community and other stakeholders, including decision-makers, business, media, youth, other CSOs, towards conservation of biodiversity, to raise funds for concrete actions, raising public voice, educate and advocate for better conservation of ecosystem of Prespa Ohrid region. It is a good model to be used from other NGOs in the region.

*Lesson learned 2:*

UG designed a yearly calendar of environmental days. UG has always collaborate with schools in order to engage young student in the celebration of eco days, considering the fact that schools has extracurricular hours dedicated to environment protection. The yearly calendar of environmental “days” is a great way that helps “Une, Gruaja” stay engaged in the global environmental movement. The wider public, especially young people is involved with creative engagements. The leaders of the Youth Center near the Municipality of Pogradec expressed their desire and commitment to be a partner with the UG association in the organization of eco days. Next, we will bear in mind to involve NGOs and other partners in cross border area to join us in celebrating those days, increasing the visibility of civil society around Lake Ohrid Region.

**Sustainability / Replication**

**8. Summarize the success or challenges in ensuring the project will be sustained or replicated, including any unplanned activities that are likely to result in increased sustainability or replicability.**

The protection of the environment and preservation/conservation of biodiversity is an important strategic objective in the “Une, Gruaja” strategy, which we will revise in 2023. As a key factor of the civil society in Pogradec, UG will continue to foster collaboration with other NGOs in the Prespa-Ohrid region through the transboundary network, which is established and maintained/sustained as a result of the successful implementation of this project.

The LAG group will be active, and its capacities will be increased. They will be part of advocacy campaigns as foreseen in the advocacy plan designed during the implementation of this 8-month project.

The expansion of the transboundary network will continue with new members and more joint actions. The Work Plan for the development and maintenance of the network will be implemented in the framework of the latest projects of UG.

Public participation in environmental events and decision-making will increase due to our awareness campaigns, information meetings, online education sessions, etc.

UG will further develop a valuable partnership with local authorities, decision-making bodies and management structures to accomplish the objectives and the results foreseen in the UG strategy that is in line with PONT Strategic Framework for the Wider Ohrid Area.

Local Communities and stakeholders of protected areas will be directly involved in concrete pilot ecosystem conservation actions and informed about the values of biodiversity, how it affects the life of people living in the area, and how to react and undertake concrete actions to protect and use natural resources for their wellbeing and socio-economic benefits.

UG is writing a full proposal for a 3-year follow-up project “Local & cross-border actors work together in the environmental protection of the Prespa - Ohrid region”, which will be submitted to PONT and other donors.

## **Safeguards**

- 9. If not listed as a separate Deliverable and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social or environmental safeguards that your project may have triggered.**

UG prepared two essential documents regarding safeguards reports requested by CEPF, such as the “Stakeholder Engagement Plan” and “Health and Safety Plan”. Those two documents helped us prevent and avoid any conflicts during the project implementation. Main stakeholders and local actors supported us because they were part of every project phase.

During the project, according to Albanian Authority's announcements, we stayed updated about measures, rules, mandatories and restrictions related to Covid 19 situations in Albania. UG staff used the experience and adaptability gained during the COVID-19 pandemic to adjust to the post-Covid situation. UG staff planned and implemented all the activities foreseen in the project, respecting all anti-Covid 19 rules: physical distancing, social distancing, mask-wearing, hand hygiene etc.

UG was able to go carefully through risks and assumptions identified in the ‘Project Development Table’ to analyze if the situation has changed, the level of risks identified during the process of designing the project and see if there are other risks to add to the table.

During the implementation of the project UG did not encounter any conflicts. UG followed the mitigation measures foreseen in the work plan for the project. Also, in line with CEPF rules, UG prepared a mechanism grievance text and we published it in the Albanian language on the UG web and FB Page organization. UG did not receive any complaints; on the contrary, we received appreciation and support in the meetings with the community and other focus groups.  
<https://unegrुaja.org.al/>

## **Additional Funding**

- 10. Provide details of any additional funding that you have secured to support this project.**

- a. Total additional funding (US\$) 11,105**

9530 EUR

- b. Type of funding**

Please provide a breakdown of additional funding (counterpart funding and in-kind) by source.

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Type of Funding</b>	<b>Amount</b>
PONT	Co-funding	11,105

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**Additional Comments/Recommendations**

**11. Use this space to provide any further comments or recommendations in relation to your project or CEPF.**

UG is supported for the first time by PONT / CEPF and needs to be familiar with the request of the donors. We appreciate the online meetings with PONT& CEPF - Regional Implementation Team. During the monthly meetings, we have had the opportunity to ask questions to clarify the donor’s requirements better. The sessions were held so that we felt comfortable discussing important issues related to the project implementation. We also had all their understanding when we shared the obstacles and difficulties, especially the risks and delays accompanying the project implementation so far.

