

Protecting Lake Ohrid

TOWARDS STRENGTHENED GOVERNANCE OF THE SHARED TRANSBOUNDARY
NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE LAKE OHRID REGION

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“We can't afford to mess up... because a good planet is hard to find -
Mr J. Potocnik, The Former European Commissioner for Environment”

In place of Foreword

Praise for Lake Ohrid region project at the UNESCO World Heritage Committee

During the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee, the EU and Albania funded project "Towards Strengthened Governance of the Shared Transboundary Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Lake Ohrid Region" was cited as a model for World Heritage upstream processes aimed at supporting World Heritage nomination efforts by national and local authorities. The Lake Ohrid project was highlighted for its strong capacity-building components for integrated management and its interlinkages of natural and cultural heritage conservation. In cooperation with the Advisory Bodies (ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN) capacity building activities related to integrated management and other relevant thematic areas, such as collaborative management, value-based promotion and sustainable development are ongoing. The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Albania, the national and regional agencies, the Macedonian counterparts, and ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN, are working closely together to make this project a success. Joint efforts and hard work gets appreciated.



40th session of World Heritage Committee

European Union

"Most probably the biggest challenge we are facing this century is essentially this: how can we live and prosper together on this planet, within the constraints of what our Earth can provide? How do we ensure continued economic growth, win the fight against climate change and adapt to its consequences, eradicate poverty and feed 9 billion people without continuing and exacerbating current patterns of environmental degradation and resource depletion? We all know that business as usual is not an option. But how do we move away from our usual business and how do we do it quickly enough? A focus on a sustainable form of development is therefore crucial and the Lake Ohrid region project is one of the locally-based initiatives that seeks answer to those urgent questions. The development of heritage conservation and sustainable tourism in the region improve life conditions, provide jobs opportunities. The EU is proud to contribute, together with Albania, to the financing of this project. It is in full compliance with the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Stabilisation and Association Agreement, and protect and showcase cultural and natural heritage"

- Antoine Avignon, Program Manager, European Delegation to Albania

Regional Course on Promoting People-Centred Approaches



Photo from regional Course on Promoting People-Centred Approaches: Credits @Unesco

Lake Ohrid welcomed 20 participants from seven southeast Europe countries to discuss how communities can contribute to heritage - and how they can benefit from it. The course on 'Promoting People-Centred Approaches: Engaging Communities in the Conservation of Nature and Culture (PCA16)' was organised by the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and aimed at providing heritage practitioners with the necessary tools for engaging communities in the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. The course, which took place from 4-13 October 2016, was organised in the framework of the project 'Towards strengthened governance of the shared transboundary natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ohrid region' funded by the European Union and the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Albania.



The course was hosted by Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This short course was primarily aimed at heritage practitioners, providing them with the necessary knowledge and tools to work more effectively with stakeholder communities. Engaging communities in conservation and management processes is intended to strengthen their ability to participate meaningfully in the process of making decisions for themselves and their heritage. Following the success of last year's PCA15 course, this regional edition used the Natural and Cultural Heritage of Ohrid Region World Heritage property and its potential transboundary extension for case study visits in order to stimulate discussion and ground debate in the reality of participatory heritage management. In addition, each participant brought their own case study to the course so that information, experiences and challenges faced could be shared by colleagues across the region. The mixed natural and cultural heritage of the Ohrid Region was particularly appropriate for advancing people-centred approaches. Issues regarding the conservation and management of both the cultural and natural aspects of the area demonstrated a paradigm shift towards a more holistic approach which emphasizes the wellbeing of a place and its people. For this reason, PCA participants had been selected from both the natural and cultural heritage sectors. Following an opening session in Tirana hosted by the Albanian Ministry of Culture, the participants worked through a series of visits that saw them completing an entire circle of Lake Ohrid, engaging with its heritage and its residents on the way. A visit to the National Museum of Natural Science 'Dr Nikola

