

CEPF Final Completion and Impact Report

Organization's Legal Name:	Center for Protection and Research of Birds
Project Title:	SOS Skadar Lake - Keeping the Montenegrin Wilderness Wild
Grant Number:	CEPF-109211
Hotspot:	Mediterranean Basin II
Strategic Direction:	2 Support the sustainable management of water catchments through integrated approaches for the conservation of threatened freshwater biodiversity
Grant Amount:	\$175,444.50
Project Dates:	October 01, 2019 - February 29, 2024
Date of Report:	April 23, 2024

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the main authority that issued permits for the conduction of the research of selected amphibian, fish, and bird species and also equipping bird individuals with GPS tagging devices in the Skadar Lake area. EPA benefited from the collected scientific data by obtaining support for annual biodiversity monitoring and updating the national Natura2000 database.

Public Enterprise (PE) "National Parks of Montenegro" and National Park Skadar Lake benefited from receiving the collected scientific data on the biodiversity of Skadar Lake and also the conservation guidelines for nature-friendly management by having the opportunity to improve their management practices and also influence the management plan for this national park.

Albanian Ornithological Society (AOS)-an environmental NGO from Albania took part in the biodiversity camps held in autumn 2021 and spring 2022 to jointly fill in the knowledge gap about spring and autumn bird migration on Skadar Lake in Montenegro and Albania.

Prespa National Park management and NGO Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) from Greece were key stakeholders during the organization of the study visit to the National Park Prespa. They jointly hosted the event and presented their work on safeguarding lake Prespa natural and cultural heritage and implementation of the viable practices for the area management.

Local touristic organizations from Tuzi, Capital Cetinje and Bar ensured venues and photos of local photographers for the photo exhibitions "Skadar Lake Wonders" that were held in their cities during summer 2021.

Municipality Zeta, local authority located within the National Park Skadar Lake recognized the need of resolving the issue of using harmful practices such as using fishing nets for crop protection in their region, and introduced a incentive scheme for local farmers for purchase of the suitable nets which are not harming bird and other species.

CONSERVATION IMPACTS

Planned Long-Term Impacts: 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
<p>Environmental NGOs science knowledge and technical skills improved, overall management, advocacy, communication capacities strengthened</p>	<p>CZIP ornithologists did a comprehensive monitoring of less researched bird species of Skadar Lake which are on Annex I of the Birds Directive, and equipped individuals of 4 different bird species with GPS tagging devices. The obtained results were analyzed and used for the preparation of a scientific article, diploma thesis, Standard Data Form document, and also comments on the draft management plan for NP Skadar Lake. These activities significantly increased the CZIP knowledge base of Skadar Lake and also capacities for in-house designed research and assessment of collected data.</p> <p>Besides this, CZIP used all project deliverables and results such as studies, photo exhibitions, etc. to enhance its advocacy and communication work. This resulted in annulling the nontransparent public hearing call for management plans of national parks including Skadar Lake, the introduction of an incentive scheme for farmers from Zeta region, and also by having 400 articles, TV and radio appearances, and posts on social media regarding the project activities, values and threats of Skadar Lake.</p> <p>The approach of the CZIP team maximally using the project results will be practiced for planning different actions for the sustainable development of the Skadar Lake and other Montenegrin KBAs.</p>
<p>Sustainable use and efficient protection of 22.000 ha of Lake Skadar National Park in Montenegro</p>	<p>The updated knowledge base on less researched amphibian, fish, and bird species, results of the study of threats to Skadar Lake by using predictive modeling and the conservation guideline for the improvement of nature-friendly management, submitted comments to the strategic management plans of NP Skadar lake, raising awareness events such as photo exhibitions and art installation, a study visit to NP Prespa in Greece to showcase the best practices of sustainable usage of the protected area, communicating regarding the values and threats to the lake's ecosystem contributed to shifting mind setup of the stakeholders involved in the protection of National Park Skadar from being</p>

Impact Description	Impact Summary
	<p>focused on tourism development to be more focused on improving management and sustainable development of the area. The introduced incentive scheme for farmers to reduce the harmful negative practices to birds and other species due to crop protection and the accepted initiative to ban the usage of ATV vehicles within the national parks including Skadar Lake are good examples of improving the management of the area.</p>

Planned Short-Term Impacts: 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
<p>Built capacities of at least 15 young researchers in Montenegro and Albania to explore and support monitoring of Lake Skadar biodiversity and wetlands in general</p>	<p>23 biology students that took part in the autumn and spring biodiversity camps from 2020 until 2022 improved their knowledge about amphibian and bird species, bird migrations and learned how to recognize species and their sounds/songs. By taking part in the camps, the students improved their knowledge about amphibians' and birds' ecology, fragile habitats of the cross-border Skadar Lake region, research methodologies, and data collection. Since they expressed interest to continue to participate in similar events and further build their capacities in the field of ornithology they will be invited to take part in the future bird research activities to be done by CZIP and AOS in Skadar Lake area or other KBAs.</p>
<p>5 international organizations (European Commission, DEU, European Parliament, Bern and Ramsar Convention) aware of Skadar Lake ecosystem condition, management practice and infrastructure development</p>	<p>5 international organizations did increase awareness on Skadar lake issues. The Contribution Reports done from 2019 until 2023 which contain information on the current state of the Lake and threats were prepared by the members of the network of Montenegrin environmental NGOs (Coalition 27) and delivered to the European Commission and Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro. These inputs were used by the European Commission and the European Parliament. European Commission within the Progress Reports for Montenegro for 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 stated that urgent measures should be taken to preserve and improve the ecological value of the potential Natura2000 sites like Skadar Lake. European Parliament within the resolutions on the 2019-2020, 2021, and 2022 Commission reports on Montenegro expressed concern about damage to bodies of water and rivers related to infrastructure projects, including Lake Skadar. The Bern Convention and Ramsar Convention are aware of the harmful infrastructure development within the National Park since on the last five annual meetings</p>

