



Small Grants – Final Completion and Impact Report

Organization Legal Name: ILIRIA-Protection and Social & Environmental Development Association

Project Title: Site Restricted Endemics of Prespa National Park, Albania –Assessment, protection, and in-situ/ex-situ conservation, through involvement of young professionals

Grant Number: CEPF-110721

Date of Completion of this Report: 30 April 2022

CEPF Hotspot: Mediterranean Basin Hotspot

Strategic Direction: 4 strengthen the engagement of civil society to support the conservation of plants that are critically endangered or have highly restricted ranges

Grant Amount: USD 18270

Project Dates: 15.06.2020-15.02.2022

PART I: Overview

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

ILIRIA staff has cooperated with the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (MASA), Research Centre for Environment and Materials, through data and documents exchange and joint decisions on different project issues and activities. With MASA, ILIRA organization established partnership regarding plant species monitoring and assessment. That was aligned with the work MASA was doing on species monitoring and assessment in Galicica National Park (NP) in North Macedonia (bordered with Prespa NP). The main issues discussed/agreed with our partner have been:

- On the establishment of the same methodology for the species monitoring and assessment
- Adaption of Excel Tables (Template) with distribution data (literature, herbarium, and field research data)
- On exchange of opinions about the assessment of the selected local endemic species from Mt. Galichica according to IUCN methodology.
- On the results and findings during the expeditions conducted in the area

-On the conservation measures to be included in the Protected Areas Management Plans and conservation of certain species such as *Dianthus galicicae*, *Centaurea galicicae*, and *Edraianthus horvatii*.

-On the assessment of the threatened risks for the common restricted species

-On the clarification of the taxonomic position of *Helichrysum plicatum*/*H. zivojinii*, *Sempervivum galicum*/*S. ciliosum*, *O. dinarica subsp. weberii* and *Crocus cvijicii*.

So far, the interaction with our partners has been achieved through SKYPE conferences and via e-mails. We have concluded that in the realization of the project activities we did not face special problems, except for the problems related to the pandemic situation, that have interrupted joint meetings in the field. The ILIRIA team will get in touch with the MASA for future cooperation.

2. Summarize the overall results of your project

The main activity of project implementation was the drafting, designation, and printing out of the "Manual on Monitoring and Assessment of Plant Species". The manual, 70 pages, is translated in Albanian language and printed out in 50 color copies. This is first kind of publication in Albania. The book "Endemic Plants and those with limited distribution of the Prespa NP" with 150 pages was also printed, in 400 copies.

The data analyses, collected during the field expeditions are summarized in the drafting of 10 assessed restricted plant endemics and proposed to be included in the national red list of plant species and IUCN Red List. The global assessment for three species (*Centaurea galicicae*, *Centaurea soskae* and *Dianthus galicicae*) is completed by the staff of ILIRIA. Two species, *Acanthus greuterianus* and *Viola eximia subsp. tringiana*, have been identified in the "Prespa" NP and recorded for the first time for the flora of Albania. A new endemic plant species, *Allium albanicum* was identified for the first time in the grazed pastures of Dry Mountain, with a population of 50 mature individuals whereas the other endemics *Centaurea galicicae* was not observed in its known locality. 15-plants of *Chamaecystus pseudojankae* and 15-bulbs of *A. albanicum*, as well as 10-plant species of *Crocus cvijicii* and *Sempervivum ciliosum* and seeds of *Centaurea spp.* and *D. galicicae* were *ex-situ* and *in-situ* cultivated in the Botanical Garden of Tirana and the garden of Prespa NP.

A focus on training meant that young botanists and two officers of Prespa NP participated in the field expeditions and were trained with a standard methodology for monitoring endemic species of the Park. Master students from 2 universities were trained on-line on the IUCN methodology of plant species assessment, and a PhD student and 2 Master students have been engaged with a master thesis, focusing on the study of endangered plants. Staff of RAPA, students, municipality staff and volunteers of CSOs (Friends of Prespa and PPNEA) were also practically trained for using the manual.

A list of recommendations in terms of improving the management and conservation of plant species and habitats that occur within the "Prespa" NP and the western slopes of the Dry Mountain was delivered to the RAPA and to the municipalities of Pustec, Maliq and Devoll.

The regular communication and data collection in the field between ILIRIA staff and MASA (Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts) staff has been quite effective during the project implementation period, in clarification of the taxonomic status for several species, in estimation of the population size and the common threats for transboundary endemics. From the collaboration we learn that different species are not under the same risk in our two countries. The cooperation between us was fruitful and we are obligated to continue for all the transboundary restricted endemics.

