

The European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

# Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA)

## *Workshop Report*

*Activity 3.1 Nature Protection*

*Nature Training Module 4, Nature Management: Conducting  
Nature Impact Assessments*

*National Park Mali Sharr (Kosovo\* and fYR of Macedonia)*

15 – 17 May 2012, Prevallë, Kosovo\*

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



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## Activity 3.1 Nature Protection

Nature training Module 4, NP Mali Sharr (Kosovo\* and FYR of Macedonia)

15 –17 May 2012

### Table of contents

	Page
1. <i>Introduction</i> .....	1
1.1 The Habitats and the Wild Birds Directives .....	1
1.2 Nature Impact Assessments.....	4
1.3 Background situation in the RENA countries .....	6
1.4 RENA Nature Work plan.....	7
2. <i>The Workshop (15 – 17 May)</i> .....	10
2.1 This workshop .....	10
2.2 Introduction to NP Mali Sharr .....	12
2.3 Proceedings 15 May 2012 .....	144
2.4 Proceedings 16 May 2012 .....	166
2.5 Proceedings 17 May 2012 .....	20
3. <i>Evaluation of the meeting</i> .....	222
3.1 Consolidated Summary Evaluation Group 1 and 2 .....	22
<i>Annex 1: RENA Nature Work Plan</i> .....	23
<i>Annex 2: Participants</i> .....	33
<i>Annex 3: Agenda</i> .....	36
<i>Annex 4: Workshop Sheets under separate cover (<a href="http://www.renanetwork.org">www.renanetwork.org</a>)</i> .....	41
<i>Annex 5: Evaluation of the training</i> .....	42

Report prepared by:

Ivana **Mijatovic Cernos**/Imre **Csikós**

Expert, Cross Border Nature Component/(Working Group 3 – Nature)

Team Leader Climate Component (Working Group 2)

Team Leader Cross Border Nature Component (Working Group 3 – Nature)

Tel: +31 30 234 02 21

Mob: +31 6 222 37 882

Fax: +31 84 745 11 93

e-mail: [imre@renanetwork.org](mailto:imre@renanetwork.org)

skype: imre.csikos



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RENA Secretariat: Hulla & Co. Human Dynamics KG; Lothringer Strasse 16, 1030 Vienna (Wien), Austria

Tel: +43 1 402 50 21 12; Fax: +43 1 402 50 20 20; email: [rena.secretariat@renanetwork.org](mailto:rena.secretariat@renanetwork.org)

Website: [www.renanetwork.org](http://www.renanetwork.org)

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Habitats and the Wild Birds Directives

The Habitats Directive (**Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora**) and the Birds Directive (**Directive 2009/147/EC**) form the **cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy**. It is built around two pillars: the [Natura 2000 network](#) of protected sites and the strict system of species protection.

The Habitats Directive protects over 1.000 animals and plant species and over 200 so called "habitat types" which are of European importance. The EU is committed to the protection of biodiversity and to halting biodiversity loss within the EU by 2020.

Over the last 25 years the EU has built up a vast network of 26.000 protected areas in all the Member States and an area of more than 750.000 km<sup>2</sup>, which is 18% of the EU's land area. This ecological network or the Natura 2000 is the largest network of protected areas in the world, and a testament to the importance that EU citizens attach to biodiversity.

The objective of the Habitats Directive is to “maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and wild flora and fauna”. Article 3 of the Directive provides for the establishment of “a coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation” under the title of Natura 2000 (Annex I Habitats and Annex II species to be maintained or restored). Article 4 further elaborates on the Annex III and the criteria for selecting sites eligible for identification as **Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and designation as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**.

The designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are carried out in three stages;

1. The responsibility for proposing sites under the Habitats Directive lies with the Member States. They carry out comprehensive assessments of each of the habitat types and species present on their territory. The choice of sites is a purely scientific process, based on standard selection criteria specified in the directive.<sup>1</sup>
2. On the basis of the proposed national lists, the Commission, in agreement with the Member States, must adopt the lists of “Sites of Community Importance”. Scientific seminars are then convened by the Commission for each bio-geographical region in order to analyse the Member States’ proposals in a transparent way. They are open to the Member States concerned and to experts representing relevant stakeholder interests, including owners, users, and environmental NGOs. These seminars are supported by the European Environment Agency, assisted by the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity which is based in Paris, France. These expert seminars aim to establish if sufficient high-quality sites have been proposed by each Member State to ensure the favourable conservation status of each habitat type and species throughout their range in the EU. The objective is to establish a list of “Sites of Community Importance” for each of the regions determined by the Habitats Directive, applying a consistent approach across the Member States.
3. Once the lists of “Sites of Community Importance” have been adopted, it is for the Member States to designate all of these sites as “Special Areas of Conservation”, as required by the Habitats Directive, as soon as possible and within six years at the most. They should give priority to those sites that are most threatened and/or that are of most importance in conservation terms. During this period, Member States must take the necessary management or restoration measures to ensure the favourable conservation status of those sites.

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<sup>1</sup> Site specific data are communicated to the Commission by using [Standard Data Forms](#).

The Habitats Directive divides the EU into 9 ecologically coherent “bio-geographical” regions – the **Atlantic**, **Continental**, **Alpine** (which includes the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Carpathian mountains and parts of Scandinavia), **Mediterranean**, **Boreal** (Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and part of Lithuania), the **Macaronesian** (Madeira, Azores and Canary Islands), the **Pannonian** (essentially Hungary and parts of the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia), the **Steppic** and the **Black Sea** region (parts of Bulgaria and Romania). Natura 2000 sites are selected according to each bio-geographical region. Working on this level makes it easier to conserve species and habitat types under similar natural conditions across a suite of countries.

**Article 6** is one of the most important articles in the Habitats Directive as it defines how Natura 2000 sites are managed and protected.

Paragraphs 6(1) and 6(2) require that, within Natura 2000, Member States:

- Take appropriate conservation measures to maintain and restore the habitats and species for which the site has been designated to a favourable conservation status;
- Avoid damaging activities that could significantly disturb these species or deteriorate the habitats of the protected species or habitat types.

Paragraphs 6(3) and 6(4) lay down the procedure to be followed when planning new developments that might affect a Natura 2000 site. Thus:

- Any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall undergo an **Appropriate Assessment** to determine its implications for the site. The competent authorities can only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned (Article 6.3)
- In exceptional circumstances, a plan or project may still be allowed to go ahead, in spite of a negative assessment, provided there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project is considered to be of overriding public interest. In such cases the Member State must take appropriate compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the N2000 Network is protected. (Article 6.4)<sup>2</sup>

Article 8 is about the financing of Natura 2000; although the main responsibility for it lies with the Member States, the article explicitly links delivery of necessary conservation measures to the provision of the EU co-financing (EARDs, European Fisheries Fund, European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, Cohesion Fund and Life +).

The Habitats Directive also comprises a "2nd pillar", which is related to the protection of species. In particular, Articles 12 and 16 are aimed at the establishment and implementation of a strict protection regime for animal species listed in Annex IV(a) of the Habitats Directive within the whole territory of Member States.

The **Birds Directive** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (this is the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) is the EU's oldest piece of nature legislation and one of the most important, creating a comprehensive scheme of protection for all wild bird species naturally occurring in the Union. It was adopted unanimously by the Member States in 1979 as a response to increasing concern about the declines in Europe's wild bird populations resulting from pollution, loss of habitats as well as unsustainable use. It was also in recognition that wild birds, many of which are migratory, are a shared heritage of the Member States and that their effective conservation required international co-operation.

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<sup>2</sup> More information as well as guidance documents can be found on:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance\\_en.htm#art6](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance_en.htm#art6)

The directive recognises that habitat loss and degradation are the most serious threats to the conservation of wild birds. It therefore places great emphasis on the protection of habitats for endangered as well as migratory species (listed in Annex I), especially through the establishment of a coherent network of **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)** comprising all the most suitable territories for these species. Since 1994 all SPAs form an integral part of the NATURA 2000 ecological network.

The Birds Directive bans activities that directly threaten birds, such as the deliberate killing or capture of birds, the destruction of their nests and taking of their eggs, and associated activities such as trading in live or dead birds, with a few exceptions (listed in Annex III - III/1 allows taking in all Member States; III/2 allows taking in Member States in agreement with European Commission). The Directive recognises hunting as a legitimate activity and provides a comprehensive system for the management of hunting (limited to species listed in Annex II - II/1 allows hunting in all Member States; II/2 allows hunting in listed Member States) to ensure that this practice is sustainable. This includes a requirement to ensure that birds are not hunted during the periods of their greatest vulnerability, such as the return migration to the nesting areas, reproduction and the raising of chicks. It requires Member States to outlaw all forms of non-selective and large scale killing of birds, (especially the methods listed in Annex IV). It promotes research to underpin the protection, management and use of all species of birds covered by the Directive (Annex V).

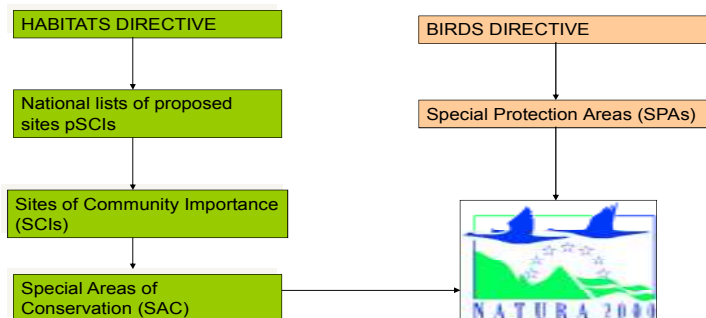


The Annexes to the Birds Directive have been adapted on a number of occasions in response to scientific and technical progress and to the successive enlargements of the European Union. The most recent adaptation is in response to the Accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union on 1 January 2007. As in the case of the 2004 enlargement, most changes concern the annexes of the directives. In the first place new typical and endangered species and habitats in the new Member States have been added to the annexes, with a limited number of geographic exceptions granted.

In August 2007 the journal Science published an analysis showing that the Birds Directive has made a significant difference in protecting many of Europe's most threatened birds from further decline. The groundbreaking paper shows that the Birds Directive has clearly helped those species considered to be most at risk, partly through the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Below: the diagram explaining the interlinkages of the Directives towards the establishment of the Natura 2000 sites.

### EU Natura 2000 network





## 1.2 The Nature Impact Assessments

As previously stressed the Article 6 is one of the most important articles in the Habitats Directive as it defines how Natura 2000 sites are managed and protected. Therefore, **Paragraphs 6(1) and 6(2)** require that, “within Natura 2000, Member States take appropriate conservation measures to maintain and restore the habitats and species for which the site has been designated to a favourable conservation status and also avoid damaging avoid damaging activities that could significantly disturb these species or deteriorate the habitats of the protected species or habitat types”.

**Paragraphs 6(3) and 6(4)** lay down the procedure to be followed when planning new developments that might affect a Natura 2000 site. So subsequently, “any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall undergo an **Appropriate Assessment** to determine its implications for the site. The competent authorities can only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned (Article 6.3) In exceptional circumstances, a plan or project may still be allowed to go ahead, in spite of a negative assessment, provided there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project is considered to be of overriding public interest. In such cases the Member State must take appropriate compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the N2000 Network is protected.” (Article 6.4).

The EU’s guidance document Assessment of Plans and Projects significantly affecting NATURA 2000 sites uses the term ‘assessment’ the way it is used in environmental impact assessment (EIA). That is, the assessment describes the whole process by which information is gathered by project or plan proponents, relevant authorities, nature conservation and other agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the public and provided to the competent authority for consideration and evaluation. The competent authority then determines the outcomes of the assessment and reaches a decision. This recognises that the assessments required under Article 6 will rely on the gathering of information and data by a variety of stakeholders as well as consultation between them.

General approach and principles From MN2000, and from important cases and developing practice, it has become generally accepted that the assessment requirements of Article 6 establish a stage-by-stage approach. The stages proposed by this guidance document are:

Stage One: Screening — the process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant;

Stage Two: Appropriate assessment — the consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site’s structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts;

Stage Three: Assessment of alternative solutions— the process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site;

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain — an assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed (it is important to note that this guidance does not deal with the assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest).