During 11-14 April 2022, UG participated in “CEPF Project Design, Proposal Writing and Fundraising Training Information”. It was a beneficial training with ‘live’ classes with pre-recorded presentations, exercises, templates, and other supporting materials. The main training guide for this programme is the ‘fundraising manual’ entitled “Institutional Fundraising for Conservation Projects” by Maaïke Manten and Caroline Pridham. Later, after finishing the training, a donor list with 77 potential donors has been provided for the participants and the possibility to review a proposal for each organization until September 2022. UG appreciated all those resources. The second part of the CEPF fundraising training will be held on 19-21 July 2022.

In June 2022, UG hosted about 12 persons at its office as a part of PONT’s grantee’s training on storytelling with PONT grantees from Albania. The session aimed to learn more about what storytelling is and some storytelling techniques. Besides all the new knowledge, we had the chance to meet other organisations working on an environmental issue that brought their unique experience through images, videos, interviews etc.

We appreciate the care of the two donors regarding the increase of the capacities of the organizations, the main local actors and the networking opportunity.

We strongly recommend that strategic donors like PONT and CEPF continue to support local organisations that show potential for further development, enthusiasm and motivation to work in the project area where they live and work.

**PART IV: Impact at Portfolio and Global Level**

**Contribution to Portfolio Indicators**

**12. In order to measure the results of CEPF investment strategy at the hotspot level, CEPF uses a set of Portfolio Indicators which are presented in the Ecosystem Profile of each hotspot. Please list these below and report on the project’s contribution(s) to them.**

Indicator	Actual Numeric Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
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5.3_Outcome 5_Number of cross-border networking relationship	1	A partnership among transboundary NGOs and other interested stakeholders in the environment has been established. LAG members Pogradec, Local Development Agency in Struga, Enheleus Lihnid, Regional Green Center Ohrid, Cist Ohrid, Red Cross, PPNEA, Prespa Albania, AEEM, Tiranë. A draft MoU is designed. It will be further elaborated and signed in the coming period.

**Contribution to Global Indicators**

**Please report on all Global Indicators that pertain to your project.**

**13. Benefits to Individuals**

**13a. Number of men and women receiving structured training.**

Report on the number of men and women that have benefited from structured training due to your project, such as financial management, beekeeping, horticulture, farming, biological surveys, or how to conduct a patrol.

# of men receiving structured training *	# of women receiving structured training *	Topic(s) of Training
17	5	“The Importance of Networking, Benefits, and Method of Cooperation between Members”
10	10	“Biodiversity in the Ohrid-Prespa region: hotspots, unique values and services ecosystems provide to humans and society”
11	9	“Advocacy for environmental protection and biodiversity conservation - Techniques and methods to develop an

		effective advocacy as a local action group”
22	12	Total number of participants

*\*Please do not count the same person more than once. For example, if 5 men received structured training in beekeeping, and 3 of these also received structured training in project management, the total number of men who benefited from structured training should be 5.*

### 13b. Number of men and women receiving cash benefits.

Report on the number of men and women that had an increase in income or cash (monetary) benefits due to your project from activities such as tourism, handicraft production, increased farm output, increased fishery output, medicinal plant harvest, or payment for conducting patrols.

# of men receiving cash benefits*	# of women receiving cash benefits*	Description of Benefits

*\*Please do not count the same person more than once. For example, if 5 men received cash benefits due to tourism, and 3 of these also received cash benefits from increased income due to handicrafts, the total number of men who received cash benefits should be 5.*

### 14. Protected Areas

#### Number of hectares of protected areas created and/or expanded

Report on the number of hectares of protected areas that have been created or expanded as a result of your project. Protected areas may include private or community reserves, municipal or provincial parks, or other designations where biodiversity conservation is an official management goal.

Name of PA*	Country(s)	Original # of Hectares**	# of Hectares Newly Protected	Year of Legal Declaration/ Expansion	Longitude***	Latitude***

*\* If possible please provide a shape file of the protected area to CEPF.*

*\*\* Enter the original total size, excluding the results of your project. If the protected area was not existing before your project, then enter zero.*

*\*\*\* Indicate the latitude and longitude of the center of the site, to the extent possible, or send a map or shapefile to CEPF. Give geographic coordinates in decimal degrees; latitudes in the Southern Hemisphere and longitudes in the Western Hemisphere should be denoted with a minus sign (example: Latitude 38.123456 Longitude: -77.123456). To obtain the latitude and longitude of your protected area, use googlemap, right click on the center of your protected*

area, and select "What's here?", and copy the latitude and longitude appearing in the popup window.