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 |
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| <p>Establishment and implementation of conservation measures for restricted endemic plant species in the Prespa region through an integrated management approach based on research, building capacities, and participation.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The implementation of the project “SRE of Prespa NP –Assessment, protection and <i>in-situ/ex-situ</i> conservation, through the involvement of young professionals,” enabled to enlarge the group of Albanian botanists involved in the assessment of restricted endemics of “Prespa” NP, finishing with documentation and description of species biology and ecology for endemic, near-endemic and restricted plant species that fulfill criteria to be classified as pKBA species (15-restricted endemic plant taxa; 8-SCI species or species with conservation interest and 19-taxa that fulfill criteria to be pKBA). 2. 15-plants of <i>C. pseudojankae</i> and 15-bulbs of <i>A. albanicum</i> and 10-plants of <i>Crocus cvijicii</i> and <i>Sempervivum ciliosum</i> as well as the seeds of <i>Centaurea soskae</i> and <i>C. shumkana</i> and <i>D. galicicae</i> were ex-situ and in-situ cultivated in the Botanical Garden of Tirana and the garden of Prespa NP. 3. A list of recommendation for improving management and conservation status of rare and endemic plant was delivered to RAPA Korçë <p>All these achievements provide long term conservation of above-mentioned species and habitats</p> |

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

| Impact Description | Impact Summary |
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| <p>(i) To improve ecological and botanical knowledge, and advance education on the values of endemic species and habitats in Prespa NP.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three young botanists and two officers of Prespa NP also participate in the field expedition and were trained with a standard methodology for monitoring endemic species of the Park in the future. 2. 16-master students have been trained on-line aimed to learn the IUCN methodology of plant species assessment. During 4-days in the labs of Tirana and Vlora Universities, students practiced in species assessment exercises as well and are ready to be involved in the conservation activities and species assessment. 3. 32-people from the staff of RAPA (Korçë), students (young botanists) of Tirana, Vlora, and Korça Universities, staff of Maliqi, Bilishti, and Pogradeci municipalities, and volunteers of CSOs (Friends of Prespa and PPNEA) are also practically trained for using the manual on species monitoring. |
| <p>(ii) To identify, document and assess the restricted endemic species and their habitats needing to be conserved in close collaboration with involved stakeholders.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ten documents of species assessment or “passports” of <i>Allium albanicum</i> EN B1ab(i,iii) + 2b(ii,iv,v); <i>Centaurea Galičicae</i> DD; <i>Crocus cvijicii</i> VU C1C2a; <i>Dianthus Galičicae</i> C1C2a(i,ii); <i>Siler ochridanum</i> EN B1ab(i,v) + 2ab(iii,v); <i>Oxytropis dinarica</i> subsp. <i>weberi</i> EN B1ab(i,v) + 2ab(iii,iv); <i>Sempervivum ciliosum</i> DD assessed for the National Red List, and <i>Centaurea shumkana</i> CR B1ab(i,iii,iv) +2b(ii,iii,v); <i>C. soskae</i> EN B1ab(iii,v) + 2ab(ii,iv) and <i>Chamaecytisus pseudojankae</i> EN B1 2ab(i,iii,v) + 2ab(ii,iv) assessed for the IUCN Red List. 2. The global assessment for three species (<i>Centaurea galicicae</i>, <i>Centurea soskae</i> and <i>Dianthus galicicae</i>) was drafted by ILIRIA staff and sent to the regional assessor officer of IUCN |
| <p>(iii) To enhance academic cooperation and build a solid network of Botanists to assess restricted endemic plants and incorporate biodiversity conservation needs in spatial planning policies of the Prespa ecosystem.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students and academic staff from three universities in Albania: University of Tirana, University of Vlora and University of Korça have been involved in project activities (workshops, field excursions, species assessment and monitoring and shared their experiences in this field. 2. A list of recommendation for improving management and conservation status of |

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| | rare and endemic plant was delivered to RAPA Korçë in order to incorporate those recommendation into new management plan for Prespa NP |
| (iv) To effectively manage the implementation of actions and coordinate all stakeholders to protect the Prespa ecosystem. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very good cooperation was established with municipalities of Pustec and Maliq staff. Informed them about location of importance of rare and endemic plants and asked them to contribute in protection of those sites. 2. Permanent cooperation was established with RAPA Korçë and NAPA in performing field visits, trainings, species identification and assessment. 3. Informed and exchanged information with other relevant stakeholders (KfW project for Prespa NP, schools, NGOs etc.) 4. Involved three main universities in project activities. |

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

Covid-19 situation - It has been a major and ongoing problem that has affected most of the project activities. Especially the cross-border cooperation with colleagues from North Macedonia has been completely conditioned by this situation. For the same reason, activity 1.4: Presentation of plant diversity of the Prespa NP in Scientific events was not completed. The congress has been postponed without a date set for when it will take place.