To ensure consistency and compatibility with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by Directive 97/11/EC and in order to reflect the fact that many projects which are likely to affect Natura 2000 sites will be projects covered by the EIA directive, procedures have been included in this methodological guidance that are similar to those in common use in

EIA. This guidance is also consistent with the general approach recommended in the European Commission’s three guidance documents on screening, scoping and review in EIA (5). Furthermore, the scope of the recently adopted SEA directive (6) covers all plans that require an Article 6 assessment. Where projects or plans are subject to the EIA or SEA directives, the Article 6 assessments may form part of these assessments. However, **the assessments required by Article 6 should be clearly distinguishable and identified within an environmental statement or reported separately.**

Similarly, MN2000 makes clear that where a project is likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site it is also likely that both an Article 6 assessment and an EIA, in accordance with Directives 85/337/EEC and 97/11/EC, will be necessary. This guidance has been designed to be compatible with general EIA procedures, and the Article 6 assessments can be easily integrated into a full EIA or SEA of a project or plan. As well as mirroring the stage-by-stage approach used in EIA, the methodology also includes other EIA procedural requirements such as:

- \_ a description of the project or plan;
- \_ a description of the baseline environment where it is relevant to the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 site (e.g. soil, water, flora and fauna, climate and the interrelationships between these factors);
- \_ the identification of impacts and assessment of their significance;
- \_ the recording and reporting of the findings of the assessment.

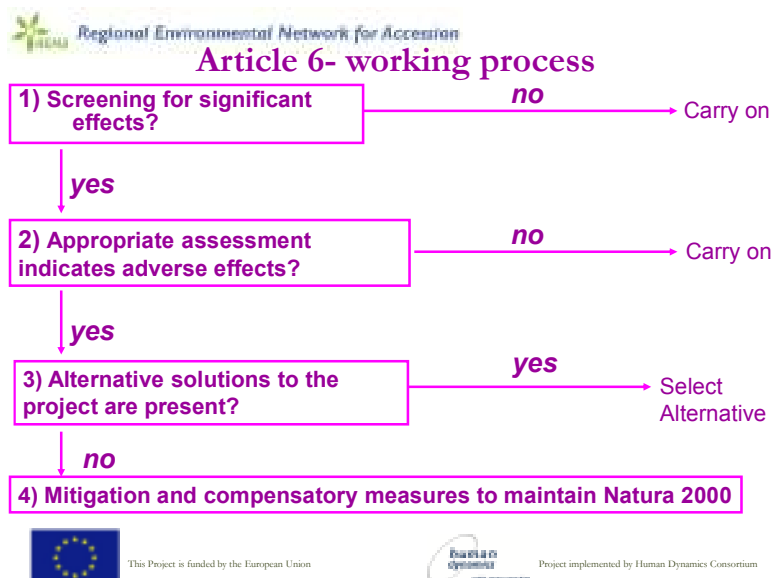
However, the EIA (Art 3) must identify, describe and assess direct and indirect effects of Annex 1 of the Directive on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora; soil, water, air, climate and landscape; material assets and the cultural heritage as well as their interaction. (for more information on this please see:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/eia-legalcontext.htm> (latest revision 2003)).

On the other side the Article 6.3 of the Habitats directive stipulates that appropriate assessment should be carried out for:

- **Any plan or project**
- **Not directly connected with, or necessary for management**
- **Likely to have a significant effect**
- **Individually or in combination**

In case of negative assessments, according to the Article 6.4 alternative solutions need to be found, if there is overriding public interest (including socio-economic) and compensatory measures need to be proposed. The EU Commission needs to be informed.



Mitigation as an integral part of environmental assessment aims at the avoidance and reduction of project related impacts that may be connected with previous policies, plans or programmes. The EU defines mitigation in Directive 85/337/EC and 97/11/EC, as 'measures envisaged in order to avoid, reduce and, if possible, remedy significant adverse effects'. A particularly useful and influential definition of mitigation in the context of designated European Wildlife Sites was provided by the European Commission's guidance note on Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (European Commission, 2000), defining mitigation as 'measures at minimizing or even negating the negative impact of a plan or project, during or after its completion'.

Compensation can be distinguished from 'mitigation' in the sense that it involves undertaking measures to replace lost or adversely impacted environmental values that should have similar functions equalling existing environmental values. If the lost values are irreplaceable, compensation concerns the creation of values which are as similar as possible. European Commission's guidance 167 note on Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (European Commission, 2000)<sup>1</sup> also provides useful guidance on distinguishing compensation from mitigation on similar grounds. Compensation in environmental assessment normally aims at biological functions and other aspects, such as landscapes and non-biotic factors are not covered. In case no adequate functional compensation can be found, most systems that have compensation rules in place allow for monetary compensation. An element that is recognized as a form of compensation is enhancement which distinguishes those compensation measures that result in greater or better environmental values than those replaced.

Understanding mitigation and compensation as a sequence is an important part of addressing impacts comprehensively. The basic tenets of environmental assessment suggest that mitigation and compensation should be considered in a hierarchy, consisting of avoidance, minimization, rectification, compensation and enhancement measures.

### 1.3 Background situation in the RENA countries

Croatia has almost transposed most of the requirements of the EU nature acquis, while Serbia is working on establishing their Natura 2000 sites and transposing EU nature legislation in the framework of an IPA twinning project. In FYR of Macedonia, many nature related activities take place, but limited progress is seen in the establishment of proposed Natura 2000 sites through the designation of SPAs and SCIs; the Netherlands is providing capacity building projects in the EU acquis. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is reported that approximately 20% of the Birds and Habitats directives are transposed and that more work needs to be done. In Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo\*, some limited steps have been taken to transpose the EU nature acquis, but this is not yet addressed in a systematic way. Turkey's concern for nature conservation is not new; its first national park was created in 1958. A wide range of protected areas have been established: national parks, nature parks, Ramsar sites, etc. The number of protected areas has increased steadily over the last few years. The area of forest cover has remained constant, and forests are sustainably managed. Efforts have been made regarding on-site conservation of the country's genetic resources, and studies on indigenous species have been conducted. Turkey has ratified most international agreements on biodiversity and nature conservation. The proportion of endangered or vulnerable species is nevertheless quite high, particularly in the case of mammals (22 per cent). The destruction or transformation of biotopes is continuing, largely as a result of the very rapid development of tourism, urbanisation, and major construction projects in rural areas. Protected areas themselves are subject to many pressures (siting of tourism projects, irrigation, overgrazing, pollution of wetlands, forest fires, illegal hunting, etc.); management plans are sorely lacking. Protected areas cover only 3.9 per cent of the country's total land area due to overgrazing. Local communities and environmental NGOs have not been closely enough involved in planning nature conservation programmes.

So it is clear, that most countries, with the exception of Croatia, are still at the very beginning of implementing the necessary and ambitious steps towards the transposition of the EU nature acquis. Overall no or limited progress was made on nature protection, as is confirmed in the EU 2009 Annual Progress Reports (*Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council in the framework of the Enlargement Strategy*).



RENA's activities have been designed in such a way that they focus on the link between the implementation of Nature Management plans according to the requirements as per Habitats Directive and strengthening the local economy (creating business and revenues in cross border areas).

Economic development, good governance and income generation in particular employment and jobs for young people, education, mobility, infrastructure development, or the private sector development in general are in fact among the most vital development topics throughout the entire of Balkan region. However, for many of those regions, in particular for the often-remote trans-boundary zones, those key development topics cannot be separated completely from natural resource management, because the latter offer the only basis for income generation and employment.

Therefore one outstanding feature of the RENA activities would be to take up those economic highly relevant development topics and to combine them with natural resource management. The objective would be to focus on creating business and employment opportunities in those trans-boundary areas, where natural resource management represents one, if not the only important added value, which can be utilized to the benefit of the local society and only with cross-border collaboration.

Overall this situation offers important opportunities: RENA could trigger the development of a regional network of cross-border organizations, which could expand their focus on the socio-economic development of trans-boundary areas in combination with natural resource management in trans-boundary areas - a highly relevant combination and a key development for many Balkan regions.

#### 1.4 RENA Nature Work plan

Based on the results of the Inception Missions in June, July and August 2010 and the Annual Nature Work Group meeting on 28 October 2010 in Zagreb, a six module training workshop is proposed.

The target group for the training workshops will be split into two groups:

2. **Group 1:** High level nature experts from the relevant Ministries of all the RENA countries (**three nominated** experts per RENA country, who will attend **all modules**): In total 24 participants per module.
3. **Group 2:** Local site managers (e.g. park management) together with local stakeholders (maximum participants from the cross border region: 6 per country: From each RENA country 2 representatives from Municipalities; 2 representatives from local business community; and 2 representatives from the Nature Protection Areas (site managers). In case a selected pilot site concerns two countries, there will be in total 12 local representatives.

The training workshops are designed as follows: The six modules will be conducted in the above six sites and include the following six module training **one-day** workshops for **Group 1**:

1. Module 1: Development and Implementation of Nature Sites Management Plans
  - "Management planning for protected areas" (Follow-up of the Eurosite toolkit)
  - Objectives setting
  - Opportunities/threats/issues/problems and how do we agree what they are?
  - What are the solutions to the opportunities/threats/issues/problems identified?
  - Involving people/stakeholders
2. Module 2: Nature Management and strengthening the local economy: creating business and revenues in cross border areas
  - Use Protected Areas to support Marketing & Employment
  - Sustainable use of resources e.g. Green Tourism for landscape
  - Case studies
3. Module 3: Communication strategies with Stakeholders
  - Aarhus and public participation; objectives of Communication
  - Work with Stakeholders: identifying; involving; informing

- Dos and Don'ts in involving the public; use of Communication media e.g. press; radio; publications; meetings etc.
- Good practice case studies
- 4. Module 4: Conducting Nature Impact Assessments
  - Required data for conducting impact analysis (acid deposition impact, air pollution impacts, fragmentation impacts; noise impacts)
  - Steps for a Full Nature Impact Assessment
  - How to deal with gaps in knowledge and data
  - Case studies
- 5. Module 5: Developing sound Nature project proposals for donor consideration (Nature project development)
  - Translate Problem and Threats Analysis into a positive vertical intervention logic, including logframe
  - Sound project fiches
- 6. Module 6: Monitoring Nature Protection Areas
  - Objectives of monitoring and reporting
  - How to set up and implement a monitoring and reporting programme / system for Nature Protection Areas
  - Work with volunteers

On the second and third day the target group for the training will be **Group 2**. Also **four** representatives of Group 1 will be invited **on a rotating basis**, so that all participants of Group 1 have the opportunity to not only work on theory (Day 1 of the workshops), but also work on practical cases (the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> day for Group 2). The topic of the training for the local community will include a 2 day workshop on Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans:

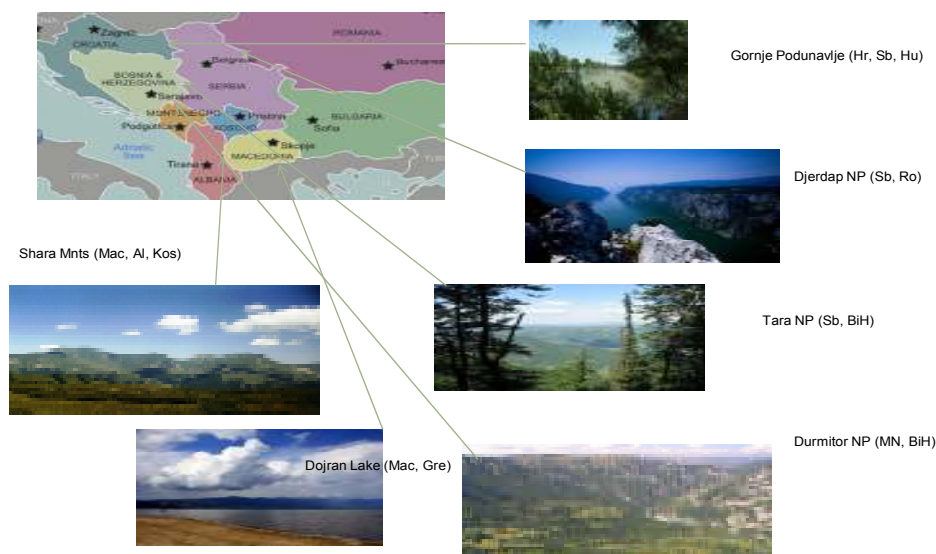
- Nature Sites Management Plan Development and Implementation; work programmes and finance
- Nature Sites Management Plans: Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas

This Group 2-training will be repeated on the six different sites and will be an interactive workshop actual implementation of Nature management plans and creating business and revenues in cross border areas.

The 6 module training programme will be given in the following identified cross-border nature protection areas.