Nezlobinski' in Stuqa looked at the links between nature and culture, as the museum offers a snapshot of the unique flora and fauna in and around Lake Ohrid. Discussion focused on how a museum can contribute to broader agendas for an area. Within the context of Ohrid's historic town centre, participants discovered and debated the benefits and limits of traditional knowledge systems for heritage management. Young masters of century-old crafts, such as filigree and pearl making, as well as religious community members showed their passion in guarding and sharing their heritage. Participants went on to explore the Galicica National Park, from up on the mountain a breath-taking view can be had of the entire Lake Ohrid region. As well as understanding local people's evolving relationship with the land over the centuries, the participants learned of the threats from development projects that have been identified for the World Heritage property of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of Ohrid Region. Moving on to Pogradec, hidden values were uncovered while visiting Pogradec Museum and the town's intangible heritage was investigated through visits with wood carvers, a farrier and local wine producers. The hospitality offered by the women of Tushemisht village and their culinary traditions was a memorable highlight of the course and aided discussion of the social benefits and challenges in coordinating public, civil and private sectors for regional sustainable development. The village of Lin and its archaeology were the backdrop to learning about community engagement tools and the various stages of the participatory process: from information provision to shared decision-making. From the tranquil retreat provided by the Lin peninsula, the participants worked together in groups to make recommendations for the future of community engagement in the conservation of Lake Ohrid's natural and cultural heritage. During public presentations held in Pogradec's Palace of Culture to close the course, the participants' conclusions focused on how to ensure that heritage can contribute to the sustainable development of the region, ensuring that benefits are gained both by local communities and by the heritage itself. Partners in the implementation of this course were ICCROM, IUCN, ICOMOS and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre with valuable contributions from the Institute of Monuments of Culture (Albania) as well as the Cultural Heritage Protection Office of the Macedonian Ministry of Culture.



ICOMOS brochures

A proposal to preserve the traditional buildings around Lake Ohrid

Conservation and preservation of the developed heritage area in Pogradec is essential for all the local authorities on the Albanian side of Lake Ohrid. In this framework the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is proposing the development of a manual with guidelines for maintenance and rehabilitation of traditionally built heritage in the Albanian part of the region. The manual will address conservation problems and upgrade the needs of the heritage developed on the Albanian side of the lake, while retaining and sustaining its morphology and construction characteristics and materials. The guidelines will act as a reference tool for all those responsible for the preservation and conservation of the developed heritage of the Pogradec area, including local architects, engineers and craftsmen. Moreover, it will also be useful for state institutions and the local administrations. The ICOMOS mission in the area, undertaken in June 2015, highlighted the need for rationalizing the built environment and improving the quality and performances of the built assets on the Albanian side of the Lake Ohrid region. The Guidelines for built heritage will be developed in close cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, Institute of Monuments, Regional Directorate for Cultural Heritage and the Municipality of Pogradec. Staff from the Albanian institutions will be involved in the development of the Guidelines. So that they may be developed for other heritage sites in Albania as well. Knowledge exchange is also foreseen with the partners from the Macedonian institutions. The Guidelines are planned to be published by autumn 2017. There are several similar publications for other heritage locations, such as Cinqueterre in Italy, Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, Jerusalem, and Gjirokastra.



ICOMOS brochures

Supporting proper Waste Management in the Municipality of Pogradec

The joint goal of partners that gathered around the project 'Towards Strengthened Governance of the Shared Transboundary Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Lake Ohrid region' is to support the efforts of local and national authorities to safeguard unique cultural and natural heritage of the Lake Ohrid Region.

One of the major challenges ahead is the improvement of solid waste management in this area. On the Albanian side of the Lake, the solid waste management has been ranked as the priority of the National Plan and National Strategy on Waste Management for the period 2010-2025. In order to make the first steps addressing this issue, the team has set up a governance structure, identifying the representatives of the consortium, local government, and other key local stakeholders. In June 2016, IUCN supported the formation of a consortium gathering the Rural Development and the National



Pogradec area

Centre for Environment from Tirana and Tourism and Sustainable Development from Pogradec. Their first task is to draft a Local Action Plan for Integrated Waste Management for the Municipality of Pogradec for the period 2017-2023. The plan will support local policy and planning for an integrated waste management system in the Region of Pogradec having in mind the new regional landfill site in Maliq, region of Korca.