We failed in the first attempt at seed cultivation. The collected seeds of *D. galicicae*, *C. soskae* were first cultivated in the Botanical Garden (Tirana) on March 8, 2021, and began to germinate after 12-days, but they were destroyed after the fall of snow accompanied by following a week of frost. Luckily, we had saved about half of the seeds of *C. soskae* and 50-seeds of *C. shumkana*, collected 2-years ago from the species author (L.SH), which were cultivated again on 28 March, in the Botanical Garden and a private farm in the village Sovjan, Korça district.

We did not agree in our attempt to have a common map with our partners (MASA) for the distribution of transboundary endemics and to have a joint assessment of this species at the global level. In this case, ILIRIA experts did assess the three threatened species at the global level and continued with the maps prepared by our GIS expert.

The first programmatic difficulty that arose after the implementation of the first activity (1.1) was the preparation of the “Manual on Monitoring and Assessment of Plant Species” in the English language. The stakeholders have proposed to have it in Albanian and printed because it will be used by employees of RAPAs and volunteers who do not know this technical language. Based on this fact, and also on the request of other stakeholders for translation in Albanian, ILIRIA re-allocated funds and translated it.

Two photos from the Prespa NP have been sent and accepted to the CEPF annual photo contests.

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 |
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| 1 | <p>The gap of knowledge on plant endemics and KBA species is reduced and the importance for conservation of threatened species in Prespa NP is increased.</p> | <p><i>1.1 Preparation of Manual of assessment and monitoring of threatened plant species</i> Drafting and printing the Manual of assessment and monitoring of threatened plant species. This is first time in Albania this kind of manual is prepared and delivered to RAPA/NAPA staff and other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p><i>1.2 Publishing (editing and printing) of Booklet with a description of restricted endemic taxa and KBA species, and a photo exhibition of the Prespa NP</i> Publishing (editing and printing) the book with a description of restricted endemic taxa and KBA species, and a photo exhibition of the Prespa NP has fulfill the gap of knowledge on the restricted endemics and pKBA species of the “Prespa” NP. A book with 150 pages was drafted, edited, and printed out in 400 copies. The book is printed in Albanian language in high-quality paper and colors.</p> <p><i>1.3 Presentation of the Park values (endemic plants, booklet) in the local schools, local authorities, TV, Park web page, social media, have made more touchable the biological values “Prespa” NP. etc.</i> A photo-exhibitions with 46 photos from Prespa NP values have been exposed in 3-events, the High school of Podgorie, Pustec, and the Final workshop in Korça. Two environmental education activities are organized in Podgorie and Pustec. Two vlogs are also prepared and displayed on YouTube in which the touristic values and attractiveness of PK “Prespa” are promoted.</p> |