- Shara National Park with Albania, FYR of Macedonia and Kosovo\* (Connecting Korabi, Mavrovo, Shara)
- Gornje Podunavlje/Kopacki rit (Hungary, Croatia, Serbia)
- Djerdap National Park (Romania, Serbia),
- Tara National Park (related to Dinaric arc initiative) (Serbia, BiH)
- Trans-boundary corridor areas between National Park Durmitor (Montenegro) and National Park Sutjeska (BiH).
- Dojran Lake (FYR of Macedonia and Greece)

Reference is made to **Annex 1** for the detailed work plan.

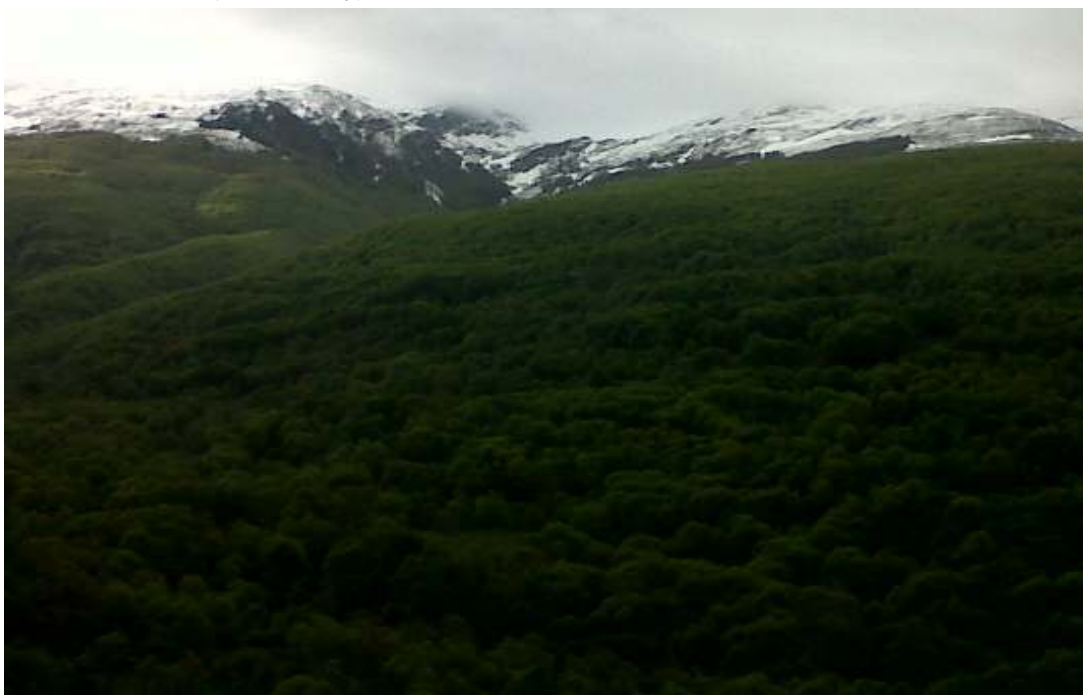


The activities of this Sub-Group will be coordinated with those under Investment Planning Sub-group in order to attract possible donors for project fiches that will be prepared as the outputs of the Nature Sub-Group.

The prepared project fiches will not be focused on possible financing by IPA funds alone due to the fact that it will be ready only at the end of 2012 as a final output of the Sub-Group activities, when the planning for year 2014 is already done.

Project fiches for those projects for which the possible donors are not identified will be more general, while those for which donors are identified will be more specific and in accordance with the requirements of identified donor. The activities will also be related to the preparation of database of available finance recourses for regional nature projects that will be further used by the beneficiaries for identification of possible financial resources for their existing and future projects.

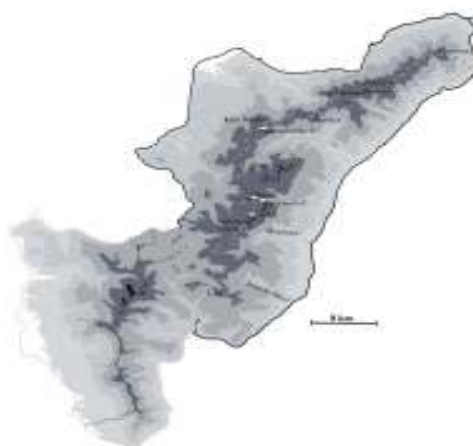
## 2. The Workshop (15 – 17 May)



NP Mali Sharr, May 2012

Sharr /Šar Planina is one of the largest and highest mountain ranges of the Balkan Peninsula, stretching between the Prizren-Metohia valley and the Polog valley in the border areas of the FYR of Macedonia and Kosovo\*. It is approx. 70 kilometres long and up to 30 kilometres wide, with the territory almost equally divided between the FYR of Macedonia and Kosovo\*. The Sharr/Šar Planina mountain range is located at the conjunction of the three large water catchment areas, and is rich in springs, rivers and waterfalls. The region is also rich in glacial relief forms, e.g. morens, glacial shoulders, glacial cirques as well as 39 post-glacial lakes (27 on the FYR of Macedonia side and 12 in Kosovo\*).

### 2.1 This workshop



This workshop concerns the implementation of the RENA Nature training package (see Annex 1).

of Module 4 of

The purpose of this 15-17 May workshop was to transfer knowledge on:

Module 4: Conducting Nature Impact Assessments:

- Required data for conducting impact analysis (acid deposition impact, air pollution impacts, fragmentation impacts; noise impacts)
- Steps for a Full Nature Impact Assessment
- How to deal with gaps in knowledge and data
- Case studies

The target group for the training workshop was split into two groups:

**Group 1:** High level nature experts from the relevant Ministries of all the RENA countries (**three nominated** experts per RENA country, who will attend **all modules**): In total 24 participants.

**Group 2:** Local authorities, e.g. site managers together with local stakeholders.

**Table : Summary RENA Nature training package Module 4:**

Day 1		Day 2 and 3	
Topic	Target Group	Topic	Target Group
Module 4: Nature Impact Assessments  Location: <b>Shara Mountains, Kosovo*</b> <b>15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> May 2012</b>	<b>Group 1:</b> National Experts per RENA country  Total 24 participants	Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans  Nature Impact Assessments for Natura 2000 sites	<b>Group 2:</b> maximum 12 local participants: 6 local representatives + site managers per involved country: <b>Kosovo* and FYR of Macedonia and Albania + representatives from Group 1</b> (maximum 11 RENA representatives: 3 from Kosovo*, 3 from Albania, 3 from FYR of Macedonia 2 from Croatia)  Trilateral cooperation site: 29 participants

The RENA facilitators were:

- ✓ Imre Csikós (Team Leader of the RENA Cross-border Nature Sub-component Working Group)
- ✓ Tim Bines (RENA expert)
- ✓ Edward Idle (RENA expert)
- ✓ Ivana Mijatović Černoš (RENA expert)

The list of participants is attached in **Annex 2**. The agenda of the workshop is attached in **Annex 3**.



## 2.2 Introduction to NP Mali Sharr



“The north-western slopes of Sharr/Šar Planina mountain range are protected since 1986, when the Provincial Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo\* within the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ) proclaimed the establishment of Sharr/Sara Mountain National Park, with the area of approx. 39 000 ha and began activity in 1995. Until today Sharr Mountains / Mali Sharr National Park remains the only national park and the largest protected area in Kosovo\*. The national park area encompasses lands of the five municipalities, four of them (Dragash/Dragaš, Suharekë/Suva Reka, Prizren and Kaçanik/Kacanic) are inhabited by predominantly Albanian population while the fifth one (Shtërpçë/Strpce) in the past had the population of prevailing Serbian ethnicity. It is planned that the definite boundaries of the Park would enclose an area of around 97 000 ha.

The borders of the national park have been recently marked under the project supported by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of Kosovo\* (MESP) and implemented in cooperation with the Kosovo\* Institute for Nature Protection.

According to the IUCN categorization Mali Sharr National Park is classified as protected area of IUCN Category II, including four strict nature reserves of IUCN Category II. The national park area was listed as an internationally Important Bird Area (IBA, BirdLife International, 1999) and Important Plant Area (IPA, Planta Europa, Plantlife, 2005) as well as on the list of the Prime Butterfly Areas.

Geomorphology of the National Park territory is the result of tectonic movements and external forces, ice, water leaks, etc. In geological structure there are Paleozoic slabs, carbonates, silicate and serpentine rocks. The climate is diverse – mild continental, mountainous continental as well as alpine and sub-alpine climate (above 2000 m). Sharr is one of the mountains richest in waters in the Balkans and there are 25 glacial lakes located on 1900 m altitude.

The Park is characterised by extremely rich biodiversity: fauna (165), ornito-fauna (200), butterflies (147), flora (2000) and phytocenosis (over 120) and ranks among the richest in the Balkans and Europe.

### Flora and Vegetation

More than 2000 plant species at the NP Mali Sharr represent some 65% of the flora of Kosovo\*, over 30% of the Balkans and about 15% of the European flora. There are 339 endemic plants, over 250 plants with medicinal properties and over 120 species of wood. The latest among other include: *Pinus heldreichii*, *Pinus peuce*, *Pinus mugo*, *Acer heldreichii*, *Taxus baccatta*, *Rhododendron ferrugineum*, etc. As many as 32 plant species present in the Sharr/Šar Planina Mountains are listed by the IUCN on the Red List of Threatened Plants, while 26 species are included into the European Red List.

The forest vegetation distinguishes: a) Oak forest area (*Quercetum montanum*) and mixed forest including crab-apple and white ash tree (*Orno-Ostryetum carfinifoliae*) at 800-1300 m, b) Mosiphile area of beech

forest (Fagetum montanum, Fagetum subalpinum, Abieti-Fagetum) at 900-1800 m, c) Fir forest area of high mountains belonging to coniferous plants (Pinetum heldreichii and Pinetum peuce at 1500-2000-2200 m, d) shrub area of high mountains of Bruchentalio-Juniperetum nanae) above 1700 m.



Bosnian pine

However, the true trademark of the Šarr/Šar Planina mountains are the relatively small areas harbouring primeval treestands of the endemic and relic Macedonian pine (*Pinus peuce*) and the Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii* ssp. *leucodermis*) which forms the oldest Tertiary plant communities *Seslerio-Pinetum heldreichii* and *Luzulo maxime-Pinetum heldreichii*. Forests of the Šarr/Šar Planina mountains are predominantly deciduous beech treestands, however mixed and coniferous forests are also present here. The main tree species in the composition of Šarr/Šar Planina forests include beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), black oak (*Quercus petraea*), oriental hornbeam (*Carpinus orientalis*), black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), silver fir (*Abies alba*) and Norway spruce (*Picea excelsa*).

## Fauna



Local breed of sheepherding dog – šarplaninac, triton and peregrine falcon.

Šarr/Šar Planina is the habitat for a large number of fauna species, which includes a high number of invertebrates, with many rare, relic and endemic species. Among 147 butterfly species most interesting are 12 Lepidoptera species. Endemics include 3 species of the hard-wing racers family (Carabidae), while many rare species belong to Plecoptera, Odonata and Heteroptera.

The fauna of Šarr/Šar Planina includes approximately 50 species of mammals, e.g. the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), European wild cat (*Felis silvestris*), the Balkan subspecies of lynx (*Lynx lynx martinoi*), wolf (*Canis lupus*), Eurasian badger (*Meles meles*), fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), otter (*Lutra lutra*), pine marten (*Martes martes*), roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), the Balkan sub-species of chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra balcanica*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), ermine (*Mustela erminea*), common shrew (*Sorex araneus*), Eurasian water-shrew (*Neomys foedens*), mole (*Talpa europaea*), Mediterranean mole (*Talpa caeca*), squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*), forest vole (*Clethrionomys glareolus*), Martino's snow vole microtus (*Dinaromys bogdanovi*), snow vole (*Microtus nivalis*), subterranean vole (*Pitymys subterraneus*), yellow-necked mouse (*Apodemus flavicollis*), striped field mouse (*Apodemus agrarius*), brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*), weasel (*Mustela nivalis*), ferret (*Mustela putorius*); many of the above are rare and endangered species of the common European and global importance. Reptiles are represented here by 17 species, and amphibians by twelve species; the most interesting are the Juniper skink (*Ablepharus kitaibelli*), Bulgarian viper (*Vipera ammodytes*) and Balkan stream frog (*Rana graeca*).