Based on the assessment of the current state of waste management in Pogradec Municipality, the first draft of the document was produced in September 2016 and is currently being reviewed by the local government. As a following step, the consortium will assist the local government of Pogradec in conducting public consultation on the draft which will also be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. In addition, a waste awareness campaign will accompany the work undertaken at policy level and awareness-raising activities will be undertaken starting from November 2016.

Joint Management requirements addressed during Transboundary Meeting in Struga

The Fourth Transboundary meeting took place on 27 and 28 October in Struga, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The meeting was organised within the framework of the project "Towards Strengthened Governance of the Shared Transboundary Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Lake Ohrid Region". A Transboundary Platform strengthens the synergies among the existing transboundary management structures, such as the Joint Secretary of the Watershed Management Committee for Lake Ohrid and ongoing initiatives such as the UNESCO Man and Biosphere designations, in order to enhance management of the Lake Ohrid region in the two countries. Representatives from the Macedonian Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, and the Ministry of Culture, representatives of the Albanian Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Culture, representatives of the Albanian National Agency on Protected Areas, members of the joint secretariat of the Transboundary Water Management Committee for Lake Ohrid, and Mayors from Struga and Pogradec as well as representatives from the local government of Ohrid participated in the meeting and representatives from the local governments around the lake participated in the meeting. The participants agreed that the Lake Ohrid region project is being implemented satisfactorily and that all planned issues are being tackled within the project implementation. However, it has been



Transboundary meeting and Struga city @Unesco

agreed that the certain activities are to be accelerated in order to meet required deadlines. This is in particularly relevant for the finalization of the Management Plan and World Heritage Nomination Dossier for the area being proposed for extension. Furthermore, the next steps of the project were discussed in order to ensure greater synergies and complementarity between the management plans for the existing World Heritage property and the proposed

extension, and promote, where appropriate, a shared journey for implementation and evaluation processes:

- Management structures must have operational and functional structure
- Strengths and weaknesses of the Watershed Committee were discussed, the main concern regarding this committee is its non-functionality since the end of 2013 (no meetings took place since that time), inconsistency in its work and lack of permanent funding. Accordingly, two options were examined in order to ensure adequate management of the property once extended:

Option 1 Enhancement of the Watershed Committee, revitalization of the structure

Option 2 - Amendment to the 2004 Agreement, with definition of clear ToR's for the body to manage trans-border issues of the extended property.

It has been agreed that both countries will exchange the elaborated draft Management Plans, in order to ensure harmonization of actions for extended property. Accordingly, the theme of the 5th transboundary meeting should focus on harmonization of two plans in order to ensure operational structure capable to manage the joint property once inscribed.

The draft Management Plan for the property already inscribed to the World Heritage list, is being elaborated under leadership of the Ministry of Culture of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, but no comments on this plan were received from the municipality of Struga and National Park Galicica. It is strongly recommended that ministry resend request for submission of the comments by these two entities and ensure incorporation of their relevant inputs. Participation of representatives of GiZ was also to the meeting is very welcomed, as well as their active engagement in the revitalization of the Watershed committee and structures of the Republic of Albania linked with the management of lakes Ohrid, Prespa and Skadar.

Albania accedes to the European Landscape Convention



Albanian Parliament

The Albanian Parliament has passed on the 8th September 2016 the Law "On the accession of the Republic of Albania to the European Landscape Convention". The convention was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 1 June 2000. So far, 38 countries have ratified it, including many EU members: Denmark, Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, UK and Sweden. The Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently proceeding with the ratification instruments to be deposited through diplomatic channels to the Conventions' Secretariat. The main objective of this convention, endorsed by Albania on this occasion, is to move forward in the protection, planning and management of landscape, to boost cooperation at the regional and international levels in the area, and to improve the quality of life of citizens in both urban and rural areas. This law is in full accordance with the Albanian government's agenda, which considers the protection of the environment as an important component of its policies, and as a joint effort with its citizens, environment organisations, civil society, media, schools, science institutions and the private sector. Improving the situation of managing the landscape, taking appropriate measures to preserve protected areas and reduce landscape pollution are the main problems and challenges for the government. An important aspect of this Convention is the creation of procedures for community involvement in the process of information transfer, decision making and raising awareness of civil society and NGOs. All stakeholders need to plan the management of their landscapes and to understand its values and its role in our lives.