### 15. Key Biodiversity Area Management

#### Number of hectares of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) with improved management

Report on the number of hectares in KBAs with improved management, where tangible results have been achieved to support conservation, as a result of your project. Examples of improved management include, but are not restricted to: increased patrolling, reduced intensity of snaring, invasive species eradication, reduced incidence of fire, and introduction of sustainable agricultural/fisheries practices. Do not record the entire area covered by the project - only record the number of hectares that have improved management.

If you have recorded part or all of a KBA as newly protected for the indicator entitled "protected areas", and you have also improved its management, you should record the relevant number of hectares for both this indicator and the "protected areas" indicator.

Name of KBA	KBA Code from Ecosystem Profile	# of Hectares Improved *

\* Do not count the same hectares more than once. For example, if 500 hectares were improved due to implementation of a fire management regime in the first year, and 200 of these same 500 hectares were improved due to invasive species removal in the second year, the total number of hectares with improved management would be 500.

### 16. Production landscapes

#### Number of hectares of production landscape with strengthened management of biodiversity

Please report on the number of hectares of production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity, as a result of your project. A production landscape is defined as a landscape where commercial agriculture, forestry or natural product exploitation occurs.

- For an area to be considered as having "strengthened management of biodiversity," it can benefit from a wide range of interventions such as best practices and guidelines implemented, incentive schemes introduced, sites/products certified, and sustainable harvesting regulations introduced.
- Areas that are protected are not included under this indicator, because their hectares are counted elsewhere.
- A Production Landscape can include part or all of an unprotected KBA.

Name of Production Landscape*	# of Hectares with Strengthened Management**	Latitude***	Longitude***	Description of Intervention

*\* If the production landscape does not have a name, provide a brief descriptive name for the landscape.*

*\*\*Do not count the same hectares more than once. For example, if 500 hectares were strengthened due to certification in the first year, and 200 of these same 500 hectares were strengthened due to new harvesting regulations in the second year, the total number of hectares strengthened to date would be 500.*

*\*\*\* Indicate the latitude and longitude of the center of the site, to the extent possible, or send a map or shapefile to CEPF. Give geographic coordinates in decimal degrees; latitudes in the Southern Hemisphere and longitudes in the Western Hemisphere should be denoted with a minus sign (example: Latitude 38.123456 Longitude: -77.123456). To obtain the latitude and longitude of your production landscape, use googlemap, right click on the center of your production landscape, and select "What's here?", and copy the latitude and longitude appearing in the popup window.*

### 17. Benefits to Communities

CEPF wants to record the non-cash benefits received by communities, which can differ to those received by individuals because the benefits are available to a group. CEPF also wants to record, to the extent possible, the number of people within each community who are benefiting. Please report on the characteristics of the communities, the type of benefits that have been received during the project, and the number of men/boys and women/girls from these communities that have benefited, as a result of your project. If exact numbers are not known, please provide an estimate.

Please provide information for all communities that have benefited from project start to project completion.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics (mark with x)							Country of Community	Type of Benefit (mark with x)								# of Beneficiaries	
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists / nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Other*		Increased access to clean water	Increased food security	Increased access to energy	Increased access to public services (e.g. health care, education)	Increased resilience to climate change	Improved land tenure	Improved recognition of traditional knowledge	Improved representation and decision-making in governance forums/structures	Improved access to ecosystem services	# of men and boys benefiting

\*If you marked "Other" to describe the community characteristic, please explain:

**18. Policies, Laws and Regulations**

Report on policies, laws and regulations with conservation provisions that have been enacted or amended, as a result of your project. “Policies” pertain to statements of intent formally adopted or pursued by a government, including at sectoral or sub-national level. “Laws and regulations” pertain to official rules or orders, prescribed by authority. Any law, regulation, decree or order is eligible to be included.

**18a. Name, scope and topic of the policy, law or regulation that has been amended or enacted as a result of your project**

No.	Name of Law, Policy or Regulation	Scope (mark with x)			Topic(s) addressed (mark with x)																
		Local	National	International	Agriculture	Climate	Ecosystem Management	Education	Energy	Fisheries	Forestry	Mining and Quarrying	Planning/Zoning	Pollution	Protected Areas	Species Protection	Tourism	Transportation	Wildlife Trade	Other*	
1																					
2																					
...																					

\* If you selected “other”, please give a brief description of the main topics addressed by the policy, law or regulation.