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	of the Standing Committee of Bern Convention, from 2019 until 2023, the key concerns of the open case file Skadar Lake were constantly repeated and emphasized to be urgently addressed by the Montenegrin Government.
50 relevant decision-makers/stakeholders in Montenegro and Albania aware and committed to SOS Skadar Lake initiative including both national and international community	50 stakeholders in Montenegro and Albania are aware of the SOS Skadar Lake initiative and directly or indirectly took part in the various project initiatives and activities (meetings, student camps, study visit, photo exhibitions, international conference, obtaining permits, data for researches, development of studies, preparing reports and comments to the strategic documents, etc): Ministry of ecology, PE National Parks of Montenegro, NP Skadar lake and its ranger service, GIZ, Environmental Protection Agency, Institute for Hydrometeorology and Seismology, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Economy, Real Estate Administration, Agency for personal data protection, Faculty of Natural Sciences from Tirana, Faculty of visual arts, Faculty of arts from Cetinje, local TOs Cetinje, Podgorica, Tuzi, Bar, Municipalities of Cetinje, Bar, Podgorica, Ulcinj, Zeta and Shkodra, local communities Ostros and Crmnica, NGOs AOS, PPNEA, ENV PRO, Parks Dinarides, Wellpoint, Green Home, Noe Conservation, Montenegrin Ecological Society, media (Euronews Albania, RTCG, newspaper Pobjeda).Border police Tuzi, Parliament of Montenegro, United Nations in Montenegro, RAPA Albania, Embassies of France, Albania, Ukraine, North Macedonia, Slovakia, Turkiye, Italy, USA in Montenegro.
15 stakeholders in Albania and Montenegro (politicians, local community representatives, media) inspired and committed to sustainable development based on a Study visit to Prespa Lake	15 stakeholders, representatives of National Park Skadar Lake, PE National Parks of Montenegro, the Environmental Protection Agency, Municipalities Cetinje, Tuzi, and Shkodra, local communities Crmnica and Ostros, NGOs AOS and Wellpoint, local tourist organization Bar, and media took part in the study visit that was organized to National Park Prespa in Greece. The visit aimed to present to Montenegrin and Albanian stakeholders the best practice example of transboundary national park management which could be also implemented in Skadar Lake area. The participants were keen to find out the management system of the National Park, the collaboration with local communities, and also how they are resolving the threats to the park. Besides this, the experiences and knowledge of Montenegrin and Albanians on the management of the transboundary Skadar Lake region and the threats

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	<p>impacting it were discussed. The participants agreed that the study visit was useful and the findings should be used for the improvement of the management of Skadar Lake on local, national and cross-border level.</p> <p>It was emphasized that similar events should be organized in the future and that more local community members should take part since they are usually neglected and not included.</p>
<p>Cumulative impacts of planned infrastructure projects are scientifically assessed, the national and international community aware of their consequences and project plans with hazardous impacts on the biodiversity of Lake Skadar recognized within EU negotiation and accession procedure</p>	<p>The cumulative impact of the planned infrastructure projects such as development of touristic complexes, potential highway construction and plans for hydropower plants construction within the wider zone of Skadar Lake were assessed by the expert for predictive modeling and summarized it into a study and the 3D video. The recommendations for the improvement of the management of the National park Skadar Lake were prepared as part of the conservation guidelines for the nature-friendly management of this area. Results of the both studies were shared with the local, national and international institutions within the public hearing process for the development of management plans for national parks including Skadar Lake and also on the International Conference for the Protection of Skadar Lake.</p> <p>The plans for the hazardous impact on the biodiversity of Skadar lake were also presented in the annual Contribution Reports and communicated to the EU institutions responsible for the negotiation process in the Chapter 27-Environment. Based on these inputs, the EU institutions raised their concerns and urged the Montenegrin Government to address the current and potential negative impact on the Skadar lake ecosystem.</p>

Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Avian influenza and disturbance seriously impacted the Dalmatian Pelican colony on Skadar Lake in the spring of 2022. Due to the fragility of the species' population and the need for the implementation of proper actions to decrease the impact of the flu on this and other bird species, CZIP alarmed all responsible institutions and media. The media campaign resulted in 82 articles that have been published nationally and regionally. The created public pressure shed more light on the effects of avian influenza on wild birds, especially pelicans than the conventional focus on its negative impact on poultry and related food industry. Besides this, CZIP initiated a Working group that was formed by the Ministry of Ecology to foster better collaboration between institutions regarding the issue of protection of the Dalmatian pelican colony. This Working group pushed for the PE National Parks of Montenegro to acknowledge the role of NGOs in mitigating disturbance of the pelican colony where access to video monitoring which was mostly only used by Noe, PE National Parks and Natural History Museum was also allowed to CZIP. The pelican crisis underlined the weak management of NP Skadar Lake and the lack of knowledge and interest in protecting it. This crisis and obstructions of the work on

improvement of the hydrological regime of Ulcinj Salina contributed to the nomination of the new Director of PE National Parks in October 2022.

The Predictive modeling study done by hydrologist Ulrich Schwarz highlighted the issue of the illegal gravel exploitation of the lower Moraca River, an important tributary of the Skadar Lake. Since the issue of the illegal gravel exploitation in Moraca escalated in mid-November 2021 when several directors of companies were arrested for this and there was a huge interest of the media for the topic, CZIP used this opportunity to present the preliminary results regarding the extent of the devastated Moraca habitats and also made estimations of the financial damage and the period needed to completely restore the area. These data raised much interest in Montenegrin media and were also used by the Montenegrin Prime Minister in several media appearances as the official estimations of the damage.

The mapping of the sites in the Zeta area where farmers are using fishing nets to ensure the protection of crops from birds and other species and the CZIP initiative to form a Working group with responsible institutions towards the resolution of this issue had an unexpected positive impact. Being aware of the size of the issue and also the need to use effective conservation measures for bird and other species protection within their territory, the local Zeta Municipality within the annual supporting measures for farmers introduced an incentive scheme for the purchase of the nets for crop protection that are not harming the wildlife.

PROJECT RESULTS/DELIVERABLES

Overall results of the project:

The project "SOS Skadar Lake-Keeping the Montenegrin Wilderness Wild" contributed to an increase in knowledge about the amphibian, fish, and bird species of National Park Skadar Lake which were either less researched or not in the the focus of the researchers and the managers of the national park. For the first time, GPS tagging devices were used to obtain crucial scientific data about the ecology, movement, and connectivity of this national park with other KBAs in the country and abroad.

This project also can be considered as the "pioneer successful attempt" to assess the cumulative impacts of threats to the lakes' ecosystem in a scientific manner within the predictive modeling study. This was backed up by the conservation guideline for nature-friendly management study whose recommendations were used to influence the process of development of the management plan for NP Skadar Lake. Besides influencing the protection of the site on the national level, efforts were put through various reports and meetings to point out the necessity of proper site management and issues impacting it within the EU negotiation and accession process.

The implementation of this project built CZIP capacities regarding advocacy, communication, analysis of the collected data, and preparation of scientific papers. This will serve as a great step towards further CZIP work for the enhancement of NP Skadar Lake and other protected areas in Montenegro.