INTERVIEW with Milovan Shutinoski

The Director of the 'Nikola Nezlobinski" Museum in Struga tells us about this special place



Milovan Shutinoski

The Nikola Nezlobinski Museum in Struga is an important place for the history of the Lake Ohrid region, presenting Lake Ohrid and its inhabitants over a period of more than 100 years. The museum conserves and displays animal and plant species of the Lake Ohrid region and Lake Prespa. It is a rare collection, because some of the species no longer exist. The founder of the museum was a Russian doctor, Nikola Nezlobinski, a nature lover. He came in Struga to help against malaria outbreak in 1924. As soon as he arrived, he started collecting and preserving insects, catching birds and other kinds of animals. In 1928, he established the first zoo exhibition and in doing so, he laid the foundations for a natural sciences museum in Struga. The current exhibition in the museum is determined by the origin of the fauna and flora, all of which originate from the mountains and fields of the Struga-Ohrid region, exhibiting the local character of this specialized scientific institution. The exhibition consists of numerous insects, amphibians, reptiles and fish species residing in Lake Ohrid, as well as many bird and mammal species from the region. The evolution of life is demonstrated in the exhibition with animal categories revealing most primitive forms up to mammals and birds. The Nikola Nezlobinski Museum is a national institution that consists of a complex of five different divisions or departments: biology, archaeology, ethnology, history and art.

The museum also hosts diverse activities, such as the Struga Poetry Evening Festival. Each year the winner of the Festival has the honour to plant a tree in the Struga Poetry Park. The current director of the museum is Milovan Shutinoski, whom we interviewed to learn more about this special place.

1. Can you describe in a few words the importance of Struga Museum for protecting the values of Lake Ohrid?

The unique collections that the museum presents, of both natural and cultural heritage, are the best example of showing how nature and people have lived side by side for centuries. The values of the Lake Ohrid region are presented for all people visiting the museum. Inside here one has the opportunity to learn much about the history of the region. You can see what we have managed to preserve, but also what has already been lost, because of the many changes that have taken place in the depths of Lake Ohrid over the years.



Museum of Struga

2. What is the most delicate part of the museum requiring the most work to maintain and protect?

Every day presents a challenge for the preservation and promotion of the natural and cultural heritage that the museum presents. We work with limited space in which we need to present the region's natural and cultural heritage, and the museum has many items in its stores that are yet to be presented to the public and properly protected.

3. Based on your research is Lake Ohrid losing or maintaining some of its oldest values?

Unfortunately, many values that the Lake Ohrid region possesses are endangered, not just at the moment, but constantly. Interference by people is the main threat to this heritage. However, on the other hand, there some positive actions have been taken to preserve the values of Lake Ohrid region. Raising awareness among the public about the treasures that the region possesses is the main goal to be achieved in order to protect and preserve it.

4. Do you have in this museum some findings from the Albanian side of Lake Ohrid? What is your message for your colleagues on that side of Lake Ohrid?

The unique collection of flora and fauna in our natural sciences exhibition presents Lake Ohrid region as a whole. One Lake. Fishes and birds don't know borders, and a rich cultural heritage is found on either side of Lake Ohrid. All people, especially those involved in protection of natural and cultural heritage, should and must work very hard to preserve and protect the values that the whole world has recognised as something special. We have to work together to protect these unique values, as our Lake Ohrid region is special and important.

Struga Poetry Evenings



Margaret Atwood planting the tree in the Struga Poetry Park.

Atwood, the winner of the "Golden Wreath" plant her tree at Struga Poetry Park

Margaret Atwood, the 76 year old canadian poet and novelist is this year's winner of the Golden Wreath of the Struga Poetry Evenings. "I am very surprised and happy to have been chosen for this year's "Golden Wreath" and especially happy to come to "The Struga Poetry Evenings". Thank you for translating my poem into your language. It is a heroic effort. We poets should all be very grateful to translators. - Atwood said at the opening of the festival. She greeted participants by reading her poem entitled "Secrets" when drawing her award. Atwood noted that in the short period while in Struga, she felt delighted by the warm welcome and pleasant conversations with people. The Canadian writer planted a tree in the Park of Poetry in Struga. Each year the winner of the Festival has the honour to plant a tree in the Struga Poetry Park. This is a great tradition which shows how the trees and books lives together and complement each other.