Depending on the source of information the number of bird species nesting in the Sharr/Šar Planina mountains varies between 129 and 200, including the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), northern hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), rock partridge (*Alectoris graeca*), eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*), Alpine accentor (*Prunella collaris*), wallcreeper (*Tichodroma muraria*), alpine chough (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*), red-billed chough (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) and whitewinged snow finch (*Montifringilla nivalis*).

### 2.3 Proceedings 15 May 2012

All presentations are presented under separate cover on the website of RENA ([www.renanetwork.org](http://www.renanetwork.org)).

1. Mr Imre Csikós, RENA Coordinator of the WG 3, sub-group Nature opened the meeting welcoming the participants, the representatives of the National Park Mali Sharr, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning as well as other participants. Mr Csikos presented the objectives of the workshop and gave outline of the agenda. He emphasised that this workshop would focus on the nature impact assessments and the proper manner to carry them out as well as their significance in management planning.
2. Mr. Ismail Hetemaj, representative of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and the RENA Focal Point for Nature welcomed the participants from the region and expressing his best wishes for fruitful cooperation. He also provided a short introduction to Kosovo\*. After this all participants introduced themselves to the auditorium.
3. Mr Csikos provided an outline of the EU Nature Legislation, i.e. talked about the **Habitats (92/43/EEC) and the Wild Birds Directives (2009/147/EC)**, with particular emphasis on the Nature Impact Assessment. Special attention was given to the provisions of Article 3 and 6 of the Habitats Directive. He stressed that the Article 3 of the Habitats Directive provides for a set up of a “coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation under the title **Natura 2000**” (Annex 1 Habitats and Annex 2 species to be maintained or restored). Additionally, the article 6 enables that national conservation measures to be put in a plan and that management plans may be prepared in this respect. The projects in such sites should not affect integrity of site (**significant impacts**) and special importance should be paid to the public consultations. Additionally, EIA Directive was also discussed and Mr Csikos talked about the differences between “Appropriate Assessment” and “Environmental Impact Assessment”. When implementing a project there must be a proper Impact Assessment (Aim of the process, Screening, Focus of the Assessment, Alternatives, Effect of the Result of Assessment, Monitoring, etc). In this context the Key Case Law verdicts were also presented. Mr Tim Bines mentioned the case of LAPPEL BANK in the UK in 1993 in this context.



4. Mr Edward Idle and Mr Tim Bines talked about Appropriate Assessments (AA) and their legal basis. Also, when is this applied or when must it be carried out? They discussed options available after an AA has been completed, the responsibility for them. Additionally, expectations of the participants for this workshop was also talked about:

- exchange of experience,
- development of management plans,
- find from different countries how they deal with nature,
- learn about Natura 2000 sites,
- Nature Vs Economy,
- Transposition of the EU legislation into the national legislation etc.

What will you do with results from the workshop was also discussed and one of possible option was to think about promoting the things participants learn in the workshop and the information they gain here. The participants might face problems in conveying the proper information to the decision makers and making sure they will deal with that, there might be communication problems, but a way needs to be found out to persuade the bosses who know the issues to do things differently.

Furthermore, differences between “Appropriate Assessment” and “Environmental Impact Assessment” were discussed. There was also talk about mitigation and compensation, differences between plans and projects. Plans include spatial plans, structural plans, development plans, etc., whereas projects include construction works and other interventions in the natural environment. AA is very specific, it relates to natural objectives, conservation objectives, it requires ecological understanding and countries need to develop conservation objectives.

Mr. Idle speaking about the case of Poland and difficulties they had in the EIA for the fact that it is not a simple straightforward process, but it requires lots of work. Additionally, Mitigation Vs Compensation was clarified: mitigation takes place on site, compensation occurs where it is not possible to mitigate on site; it must be effective replacement of like with like and audited. In discussion, the species and habitats which cannot be compensated were mentioned, also possible solutions in such cases and examples when habitats have been damaged were revealed.

5. Mr Edward Idle discussed a diagram for producing a plan in the case of Kosovo\*. There was also a short discussion about who should make the Scope of Assessment and the participants from Kosovo\* explaining the current situation in Kosovo\*.
6. Mr. Imre Csikós provided presentation on many different cases, Article 4 of Habitat Directive which deals with the selection of sites, selection of the protection regimes that have to be applied to species. The case of Port Bristol on the Seven Estuary, the case of Mont Falcone in Italy, case of Bund Natursucht in South of Germany, Cocclefisheries in Netherlands, Land Use Plans in Gibraltar, Basse Cobbieres in France and the German Plant Protection Law (German Pesticides Law) were presented.

There was also a short discussion with participants from Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of Kosovo\* who talked about the plans for construction of a touristic village in the Cursed Mountains in the west of Kosovo\* which has been under the protection of MESP and which is known for rich biodiversity. Other participants agreed that the MESP should consider what measures to take to mitigate and or to apply compensation measures if that is possible.

- Other cases presented: Mopeds and Turtles in Greece, Facts of the case in Finland, Finnish Wolves, Thermal Power Plant RWE Eemshaven, etc.

Participants from Kosovo\* raised the issue of quarries which are numerous in Kosovo\* and their impact on the nature. Mr Tim Bines talked about the case of Southampton and Dibden Bay in Southeast of UK, the area and the planned construction of another port, the discussions held, the habitats around it, the proposals which were made and the period required to take decision.

7. Mr Edward Ilde continued with the presentation of other cases: Strangford Lough (Northern Ireland), and its capacity of having one of the world’s fastest tidal flows, the stages of the Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, mitigation measures, stage 3 Assessment of alternative solutions, etc.
8. Ms Petra Mihalic, representative of the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Nature gave presentation on responsibilities of the Ministry in this respect. She also presented the Ecological Network as well as the legal framework, institutional framework, at the state, regional and local level.



She talked about Impact Assessment of plans, programmes and projects. Additionally, establishment of overriding Public interest and compensation terms were mentioned.

9. Mr Imre Csikos, Mr Edward Idle and Mr Tim Bines provided in the end more examples of AA. The case of Lowland Heathland (which has globally rare habitat) and the most important three rare species in the UK was presented. Also Plan by plan approach was discussed. An example of housing development (Orton Brick Pits) was given. Furthermore, a number of recommendations when making a proper AA were given.

#### 2.4 Proceedings 16 May 2012

All presentations are presented under separate cover on the website of RENA ([www.renanetwork.org](http://www.renanetwork.org)).

10. Mr. Edward Idle welcomed the participants on the second day, with particular emphasis on the local stakeholders who were not present on the first day due to format of the workshop. Introductions were made of all the participants.
11. Mr Hazer Dana, Director of the NP Mali Sharr gave a brief overview of the National Park, the area and the history. He spoke about the Law on NP which is currently waiting the approval by the Assembly and possible extension of the boundaries of the National Park. The Park is rich with flora and fauna and almost half of its territory is covered by forests. There are three zones, first zone is strict protection, while the Zone two is mainly covered by forests and some activities are allowed. In zone three the construction is allowed, but situation has run out of control a little. There's Law on Nature but at the moment, there is no management plan for the NP Mali Sharr. Currently, the UNDP is drafting a management plan for the Park: They are under the MESP to which they report annually. They draft work plans, which help them manage the Park. The office has no budget on its own but it is provided with funds from the Ministry.
12. As agreed in the meeting of 19 April, a short site visit to the NP Mali Sharr was organised for participants, to experience some of the Park specific features and also witness illegal construction.







13. Mr Csikos continued the workshop with a presentation on the **Habitats Directive and Managing Natura 2000 sites** as the majority of the audience was new to the subject. He talked about the EU Nature Legislation and policy, with short introduction to the most important articles of the “Habitats” Directive (92/43/EEC) as well as the Management Plans.
14. Mr Edward Idle and Mr Tim Bines continued the workshop on the NP Mali Sharr management plan. The participants talked about their impressions from the site visit: beautiful landscape, illegal construction, the management plan should prescribe if construction could be allowed, lack of infrastructure or destruction of previous infrastructure (no waste containers, no access road, etc.), no enough signs posted, tourist information office missing, etc.

The participants also answered the question: what do they like about the place: the climate, nature and local people, Nature, great beauty, people who are very welcoming, attractive for tourism, cultural diversity, natural and cultural heritage, healthy living, traditional food, rich flora and fauna, healthy water and air quality, etc.

A question was raised what the the Managment was: doing things in the right way, proper organising of a job, a set of measures to preserve or enhance something, doing something from point A to B with the most efficient way of using resources, organised activities based on a specific set of issues and laws, summary of means, activities and goal in any particular area, a plan which through its mechanisms of checks and controls can carry out something, good leadership and use of resources effectively and efficiently.

When asked what is meant by the Plan, participants provided different answers: an action of everyone intending to carry out a job, a clear picture of using something legally defined in management goals, time frame for which activities must take place, preparation of operative plans for a specific time frame to give a predicted outcome, forecasting action, a written action intended for something we want to achieve, composition of material where means of realisation of a job successfully are predicted, inclusion of specific activities which must be completed within a specific period of time, a guide for fulfilment of works, summary or list of important cultural, natural features to deliver something.

In addition Mr. Idle added that a Plan should include some idea of the cost to deliver something and best use of resources.

Next, the process of management planning was outlined:

- Plan for the Plan;
  - Selection of stakeholders and roles;
  - Involvement of stakeholders from the start;
  - Strengthening ownership;
  - Clarifying content/format;
  - Sticking to specific issues;
  - Keeping talking; and
  - Being flexible
- ✚ Who makes use of Management Plan and for what?
  - ✚ Clarify and confirm the Impact
  - ✚ Assess the significance of the Impact
  - ✚ Assess the scope of the Impact
  - ✚ Identify what information is needed to carry out an AA

15. Group work was organised to talk about the threats and opportunities at the NP Mali Sharr. Group one work: *Group one – Kosovo\** was supposed to draft List of Contents and Issues to be included in the Plan, which was presented by Valmira Gashi from MESP:

#### 1. List of Contents

- Description or screening of the environment
- Design
- Threats
- Opportunities and advantages
- Objectives and Priorities
- Tasks and plan of work and the cost of projects
- Measures and activities
- Monitoring programme
- Annexes
- Period of time for completion of project
- The Management Plan should have around 20 pages

#### 2. Problem Identification

- Lack of investment
- Lack of new Law
- Lack of budget – human resources
- Functioning of parallel institutions in a part of N.P. Sharri
- Lack of database of flora and fauna
- Lack of strategy for promotion of tourism
- Insufficient cooperation with neighbouring countries
- Lack of Brand (Logo) for N.P.Sharri.



The next *Group Two* presented their view on the FYR of Macedonia *side* of the border: Short introduction was given about the FRYOM side of the protected area: The mountain has not been yet pronounced a National Park despite the initiatives to do so. There have been some analysis carried out and the situation in that part is regarded as unsatisfactory.

#### 1. List of Contents

- Introduction
- Analysis of the situation
- Objective and Plan
- Announcement of N.P. Sharri
- Spatial Development Framework
- Habitats, flora and fauna, rivers, lakes, birds
- Establishment of protected areas
- Conservation and Protection of Environment
- Activities on implementation – legislation

#### 2. Problem Identification

- Non harmonization of dialogue with the local population and forest company

Recommendations were given by Mr. Tim Bines and Mr Edward Idle on how to handle this situation:

- Protected areas in all three sides should have a common management plan, they should merge their activities on that issue
- They should coordinate their activities as regards N.P. Sharri.

#### *Group Three: Croatia*

- What processes should be?
- What should not be in Plan?

#### 1. Process of approval of MP

- Content of MP
- Basic information (Introduction)
- Vision/Mission (small plans)
- Overall objectives ( in Albania, but in Croatia this is regarded as Targets)
- Specific objectives
- Issues/Threats
- Identification of stakeholders (included from the beginning) and participation
- Activities/Themes (biodiversity, culture, water, soil, etc).
- Outputs/Results
- Indicators of success/Monitoring
- Budget (financial plan)
- Appendix: maps, list of species, habitats, etc.

#### 2. Not in the Plan

- Not all species

As a conclusion it is agreed that drafting a Management Plan must include the stakeholders from the onset and that the use of appendices is important in achieving credibility.

16. At the end of the day Mr Tim Bines finished with the traditional/consensus management planning process and the conclusion that when drafting management plans it is sometimes difficult to get everybody involved, but time constraints of people involved must be taken into account at any stage.

## 2.5 Proceedings 17 May

17. The training was continued with the review of the previous day conclusions. Mr Bines and Mr Idle showed the diagram of consensus management planning (what needs to be done when preparing management planning, what you need to emphasize and where to make efforts, where to allocate resources, etc), where group of issues were identified and categories of issues were discussed;

- Threats;
- Opportunities;
- Risks

Additionally, work in groups must be dynamic, everybody must be involved, the process must be managed and organized.