Results for each deliverable:

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
1.0	Increasing knowledge base on biodiversity of Lake Skadar	1.1	==AMEND JULY 2023==Standard Data Form (SDF) for NP Skadar lake filled in and shared with stakeholders	To support the process of the currently ongoing establishment of the Natura2000 network in Montenegro, CZIP used the collected data on selected amphibian, fish, and bird species to fill in the Standard Data Form (SDF) for National Park Skadar Lake. The data form contains an extensive description of the site and its ecology. It was submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency, PE National Parks of Montenegro, and the Ministry of Ecology for further revision and use. The preparation of this document contributed to the capacity building of CZIP ornithologists to produce scientific documents and engage in the Natura2000 designation process.
2.0	Identification of biodiversity threats through predictive modeling	2.2	Conservation guidelines for nature friendly management translated to Albanian language and disseminated accordingly	Based on a participatory approach, the document "Assessment of Nature Protection Efficiency in Lake Skadar National Park" which serves as a conservation guideline for the nature-friendly management of this national park was developed by the expert Marija Vugdelic. The approach included the organization of 5 meetings with 27 stakeholders ranging from local communities, providers of touristic services, environmental NGOs, the management body of NP Skadar Lake and its separate departments, the

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				<p>Environmental Protection Agency and the Ministry of Ecology.</p> <p>The document provides detailed insight into the effectiveness of the management of NP Skadar Lake and recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>The findings from the document were used for the preparation of the comments to the public hearing for the revision of the Management Plan of Skadar Lake. The documents itself was also submitted to the National Parks of Montenegro and the Ministry of Ecology during the public hearing process. The main results were also presented at the International Conference for the Protection of Skadar Lake which was held on 13th December 2023. The document was translated to the English language instead of Albanian and distributed to all participants of the Conference in electronic version.</p>
3.0	Advocating for Lake Skadar sustainable development under the EU accession process	3.1	AMEND JULY23 =5 Contribution Reports prepared by Coalition 27	<p>Contribution Reports aiming to provide an overall picture of Montenegro's progress in the EU accession process regarding the improvement of the environmental protection and climate change situation were prepared for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 (five reports in total). The reports were prepared by Coalition 27, the network of Montenegrin environmental NGOs, including CZIP, that jointly monitors the EU accession process regarding Chapter 27-Environment. The</p>

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				<p>reports were delivered to the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro, the European Commission, and DG NEAR.</p> <p>The reports present the analysis of the substantial issues within ten sub-areas of Chapter 27 including nature protection, and also include a set of recommendations to strengthen the process of transposing and implementing the EU legislation in the environmental sector.</p> <p>All prepared reports indicate that despite some progress made, Montenegro's nature is still under threat, and it is needed to address the numerous issues in this area, especially to strengthen the management of Montenegrin national parks, including Skadar Lake.</p>
4.0	Communicating the conservation needs and threats to citizens of Montenegro	4.1	SOS Skadar Lake initiative known to citizens of Montenegro through 20 produced and published articles	<p>235 articles on various internet portals, 25 articles in daily newspapers, 33 articles on the CZIP website, 14 TV appearances, one radio appearance, and 108 posts on social media (CZIP Facebook and Instagram accounts) were published during the project. The articles were related to the biodiversity values of Skadar lake, project progress, activities, and threats and issues that occurred within the project implementation period (fires, public debates for the NP management plan, avian influenza, poaching, poor management of NP Skadar Lake and consequent failure of nesting of Dalmatian pelicans).</p>

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				<p>A Company for press service, PR & Media Center, was hired to ensure visibility to the Montenegrin media of the following events: Photo exhibitions "Skadar Lake Wonders" in Tuzi, Bar and Cetinje, handover of equipment to the Border Police in Tuzi, and the International Conference.</p> <p>In addition, 10 investigative stories were prepared and published by 10 Montenegrin journalists. The topics of the stories were related to the various issues of protection of National Park Skadar Lake such as plastic pollution, extinction risks for endangered species such as the Albanian Water Frog and European Eel, the spread of invasive fish and plant species, climate change impact, illegal fishing, etc.</p>
4.0	Communicating the conservation needs and threats to citizens of Montenegro	4.2	Photos of the open air exhibition devoted to the Skadar Lake ecosystem fragility, biodiversity richness, ecosystem services, threats and opportunities, cultural heritage of local people	<p>CZIP organized five photo exhibitions "Skadar Lake Wonders" parallely during one touristic season in four locations that are gravitating NP Skadar lake: twice in Tuzi and once in Cetinje, Bar and Rijeka Crnojevica. The exhibitions were presented to the public from June until September 2021. The photos of the exhibition presented the natural and cultural values of the national park Skadar Lake. The exhibitions were organized with the support of the local tourist organizations (TO Tuzi, TO Cetinje, and TO Bar) which provided locations for the exhibitions and photos of the local</p>

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				<p>photographers with the motives of wildlife and culture of Skadar Lake area.</p> <p>Together with TO Bar and TO Cetinje, CZIP delivered the photos from the exhibition to interested local schools gravitating Skadar Lake area. The photos from the exhibition presented in Bar and Tuzi were distributed to 9 elementary schools in these areas. Since the photos of the exhibition presented in Cetinje were done as an outdoor exhibition, the photos remained to TO Cetinje to be used in the upcoming years.</p>
3.0	Advocating for Lake Skadar sustainable development under the EU accession process	3.2	AMEND JULY23 = One conference (list of participants, pictures, press releases...)	<p>To present the project results and also discuss some of the main challenges to the protection of the Skadar Lake ecosystem and the issue of cross-border cooperation on the protection of the lake, a International Conference on the Protection of Skadar Lake was organized on 13th December 2023. At the event 66 persons took part, representing various stakeholders including Embassies, local authorities, the Environmental Protection Agency, Ministries, NGOs, local tourist organizations, Border Police, management bodies of Skadar Lake, etc. from both Montenegro and Albania.</p> <p>It was concluded that many same challenges for the protection of the lake are present on both sides and the cooperation between Montenegrin and Albanian authorities should be intensified. Also, the issues should be tackled jointly to suppress them and have</p>

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				more impact on the conservation of the natural resources of the lake.
1.0	Increasing knowledge base on biodiversity of Lake Skadar	1.2	Programme and reports from two summer camp for at least 15 students	<p>The programs and reports were prepared for 4 camps that were done within the project. Two autumn biodiversity camps were held in September 2020 and October 2021, while two spring biodiversity camps were held in April/June 2021 and in March/April 2022. The camps in autumn 2021 and spring 2022 were organized as cross-border events in cooperation with the Albanian Ornithological Society (AOS). In total, 23 biology students and 2 touristic guides from Montenegro and Albania took part in the camps.</p> <p>The participants took part in the research of Albanian Water Frog, placing of nesting houses for European Roller, and following autumn and spring bird migration from ten different sites along Skadar Lake shores in both Albania and Montenegro. They improved their knowledge about bird species and different habitat types within the Skadar Lake ecosystem. They also expressed interest in taking part in future fieldwork activities and especially building their capacities in ornithology.</p>
2.0	Identification of biodiversity threats through predictive modeling	2.1	Predictive model for Skadar Lake developed based on existing data and plans	The study "Predictive Hydrological Modelling and Habitat Assessment for Skadar Lake, Montenegro" for the first time combined the flood dynamic data (duration and magnitude