The city of poetry and bridges, the city of the Miladinov brothers, has for the 55th time lived up to its reputation as a capital of poetry once again. Thirty-two poets from thirty countries: Canada, Italy, Australia, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Belgium, Israel, Hungary, China, Colombia, Mexico, Spain, France, Ireland, India, Bulgaria, Albania, Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, Germany, Lithuania, Morocco, Palestine, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia and twenty poets from Macedonia participated in the jubilee edition of Struga Poetry Evenings.



55th festival of Struga Poetry Evenings



Exploring Underwater Lake Ohrid



Cycling around Lake Ohrid. Credits: Ivana Dervishi

Cycling 360 degrees around the deepest lake in the Balkans

Lake Ohrid is an ideal adventure for bike lovers, and anyone who wants to enjoy a 360-degree panoramic view of the lake. It's a great adventure that combines cultural tourism with active tourism and riding. Ivana Dervishi is passionate about traveling and writing and chose these means to circumnavigate the lake on two wheels. She loves the idea of cycling across the border between two states. Lake Ohrid is the most wonderful part of eastern Albania, and also a magnet for tourists in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The total distance by bike around the lake is 100 km. "You can choose to do it in a day or two, including a night stopover in Pogradec or Ohrid. Making sure to have food and water for short breaks on the way, you can start biking in Pogradec and head towards Tushemisht. Lake Ohrid is always on your left and you never lose sight of it during this 12-km ride until you reach the border point. A passport check later and you are free to continue your cycling," she said. After passing the border of Tushemisht, the fresh air in Galicica National Park and the amazing view of the sleeping Lake Ohrid below you lays out the full aspect of the 360-degree trip that lies ahead: you can see the whole lake in the palm of your hand. After a slow ride up the mountain, you descend fast to Trpejca and Peshtani, pumping you with adrenaline. After a 40-km trip you arrive in the most beautiful stop of Ohrid, a city full of tourists. After that the 15 km to Struga is like a simple stroll, along a secondary road shaded by tall trees while you reflect on your journey with beautiful close up views of the lake's reed beds. The Black Drini river flowing through the heart of Struga is also a relaxing stop for a short coffee or snack. After 60 km from the start of your trip you are almost at the 180-degree point of the lake. The road towards the border with Albania begins to climb, higher and higher, up to 1,000 m above sea level. This is the most difficult part of the route. But the border procedures pass fast and you very soon find yourself on Albanian soil. The descent to Qafe Thane and on towards Lin requires cycling experience and good brakes. And there it is: a view of Lake Ohrid emerges again. The last 10 km to Pogradec is very relaxing; you are close to the finish and along the newly constructed road the view of Lake Ohrid is never interrupted. A dinner in Drilon would be the ideal closure of your 100-km trip around Lake Ohrid, the deepest lake in the Balkans. You will be tired but full of memories, of a beautiful lake, the birds, the swans, boats and people, and all its heritage merged on both parts of the transboundary lake.

Scuba divers are discovering the Lake Ohrid, one of the deepest lakes in Europe, and the most ancient, where adventurers can find true archaeological treasures on the lake floor. Known for its unique biodiversity, Lake Ohrid has also revealed its hidden history. Local Macedonian diver Milutin Sekuloski recently discovered the remains of a Bronze Age settlement in the depths of Lake Ohrid. He is a diving instructor at Amfora Diving Center and helps others to reach the blue depths of Lake Ohrid. "Why do many tourists want to dive here? To see the authentic artefacts of the prehistoric settlement from 3,200 years ago. Most of them want to take photos and videos underwater," Milutin said to Euronews. Tourists can visit the reconstructed lake village and take an hour-long dive to find pieces of ancient ceramics, bones, tools and even jewellery on the lake floor.