18. Plenary continued in group work where groups had to identify the threats, opportunities and risks:

### Group one – Kosovo\*

#### 1. Threats:

- Illegal hunting
- Loss of grassland/decrease in number of animals
- Fires (human factor, loss of biodiversity)

#### 2. Opportunities:

- Increase of Inspections
- Increase subsidies from the government to sheep farmers
- Develop municipal plans to stop fire outbreaks
- Harmonisation of these plans with central level

#### 3. Risks:

- Extinction of some species (bird life)
- Use of prohibited methods of hunting
- Avalanches
- Failure to include local population in the process, particularly development of livestock
- Biodiversity loss due to forest fires (deliberate or accidental)
- Lightning causing forest fires.

### Group two – FYR of Macedonia

#### 1. Threats:

- Loss of grassland
- Illegal logging
- Illegal construction
- Migration
- Illegal landfills

#### 2. Opportunities

- Respecting the law
- Increasing awareness
- Promoting tourism
- Urban planning
- Producing organic products
- Urban spatial planning

#### 3. Risks

- Hunting
- Fire
- Extinction of rare species
- Waste
- Incontrollable construction

Group three – Croatia (NP Kornati)

**1. Issues:**

- Anchoring (makes real big damage to marine habitats)
- Illegal fishing (there are some permissions for fishing)
- Private property
- Lack of proper visitor centre

**2. Solution for the issues:**

- Spatial plans need to be changed
- Cooperation with local people
- Capacity building, legislation, cooperation with other competent authorities.

**19.** Mr Imre Csikos talked about the different ways of learning:

Authoritarian, Laissez Fare and Participatory.

He also talked about identifying the problem and defining the proper intervention logic.

- Definition of key problem, Impact of problem, causes of problem;
- Making elements positive;
- Defining SMART indicators which should include: how much, where, and by when?;
- SMART indicators are to be linked, Indicate where to find information;
- Definition of external factors, etc).

He presented the Logical Framework (Logframe).

**20.** Mr Edward Idle and Mr Tim Bines talked about Monitoring and Communication at the NP Mali Sharr. They discussed internal communication and its management, the importance and necessity of LogFrame, the Management Plan development and considerations for decision making. Stakeholders were also discussed at length, where Estonia was provided as an example, as well as some other (Loch Lomond in Scotland, Windsor Castle. Additionally, revenue promotion was presented with many examples shown of how to achieve revenue through branding which can be very simple and very effective.



White tailed eagle on UK's Island of Mull is used for branding purposes.

**21.** In the end comments and feedbacks was received from the participants with recommendations for the next training. Some participants suggested that there is more interaction between the Group 1 and 2 in the training, which some proposed that more training is given on more specific topics.



### 3. Evaluation of the meeting

The results of the evaluation of the event on 15-17 May 2012 is shown hereunder (reference is made to Annex 4).

#### 3.1 Consolidated Summary Evaluation Group 1 and 2

20 out of 21 participants filled the evaluation form for the Day 1-3. The Evaluations showed that the expectations of the participants as regards the contents of the workshop were met:

- ✓ **90% of the participants** indicated that the **objectives** of the workshop **were met** (rated between good and excellent).
- ✓ **95% of the participants** indicated that the **content** of the workshop was **well suited** to their level of understanding and experience (rated between good and excellent); **95% indicated** that the **workshop was relevant** and informative (rated between good and excellent)
- ✓ **100% of the participants** indicated that the workshop **facilitators were well prepared and knowledgeable** on the subject matter (rated good and excellent). In addition **100% indicated** that attending the workshop was **time well spent** (rated between good and excellent)
- ✓ In total participants considered the training very successful. However, they would like to participate in more trainings and would welcome more interaction between the Group 1 and Group 2.

Aspect of Workshop	Excellent	Good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Unacceptable
1 The workshop achieved the objectives set	30%	60%	10%			
2 The quality of the workshop material provided	35%	45%	15%		5%	
3 The content of the workshop was well suited to my level of understanding and experience	30%	65%	5%			
4 The practical work was relevant and informative	35%	60%	5%			
5 The workshop was interactive	75%	20%	5%			
6. The mix between theory and practise allowed sufficient opportunity to implement acquired knowledge and skills	35%	45%	20%			
Aspect of Workshop	Excellent	Good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Unacceptable
7 Trainers were well prepared and knowledgeable on the subject matter	80%	20%				
8 The duration of this workshop was neither too long nor too short	20%	50%	30%			
9 The logistical arrangements (venue, refreshments, equipment) were satisfactory	65%	35%				
10 Attending this workshop was time well spent	65%	35%				

## ANNEX 1: RENA Working Group 3: Cross border cooperation and multilateral environmental agreements

### RENA Activity 3.1. Nature Protection

#### 1. Background

During the period June – August 2010 inception mission have been implemented to the eight beneficiary countries to discuss the Nature Component of WG 3 (Cross Border Cooperation) of RENA.

The starting point for discussions in the countries included a draft Activity Schemes Working Document on the subgroup Natura which was sent to the National Focal Points before the meetings in June 2010. Discussions focused on the elements of this Working Document which follows the ToR:

- Task 1: Establishment of Nature Protection Working Group and organization of annual meetings;
- Task2: Training needs assessment / identification of case studies and/or pilot projects to be implemented;
- Task 3: Elaboration of training programme: preparation of materials for pilot projects and/or case studies;
- Task 4: Implementation of training programme;
- Task 5: Training evaluation and assessment of further capacity building needs, alignment of initiatives with donors.

A questionnaire was added to have a preliminary view on training needs.

From the inception missions it became clear that most countries and territories included in the project area understand the necessity to increase the number and/or size of their protected areas.

However, it should be noted here, that the vast majority of protected areas existing today in the region are relatively small areas of less than 10,000 ha. Such small areas may be suitable for protection of e.g. landscape phenomena or threatened plant species, but rather not for protection of larger fragments of valuable mountain ecosystems and habitats, and definitely not for protecting populations of large mammals, especially carnivores.

Protecting larger parts of the most important ecosystems and habitats of the region is mainly possible in existing and planned large-scale protected areas, most often bearing the national park designation. At the same time, most of these areas have a geographical trans-boundary dimension. Currently existing terrestrial large-scale protected areas in the project region are the national parks Sutjeska (17350 ha) in Bosnia and Herzegovina connecting to Durmitor (32 000 ha) in Montenegro, the Shara Mountains (39 000 ha) in the territory of Kosovo\*, linking to Shara mountains and Mavrovo National Park (73 088 ha) in FYR of Macedonia, Galicica (22 750 ha), and Pelister (12 500 ha) in FYR of Macedonia, Djerdap (63 608 ha) in Serbia, linked to Romania, Fruska Gora (25 393 ha), Tara (19 175 ha) (Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Kopaonik (11 810 ha) in Serbia. The above listed national parks together encompass the area of 316 674 ha, which accounts for as much as some 34.75 per cent of all areas currently protected in the Western Balkans (excluding Turkey). Finally, the picture is incomplete without mentioning big national parks protecting important aquatic ecosystems like the Lake Prespa (27 750 ha) in Albania or the Skadar Lake (40 000 ha) in Montenegro.

Croatia has (almost) transposed most of the requirements of the EU nature legislation *acquis*, while Serbia is working on establishing their Natura 2000 sites and transposing EU nature legislation in the framework of an IPA twinning project. In FYR of Macedonia many nature related activities take place, but limited progress is seen in the establishment of proposed Natura 2000 sites through the designation of SPAs and SCIs. The Netherlands provides capacity building projects in the field of the EU *acquis* in nature protection. In BiH it is reported that approximately 20% of Birds and Habitats directives are transposed and that substantial more work needs to be done. In Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo\* some limited initiatives exist in relation to transposing the EU Nature *acquis*, but this is not yet addressed in a systematic way. Turkey's concern for nature conservation is not new; its first national park was created in 1958. A wide range of protected areas have been established: national parks, nature parks, Ramsar sites, etc. The number of protected areas has increased steadily over the last few years. The area of forest cover has remained constant, and forests are sustainably managed. Efforts have been made regarding on-site conservation of the country's genetic resources, and studies on native species have been conducted. Turkey has ratified most international agreements on biodiversity and nature conservation. The proportion of endangered or vulnerable species is nevertheless quite high, particularly in the case of mammals (22 per cent). The destruction or transformation of biotopes is continuing, largely as a result of the very rapid development of tourism, urbanisation, and major construction projects in rural areas. Protected areas themselves are subject to many pressures (siting of tourism projects, irrigation, overgrazing, pollution of wetlands, forest fires, illegal hunting, etc.); management plans are sorely lacking. Protected areas cover only 3.9 per cent of the country's total land area due to overgrazing. Local communities and environmental NGOs have not been closely enough involved in planning nature conservation programmes.

The above trends are also confirmed in the annual progress reports prepared by the European Commission to inform the European Parliament and the Council on progress made in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

So it is clear, that most countries, with the exception of Croatia, are still at the very beginning of implementing the necessary and ambitious steps towards the transposition of the EU nature *acquis*. Overall no or limited progress was made on nature protection, as is confirmed in the EU 2009 Annual Progress Reports for all the RENA countries.

It should be stressed that the simple transposition of the EU nature legislation is not the only necessary pre-conditions for the required changes. Even the combined knowledge of scientists, appreciation of natural values of expanded cross border territories proposed for protection and the enthusiasm of environmental NGOs are insufficient for this. Initiatives concerning such considerable extension of protected areas would never be successful without the nation-wide consensus, understanding and support, which will then foster political commitment of the decision-makers and allow implementing such changes. Therefore, significant extension of protected areas would require reaching the adequate level of awareness among the whole society, but also determining the proper legal solutions for the newly proposed or much enlarged protected areas, allowing a compromise with the present land-users. Depending on the tourist attractiveness of the park and accessibility of its location, the local inhabitants and entrepreneurs, especially those involved in tourist services sector (e.g. infrastructure owners, service providers or tour-operators) may significantly increase their incomes, as the 'national park label' becomes still more attractive marketing brand, also in the south-eastern Europe.

### **Related nature project initiatives in the region**

Annex 1 presents the ongoing, recently completed and planned **cross-border** nature activities (“in the pipeline”) in the region. Representatives from Turkey indicated that the development of initiatives for cross border nature projects is at this moment politically “a step too far”. As a consequence, cross border nature projects are not pursued at this stage by Turkey.

From the annex it appears that a surprising number of cross border activities take place in the region. The biggest regional initiative is the so called Dinaric Arc Initiative, consisting of a long list of national and trans-boundary nature projects. Most of the activities range from relatively small (up to 20000 Euros) to large (Lake Prespa, Neretva delta) ones.

The project consists of many project initiatives, some cross border oriented, some more national oriented, some with modest budgets up to 20,000 Euro (WWF boosting tourism in Durmitor) and some very large up to 22 million USD (UNDP Coastal biodiversity conservation in Dalmatia). The Dinaric Arc project portfolio includes 42 projects in the Western Balkans targeting the above mentioned areas. Among these projects the following are identified that have been implemented in a trans-boundary context.

In 2000 three trans-boundary projects on Nature protection were launched by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and the Regional Environmental Centre (REC) involving 6 countries, aimed at establishing and restoring the dialogue across political borders in the Balkan Peninsula. The projects focused on the joint cross-border management of a common territory and shared natural resources, which proved to be a very fertile ground for dialogue promotion and a very good entry point for this peace-building process in a difficult post-war situation.

Three representative trans-boundary sites with important ecological qualities, different management regimes, threats and protection status were identified: Shkodra Lake / Skadar Lake between Albania and Montenegro, the Neretva Delta corresponding to the lower part of the Neretva River between Bosnia Herzegovina and Croatia and the mountain ridge of West Stara Planina between Bulgaria and Serbia.

After 8 years this important project was closed in February 2009. The most important result is the foundation of independent, legally registered organizations in the form of NGOs, which are the continuation of the already well established Trans-boundary Collaboration Forums on each side of the border for all three sites. Those Forums first started as informal platforms, initiating regular contacts, meetings, working groups and first small cross-border projects. Gradually - with the continuous effort of the site-coordinators, who played a crucial role in this process and who are to a large extent responsible for the success of the project - the Forums gained the position and recognition of permanent structures

Besides the Forums a large spectrum of other results have been achieved such as the publication of numerous bibliographies and books on the values of the natural resources, the production of promotion material like calendars and brochures, or the performance of baseline studies, capacity building workshops, technical assistance to communities or nature park authorities and small grant programmes.