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| 2. | <p>A Comprehensive dataset containing all available data on geographic distribution, population size, localities of all restricted endemics are collected after stakeholder's training.</p> | <p><i>2.1 Training Workshop</i> 12-Power Point Presentations in Albanian have been prepared. The project staff decided to develop a full module with young botanists for their training with methodology and necessary practical skills in order to be able to assess the plant species, based on the IUCN guideline (Guidelines for Using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria) for species assessment. 16-students of master's degree in Environmental Biology participated in that training on theoretical module for assessment of species using the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, Version 14. 32-people from the staff of RAPA (Korçë), students (young botanists) of Tirana, Vlora and Korça Universities, staff of Maliqi, Bilishti and Pogradeci municipalities and volunteers of CSOs (Friends of Prespa and PPNEA) are also practically trained for using of manual. The training workshop was organized in 2-days, in Lesser Prespa and Macro Prespa Lakes. 10 people are trained in the field during project implementation (3 students + 1 PhD students + 4 RAPA staff + 2 ILIRIA staff) on plant identification, monitoring and assessment.</p> <p><i>2.2 and 2.3 Observation, identification and monitoring of restricted endemics and their habitats on terrestrial part of the park</i> Fieldwork was conducted from July 2020 to December 2021. During field survey and plant collection, we used the standard methodology described in the Manual for Plant Species Monitoring and Assessment. The focus of our expeditions was observation and monitoring of the current state of restricted endemic species of Prespa NP, their distribution and habitat of growing, and other aspects of their ecology. Data on the number of locations, numbers of mature individuals, flowering and fruiting period, companion species, and habitat types of <i>Laserpitium ochridanum</i>, <i>Centaurea soskae</i>, <i>Chamaecytisus pseudojankae</i>, <i>Edraianthus horvatii</i>, <i>Sempervivum ciliosum</i>, <i>Oxytropis dinarica subsp. weberi</i> and <i>Dianthus galicicae</i> have been collected. A new endemic plant species, <i>Allium albanicum</i> was identified for the first time in the grazed pastures of Dry Mountain on 2 August 2020, with a population of 50 mature individuals whereas the other endemics</p> |
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| | | <p><i>Centaurea galicicae</i> was not observed in its known locality.</p> <p>In the field, expeditions have been actively participated and trained one Ph.D. student (D. Shuka) and 3-young botanists (R. Kodra, F. Muçollari and Xh. Adillari) and two-member staff of Prespa NP, O. Duma and V. Male as well as two-member staff of RAPA Korçë from Pogradeci. A drone (MAVIC 2 PRO) with a double battery and memory card has been used in the field for rocky slope habitats and species monitoring.</p> <p><i>2.4 Desk work: Data processing and species assessment</i></p> <p>The desk work consisted on data collection from literature and calculation of the population size for the investigated species and others. In totals, data on locations, coordinates, altitudes, population size, collector, and date of collection/observation and cited literature for 12 plant species (<i>A. albanicum</i>, <i>C. pseudojankae</i>, <i>C. shumkana</i>, <i>C. galicicae</i>, <i>C. soskae</i>, <i>L. ochridanum</i>, <i>C. cvijicii</i>, <i>D. galicicae</i>, <i>E. horvatii</i>, <i>F. galicicae</i>, <i>Oxytropis dinarica subsp. weberi</i> and <i>S. ciliosum</i>) is achieved and shared with partners and stakeholders. From the desk work results that 19-species that fulfill the criteria to be pKBA-s have been identified during the observations in the terrain during field trips of the summer and autumn of 2020 and 2021. The collected data have been used for the assessment of current status of 10-plant species (see above)</p> |
| 3 | Landscape-scale conservation planning and incorporation of conservation policies in the Prespa Management Plan | <p><i>3.1 Observations on grazing regime/discussion with shepherds/mapping of sensitive habitats and threatened species in grasslands</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the field trips, the project team met with four local shepherds, from the villages Bratomirë and Podgorie on the western slopes of Dry Mountain and the ridge of this mountain and two other shepherds in Lesser Prespa area. 2. Grazing pressures were observed near villages and alpine grasslands of Dry Mt, but not within the territory of NP of Prespa. 3. ILIRIA has proposed a change of the zonation of the Prespa NP, including in the core zone the rocky slopes of the Prespa Lake in the Gollomboçi peninsula and the cliffs on the right side of Leaser Prespa. |

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| | | <p>4. The ILIRIA staff have proposed to the directorate of forestry in Maliq Municipality a time-table grazing regime, according to the altitudes of pastures in the subalpine and alpine zone of Dry Mt under the administration of this municipality.</p> <p><i>3.2 Preparation of the Red List of plant endemics and presentation of conservation policies to RAPA/NAPA authorities for incorporation in new Management Plan of Prespa NP.</i></p> <p>A package of recommendations in terms of improving the management and conservation of plant species and habitats that occur within the “Prespa” NP and the western slopes of the Dry Mountain, resulting from the field observation and data analyses, have been made known to the Directorate of RAPA (Korçë) and NAPA (MoTE).</p> <p>On the field expeditions living plants of <i>Chamaecytisus pseudojankae</i>, <i>Crocus cvijicii</i>, <i>Sempervivum ciliosum</i>, and <i>Allium albanicum</i> have been successfully translocated for <i>ex-situ</i> conservation in the center of the “Prespa” NP and Botanical Garden of Tirana. Furthermore, young seedlings and seeds of <i>Dianthus Galicicae</i>, <i>Centaurea soskae</i> and <i>C. shumkana</i> have been planted <i>in situ</i> in openings of western slopes of Dry Mt.</p> |
| 4 | <p>A group of Botanists among two countries were identified and cooperation with Partner for assessment of threatened species in transboundary ecosystems is strengthened.</p> | <p><i>4.1 Preparation of the road map for collaboration and implementation schedule, and identification of a group of experts for the assessment of threatened transboundary plant species.</i></p> <p>A group of 4 botanists from N. Macedonia and 3 from Albania discussed in principle about the way of cooperation within the project, the meetings that will be realized, the species that will be evaluated and the way that will be followed for the successful realization of the project activities. Among others, was discussed and agreed on assessment of threatened transboundary plant species in both countries with the focus Dry mnt./Galicica. Discussions were initially done online and by email.</p> <p><i>4.2 Joint observations with partners for sharing the experience on data collection and assessment of endemic plants.</i></p> <p>The regular communication and data collection in the field between ILIRIA staff and MASA staff (North Macedonia) has been quite effective particularly in terms</p> |