Another diver, Tomasz Pezold, who works for IUCN on the Lake Ohrid region project, shared with us his diving experience with the team of Milutin. "Although not that spectacular in terms of colours and visible biodiversity as tropical seas, a dive in Lake Ohrid is a unique experience. Having a closer look through crystal clear water reveals aquatic creatures that can't be observed better in other freshwater bodies. The opportunity to spot archaeological remnants brings a historical charm which elevates diving experience to another level. Such an option for diversified visitor's experiences shall be properly planned and introduced on Albanian side of the Lake" said Tomasz. Euronews broadcasted some amazing views from the depths of the oldest lake in Europe, showing Lake Ohrid's rich wealth of flora and fauna, but also its history.

Reportage by Euronews on 19 Sept 2016

Fish fossils of Pogradec



Belushka and Koran

If a lake is 4 million years, then the residents in its ancient waters must also be ancient and unique. Koran and belushka are two types of fish that are special to Lake Ohrid and can be found relatively easily in the area of Pogradec, on the Albanian side. The blogger, **Aurélien Rateau**, wrote an interesting report on Huffingtonpost.fr about a tour around Pogradec. He spent part of the day with local fishermen on the shores of the lake, observing how they catch the



Restaurant in Pogradec

fish and sell them on to restaurants. This is the only way they can earn money and secure a living. It is beneficial for them, but not for the fish, which are unique to Lake Ohrid. But Pogradec lives by tourism. Albanians come to spend weekends and holidays on the shores of the crystal clear blue waters of the lake.

They take advantage of the beaches, enjoy the promenades and, inevitably, go to a restaurant and taste koran and belushka.

The koran. *Salmo letnica*, its Latin name, is the queen of the lake. The latest genetic research has found the fish to be a subspecies of brown trout, branching from their common ancestor a little over a million years ago.

The belushka. *Salmo ohridanus*, is more mysterious. This fish, belonging to the salmon family, has four million years of history. It attests to the respectable age of the lake and can be described as a fossil species. The situation with belushka, which is not helped by artificial reproduction, is even more critical than that for the koran. Again, all it has taken is a few years for this fish, shaped by millions of years of evolution, to find itself threatened in its unique habitat, Lake Ohrid. The blogger understands the life of these poor fishermen in Pogradec, who can live only by what the lake brings them, but Mr Rateau is also concerned about the conservation of the unique species living in the depths of Lake Ohrid.

Blog by Aurélien Rateau, at Huffington Post. Fr, on 5 October 2016

Ohrid Summer festival

Ohrid Summer Festival is the biggest cultural event on the Macedonian side of the Lake Ohrid region. The 56th edition opened this year on 12 July 2016 with a Gala Concert, and lasted until 20 August 2016. The festival presented classical concerts and opera, theatre and dance, staged at different venues across the city. The new director of the festival, Oliver Arsovski, a musician himself who has performed at the festival, considers the Ohrid Summer Festival as one of the most prestigious cultural events not only in Macedonia, but also in the region and beyond. Many events were held in

Ohrid when this beautiful city was packed with tourists. This tradition originates from the idea of Ohrid as the spiritual capital of Macedonia, an antique city with a magical blue lake, a city with a cultural history marked with values of ancient civilizations, a city that represents the whole cultural and spiritual history of the region. Ohrid Summer Festival was first held on 4 August, 1961, in the beautiful cathedral of St. Sophia. After a couple of years of discovering itself and outlining its own character, Ohrid Summer Festival firmly established itself as one of the pivots of the Macedonian cultural tradition.