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				<p>of flood levels) and the most important wetland habitats in particular alongside the shallow lakeshore in Montenegro and Albania. It allows the estimation of potential hydro-technical impacts on the wetland habitats and also supports future management under the changing climate conditions.</p> <p>The results showed that the most serious current threat to the National Park is located just upstream of the lower River Morača, which is closely connected to the lake ecosystem. One of the main conclusions of the study underlined the need for systematic ecological assessment of the area under increasing current and future pressures, in particular changes in water regime and flood dynamics.</p> <p>The study was translated into Montenegrin and submitted to local institutions within the public hearing process regarding the Management plan for NP Skadar Lake. A 3D video was also done based on the study which presents the current threats and potential negative changes in Skadar Lake area. Both the study and the 3D video were presented at the International Conference held in December 2023. They are also available on www.czip.me.</p>
5.0	Capacity building and project administration	5.1	CSTT/GTT filled up and sent to CEPF at beginning and end of project	The reports were completed and submitted on time.

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5.0	Capacity building and project administration	5.2	Final Completion and Impacts Report filled up and submitted at the end of the project	Final Completion and Impact reports have been completed and submitted on time.
5.0	Capacity building and project administration	5.3	Report (poster/presentation) from participation to two CEPF grantee meetings and exchanges	One CEPF grantee meeting was planned to be held in April 2020, but was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no other CEPF grantee meetings during the project. Therefore, this deliverable was not achieved.
3.0	Advocating for Lake Skadar sustainable development under the EU accession process	3.3	Report of study visit to Lake Prespa for 15 decision makers/politicians, local community representatives, media, showcasing a good example of sustainable development in harmony with nature conservation and local community empowerment	From 9th until 12th November 2021, CZIP organized a study visit to National Park Prespa in Greece to present to Montenegrin and Albanian stakeholders the best practice example of transboundary national park management which could be also implemented within the Skadar Lake region. 15 stakeholders took part: representatives of National park Skadar Lake, PE National Parks of Montenegro, the Environmental Protection Agency, Municipalities Cetinje, Tuzi and Shkodra, local communities from Virpazar and Ostros, NGOs, local tourist organizations, and media (RTCG and Euronews Albania) from both countries. The event was hosted by the Prespa National Park management and NGO Society for the Protection of Prespa (SPP) from Greece which has been working since its establishment on safeguarding Lake Prespa's exceptional heritage and promoting viable development in the area that requires harmonious cooperation of the three states

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				<p>that share the Prespa lake-North Macedonia, Albania and Greece.</p> <p>The participants were introduced to the management model, activities, challenges, threats, and examples of how they are dealing with the negative impacts on the park. Several sites were visited where SPP and the NP management are performing various activities such as traditional mowing, etc.</p>
4.0	Communicating the conservation needs and threats to citizens of Montenegro	4.3	Telemetry data for 6 birds showing connectivity between Lake Skadar and other KBAs including other CEPF sub-regions, emphasizing biodiversity importance and being used as both scientific and communication tool in nature protection.	<p>Telemetry data were obtained from 7 bird individuals that were equipped with GPS tracking devices: 2 young Pygmy cormorants, 3 Glossy ibises, a Honey-buzzard, and a Common buzzard. The species with different ecologies were selected to provide a better insight into the activities and territories/migration routes/wintering sites they are using locally and internationally. The data showed the importance of shores of Moraca and Skadar Lake as important nesting, feeding, and roosting sites. Also, the data allowed gaining insights into birds' migration patterns.</p> <p>The Pygmy cormorants and the Common buzzard moved only locally. Two Glossy ibises reached Chad and Tunisia, while another Glossy ibis and Honey-buzzard reached Albania. The movement of the tagged birds and the invitation to propose their names raised interest among the Montenegrin public and the followers of CZIP's social media accounts.</p>

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				<p>The progress of their migration was regularly updated while the connectivity with other KBAs in the country and abroad was explained.</p> <p>The obtained data were also used for building capacities of CZIP staff for the development of scientific documents such as a diploma thesis. It was prepared by the ornithologist Nikola Novovic and submitted to the Department of Biology, University of Montene</p>
5.0	Capacity building and project administration	5.4	A complaint mechanism created and made available to public, as demonstrated by specific sections in the performance reports.	The grievance mechanism was created and published on CZIP website (www.czip.me) in the Montenegrin and English languages. No complaints on the project were received.
4.0	Communicating the conservation needs and threats to citizens of Montenegro	4.4	AMND JULY23==Touristic bird guide/brochure for NP Skadar lake printed in 600 copies on Montenegrin, English and Albanian language and distributed to stakeholders	A brochure containing a map with suitable locations for bird watching, behavior rules and illustrations, and a description of bird species of conservation importance in National Park Skadar Lake was printed in 750 copies in Montenegrin, English and Albanian language (250 copies per language). Part of the printed brochures were delivered to participants of the International Conference on the Protection of Skadar Lake held on 13th December 2023 in Podgorica. The rest was distributed to the Info center of NP Skadar Lake in Vranjina and Virpazar and local tourist organizations from Podgorica, Tuzi, Capital Cetinje, and Bar which are gravitating Skadar Lake area. Through the above-mentioned organizations, the brochure

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				was further distributed to the people visiting this area.

Tools, products or methodologies that resulted from the project or contributed to the results:

Research on Albanian Water Frog was done by expert Katarina Ljubisavljevic in 2020 and 2021. The findings were summarized into report which was submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency and PE National Parks of Montenegro. The species was identified at a total of 46 locations within NP Skadar Lake, of which 78% were new findings of this species. Also, the report indicated that the species was exposed to a larger number of threats in 2021 compared to 2020 especially due to the fires within NP Skadar Lake that impacted the species' habitats.

Research of selected fish species within NP Skadar Lake was done by ichthyologist Danilo Mrdak in 2020 and 2021. The results indicate the stable status of the population sizes of the researched fished species. The report was submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture, forestry, and Water, Environmental Protection Agency, and PE National Parks of Montenegro.

A draft of the scientific paper "Species richness and abundance of common birds in floodplains of Skadar Lake" was prepared using the results of the research of selected bird species done within the project. The article focuses on the comparison of obtained data with bird data from similar habitats as Skadar Lake. It will be submitted to one of the most prominent ornithological scientific journals in the region-Acrocephalus which publishes original contributions in all fields of ornithology. The collected data from bird monitoring and research done on Skadar Lake within the project were also used to prepare the Standard Data Form (SDF) document. The document contains a description of the site, the population sizes of the researched bird species from Annex I and II of the Birds Directive, and also an overview of threats, pressures, and activities with impacts on the site. It will be used to update the established Natura2000 database and support the establishment of the Natura2000 network in Montenegro.