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| | | <p>of building a solid network among botanists of both countries, and incorporating biodiversity conservation needs in spatial planning policies of the Prespa ecosystem.</p> <p>Both staffs have been working together for assessment of the habitat types and risks to restricted endemics such as <i>Dianthus Galicicae</i>, <i>Festuca Galicicae</i>, and <i>Laserpitium ochridanum</i> and have shared data for the assessment of six restricted endemic species of Dry and Galichica Mts. With MASA (from N. Macedonia), we have had a monthly SKYPE conference, where we have discussions about all the planned activities and the activities implemented so far within the project.</p> <p>The collected data in the field and other documents linked with the project results have been shared by e-mail.</p> <p><i>Activity 4.3 Joint meeting with partner experts and staff of Galicica NP for evaluation of threatened habitats at the landscape scale and risk assessment.</i></p> <p>The meeting with MASA (N. Macedonian partner) was organized on July 9, 2021. In the meeting both staffs have been discussed further trainings of the young botanists for plant monitoring and assessment; the joint assessment of three local endemic plants; on the possibility of other cooperation in terms of conservation of threatened plant species in the cross-border areas. Together with the assessment was provided the distribution maps according to GeoCat, as well the respective information to calculate AOO and EOO for each of those species.</p> |
| 5 | <p>The health of transboundary habitats is monitored, conservation in situ and ex situ of CR/EN plant species is implementing and conservation policies are proposed.</p> | <p><i>5.1 Collection and cultivation of threatened endemic plants in situ and ex situ by seeds.</i></p> <p>During field expeditions, are collected the seeds of <i>C. pseudojankae</i>, <i>C. cvijicii</i>, <i>S. ciliosum</i> and <i>A. albanicum</i> and they are cultivated ex-situ in the garden of visitor center in Prespa N. Park and in botanical garden of Tirana.</p> <p><i>5.2 Preparation of the list of CR species and the proposal for the IUCN authorities. Presentation of conservation policies to the legal institutions (MoTE and MOEPP).</i></p> <p>Data collected enables us to assess the current protection status of 10-restricted endemic plant species. 10 documents of assessed species or “passports” of <i>Allium albanicum</i> EN B1ab(i,iii) + 2b(ii,iv,v); <i>Centaurea galicicae</i> DD; <i>Crocus cvijicii</i> VU C1C2a; <i>Dianthus galicicae</i></p> |

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| | | <p>C1C2a(i,ii); <i>Siler ochridanum</i> EN B1ab(i,v) + 2ab(iii,v); <i>Oxytropis dinarica subsp. weberi</i> EN B1ab(i,v) +2ab(iii,iv); <i>Sempervivum ciliosum</i> DD assessed for the National Red List, and <i>Centaurea shumkana</i> CR B1ab(i,iii,iv) +2b(ii,iii,v); <i>C. soskae</i> ENB1ab(iii,v) + 2ab(ii,iv) and <i>Chamaecytisus pseudojankae</i> EN B1 2ab(i,iii,v) + 2ab(ii,iv) assessed for the IUCN Red List are under investigation from the respective authorities for the final decision.</p> |
| 6 | Effective coordination with Project Partner and Stakeholders | <p>Preparation and submission of the midterm report covering the period July, 2020-March, 2021 was delivered on time as planned.</p> <p>Regular correspondence with project partners via monthly SKYPE conferences and e-mail have been organized.</p> <p>A meeting among the selected botanist of both countries was also held in Krani (North Macedonia) on July 8 and 9, 2021. The communication and collaboration with partners of MASA, continue, even and after project competition.</p> <p>Permanent cooperation with NAPA and RAPA Korçë, municipalities of Pustec and Maliq, have been key success on implementation the project activities.</p> <p>The final workshop was attended by 32-people with participation of the staff on RAPA and “Prespa” NP, students and representatives from NGOs (Friends of Prespa and PPNEA) as well as representatives of Pusteci, Maliqi, Korca and Devolli municipalities.</p> <p>In the final workshop was envisaged to enforce the continuous communication and collaboration with the partners of MASA and Galicica NP staff, focusing in information and coordination in case of accidents and promoting transboundary touristic activities.</p> |
| 7 | Enhanced capacity of project Team | <p>The legal representative of ILIRIA has managed the project implementation and has provided all documents and reports to other stakeholders and project supporters. With participation of young botanists in species monitoring, drafting and assessment the project team was enlarged.</p> <p>The active participation of other trained students in the implemented activities have also strengthen the management capacity of ILIRIA in the field, for this reason ILIRIA has planned to invite and include some of them in the future projects and events.</p> |