Balkan Mish-Mash Film Production in Pogradec



Balkan Mish-Mash Film Production was held in Pogradec from 31 July to 5 August 2016. This year's production was made possible with the support of UNESCO. Up to 150 films from the Balkan countries participated in this edition of the festival. A new section "Balkan Heritage" was added to the competition's other genres in the festival. Documentaries that deal with Balkan traditions, cultures, music and nature were part of the festival, enabling us to know more about what we have in common and what makes Balkan countries unique. The festival is held every year in Pogradec, an area known historically for the importance of its commercial routes among Balkan countries in the centuries of the Ottoman Empire. The best film and the winner of the festival was *Wish to wash with rain*, directed by Gülten Taranc from Turkey. Best experimental was *We have all been here forever*, by Peter Cerovsek, Neza Grum, Matvez Jerman (Slovenia). Best animation: *Dinner for a few*, by Nassos Vakalis (Greece). Best comedy: *Getting fat in a healthy way*, by Kevork Aslanjan (Bulgaria). Best Balkan Spirit: *Behold*, by Mark Sargent (Greece). The Balkan Film Food Festival is not just a festival about food and culinary traditions; it is also about the Balkan Film Production. The intention of the festival is to create a climate of understanding and friendship and collaboration among the Balkan countries.

Pogradec Photography Days



Living by the shore of Lake Ohrid, inspires you to be a writer, a photographer or a painter. Photography and painting are regarded as silent poetry. A photo is worth thousands words, that is why the most common activities in Pogradeci area are exhibitions, with painting and photos, all with Lake Ohrid in focus.

Pogradec Photography days, is an initiative held in 29 October, for the second year in row. It brought some amazing artworks from probably the best photographers of Albania. The most known photographer of the Lake, Ardian Fezollari was the organiser of this event. 22 professional artists from different cities of Albania participated in that activity with their best photos of the year. The aim of this activity was to show the greatest pictures of the year in one room. The nature, the people and the lake were captured from different eyes, displaying not only artistic personality of authors, but also the reality and panorama of beautiful Alba-

Tourism Ideas Competition for Korca and Pogradec



Albania's Ministry of Economy, Tourism, Trade and Entrepreneurship, the Albanian Investment Development Agency, AIDA, and the Albanian tourism industry, with the support of the RisiAlbania Project, has launched the third edition of the Risi Turistike Award. This time the competition is set in Korca in order to foster development of new tourism products. Korca is the municipality that includes the city of Pogradec, which is situated on the shores of Lake Ohrid, the oldest and deepest lake in Europe. The innovative tourism products will help create new products and itineraries, or add value to the existing ones, by providing a richer and authentic experience for tourists in both areas. Submissions are encouraged especially from young people with innovative ideas that could make the tourism offer in the Lake Ohrid region diverse and dynamic. The winners of this competition will be announced in December 2016. The competition is regarded as good opportunity which could bring new tourism ideas to the Lake Ohrid region. It is worth noting that the tourism product in Pogradec is in its early stages and needs developing, through preserving the best traditional and cultural heritage values.



nian landscape, especially the peaceful image of Lake Ohrid. It was not only an exhibition, but rather a forum of sharing ideas among photography professionals, and explaining the beautiful works. The message was: "Whether you're a painter, photographer or poet, let the beautiful Lake Ohrid inspire you to new creative heights".

Our lake Ohrid "two countries, one lake"



Lake Ohrid wildlife. Credits: Noldi Shaho



Lin village by drone. Credits: Michael Hussey

partners



UNESCO
World Heritage Centre - Project coordinator



The European Union
main financial contributor



The Ministry of Environment
of the Republic of Albania



MINISTRY OF CULTURE
of Republic of Albania



MINISTRY OF CULTURE
of the FYR of Macedonia



Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
of the FYR of Macedonia



ICCRUM
(International Centre for the Study of the
Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property)



ICOMOS
(International Council on Monuments and Sites)



IUCN
(International Union for Conservation of Nature)

calendar

Whats next?

6-7 December 2016: Training on
the Conservation and Management
of the Lake Ohrid Region Ecosystem

Social Media Competition Winter
2016-2017

Spring 2017: Sustainable Enterprise
Development- Training

Spring 2017 - 5th Transboundary
Meeting in Pogradec

Protecting Lake Ohrid

This is a quarterly newsletter published by the project "Towards strengthened governance of the shared transboundary natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ohrid region".

Langauges: English, Albanian, Macedonian. The European Union is not responsible for the content of this newsletter.

In the next issue: Project activities, *Tourism around Lake Ohrid*, *Social media Competition*, and much more...

Project page: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/lake-ohrid-region>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/lake_ohrid

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Blog: <http://lakeohrid.blogspot.al/>

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