

## **Process Framework for Involuntary Restrictions**

**Date**

**11/06/2024**

**CEPF Grant**

**Association for sustainable development MILIEUKONTAKT Macedonia**

***Improving the management of Lake Dojran Monument of Nature, North Macedonia***

**Dojran Lake, Municipality of Dojran, Republic of North Macedonia**

## **Grant Summary**

1. Grantee organization  
**Association for sustainable development MILIEUKONTAKT Macedonia**
2. Grant title  
**Improving management of Lake Dojran Monument of Nature, North Macedonia**
3. Grant number  
**CEPF-115578**
4. Grant amount (US dollars)  
**39440 US\$**
5. Proposed dates of grant  
**01/07/2024-30/06/2025**
6. Countries or territories where project will be undertaken  
**Republic of North Macedonia, Municipality of Dojran, Dojran Lake**
7. Date of preparation of this document  
**11/06/2024**

**The Process Framework will describe the project and how restrictions of access to natural resources and measures to assist affected communities. Affected communities should have the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the Process Framework. Typically, the Applicant will prepare a draft Framework that will then be shared and discussed with local communities and other relevant stakeholders. Based on the consultations, a final Framework will be prepared. CEPF may provide guidance on development of the Framework and will review and approve the final Framework prior to approving the final project proposal application. The Process Framework should include the following elements:**

### **A. Project background**

Dojran Lake is a nationally protected area that hosts unique biodiversity that is of global importance. Hence, Dojran Lake has been declared a Ramsar site and an Important Bird Area, it is part of the Emerald network and has been proposed as a potential NATURA 2000 site (under EU Habitats & Birds Directive). The ecological condition and biodiversity of Lake Dojran has been threatened by processes that cause eutrophication (nutrient discharge mainly from wastewater) and the lack of active management and protection by the competent authorities. Within our previous CEPF funded project we have established a solid knowledge basis to tackle both issues and have established collaboration with many different stakeholders. As part of this, we have raised awareness on local, national and international level regarding the urgent need to improve protection of Lake Dojran and we have identified the major pollution sources and developed appropriate solutions. Consequently we have raised additional funds to build three wastewater treatment plants (MBBR and constructed wetlands technology) to provide treatment of

wastewater before its discharge in Lake Dojran and we have developed the Management Plan with Action plan for Lake Dojran.

In our previous work, we have managed to make significant progress in tackling the issue of pollution. However, at the moment, the lack of management structure/organization, human, knowledge and financial capacities of the competent authority Dojran Municipality and the fact that the Management Plan has not been yet officially adopted, presents the biggest obstacle for proper management of the monument of nature. Consequently, main objectives of the projects are:

- 1) to support the competent authority Dojran Municipality to establish a management body and/or ranger service that will provide active, long-term and effective protection of the biodiversity and management of the protected area Lake Dojran; and
- 2) to support the competent authority Dojran Municipality to implement the legally-binding procedure for adoption of the Management Plan with Action Plan for Lake Dojran.

In addition, the project aims to implement monitoring activities of the water quality of Lake Dojran to improve the knowledge on the ecological condition of Lake and to assess potential means/mechanisms for long-term financing of the annual action plans and the management body/ranger service of the monument of nature Lake Dojran.

## **B. Participatory implementation**

The project has been designed in collaboration with the main stakeholder - the local self-government of Dojran Municipality. Dojran Municipality is a long-term partner of our organization in all matters regarding Dojran Lake and we have jointly worked and implemented projects to improve Dojran Lake condition for the past five years. We intend to maintain this close collaboration also during all stages of the project implementation, which will ensure participation of the local community in the project implementation. Based on our previous work on Dojran Lake, we have established good communication with the local community and all relevant local and national stakeholders (e.g. lake concessionaire, business sector, landowners, fishermen, scientific experts, public companies, the Ministry for environment and physical planning) which we plan to continue also in this project in order to ensure participatory implementation. Intrinsic to the requirements related to the adoption of the Management Plan of Lake Dojran (one of main objectives of the project), the local stakeholders will be closely involved in the procedure. Moreover, based on the provision of the Law on nature, the whole local community and the wider public will have the opportunity to participate in the procedure for the adoption of this document (e.g. through the public hearings). Finally, additional level of participatory implementation will be secured through the close collaboration with the official Councils of Dojran Lake i.e. the Stakeholder Council and the Scientific Council of Lake Dojran.

The project will raise an initiative for transboundary collaboration regarding management of Dojran Lake between the official responsible authorities from Greece and North Macedonia.

Participation in the project activities will be encouraged and enabled through the following actions:

- The project kick-off meeting, which will be used as point to spark the interest in participation
- Regular meetings with the key stakeholders
- Close involvement of the stakeholders, during implementation of project activities
- Organization of public hearings on the main project deliverables to enable participation and a possibility to influence the decision-making process by the participating members and the wider community.