One of the conclusions is that natural resource management is a door opener for re-establishing the so important cross-border collaboration of the various stakeholders. However, it is by itself not a sufficient contribution for the local and regional development. As a consequence the newly established Forum organizations have extended their scope and range of activities. According their statutes and objectives they now combine natural resource management much more with important economic and social issues for communal and regional development such as the promotion of eco-tourism, waste and water management, agriculture, land management or good governance and civil society representation.

#### **The trans-boundary organisations**

- **Skadar Lake: Skadar / Shkodra Lake Forum (SLF):** 2 organisations established in Albania and Montenegro in January/May 2008. Statement and agreement of cooperation signed on 2 February 2009 at the occasion of the international Wetland Day (Ramsar Day)
- **Neretva Delta: Neretva Delta Forum (NDF):** 2 organisations established in Bosnia&Herzegovina and Croatia in January 2008. Statement and agreement of cooperation signed on 6 February 2008 at the Nature Park

<p>Hutovo Blato</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>West Stara Planina :Establishment of Stara Planina Euroregion in 2007</b> with two independent associations on Serbian and Bulgarian side</li> </ul>
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The common feature of most of the above projects is that they focus on initiatives to secure the preservation of the ecological wealth and ecological integrity of the of the region through establishment of network of protected areas, cultural diversity, empowering local societies in their efforts for sustainable development, and to some extent the integration of the requirements of the EU nature protection *acquis* (Wildbirds and Habitats directives) in the other sectoral policies and practices.

One of the major lessons learned from these projects and initiatives is that with the end of the projects, the activities have difficulty to ensure continuity and sustainability of the deployed activities on the ground.

For instance, the above identified new Forum organizations may origin from a long-lasting dialogues process; they are today in a difficult and delicate start-up phase. With the end of the project, they have to establish an independent and sustainable functioning in terms of financial, institutional and human resource. There is a considerable risk that those capacities cannot be built up and maintained rapidly enough, because each of the founded organisations is by itself still small and dependent on local projects and public capacities.

Feedback provided from the beneficiaries during the inception missions give the impression that the organisations still (formally) exist, but that current activities of these organisations seem to be put at a low level. For instance no evidence of follow-up on the nature cross border projects involving these organisations could be detected.

**Proposed RENA nature activities**

The Nature component of RENA is small, compared to above initiatives. This means that it is necessary to define projects that **are building on the above projects, avoid duplication** and are **complementary** to these.

A solution would be to deal with natural resource management in a broader context. RENA’s activities have been designed in such a way that they focus on the link between the implementation of Nature Management plans and strengthening the local economy (creating business and revenues in cross border areas).

Economic development, good governance, income generation in particular employment and jobs for young people, education, mobility, infrastructure development, or the private sector development in general are in fact among the most vital development topics throughout the entire of Balkan region. However, for many of those regions, in particular for the often-remote trans-boundary zones, those key development topics cannot be separated completely from natural resource management, because the latter offer the only basis for income generation and employment.

Therefore one outstanding feature of the RENA activities would be to take up those economic highly relevant development topics and to combine them with natural resource management. The objective would be to focus on creating business and employment opportunities in those trans-boundary areas, where natural resource management represents one, if not the only important added value, which can be utilized to the benefit of the local society and only with cross-border collaboration.

Overall this situation offers important opportunities: RENA could trigger the development of a regional network of cross-border organizations, which could expand their focus on the socio-economic development of trans-boundary areas in combination with natural resource management in trans-boundary areas - a highly relevant combination and a key development for many Balkan regions.

At the ReREP Regional Meeting in Sarajevo on 29 May 2009 on nature protection in the region (“Towards Natura 2000 in South Eastern Europe”), special attention was paid to the potential of further developing trans-boundary nature projects in the region building on the experiences in the above mentioned projects.

RENA has the ambition to assist in putting to the foreground and stimulate these important trans-boundary cooperation processes in the region. During the above Sarajevo meeting many potential trans-boundary projects were mentioned. During the inception missions the status of these projects were assessed and each RENA country has identified and proposed sites where RENA activities can be developed (Table 1).

Table 1: Proposed Cross Border Nature Protection Initiatives in the Region (proposed by RENA countries following inception mission)

Nr	Proposed Cross Border initiatives where RENA activities can be implemented	Proposed by
1	<p>Build on trilateral cooperation with Albania, FYR of Macedonia and Kosovo*.</p> <p>Trans-boundary project connecting Korabi Protected Landscape, Mavrovo National Park and Shara National Park with Albania, FYR of Macedonia and Kosovo*. Shara is already NP in Kosovo*. In FYR of Macedonia the Shara NP is in preparation.</p> <p>The Shar Planina massif is located between the Gostivar and Tetovo valleys in the south-east, the Mavrovo Lake on the south and the Korab massif in the west.</p> <p>From the west side, the massif enters the Albanian territory with a little tiny part, while its northern and north-western parts lie on the territory of Kosovo* where</p>	<p>Albania, FYR of Macedonia and Kosovo*</p>



Nr	Proposed Cross Border initiatives where RENA activities can be implemented	Proposed by
	the area is a designated national park. The area is considered important as a north south and east west migration route for brown bear and lynx.	
2	Build on trilateral cooperation with Serbia, Hungary and Croatia in the project Danube-Drava-Mura: Special Nature Reserve Gornje podunavlje Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve is a large protected area of wetland in the northwest of Serbia (Vojvodina province). It comprises two big marshes along the left bank of the Danube River - the Monostor and Apatin marsh, including 66 km (41 miles) of the Danube course (1366 – 1433 km). It connects with Kopacki Rit (Croatia) and the Mura Drava Biosphere reserve (Croatia and Hungary) and together these areas form the largest river wetland area in Europe.	Serbia
3	Build on Bilateral cooperation with Serbia, and Romania; Djerdap National Park The Djerdap NP stretches along the right bank of the Danube River from the Golubac fortress to the dam near Sip, Serbia. It spreads over 640 square kilometres and the park management office is in the town of Donji Milanovac on the Danube. The main feature and attraction of the Djerdap National Park's natural beauty is the Djerdap gorge - the famous Iron Gate - the grandiose gateway through the southern slopes of the Carpathian mountains where the longest and biggest river accumulation in former Yugoslavia is located. The area extends into Romania	Serbia
4	Build on Bilateral cooperation with Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Tara National Park Tara NP is a mountain located in western Serbia. It is part of Dinaric Alps and stands at 1,000-1,500 meters above sea level. The mountain's slopes are clad in dense forests with numerous high-altitude clearings and meadows, steep cliffs, deep ravines carved by the nearby Drina River and many karst, or limestone caves. The mountain is a popular tourist center. The area stretches into Bosnia and Herzegovina	Serbia
5	Build on bilateral cooperation with Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Durmitor National Park Durmitor is a massif and the name of a national park in North Western Montenegro. It reaches a height of 2,522 m (Bobotov Kuk). It links to Sutjeska National Park is a national park located in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Republika Srpska entity. It is Bosnia and Herzegovina's oldest national park. This is home to one of the last two remaining primeval forests in Europe, called Perućica. Beech trees tower over 60 metres high and endemic black pines stem from the rocky faces that protect the ancient forest	Montenegro
6	Build on local bilateral cooperation with FYR of Macedonia and Greece: Dojran Lake is a lake with an area of 43.1 km <sup>2</sup> shared between the FYR of Macedonia (27.3 km <sup>2</sup> ) and West FYR of Macedonia within Greece (15.8 km <sup>2</sup> ).	FYR of Macedonia

The proposed training programme will be held in the above proposed trans-boundary pilot sites. The training topics are based on a training topics assessment carried out in the inception phase.

The topics have been selected on the basis of complementarities to the other ongoing initiatives. On the basis of (1) interviews during the inception phase and (2) available project documentation of the past, ongoing and planned initiatives as outlined above, it can be concluded that the above topics, especially in the field of **management plan implementation, nature impact assessments, and integrating economic concerns into nature management planning**, are issues that are truly complementary to the other initiatives. In addition, the proposed sites all have links to the ongoing initiatives. Prior to developing the training agenda in detail, this will need to be coordinated with the donors active in that area (mostly IUCN that coordinate the Dinaric Arc Initiative).

Questionnaires, indicating the potential topics have been sent to the Focal Points and it was requested to indicate priorities for training topics. Table 2 summarises the results of this assessment:

Table 2: Feedback from the RENA countries on training topics

	Alb	BiH	Cro	Kos	Mac	MN	Ser	Tur	Total
Introduction to Bird and Habitats Directive and EU Com on halting loss of biodiversity	1					1			25%
Nature Impact assessments		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	88%
Designation Natura 2000 sites	1	1		1					38%
Developing sound (IPA) Nature projects	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	88%



Management Plans Implementation		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	<b>88%</b>
Special Topics (hunting, agri-environment, communication)		1		1		1		1		50%
Nature Management and economics: creating business and revenues in cross border areas	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	<b>88%</b>

The results showed that training workshops would be especially welcomed on

- Implementation of Nature Sites Management Plans;
- Conducting Nature Impact Assessments;
- Nature Management and strengthening the local economy: creating business and revenues in cross border areas;
- Developing sound Nature project proposals for donor consideration.

The results also showed that limited work from RENA is required as regards a general introduction of the EU Nature Legislation and designation of Natura 2000 sites (SACs and SPAs). Most countries indicate that already quite some work has been done on this aspect through other (ongoing) initiatives.

Initially, a 4-module regional training round was proposed located on 4 sites in the region. However, during the 28 October 2010 Annual Meeting of the RENA Nature Working Groups it was proposed to expand this to a 6-module training proposals to all the six proposed sites (Table 1).

The following organisations in the region that are involved in cross border nature projects have been proposed, as they have a good reputation and a good track record with the Ministries:

- The Macedonian Ecological Society is considered to be a professional organisation with who RENA could establish contacts to bring nature protection objectives of RENA further;
- IUCN Belgrade initiative, because of the Regional Dinaric Arc project where several cross border initiatives exist, such as the Tara National Park).

### Set-up of RENA training programme

Based on the results of the inception missions in June, July and August 2010 and the Annual Nature Work Group meeting on 28 October 2010 in Zagreb, a six module training workshop is proposed.

The target group for the training workshops will be split into two groups:

**Group 1:** High level nature experts from the relevant Ministries of all the RENA countries (**three nominated** experts per RENA country, who will attend **all modules**): In total 24 participants per module;

**Group 2:** Local site managers (eg park management) together with local stakeholders (maximum participants from the cross border region: 6 per country: From each RENA country 2 representatives from Municipalities; 2 representatives from local business community; and 2 representatives from the Nature Protection Areas (site managers). In case a selected pilot site concerns two countries, there will be in total 12 local representatives.

The training workshops are designed as follows: The six modules will be conducted in the above six sites and include the following six module training **one-day** workshops for **Group 1**:

Module 1: Development and Implementation of Nature Sites Management Plans

- “Management planning for protected areas” (Follow-up of the Eurosite toolkit);
- Objectives setting;
- Opportunities/threats/issues/problems and how do we agree what they are?;
- What are the solutions to the opportunities/threats/issues/problems identified?;
- Involving people/stakeholders.

Module 2: Nature Management and strengthening the local economy: creating business and revenues in cross border areas

- Use Protected Areas to support Marketing & Employment;
- Sustainable use of resources e.g. Green Tourism for landscape;
- Case studies.

Module 3: Communication strategies with Stakeholders

- Aarhus and public participation; objectives of Communication;
- Work with Stakeholders: identifying; involving; informing;
- Dos and Don'ts in involving the public; use of Communication media e.g. press; radio; publications; meetings etc.
- Good practice case studies.

Module 4: Conducting Nature Impact Assessments

- Required data for conducting impact analysis (acid deposition impact, air pollution impacts, fragmentation impacts; noise impacts);
- Steps for a Full Nature Impact Assessment;
- How to deal with gaps in knowledge and data;
- Case studies.

Module 5: Developing sound Nature project proposals for donor consideration (Nature project development)

- Translate Problem and Threats Analysis into a positive vertical intervention logic, including logframe;
- Sound project fiches.

Module 6: Monitoring Nature Protection Areas

- Objectives of monitoring and reporting;
- How to set up and implement a monitoring and reporting programme / system for Nature Protection Areas;
- Work with volunteers.