**18b. For each law, policy or regulation listed above, please provide the requested information in accordance with its assigned number.**

No.	Country(s)	Date enacted/ amended MM/DD/YYYY	Expected impact	Action that you performed to achieve this change
1				

2				
3				

## 19. Biodiversity-friendly Practices

### Number of companies that adopt biodiversity-friendly practices

Please list any companies that have adopted biodiversity-friendly practices as a result of your project. While companies take various forms, for the purposes of CEPF, a company is defined as a for-profit business entity. A biodiversity-friendly practice is one that conserves or uses natural resources in a sustainable manner.

No.	Name of Company	Description of biodiversity-friendly practice adopted during the project	Country(s) where the practice has been adopted by the company
1			
2			
...			

## 20. Networks & Partnerships

### Number of networks and/or partnerships created and/or strengthened

Report on any networks or partnerships between and among civil society groups and other sectors that you have created or strengthened as a result of your project. Networks/partnerships should have some lasting benefit beyond immediate project implementation. Informal networks/partnerships are acceptable. Examples of networks/partnerships include: an alliance of fisherfolk to promote sustainable fisheries practices, a network of environmental journalists, a partnership between one or more NGOs with one or more private sector partners to improve biodiversity management on private lands, or a working group focusing on reptile conservation.

Do not list the partnerships you formed with others to implement this project, unless these partnerships will continue after your project ends.

No.	Name of Network / Partnership	Year established	Did your project establish this Network/ Partnership? Y/N	Country(s) covered	Purpose
1	Transboundary network for biodiversity conservation in the Prespa –Ohrid Region.	2021	Yes	Albania & North Macedonia	Influence the attitude of the community and other stakeholders, including decision-makers, business, media, youth, other CSOs, towards

					<p>conservation of biodiversity, to raise funds for concrete actions, raising public voice, educate and advocate for better conservation of ecosystem of Prespa Ohrid region. The expansion of the transboundary network will continue with new members and more joint actions. The Work Plan for the development and maintenance of the network will be implemented in the framework of the latest projects of UG. Public participation in environmental events and decision-making will increase due to our awareness campaigns, information meetings, online education sessions, etc. UG will further develop a valuable partnership with local authorities, decision-making bodies and management structures to accomplish the objectives and the results foreseen in the UG strategy that is in line with PONT Strategic Framework for the Wider Ohrid Area.</p>
2	NLAG	2020	No	Albania & North Macedonia	<p>To play an active role in advocating and mobilizing the local communities for the protection of biodiversity and the environment in the Ohrid-Prespa area.</p>

					The NLAG was not established as direct results of this particular project, however, it was significantly strengthened through project activities.
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## 21. Sustainable Financing Mechanism

List any functioning sustainable financing mechanisms created or supported by your project. Sustainable financing mechanisms generate funding for the long-term (generally five or more years). These include, but are not limited to, conservation trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, payment for ecosystem service (PES) schemes, and other revenue, fee or tax schemes that generate long-term funding for conservation. To be included, a mechanism must be delivering funds for conservation.

### 21a. Details about the mechanism

No.	Name of Financing Mechanism	Purpose of the Mechanism*	Date of Establishment**	Description***	Countries
1					
2					
3					

\*Please provide a succinct description of the mission of the mechanism.

\*\*Please indicate when the sustainable financing mechanism was officially created. If you do not know the exact date, provide a best estimate.

\*\*\*Description, such as trust fund, endowment, PES scheme, incentive scheme, etc.

### 21b. Performance of the mechanism

For each Financing Mechanism listed previously, please provide the requested information in accordance with its assigned number.

NO.	Project intervention (mark with x)			Has the mechanism disbursed funds to conservation projects?
	Created a mechanism	Supported an existing mechanism	Created and supported a new mechanism	
1				
2				
3				

## 22. Red List Species

If the project included direct conservation interventions that benefited globally threatened species (CR, EN, VU), as per the IUCN Red List, add the species below.

Examples of interventions include: preparation or implementation of a conservation action plan, captive breeding programs, species habitat protection, species monitoring, patrolling to halt wildlife trafficking, and removal of invasive species.

Genus	Species	Common Name (Eng)	Status (VU, EN, CR or Extinct in the Wild)	Intervention	Population Trend at Site (increasing, decreasing, stable or unknown)

**Part V. Information Sharing and CEPF Policy**

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final completion and impact reports are made available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and publicized in our e-newsletter and other communications.

Provide the contact details of your organization (organization name and generic email address) so that interested parties can request further information about your project.

**Organization Name: Une, Gruaja**

**Generic email address: [une\\_gruaja@yahoo.com](mailto:une_gruaja@yahoo.com)**