### **C. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons**

The project focuses on an area that is under protection by North Macedonia national laws because of its natural values. The law stipulates that activities that negatively impact the ecosystem values of Dojran Lake are prohibited; however, currently there is a lack of full enforcement of the law. The project will largely affect those individuals/ entities that currently engage in potential illegal activities that undermine the natural status and ecology of the lake, which are anyhow forbidden by the national law. The project aims to better control and manage this protected lake, while providing alternatives to those that in some way depend for their living on the natural resources the lake provides. In particular, through the adoption of the Management Plan, for the first time zones for protection with different degree of management – strict, active and sustainable management, will be established within the monument of nature Lake Dojran in (in accordance with the provisions of the Law on nature). These zones might affect activities of certain individuals/groups/entities of the local population. The initiative for establishment of protection zones will be presented and discussed with the potential affected persons during various meetings and the official public hearings.

Affected persons may include: the local government and public companies, community members and businesses sector (e.g. fishermen, farmers, future CSOs, tourist facilities).

### **D. Measures to assist the affected persons**

The project objective is to provide long-term stable and sustainable access to natural resources to the local community, through the enforcement of the Management Plan with an Action Plan for Dojran Lake. The current bad ecological situation of Dojran Lake, due to pollution and the unsustainable use of its resources will likely result in a near-future complete collapse of these natural resources, which will in turn have detrimental repercussions on the socio-economic situation and the well-being of the local community.

Adoption of the Management plan for this protected area will result in enforcement of existing and new regulations, which might require from the local stakeholders to change their practices of usage of the natural resources e.g. development of the coastal area. Although the proposed regulations/measures will provide long-term social and economic benefits to the affected people, to minimize the short-term impact and enable smooth transition, all affected people will have the opportunity to participate and get involved in the process of the development and implementation of the proposed activities. In addition, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the Management Plan will be conducted. The affected persons as well as the wider

public will have the opportunity to raise their concerns about the project activities during the public hearings on the Management Plan and the SEA. All concerns will be duly noted, discussed and taken into consideration in the finalization of the proposed project activities.

Communities will be instructed on sustainable management practices of the lake, so that all individuals to have the opportunity to make better livelihoods, without undertaking illegal activities.

#### **E. Conflict resolution and complaint mechanism**

The project team and the main partner Dojran Municipality will establish a grievance mechanism in order to provide means to address complaints and/or conflict situations by any stakeholder or a person affected by the project. The grievance mechanism will be publically available and will be communicated with all project participants as well as the local community, through direct communication, posters, leaflets etc. Any person or a group of people has the right to raise an official or unofficial complaint, and the project coordinator has the obligation to respond within 15 days.

The project coordinator will be the first contact person for receiving the grievances. Project coordinator details (name, email and postal address) along with the contact information of the grantee organization, the CEPF Regional Implementation Team, the Grant Director will be made available to the public and the project stakeholders using the abovementioned means.

The project coordinator shall attempt to resolve the potential issues with the help from the project team, the partner Municipality of Dojran and if necessary, with the CEPF Regional Implementation Team. The project coordinator has the obligation to communicate all grievances with the CEPF Regional Implementation Team and the CEPF Grant Director within 15 days.

The following text will be included in the grievance mechanism: “If the applicant is not satisfied with the response, a grievance may be submitted to CEPF via the Conservation International (CI) Ethics Hotline. The CI Ethics Hotline consists of a toll-free telephone line (+1-866-294-8674) and a secure web portal that allows grievances to be made anonymously. The web portal can be found on any research engine, typing “conservation international grievance mechanism”.

#### **F. Implementation Arrangements**

The project has been conceptualized in partnership with the competent authority of Dojran Lake and it builds on the findings from the previous CEPF project that was implemented jointly by Milieukontakt Macedonia and Dojran Municipality. All activities of the project will be implemented in close collaboration with Dojran Municipality. This kind of approach, starting from the onset of the project, substantially minimizes the likelihood of conflicts or grievances.

The project goals, activities, scope and expected results, as well as the safeguard mechanisms, will be presented and discussed with all affected persons during the project kick-off meeting. This meeting will be used to spark interest and attention of additional stakeholders. Furthermore, regular meetings will be

organized to update the stakeholders about the progress of the implementation i.e. in particular with the official Councils of Lake Dojran. The wider public will be continuously informed on the objectives and the progress of the activities through the official social media page of Dojran Municipality. The public hearings on the outcome of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Management Plan will serve as additional safeguard mechanism and an opportunity to hear the public opinion on the project and raise concerns. Overall, this kind of participative approach decreases the likelihood for complaints and conflict situations during implementation of the project.