The study "Predictive Hydrological Modelling and Habitat Assessment for Skadar Lake, Montenegro" was prepared by hydrologist Ulrich Schwarz. The study results show that the most serious current threat to the National Park is located just upstream of the lower River Morača, which is closely connected to the lake ecosystem. The study results indicate the need for continuing ecological assessment of the area. Also, it was stressed that for lower River Morača only an extensive restoration project would improve the situation. The study was translated into the Montenegrin language and distributed to stakeholders within the public hearing for management plans of Skadar Lake and also on the International Conference for the Protection of Skadar Lake held in December 2023.

3D video about threats impacting Skadar Lake was done also by Ulrich Schwarz. It presents the current threats and potential negative changes in areas within the NP Skadar Lake. The video presents how these areas would look in the cases of restoration or further devastation. The description of the video was done in Montenegrin (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUEILb6duzg>) and English language (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWdgPSPMuJg>). The video was done based on the findings of the study "Predictive hydrological modeling and assessment of Skadar Lake habitats, Montenegro".

The study "Assessment of Nature Protection Efficiency in Lake Skadar National Park" was developed by the expert Marija Vugdalic. This document serves as a conservation guideline for improving nature-friendly management of National Park Skadar Lake. It was made on the participatory approach and includes the assessment of the current state of management of NP Skadar Lake and recommendations for its improvement regarding financing, building staff capacities, monitoring, and patrolling activities, etc.

The study "Results of research on tourist offer and potentials of Municipalities of Tuzi and Zeta" was done within the project to explore local tourist offers within Municipalities Tuzi and Zeta. These sites were chosen on their proximity to the most valuable Skadar Lake habitats, undeveloped tourist offers, and plans for future ingestions towards tourist infrastructure. The study was done based on 175 completed face-to-face and also online surveys with locals from 10 villages from both municipalities. The study indicates that tourism is poorly developed in both municipalities and that the existing offer is not thematically embodied. The existing brand of still preserved nature should be further elaborated and used for the development of more sustainable tourist offers.

A pocket-sized brochure/touristic guide containing information about locations for bird-watching, behavior rules in the National Park Skadar Lake, and descriptions and illustrations of charismatic bird species and species of conservation importance was printed in 750 copies in Montenegrin, English, and Albanian language. PE "National parks" provided the design of the map that was put in the brochure, while Touristic Organization Tuzi helped with the text concerning the areas of Tuzi municipality which are mentioned in the brochure, and with the translation of the brochure on the Albanian language. Therefore, their logos were also included in the brochure.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in Touristic Organization Tuzi to jointly continue the work on the promotion of biodiversity within Tuzi municipality. Also, another MoU was signed with the Touristic Organization of the Capital Cetinje aiming to jointly work on the promotion of biodiversity in the Cetinje area. This cooperation was established within the process of preparation of the joint photo exhibitions about the natural and cultural values of Skadar Lake which were done during summer 2021.

PORTFOLIO INDICATORS

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
2.0	Number of KBAs under improved management and number of hectares covered			16,000	By mainstreaming the collected comprehensive scientific data on selected amphibian, fish and bird species in the draft management plan of NP Skadar Lake and Natura2000 database,

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
					improving the nesting condition for Dalmatian pelican and European Roller and advocating for better protection measures and more effective monitoring of the Skadar Lake wet meadows, especially on the buffer/contact zones of the national park where high level of poaching pressure was noticed, it is estimated that approximately 16000 ha of NP Skadar Lake has enhanced protection.
1.1	Number of land-use plans or land use management practices incorporate provisions for biodiversity conservation (e.g., integrated coastal zone management plans, river basin management plans, agricultural development plans, etc.)			2	CZIP influenced the process of public hearings for the Management Plan for National park Skadar Lake 2021-2025. Since the call for public hearing regarding the national parks' management plans was not done in transparent manner and did not allow sufficient time to provide comments to the document but only participate personally in public hearings events during a short period of time, based on CZIP initiative, the Ministry of ecology annulled this call in July 2022 and urged PE National parks of

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
					<p>Montenegro to launch another call.</p> <p>CZIP also submitted comments on the draft of the Spatial plan for Montenegro until 2040. CZIP remarked that the planned development the traffic line along Bojana River which connects Skadar Lake and the Adriatic sea can increase the risks of Lakes pollution. Also, Skadar Lake area should be recognized as a future UNESCO biosphere reserve. This was not pointed out in the document, although several initiatives for its proclamation were submitted in previous period.</p>
2.1	Number of threatened freshwater species seeing status improved (i.e., short-term increase in population and/or breeding success)			1	Research done during 2020/21 indicate that Albanian Water Frog is present on the locations with the favorable habitat characteristics, such as wetland and shallow parts with lots of aquatic vegetation in the north and northwestern parts and as well as in the tributaries

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
					and lagoon of the southern rim of Skadar Lake. The species was not registered along rocky and steep parts of the coast. The Albanian Water Frog was identified at a total of 46 locations within NP Skadar lake, of which 78% were new findings of this species.
2.4	Number of Freshwater KBAs in priority CMZ with improved information on biodiversity, shared with stakeholders			1	Monitoring of the following species was done within the National Park Skadar Lake (KBA Lake Skadar, MNE13) and surrounding area: Albanian Water Frog, European Roller, Dalmatian Pelican, Whiskered Tern, Ferruginous duck, and Turtle Dove. Special attention was given to the research of the common bird species on Skadar Lake floodplains which are the least investigated area within the NP. 83 bird species were registered there. Also, 7 bird individuals were equipped with GPS tracking devices (2 young Pygmy cormorants, 3 Glossy ibises, a Honey-buzzard, and a Common buzzard). The data received from their

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
					<p>movement was used to provide insight into the ecology, possible migration patterns of the species, and connectivity with other KBAs from the country and abroad.</p> <p>Besides amphibian and bird species, the current condition of the population of the following freshwater fish species was determined: Skadar shad, Roach, Skadar rudd, Montenegro Riffle Dace, Ohrid Spined Loach.</p> <p>The monitoring and research done filled in significantly the knowledge gaps; and accessed the state and health of the lake's ecosystem. The obtained biodiversity data were used for influencing the proper management planning of NP Skadar Lake, conducting conservation actions such as placement of nesting houses, advocating for the decrease of the threats impacting the national park, etc. The data were shared with the main stakeholders involved in the</p>