On the second and third day the target group for the training will be **Group 2**. Also representatives of Group 1 will be invited on a **rotating basis**, so that all participants of Group 1 have the opportunity to not only work on theory (Day 1 of the workshops), but also work on practical cases (the 2nd and 3rd day for Group 2). The topic of the training for the local community on day 2 and day 3 will be the same in all modules and include a 2 day workshop on Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans:

- Nature Sites Management Plan Development and Implementation; work programmes and finance
- Nature Sites Management Plans: Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas

This Group 2-training will be repeated on the six different sites and will be an interactive workshop actual implementation of Nature management plans and creating business and revenues in cross border areas

The participation of Group 1 representatives in day 1 and day 2 is balanced in such a way that all Group 1 representatives will participate two times in all modules for day 2 and 3. As this is the same training, this means that we will ask group 1 representative who participate the second time to make a presentation in the training for day 2 and 3.

Table: Summary RENA Nature training package

Day 1		Day 2 and 3	
Topic	Target Group	Topic	Target Group
Module 1: Development and Implementation of Nature Sites Management Plans Location: <b>Gornje podunavlje or Kopacki Rit, Serbia or Croatia</b> <b>Tentative date in May 2011</b>	<b>Group 1:</b> 3 Ministry National Experts per RENA country Total 24 participants	Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans  Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas	<b>Group 2:</b> maximum 18 local participants: 6 local representatives + site managers per involved country: Croatia; Serbia; Hungary <b>Group 1:</b> maximum 7 RENA representatives (2 from Serbia, 3 from Croatia, 2 from Turkey) Trilateral cooperation site: 25 participants
Module 2:  Nature Management and strengthening the local economy: creating business and revenues in cross border areas Location: <b>Dojran Lake, FYR of Macedonia</b> <b>Tentative date in June 2011</b>	<b>Group 1:</b> 3 Ministry National Experts per RENA country  Total 24 participants	Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans  Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas	<b>Group 2:</b> maximum 12 local participants: 6 local representatives + site managers per involved country: FYR of Macedonia, Greece <b>Group 1:</b> maximum 11 RENA representatives (3 from FYR of Macedonia, 3 from Kosovo*, 3 from Albania, 2 from Turkey) Bilateral cooperation site: 23 participants
Module 3:	<b>Group 1:</b> 3 Ministry National Experts per	Practical Development and Implementation of Nature	<b>Group 2:</b> maximum 12 local participants: 6 local

Day 1		Day 2 and 3	
Topic	Target Group	Topic	Target Group
<p>Communication with Stakeholders</p> <p>Location: <b>Djerdap, Serbia</b></p> <p><b>Tentative date in September 2011</b></p>	<p>RENA country</p> <p>Total 24 participants</p>	<p>Site Management Plans</p> <p>Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas</p>	<p>representatives + site managers per involved country: Serbia and Romania</p> <p><b>Group 1:</b> maximum 5 RENA representatives (3 from Serbia, 3 from Montenegro)</p> <p>Bilateral cooperation site: 18 participants</p>
<p>Module 4:</p> <p>Conducting Nature Impact Assessments</p> <p>Location: <b>Shara NP, Kosovo*</b></p> <p><b>Tentative date in April 2012</b></p>	<p><b>Group 1:</b> 3 Ministry National Experts per RENA country</p> <p>Total 24 participants</p>	<p>Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans</p> <p>Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas</p>	<p><b>Group 2:</b> maximum 18 local participants: 6 local representatives + site managers per involved country: FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo*, Albania</p> <p><b>Group 1:</b> maximum 11 RENA representatives (3 from Kosovo*, 3 from Albania, 3 from FYR of Macedonia, 2 from Turkey)</p> <p>Trilateral cooperation site: 29 participants</p>
<p>Module 5:</p> <p>Developing sound Nature project proposals for donor consideration (Nature project development)</p> <p>Location: <b>Tara NP, Serbia</b></p> <p><b>Tentative date in June 2012</b></p>	<p><b>Group 1:</b> 3 Ministry National Experts per RENA country</p> <p>Total 24 participants</p>	<p>Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans</p> <p>Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas</p>	<p><b>Group 2:</b> maximum 12 local participants: 6 local representatives + site managers per involved country: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina</p> <p><b>Group 1:</b> maximum 8 RENA representatives (3 from Croatia, 2 from Serbia, 3 from Bosnia and Herzegovina)</p> <p>Bilateral cooperation site: 20 participants</p>
<p>Module 6:</p> <p>Monitoring Nature Protection Areas</p> <p>Location: <b>Durmitor, Montenegro</b></p> <p><b>Tentative date in September 2012</b></p>	<p><b>Group 1:</b> 3 Ministry National Experts per RENA country</p> <p>Total 24 participants</p>	<p>Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans</p> <p>Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas</p>	<p><b>Group 2:</b> maximum 12 local participants: 6 local representatives + site managers per involved country: Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro</p> <p><b>Group 1:</b> maximum 6 RENA representatives (3 from Montenegro, 3 from Bosnia and Herzegovina)</p> <p>Bilateral cooperation site: 18 participants</p>

#### Follow-up on the RENA training programme

Towards the end of this specific RENA initiative, it is necessary to focus on the sustainability of the results once the RENA initiative under this contract is phased out. RENA experts will identify:

- Potential follow-up topics in the selected pilot areas: identification, presentation and discussion of potential follow-up projects/programmes with the Group 1 representatives;
- Preparation of draft project documents (fiches, project identification sheets, etc. format depending on donor).

It will be ensured that the projects are demand driven, so that there is a clear ownership to these project ideas.

## 2. Objectives

The objective of this RENA nature activity is to strengthen cooperation on issues of trans-boundary importance through the demonstration of best practices aligning nature management and local socio-economic development, while building capacity for nature protection in cross border areas.

## 3. Target group

**Group 1:** Ministries responsible for legislation in the environmental *acquis* with a special focus on the nature protection (e.g., Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) directives and the Commission Communication on biodiversity (Com (2006) 216)) in Albania, BiH, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo\*), Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. High level nature experts from the relevant Ministries of all the RENA countries (**three nominated** experts per RENA country, who will attend **all modules**): In total 24 participants per module.

**Group 2:** Local site managers (eg park management) together with local stakeholders (maximum participants from the cross border region: 6 per country: From each RENA country 2 representatives from Municipalities; 2 representatives from local business community; and 2 representatives from the Nature Protection Areas (site managers). In case a selected pilot site concerns two countries, there will be in total 12 local representatives.

## 4. Expected results

The following results are expected

- Improved capacity on developing and implementing nature management plans, while ensuring sustainability of defined actions in those plans;
- To stimulate and foster regional trans-boundary co-operation in the field of nature management;
- To acquire practical skills on the ground on the nature management plan drafting process.

## 5. Tasks

**Task 1.** Establishment of Nature Protection Working Group and organization of annual meetings

Working group on Nature Protection issues will meet three times per project duration. Decisions on selection of 1) pilot projects and/or case studies, covering SEE, Turkey, as well as EU member states; 2) training materials and 3) results of training will be made by the WG members.

Output: Three annual meetings of the Nature Protection Working Group.

**Task 2.** Elaboration of training programme: preparation of materials for pilot projects and/or case studies

Based on the training needs the training programme(s) will be developed. Logistics, training methodologies and training materials will further be elaborated. Six pilot sites have been selected on the basis of proposals from the RENA countries. The sites are mentioned in table 1 of section 1.3:

- (1) **Shara** National Park with Albania, FYR of Macedonia and Kosovo\* (Connecting Korabi, Mavrovo, Shara);
- (2) **Gornje podunavlje / Kopacki Rit / Danube Drava** National Park Hungary, Croatia, Serbia);
- (3) **Djerdap** National Park (Romania, Serbia);
- (4) **Tara** National Park (related to Dinaric arc initiative) (Serbia, BiH);
- (5) Trans-boundary corridor areas between National Park **Durmitor** (Montenegro) and National Park **Sutjeska** (BiH);
- (6) **Dojran** Lake (FYR of Macedonia and Greece).

The preparation of the detailed training programme will include:

- Identify target groups for the trainings through the relevant Ministries (Group 1 & Group 2);
- Initial threats and opportunities assessment;
- Identify relevant information on past initiatives and ongoing initiatives to avoid duplication and create synergy;
- Develop training packages;
- Prepare detailed agenda in collaboration with the Nature WG coordinators;
- Agree on logistical arrangements.

The multi-module training programme has to be designed in such a way that they will support ongoing or support the development of new cross border nature protection initiatives. Elements of the Multi-module training programme will focus on the key elements of the EU nature protection *acquis*:

- Module 1: Development and Implementation of Nature Sites Management Plans;
- Module 2: Nature Management and strengthening the local economy: creating business and revenues in cross border areas;
- Module 3: Communication with Stakeholders;
- Module 4: Conducting Nature Impact Assessments;
- Module 5: Developing sound Nature project proposals for donor consideration (Nature project development);
- Module 6: Monitoring Nature Protection Areas.

The design and set up of the training programme, including the way target groups will be involved and the training topics is explained in section 1.3 and 1.4 above.

Outputs:

- Detailed two year Regional training programme defined at Pilot Projects for the period 2011 and 2012.

### **Task 3.** Implementation of training programme

The training will be implemented in such a way that they will build on existing cross border nature protection projects and support the development of planned initiatives. The training will be linked to these identified pilot projects. Experts that are involved in the existing initiatives under the other donor parallel programmes will be closely involved in the training programme, either as trainers or as observers, depending on the subject of the training.

During the implementation of the training programme we will continuously investigate how possible gaps that remain in the delivery of the training programme (due to financial limitations), can be supported and filled in by other donors.

At this stage it is foreseen that during the period 2011 and 2012 the training will include 6 three-days training events for a target audience of maximum 30 participants. As stated in section 1.3 of this activity sheet, the participants of Group 1 (experts from the relevant Ministries) should be continuous so that not only a strong regional network can be built of specialists in the field of nature protection, but that also a core team of regional experts can be developed that could provide further training once the RENA initiative is over.

Output:

- Implementation of a multi-module regional training programme (6 regional events are foreseen on 6 pilot sites);
- Each training event will have a detailed training report, including an evaluation.

### **Task 4.** Assessment of further capacity building needs, alignment of initiatives with donors

The specific tasks will include:

- The identification, presentation and discussion of potential follow-up projects/programmes to donors;
- Prepare the project documents together with and in close collaboration with the beneficiaries and project for donor financing (format according to donor);
- Prepare a guideline for practitioners and managers for protected areas management plans incorporating the results of the training of Task 3. The Guidelines target the development, implementation and monitoring of nature management plans;
- Preparation of database of potential donors (IFIs, bilateral donors) that are able to finance nature protection projects.

Output:

- At least 2 project fiches or project identification sheets etc. according to the required formats for a follow-up project at the selected pilot sites;
- Guideline for practitioners and site managers for protected areas management plans incorporating the results of the training of Task 3;
- Database of donors prepared and published on RENA website.

## **6. Outputs**

The following deliverables will be produced:

- Three annual meetings of the Nature Protection Working Group and minutes of these meetings;
- Detailed two year Regional training programme defined at Pilot Projects for the period 2011 and 2012;
- Implementation of a multi-module regional training programme (6 regional events are foreseen);
- 6 training reports: Each training event will have a detailed training report, including an evaluation;
- At least 2 project fiches or project identification sheets etc. according to the required formats for a follow-up project at the selected pilot sites;
- Guideline for practitioners and site managers for protected areas management plans incorporating the results of the training of Task 3.

## **7. Submission of Reports**

All reports shall be as concise as possible and written in the English language. All technical reports will be discussed in the RENA Working Group 3.

## **8. Inputs**

The following experts are required which have the following specific experience

### Qualifications and skills:

- University degree;
- Fluency in written and spoken English;
- High-quality analytical and document drafting skills.



Professional experience:

- At least 5 years experience in European Community law in the field of nature protection and implementation to serve as the local liaison and support to the Ministries;
- knowledgeable in the implementation of EC legislation on nature protection about which a country has substantial questions;
- knowledgeable in implementing management plans for Natura 2000 sites;
- more than 5 years experience in training in the field of the nature protection *acquis*.