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| | | Two people from ILIRIA organization are trained in the field during project implementation on plant identification, monitoring and assessment. |
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6. Please describe and submit any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

The first document, produced in the frame of the project is the “Manual on Monitoring and Assessment of Plant Species”. The manual is the main document that describes methodological bases for species monitoring and assessment, delivered to the RAPA/NAPA and participants of the training.

Passports of 10 assessed restricted plant endemics and proposal to be included in the national red list of plant species was done. The global assessment for three species (*Centaurea galicicae*, *Centurea soskae* and *Dianthus galicicae*) is completed by the staff of ILIRIA.

6 different maps presenting; rare and endemic species distribution, grid map, 3D maps, topography etc. They were used for presenting of species distribution, new proposal for the changed zonation and the habitat type of species occurrence.

12-Power Point Presentations, presented with students of Tirana and Vlora Universities have been delivered to the RAPA directory and to the other students.

A preliminary report in Albanian language, named “Disa propozime për ndryshimin e Menaxhimit të PK Prespë dhe në shpatet perndimore të Malit të Thatë” (Some proposals to be included in the Management Plan of Prespa NP and in the western slopes of Dry Mt. 10-pages” were delivered to the National Association of Albanian Parks, team leader and staff of KfW project “*Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa*” and RAPA-Korçë).

Two photos from the Prespa NP have been sent and accepted to the CEPF annual photo contests.

A news on “Two new plant species discovered in Prespa” was drafted and announced.

The social media and a YouTube channel of D. Shuka was used successfully to rise community awareness, so four news have been posted from the Prespa NP in the web of “Flora Shqiptare” on the species *Sempervivum ciliosum*, *Helichrisum plicatum*, *Lilium chalconicum*, *Juniperus communis* subsp. *alpine* and *Crataegus orientalis*.

- <https://m.facebook.com/groups/2128221434068192/permalink/2934683890088605/>
- <https://m.facebook.com/groups/2128221434068192/permalink/2933253880231606/>
- <https://m.facebook.com/groups/2128221434068192/permalink/2931317127091948/>
- <https://m.facebook.com/groups/2128221434068192/permalink/2814172738806388/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/dikua/posts/10159561592189431>
- <https://www.facebook.com/dikua/posts/10159561592189431>,
- <https://www.facebook.com/dikua/posts/10159563334089431>
- <https://www.facebook.com/dikua/posts/10159561592189431>

The two main documents drafted, designed, edited, and printed out; “Manual of Monitoring and Assessment of Plant Species” and “Endemic Plants and those with limited distribution of the Prespa NP” are now part of the NAPA web page;

- <http://akzm.gov.al/uploads/dokumente-1644840944778.pdf>
- <http://akzm.gov.al/publikime/62062b74eb221f961af8693c>

Same documents: “Manual of Monitoring and Assessment of Plant Species” and “Endemic Plants and those with limited distribution of the Prespa NP” are part of web-page of ILIRIA www.iliria-al.org ;

- http://iliria-al.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/SodaPDF-compressed-Bimet-endemike-dhe-ato-me-perhapje-te-kufizuar-PK-Prespa_final_reduce-compressed-3.pdf
- <http://iliria-al.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/manu.pdf>

Two vlogs are prepared, as an additional output of the project, in order to promote the values of the “Prespa” NP in youtube channel of D. Shukain voluntary base;

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0B_13qiKcU
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oft1KQkDBFA>.

The vlogs have been attended by more than 2,600 views each.