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
					protection of Skadar Lake watershed on local and national level
2.2	Number of priority CMZ where community stakeholders (e.g., fishers, farmers, etc.) receive economic benefits from adopting practices with positive impacts on biodiversity			1	<p>In Catchment Management Zone "Lake Skadar", locals from three villages (Berislavci, Sukuric, Mataguzi) were trained on how to properly use the compost stations received in 2022 within another CEPF-funded project implemented by Noe Conservation. By using the plant waste, the trained farmers will reduce the cost of waste disposal and also significantly decrease the usage of chemical fertilizers.</p> <p>During 2024, after the closure of the project, farmers from six villages (Balabani, Mataguzi, Vranj, Kurilo, Golubovci, Podhum) will benefit from the recently established incentive measure scheme-subventions from local Municipality Zeta for the purchase of bird-friendly nets for crop protection instead of fishing nets which are having a direct</p>

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
					negative impact on various bird and other species. By abandoning this negative practice, the farmers will benefit from the increase to the access to ecosystem services that these species are providing for crop protection (pollination, pest control, etc).
5.1	Number of organizations demonstrating increase knowledge of and engagement in international or regional conservation agreement			1	NGO Green Home, formal representative of the Informal group of citizens from Virpazar who initiated the complaint to the Bern Convention regarding the development of two tourist projects-Porto Skadar Lake and White Village within the National park Skadar Lake, increased its engagement on international level by providing comments on the progress of the case and also participating in the Standing Committee meeting held in December 2022. Based on the feedback provided, the Standing Committee reiterated the three key concerns of the complainant and urged the authorities of Montenegro to follow them: revoke all building permits

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
					for Porto Skadar Lake and White Village; develop and deliver a new spatial plan and management plan for the National Park, and initiate and establish efficient and effective methods of monitoring implementation of existing laws. This NGO provided comments and also took part in the above-mentioned event with CZIP support.

GLOBAL INDICATORS

Protected Areas

Protected areas that have been created and/or expanded as a result of the 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 Protected Area	WDPA ID*	Latitude	Longitude	Country	Original Total Size (Hectares) **	New Protected Hectares ***	Year of Legal Declaration or Expansion

*World Database of Protected Areas

**If this is a new protected area, 0 should appear in this column

*** This column excludes the original total size of the protected area.

Key Biodiversity Area Management

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) under improved management—where tangible results have been achieved to support conservation—as a result of the project.

KBA Name	KBA Code	Size of KBA	Number of Hectares with Improved Management
Skadarsko jezero	MNE13		16,000

Production Landscapes

Production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity as a result of the project.

A production landscape is defined as a site outside a protected area where commercial agriculture, forestry or natural product exploitation occurs.

Name of Production Landscape	Latitude	Longitude	Hectares Strengthened	Intervention
Mataguzi, Balabani, Gostilj, Golubovci, Podhum	42.325046	19.27944	5	Introduced incentive scheme by Municipality Zeta for purchase of bird-friendly nets to stop the harmful practice of using fishing nets for crop protection that are endangering bird and other species

Benefits to Individuals

- **Structured Training:**

Number of Men Trained	Number of Women Trained	Topics of Training
17	19	European roller (<i>Coracias garrulus</i>) conservation actions in Zeta region and research of Albanian Water Frog in NP Skadar lake (spring biodiversity camp 2020) Following of the autumn bird migration on Montenegrin side of Skadar lake (autumn biodiversity camp 2020) Following of the autumn and spring bird migration on both Montenegrin and Albanian sides of Skadar

Number of Men Trained	Number of Women Trained	Topics of Training
		lake (autumn and spring biodiversity camps 2021 and 2022) Usage of the compost stations for farmers from Municipalities Zeta and Tuzi

- **Cash Benefits:**

Number of Men – Cash Benefits	Number of Women – Cash Benefits	Description of Benefits
3	1	Participation of touristic guides at the biodiversity camps- being more competitive when organizing touristic tours on Skadar Lake due to increased skills on identification of the freshwater bird species Donation of 1350 meters of bird friendly nets to ensure appropriate protection of different crops and vegetables that two farmers from Skadar Lake area are producing

Benefits to Communities

View the characteristics column below with the following corresponding codes:	View the benefits column below with the following corresponding codes:
1- Small Landowners	a. Increased Access to Clean Water
2- Subsistence Economy	b. Increased Food Security
3- Indigenous/ Ethnic Peoples	c. Increased Access to Energy
4- Pastoralists / Nomadic Peoples	d. Increased Access to Public Services
5- Recent Migrants	e. Increased Resilience to Climate Change
6- Urban Communities	f. Improved Land Tenure
7- Other	g. Improved Use of Traditional Knowledge
	h. Improved Decision-Making
	i. Improved Access to Ecosystem Services

Community Name	Community Characteristics							Type of Benefit									Country	Number of Males Benefitting	Number of Females Benefitting
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i			
Berislavci	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Montenegro	7	2
Sukuric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Montenegro	1	0
Mataguzi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Montenegro	2	0
Kotrabudan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Montenegro	125	108
Podhum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Montenegro	123	130	
Kurilo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Montenegro	67	22	
Godinje	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Montenegro	1	0	

Characteristics of "Other" Communities:

Policies, Laws and Regulations

View the **topics** column below with the following corresponding codes:

A- Agriculture	E- Energy	I- Planning/Zoning	M- Tourism
B- Climate	F- Fisheries	J- Pollution	N- Transportation
C- Ecosystem Management	G- Forestry	K- Protected Areas	O- Wildlife Trade
D- Education	H- Mining and Quarrying	L- Species Protection	P- Other

No.	Name of Law	Scope	Topics															
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	Management plan for National Park Skadar lake for the period 2021-2025	National	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Ban of usage of ATV vehicles in national parks including Skadar lake	National	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

“Other” Topics Addressed by the Policy, Law or Regulation:

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
1	Montenegro	May 30, 2022	To ensure democratic and transparent proceedings regarding the adoption of	On 20th May 2022, Public Enterprise “National Parks of Montenegro” announced public debate for the adoption of

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
			management plans of national parks including Skadar Lake.	management plans for all 5 Montenegrin national parks including Skadar Lake. CZIP submitted the initiative to the Ministry of Ecology, as a legally higher instance body, to annul the call for public debate due to extremely short deadlines for participating in public hearings to give comments in person (from 3 to 15 days) and for not allowing the public to submit their comments in writing. The Ministry annulled the call and forced National Parks to open new debates with reasonable deadlines and provided the opportunity for submission of written comments. Besides taking legal means to annul the call, CZIP also released a statement to inform the public and create pressure for the sake of future transparency of the process.
2	Montenegro	June 03, 2023	To decrease the disturbance of wildlife and the damage to the habitats of Montenegrin national parks, including Skadar Lake	In May 2023, CZIP collected information and proofs that touristic agencies and companies are offering a special service within the territories of Montenegrin national parks-driving ATV vehicles which cause much damage to the

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
				<p>ecosystems. Based on the collected data, among which is proof that the driving ATV vehicles are organized within the territory of NP Skadar Lake, CZIP sent an initiative to the director of the National parks of Montenegro, asking to organize a joint meeting and ban the usage of this vehicle within national parks. The joint meeting was held on 9th May 2023. Soon after the meeting, the national park management informed the public via post on their social media accounts that more strict controls would be done by the ranger service of the parks and Ecological inspection within national park territories and that ATV vehicles are forbidden to be driven into its territories. Also, it called on tourist agencies to organize these activities by complying with the Law on nature protection which prescribes that this kind of activity is forbidden within the territories of national parks.</p>

Companies Adopting Biodiversity-friendly Practices

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.

Name of Company	Description of Biodiversity-Friendly Practice	Country/Countries where Practice was Adopted
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Networks and Partnerships

Networks/partnerships should have some lasting benefit beyond immediate project implementation. Informal networks/partnerships are acceptable.

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
Coalition 27	2016	Montenegro	No	Coalition 27 is an open platform of 16 Montenegrin CSOs that jointly monitor, advocate and promote European acquit in the field of the environment. Also, they jointly contribute to the quality and transparency of the EU negotiation process to Chapter 27- Environment through preparation of various contribution reports, analysis etc. Their watchdog role was strengthened within this project by organizing joint advocacy campaigns regarding the improvement of the public hearing process regarding the strategic documents such as management plans for national parks and also by ensuring quality of the annual Contribution reports which are delivered to the EU institutions on national and international level.
Informal working group for the suppression of the issue of using fishing nets for crop protection in Zeta area	2023	Montenegro	Yes	The informal working group consisting of representatives of CZIP, Municipality Zeta, Ecological Inspection, Ministry of Agriculture, forestry, and water, and Ministry of Tourism, ecology, sustainable development, and the

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
				<p>development of North was formed in November 2023 to discuss the issue of using fishing nets for crop protection on the territory of Zeta area which is harmful to various bird species and also propose concrete steps to resolve the issue. Within the field work done by CZIP ornithologists from 2020 until 2023, several critical spots in Zeta region were identified where the farmers are using fishing nets for crop protection, and thus many protected bird species are found entangled and dead in the nets. This issue was recognized within the duration of the project as one of the major threats impacting the survival of bird species in the wider area of the national park Skadar Lake. Based on the findings from the field, CZIP prepared a report and also organized a meeting with the representatives of the above-mentioned institutions to present the problem and jointly discuss possible solutions.</p> <p>The representatives of the Municipality Zeta and Ecological inspection, based on CZIP initiative, showed interest in contributing to the suppression of the issue of using fishing nets for crop protection and Zeta area. The Secretariat for Entrepreneurship and Agriculture included subventions in the "Program of Incentive Measures to Support Rural Development for the Territory of Zeta Municipality for 2024" for purchase of the suitable nets for crop protection that is not harming bird species (they will provide a subvention up to 40% of the total sum, maximum 300 EUR per request). Also, they are exploring other options for finding means</p>

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/ Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
				to support the action of the purchase of suitable nets. Other joint actions will be done after the closure of this project such as the promotion of the incentive measures and the need to resolve the issue to local farmers via both local and national media channels.
Local Touristic Organization Tuzi	2021	Montenegro	Yes	Local Touristic Organization Tuzi and CZIP established their cooperation while jointly organizing the photo exhibition "Skadar Lake Wonders" in June and September 2021. LTO Tuzi provided the venue of the exhibition in Tuzi and also photos of local photographers with the motives of cultural and natural values of Skadar Lake. LTO also helped with the organization of the educational outdoor workshops in about the biodiversity of Skadar Lake where 522 students and 23 teachers from elementary schools in Tuzi and Podgorica took art. It also helped with the distribution of the photos from the exhibition to 5 local schools from Tuzi. Besides this, ti provided materials and also translation of the pocket-sized touristic guide about birdwatching on Skadar Lake. In order to strenghten the established cooperation, LTO Tuzi and CZIP signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aiming to jointly work on the promotion of the biodiversity richness of Tuzi municipality.
Local Touristic Organization Capital Cetinje	2021	Montenegro	Yes	Local Touristic Organization Capital Cetinje and CZIP established their cooperation regarding joint organization of the photo exhibition "Skadar Lake Wonders" in June 2021. LTO Cetinje provided the venue of the exhibition in Cetinje and also photos of local photographers with the motives of cultural

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
				and natural values of Skadar Lake. Although it was planned to have the exhibition only once in Cetinje, due to the interest of the LTO to have different events also after the closure of the main touristic season, the exhibition was placed in Rijeka Crnojevica, one of the most visited sites on the territory of Cetinje in September 2021. To strengthen the established cooperation, LTO Cetinje and CZIP signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aiming to jointly continue working on the promotion of the biodiversity richness of Cetinje municipality.

Sustainable Financing

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 services (PES) schemes, and other revenue, fee or tax schemes that generate long-term funding for conservation.

Name of Mechanism	Purpose	Date Established	Description	Country/Countries	Project Intervention	Delivery of Funds?

Globally Threatened Species

Globally threatened species (CR, EN, VU) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, benefitting from the project.

Genus	Species	Common Name (English)	Status	Intervention	Population Trend at Site
Streptopelia	turtur	European Turtle Dove	VU	European Turtle Dove was one of the species which was monitored within the bird survey on the surrounding meadows	Unknown

Genus	Species	Common Name (English)	Status	Intervention	Population Trend at Site
				of Skadar Lake. The monitoring aimed to obtain a better understanding of the distribution of this species. 52 observations of this species in the different habitats of Skadar lake area were registered. Also, patrolling to detect fish nets used for crop protection in agricultural area were done on the Skadar lake meadows, where this species is foraging.	
Falco	vespertinus	Red-footed Falcon	VU	Within the bird survey conducted on the meadows of Skadar lake, a flock of maximum 7 individuals of Red-footed falcon was observed. Considering the eastern part of the northern shore of Skadar lake seems to be a suitable habitat for this species, a larger number of this species can be expected in the future. Since it is crucial to have safe foraging sites for this species, the mapping of sites with harmful practice of usage fish nets for crop protection was done in Zeta area.	Unknown
Pelophylax	shqipericus	Albanian Water Frog	EN	From a total of 46 locations where the species were registered during the conduction of the research within the project, 78% (36 locations) present the new findings for the Skadar Lake area. Despite this, due to observed decreased abundance primarily on location Vranjina in NP Skadar Lake, the median relative abundance of the species has decreased from 5 to 4 individuals on 100 m of the transect of the coastline. So the trend related to this species can be considered as decreasing.	Decreasing
Alosa	sp. nov. 'Skadar'		VU	The monitoring of this species was conducted during 2020-2021. The results	Unknown

Genus	Species	Common Name (English)	Status	Intervention	Population Trend at Site
				<p>showed a high biomass of this species in the middle part of the Skadar lake, although the species is not so abundant. This information is encouraging for the survival of the species since previously a decreasing trend was observed.</p>	

LESSONS LEARNED

Although it was initially planned to have two conferences within the project, having only one conference which served as a final project event was a good decision since many meetings were held with various stakeholders this could lead to the stakeholders being overwhelmed with too many events happening and having decreased interest to take part. Having the Ambassadors of Albania and France to give opening speeches at the beginning of the International Conference for the Protection of Skadar Lake and thus present their perspective on the improvement of this ecosystem was very useful since it showed the local and national stakeholders the interest that these two countries are having in protecting the Skadar Lake.