The visibility and attraction of the “Prespa” NP were increased also through the information spread by the website of ILIRIA and Facebook of the ILIRIA staff after each activity developed. The number of likes on Facebook for the photos of different activities, carried out in the frame of project implementation is more than 1,000 (see the links below).

- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/4243092112457243>
- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/4246290805470707>
- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/3617315005034960>
- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/3619465838153210>
- <https://www.facebook.com/dikua/posts/10159561592189431>
- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/4231748370258284>
- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/4210813655685089>
- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/4207558746010580>
- <https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7>

Some specific publications are those related to specific species.

- Shafran i Veluçit (*Crocus veluchensis* Herbert)

<https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/3481583125274816>

- Zambaku i Bardhë (*Lilium candidum*)

<https://www.facebook.com/dikua/posts/10159230086629431>

- Alkanë (*Alkana noneiformis* Griseb.)

<https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/3478608818905580>

- Manushaqe e Etolisë (*Viola aetolica* Boiss. & Heldr.)

<https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/3473887066044422>

- Shafran Luleartë (*Crocus chrysanthus* Herbert)

<https://www.facebook.com/iliria.alb.7/posts/3472120516221077>

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>.

During this project the following lessons turn to thinking about the future actions:

-The first lesson learned from our experience in the project implementation was that combination of different methods in biodiversity monitoring and assessment is more resultative. In our case, combination of the large-scale transects with that of “free walking” or “Mashrut”, was decisive in identification of new localities for all of restricted endemics. The great contribution in the identification of the new localities for 13-restricted endemics from 15 in total were provided from the cooperation and joint observations with the staff of “Prespa” NP and shepherds that operate in the territories out of the park.

-Using of Drone Mavic 2 Pro (provided in the frame of project) in plant cover monitoring of different species and habitat types and observation of species in the habitats that cannot be physically visited, was the best practice for successfully implemented activities in population counting/calculation and plant communities identification, particularly in the forested areas and water plant cover vegetation. The archive of the aerial photos, taking from the drone, will be a good base for continuous analyses of the plant cover dynamics on these habitats.

-Printing the large photos of threatened species and habitat types and using them in photo-exhibition as “instrument” for species/habitat identification as well as publication of the book, has helped and made the botanical values and beauties of the “Prespa” NP, easily tangible and soundable to the local community, students and local governance. Photos have served as a very good instrument to reflect natural reality.

-We use different ways to inform the community in time and to present the activities carried out within the project. The most effective were the use of Facebook and the vlogs.

-In Albania there is a great lack of publications on nature conservation. The publications realized within this project are very welcomed by everyone, especially the RAPA, NAPA, and CSO staff that operate in nature protection. Such future publications are very welcome.

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.

One of the most important outputs of the project is the "Manual of Monitoring and Assessment of Plant Species". The trainings that the ILIRIA organization has conducted in the field, as well as the theoretical ones, have made the local staff of NP Prespa and RAPA Korca have basic knowledge regarding the monitoring of plant species. In this context, the beginning of this process is now possible to be done by the park staff themselves, who will still have to support the following. This is in order to create a 'routine practice' and continuous plant monitoring process. This will bring very positive effects in terms of the management of NP Prespa.

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.

Project did not trigger any safeguard.

Additional Funding

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

The project was financed by Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund ("CEPF") and Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust (PONT) in a total amount of 36,540 USD, from which 50% by the CEPF and 50% by PONT, respectively.

a. Total additional funding (US\$)

Total additional funding from PONT was USD 19,293.

b. Type of funding

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

| Donor | Type of Funding | Amount, US\$ |
|-------|----------------------------|--------------|
| | Cash (Iliria contribution) | 419 |
| PONT | Cash fund | 18,874 |
| Total | | 19,293 |

Additional Comments/Recommendations

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

Based on the previous experience in the Prespa NP and the lesson learn about the inability of some species to form seeds due to extended drought during the summer months, we think that more in-depth studies should be undertaken in the future on the role of global warming in case of specific ecosystems and measures to be undertaken to prevent the negative effects on plant species.

The identification of the new locality of *Allium albanicum* in the Dry Mt and some other species in the Greek Part of Prespa, shows also that the observation and the study of plant diversity in the Prespa ecosystem cannot be considered complete.

We also suggest that the common studies on the indicator species and endemics that occur in transboundary ecosystems should be supported by donors in the future. Only the common efforts can produce better results in habitat species protection and conservation.

To improve the management of the park, the mapping of its vegetation based on the NATURA2000 approach is necessary.