Despite this approach is not so popular among NGOs and being more demanding regarding time and energy, deciding in Working groups instead of working only one-to-one with the responsible institution is having a positive impact on stakeholders and should be used more often. This approach proved to be good regarding the resolution of the issue of using fishing nets for crop protection in Zeta and also putting pressure on PE National Parks to recognize NGOs as important stakeholders in resolving the Dalmatian pelican crisis due to avian influenza and human disturbance.

One of the main challenges within the project was how to "stimulate" the students of the Faculty of Visual Arts (FVU) from Podgorica to take part in the competition that CZIP organized for the design of the art installation presenting threats to Skadar Lake and possible solutions. Despite having the aim of the competition presented to the students and also including the financial award, the competition was not successful. This could have been avoided by having included the FVU representatives during the project preparation phase to discuss the planned activity and assess if they are interested in taking part. Although this activity was completed with the student from the Faculty of Arts from Cetinje, a better approach would have been to design a national open call for artists to propose the design of the art installation.

Another challenge that which CZIP team faced during the project implementation was the slow process of obtaining needed data from the cadaster related to the LIDAR elevation model which should have been used for the development of the predictive modeling study. Since the data were not publicly available, CZIP submitted a request for free access to information to obtain it but the attempts were not successful despite numerous initiatives sent to the Real Estate Administration. Although this process increased CZIP capacities related to the research of data via the FoI requests, the already developed system/online app "Ask institutions" developed by NGO MANS should have been used for this purpose.

SUSTAINABILITY/REPLICATION

Since the Dalmatian pelican population is still fragile due to the impact of avian influenza and human disturbance, the monitoring and surveillance actions will be continued by CZIP ornithologists beyond the project level. The continuation of the conservation actions such as placing nesting houses for the nationally endangered bird species such as the European Roller and its regular monitoring should ensure the increase of the viable population of this species in Montenegro.

The telemetry data of the GPS-tagged birds provided insight into the ecology and movement patterns and also contributed to improving the knowledge base about the selected bird species on Skadar Lake and the connectivity with other KBAs on local, national, and international levels. CZIP will continue to use the movement data of the still-tagged bird individuals for both communication and scientific purposes. Also, these activities will be

used as a fundraising tool for obtaining additional means for performing actions for bird species conservation.

The long process of approving the scientific article and publishing it in the selected journal could impact the enthusiasm and will of CZIP ornithologists for further scientific work besides collecting data on the field. Despite this, to strengthen the CZIP advocacy role based on published scientific data, these practices should be continued in the future. Local Municipality Zeta and Ecological Inspection will continue to work on resolving the issue of the usage of fishing nets for crop protection in the Zeta region together with CZIP by performing various joint activities such as joint media appearances, training for local farmers, etc.

The results of the predictive modeling study and the conservation guidelines for nature-friendly management were used for the improvement of the management plan for NP Skadar Lake, creating additional pressure on the public about the need to ensure the transparent and democratic process of public hearings regarding strategic documents and to influence the poor management of the national parks including Skadar Lake. This approach will be continuously used by the CZIP team for the advocacy and communication work related to other endangered KBAs in Montenegro. Besides this, the results of both studies are being used for the development of the project proposal targeting the restoration of the habitats of the Skadar Lake ecosystems' within the BirdLife program "Recovering Nature in the East-RENATE". Since one of the project components was also related to tourism, the results of the research on the tourist offers of the Municipalities of Zeta and Tuzi will be used by local tourist organizations for the development of more nature-friendly offers and products with the tourist providers from this region.

Overall, most of the implemented project activities could be replicated for other Montenegrin or regional KBAs that are striving for efficient sustainable development and enhanced management.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS/STANDARDS

The biodiversity research was done in the National Park Skadar Lake were done based on the permits which were issued by the Environmental Protection Agency. CZIP project staff obtained permits for period 2020-2023 for conduction of bird ringing, bird research and equipping selected bird species with satellite tracking devices-transmitters. There permits also were obtained for the engaged experts who conducted the research of selected bird, amphibian and fish species.

Special safety precaution was given to fieldwork conducted from the boat, where CZIP staff and experts wore suitable equipment such as life jackets. The rented boats also had the needed safety equipment (floating devices, visual signaling devices, etc.)

Besides this, CZIP project staff, engaged experts and students that took part in the monitoring activities and biodiversity camps had individual life insurance covered by the project budget.

Due to lockdown and ban of movement among municipalities/cities because of COVID-19 pandemics in 2020 and early 2021, the biodiversity camps were organized by minimizing the possibility to endanger the health of the participants, where only few active volunteers/biology students were invited to participate in the events. Also, all students signed volunteering contracts according to the requirements of the Montenegrin Law on volunteering.

A grievance mechanism was created within the project, but no complaints were received.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Several unexpected circumstances occurred during the implementation of the project such as worsening of the cooperation with PE National Parks due to poor management of NP Skadar Lake, difficulties with completing some of the activities such as development and placement of art installation, negative impacts of avian influenza on population of Dalmatian pelican, change of the Project Coordinator, etc. This resulted with project being amended twice and prolonged for almost two years. The required realignment of the budget and subsequently proposed activities were fully supported by CEPF which had significantly positive impact to the course of the project. We are grateful to CEPF regional implementing team for showing understanding for all unforeseen events and also given support to overcome the obstacles and successfully complete the project.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Total Amount of Additional Funding Actually Secured (USD)	\$2,476.00
Breakdown of Additional Funding	<p>Following additional funding was secured during the implementation of the project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Counterpart funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -458 USD-purchase of 20 nesting houses for European Roller (Spring Alive project financed by Heidelberg Cement) -1653 USD-purchase of 1350 meters of bird-friendly nets for crop protection that were donated to two farmers from the Skadar Lake area (Adriatic Flyway project phase 4 financed by EuroNatur) 2. In-kind contributions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -228 USD-10 nesting houses for European Roller donated by the NGO Riparia from Serbia -137 USD-6 nesting houses for European Roller donated by Slovenian ornithologists Tomaz Mihelic and Borut Stumberger

INFORMATION SHARING AND CEPF POLICY

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. For more information about this project, you may contact the organization and/or individual listed below.

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