It is also necessary to make an overall assessment of the impact of climate change on the park. Impact assessment is also needed for rare and endemic species.

The park staff should start monitoring rare and endemic plants, based on the preparation manual in the framework of this project.

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 |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| 4.1 Number of threatened plant species seeing status improved | 1 | 1. Establishment of grazing regime and 2. Enlarge the Prespa NP surface towards the rocky slopes of Shengjergji and Bregas villages. With this enlargement 80 % of species population will be within the NP borders, from 55 % that is currently. Population is expected to be stable / increasing. |

| | | |
|--|----|--|
| 4.4 Number of protected area managers demonstrating improved skills and knowledge on plant conservation | 16 | In Total 16 people were involved in project activities, from which; 13 people from RAPA Korce and 3 people from NAPA |
| 4.5 Number of locally endemic or highly threatened plant species for which improved knowledge is available | 15 | <i>Allium albanicum, Siler ochridanum, Centaurea galicicae, Centaurea shumkana, Centaurea soskae, Centaurea soskae subsp. albida, Edraianthus horvatii, Dianthus galicicae, Sempervivum ciliosum, Astragalus mayeri, Chamaecytisus pseudojankae, Oxytropis dinarica, Crocus cvijicii, Micromeroa cristata subsp. kosanini, Festuca galicicae</i> |
| 4.6 Number of KBAs for which information on plants is improved | 1 | In KBA ALB08 - Prespa lake, are estimated 27 plant species which fulfill criteria to be KBAs. This species contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity under criteria A (Threatened Biodiversity) and B (geographically restricted biodiversity). From 27 species, 15 taxa are restricted endemics, 11- others are threatened species or their populations are small and the number of individuals has less than 500 mature individuals. Two species; <i>Acanthus greuterianus</i> and <i>Viola eximia</i> subsp. <i>tringiana</i>) have been recorded and reported for the first time in the "Prespa" NP. |
| 4.7 Number of young professionals with substantial experience in plant conservation gained | 4 | 3 master students + 1 PhD student of the departments of the Biology from Tirana and Korca Universities have been trained to learn the IUCN methodology of plant species assessment |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 5.3 Number of cross-border networking relationship | 1 | The relationship with MASA (Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts) staff has established and resulted effective in clarification of the taxonomic status for several species, in estimation of the population size and the common threats for trans boundary endemics. The cooperation between us was fruitful and we are obligated to continue for all the trans boundary restricted endemics. |
|--|---|---|

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 |
|--|--|--|
| 5 | 11 | 16 student in three different days about the methodology and practical skills on (i) assessment the plant species, based on the IUCN guideline and (ii) field training regarding plant species monitoring, plant species assessment and using the Manual |
| 10 | 0 | Training during the field expeditions of the project implementation (3 students + 1 PhD students + 4 RAPA staff + 2 ILIRIA staff) |
| 15 | 11 | 26 |

**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 * |
|--------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Prespa Lakes | ALB08 | 0 |
| | | |

** 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 | Improved representation and decision-making in governance forums/structures | Improved access to ecosystem services | # of men and boys benefiting | # of women and girls 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 | MASA (Macedonian Academy of Science and Art) | 2020 | yes | North Macedonia and Albania | Regular communication on the clarification of the taxonomic status for several species, in estimation of the population size and the common threats for |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|------|----|---------|--|
| | | | | | transboundary endemics. The cooperation between us was fruitful and we will continue for all the transboundary restricted endemics. |
| 2 | Department of Biology, Faculty of Natural Sciences at the Tirana University | 2016 | No | Albania | The collaboration with the Department of Biology, FNS, University of Tirana have been installed 6-year before, since 5-experts of different fields from this department have been involved on several projects that our CSO have implemented so far. ILIRIA has planned to continue also in the future this new partnership with Department of Biology, FNS, UT. |

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) |
|----------------|---|---------------------|--|--|---|
| <i>Festuca</i> | <i>Festuca galicicae</i> Horvat ex Markgr.-Dann. | Festuce of Galicica | Vulnerable B1ab(ii,iii)+2ab(ii,iii) | 1. Establishment of grazing regime and 2. Enlarge the Prespa NP surface towards the rocky slopes of Shengjergji and Bregas villages. With this enlargement 80 % of species population will be within the NP borders, from 55 % that is currently. | So far, the population trend was declining due to overgrazing and fires. With two interventions, it will be stable and increased. |

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, 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: ILIRIA-Protection and Social & Environmental Development Association

Generic email address: info@iliria-al.org