The envisaged input of experts in working days is as follows:

Tasks	Category					
	KE1	KE2	KE3	KE4	SSTE	JSTE
<b>Total</b>	5	0	12	55	38	tbd

**Incidental Expenditure Budget – approximately 177.700 euro**

**Generic agenda for Nature protection regional workshops (6 regional workshops/May 2011-September 2012)**

Objective	Strengthen cooperation on issues of trans-boundary importance through the demonstration of best practices aligning nature management and local socio-economic development, while building capacity for nature protection in cross border areas.
Agenda items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans</li> <li>• Creating Business and Revenues in Cross Border Areas</li> <li>• Conducting Nature Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Developing sound Nature project proposals for donor consideration</li> <li>• Nature protection areas</li> </ul>
Results/Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved capacity on developing and implementing nature management plans, while ensuring sustainability of defined actions in those plans</li> <li>• Improvement of regional trans-boundary co-operation in the field of nature management</li> <li>• Acquiring practical skills on the ground on the nature management plan drafting process</li> <li>• Training reports, project fiches, guidelines.</li> </ul>
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives of Ministry of Environment and other relevant Ministries (depending on the training topic) as well as representatives of NGOs.</li> </ul>
Time required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop duration: 3 days each</li> </ul>

**Annex 2: PARTICIPANTS' LIST:**

	names	contact details	Institution
1	<b>Mila Loncar (Croatia)</b>	<a href="mailto:mila.loncar@min-kulture.hr">mila.loncar@min-kulture.hr</a> tel. +385 91 588 29 104	Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection, Department for Nature Protection
2	<b>Petra Mihalic (Croatia)</b>	<a href="mailto:petra.mihalic@min-kulture.hr">petra.mihalic@min-kulture.hr</a> , tel. +385 1 4866 183	Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection, Department for Nature Protection
3	<b>Daniela Schneider (Croatia)</b>	<a href="mailto:Daniela.schneider@hzzp.hr">Daniela.schneider@hzzp.hr</a>	Institute for Nature Protection
4	<b>Vlado Atanasovski (fYR of Macedonia)</b>	<a href="mailto:V.Atanasovski@moepp.gov.mk">V.Atanasovski@moepp.gov.mk</a> ; + 389 78 290 159	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
5	<b>Mustafa Kamili (fYR of Macedonia)</b>	<a href="mailto:Mustafa65@live.com">Mustafa65@live.com</a> ; +389 76 455434	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
6	<b>Ana Lekic (Montenegro)</b>	<a href="mailto:ana.lekic@epa.org.me">ana.lekic@epa.org.me</a>	Agency for Environmental Protection
7	<b>Arjana Matushi (Albania)</b>	<a href="mailto:arjanamatushi@hotmail.com">arjanamatushi@hotmail.com</a> , <a href="mailto:Arjana.sinojmeri@moe.gov.al">Arjana.sinojmeri@moe.gov.al</a>	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Management
8	<b>Silvamina Alshabani (Albania)</b>	<a href="mailto:Silvamina.alshabani@moe.gov.al">Silvamina.alshabani@moe.gov.al</a>	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Management
9	<b>Sami Sinani (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:sami.sinani@ks-gov.net">sami.sinani@ks-gov.net</a> , +377 44 643 682	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Senior Officer for Biodiversity Protection
10	<b>Valmira Gashi (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:valmira.gashi@ks-gov.net">valmira.gashi@ks-gov.net</a> , +377 44 925 396	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Senior Officer for Sustainable Use of Nature Resources
11	<b>Ismail Hetemaj (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:Ismail.hetemaj@ks-gov.net">Ismail.hetemaj@ks-gov.net</a>	Ministry of Environmental and Spatial Planning, RENA WG 3 Coordinator

	names	contact details	Institution
12	<b>Miradije Gerguri (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:Miradije.gerguri@ks-gov.net">Miradije.gerguri@ks-gov.net</a>	Ministry of Environmental and Spatial Planning
13	<b>Bekim Bytyqi (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:becotours@hotmail.com">becotours@hotmail.com</a>	NP Mali Sharr, Tourism Officer
14	<b>Zafir Azizovic (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:zafir_imago@hotmail.com">zafir_imago@hotmail.com</a>	NP Mali Sharr
15	<b>Arsim Xhejlani (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:arsimxhejlani@hotmail.com">arsimxhejlani@hotmail.com</a>	NGO FINQ (ornithological association)
16	<b>Besim Demiri (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:besifire@hotmail.com">besifire@hotmail.com</a>	Fireman Association
17	<b>Adem Idrizi (fYr of Macedonia)</b>	<a href="mailto:adem.erp@gmail.com">adem.erp@gmail.com</a>	NGO Eko Rural
18	<b>Pejtim Saiti (fYR of Macedonia)</b>	<a href="mailto:pajtim@ppc.org.mk">pajtim@ppc.org.mk</a>	NGO Ppc
19	<b>Nesim Veliu (fYR of Macedonia)</b>	<a href="mailto:ideali_mk@yahoo.com">ideali_mk@yahoo.com</a>	NGO Ideal
20	<b>Ismet Bytyqi (Kosovo*)</b>		Hunter's Association
21	<b>Xhezair Smaili (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:pnsharri@hotmail.com">pnsharri@hotmail.com</a>	NP Mali Sharr
21	<b>Hazer Dana (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:hazer.dana@hotmail.com">hazer.dana@hotmail.com</a>	NP Mali Sharr, Director
23	<b>Samir Memai (Kosovo*)</b>	<a href="mailto:pnsharri@hotmail.com">pnsharri@hotmail.com</a>	MP Mali Sharr, Forestry technician

	names	contact details	Institution
24	<b>Rezaite Zagaj</b>		Raiffaisen Bank, Prizren
25	<b>Imre Csikos, Expert (RENA expert)</b>	<a href="mailto:imre.csikos@renanetwork.org">imre.csikos@renanetwork.org</a> +31622237882	<i>RENA Key Expert WG 3</i>
26	<b>Ivana Mijatovic, Expert (RENA expert)</b>	<a href="mailto:imijatovic@yahoo.com">imijatovic@yahoo.com</a> +385914555580	<i>RENA expert</i>
27	<b>Tim Bines (RENA expert)</b>	<a href="mailto:timbines@yfast.co.uk">timbines@yfast.co.uk</a>	<i>RENA expert</i>
28	<b>Edward Idle (RENA expert)</b>	<a href="mailto:edward.idle@virgin.net">edward.idle@virgin.net</a>	<i>RENA expert</i>
29	<b>Skender Shala (RENA expert)</b>	<a href="mailto:shalaskenda@gmail.com">shalaskenda@gmail.com</a>	<i>RENA National Coordinator for Kosovo*</i>
30	<b>Senad Dani</b>	<a href="mailto:Senad_dani@yahoo.com">Senad_dani@yahoo.com</a>	<i>Interpreter</i>
31	<b>Adem Kollari</b>		<i>Interpreter</i>

Annex 3

**AGENDA**

**Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA) project**

**Module 4: Nature Management: Conducting Nature Impact Assessments**

**May 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

**Place:** Shara Mountains, Kosovo\*

**Date/Time:** 9.00 – 17.30, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May,  
9.00 – 17.00, Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May,  
9.00 – 17.00, Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May.

**Table : Summary RENA Nature training package Module 4:**

Day 1		Day 2 and 3	
Topic	Target Group	Topic	Target Group
Module 4: Nature Impact Assessments  Location: <b>Shara Mountains,            Kosovo*</b> <b>15<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> May 2012</b>	<b>Group 1:</b> National Experts per RENA country  Total 24 participants	Practical Development and Implementation of Nature Site Management Plans  Nature Impact Assessments for Natura 2000 sites	<b>Group 2:</b> maximum 12 local participants: 6 local representatives + site managers per involved country: <b>Kosovo* and FYR of            Macedonia and            Albania +            representatives from            Group 1</b> (maximum 11 RENA representatives: 3 from Kosovo*, 3 from Albania, 3 from FYR of Macedonia, 2 from Croatia)  Trilateral cooperation site: 29 participants



**DAY 1, 15th May: Nature Management and Conducting Nature Impact Assessments**

- 9:00 *Welcome coffee*
- 9:15 – 9:45 **Welcome and introduction**  
Mr. Imre Csikós, RENA Climate Working Group Leader  
Mr. Muhamet Malsiu - Director of EPD and RENA National Focal Point  
Mr. Gazmend Selimi - European Commission Liaison Office in Kosovo\*  
Introduction of participants  
Objectives of the meeting  
Outline of the agenda
- 9.45 – 10:45 **Natura 2000 and Nature Impact assessments**  
*By Imre Csikós*  
  
Outline of EU Nature Legislation re Nature Impact Assessments  
Habitats Directive  
EIA Directive  
Water Framework Directive
- 10:45 – 11:00 *Coffee break*
- 11:00 – 11.45 **What are the differences between “Appropriate Assessment” and “Environmental Impact Assessment”?**  
*By Mr. Edward Idle and Dr Tim Bines*  
  
**Appropriate Assessments**
  - What is their legal basis?
  - When do they apply or when must they be carried out?
  - Who is responsible for them?
  - What must be done about them?
  - What options for action are available after an AA has been completed
  - What role does EU have?
- 11.45 – 12.30 In (Mixed) Country Groups
  - Identify 3 examples where an AA should be carried out.
  - Identify the “Responsible Authority”.
  - Identify the steps to be taken to complete an AA.
  - Can impact be avoided or do mitigation and/or compensation apply?
  - Identify the role of Government in final decision.
- 12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch*
- 13:30 – 14:30 **Environmental Impact Assessments**  
*By Mr. Edward Idle and Dr Tim Bines*
  - What is their legal basis
  - When do they apply or when must they be carried out?
  - Who is responsible for them?
  - What must be done about them?
  - What options for action are available after an AA has been completed
  - What role does EU have?

14.30 – 15.30	<b>Examples of AA (Order of presentation to be decided)</b>  <i>Croatia, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland</i>
15:30 – 15:45	<i>Tea/ coffee break</i>
15:45 – 16.30	<b>More examples of AA</b> <i>By Imre Csikós, Edward Idle and Tim Bines</i>
16.30 – 17.00	<b>Questions and clarifications</b>
17.00- 17.30	<b>Wrap up day 1</b> Tim Bines and Edward Idle
19.00-21.00	<i>Dinner</i>
<b><u>DAY 2, 16<sup>th</sup> May</u></b>	<b>Nature Impacts and Management Plans</b>
9:00	<i>Welcome coffee</i>
9:15 – 9:30	<b>Welcome and introduction</b> Mr. Imre Csikós, RENA Working Group Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of participants</li> <li>- Objectives of the meeting</li> <li>- Approval of the agenda</li> </ul>
9:30 – 10:00	<b>Short introduction to Mali Shar</b> <i>by National Park staff</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of main features of interest re Natura 2000</li> <li>- What are the main features of Management of N.P.?</li> <li>- What resources are available for management?</li> </ul>
10:00 – 12:00	<i>Site Visit</i>
12.00 – 12.45	<b>The Habitats Directive and Managing Natura 2000 sites</b> <i>Introduction by Mr. Imre Csikós with Tim Bines and Eddie Idle</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EU Nature legislation and policy</li> <li>- Short Introduction to the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC</li> <li>- Management Plans and the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive</li> </ul>
12:45 – 13:45	<i>Lunch</i>
13:45 – 14:30	<b>Mali Shar N.P. Management Plan</b> <i>Plenary session. Facilitated by Eddie Idle, Tim Bines</i> Information gathering – what is available; what is missing? What are the threats and opportunities at Mali Shar What should be the objectives? How to plan the work necessary to achieve the objectives
14:30 – 15:15	<b>Dealing with nature impacts at Mali Shar NP – opportunities and threats</b> <i>Plenary session. Facilitated by Eddie Idle, Tim Bines</i>

This section of the programme will be a discussion structured in line with any guidelines for Management Plan production with an emphasis on evidence based impacts and significance and how to reduce nature impacts to achieve sustainability of use of resources.

- 15:15 – 15:30 *Tea /Coffee (to be available during group work below)*
- 15:30 – 16:30 **Workshop: Groups to select 1 impact each**  
*Plenary session. Facilitated by Eddie Idle, Tim Bines*
- Clarify and confirm the Impact
  - Assess the significance of the Impact
  - Assess the scope of the Impact
  - Identify what information is needed to carry out an AA
- 16.30 – 17.15 **Discussion, comments and feed-back**
- 19.00 – 21.00 *Dinner*

**Day 3: 17<sup>th</sup> May**      **Nature Impacts: Appropriate Assessments**

- 9:00 *Welcome coffee*
- 9:15 – 9:45 **Review results from the previous day:**  
*By Mr Imre Csikos/Edward Idle/Tim Bines*
- 9:45 – 10.45 **Appropriate Assessments**  
*By Edward Idle/Tim Bines*  
Avoidance  
Mitigation and/or Compensation  
Other examples e.g. Belgium
- 10:45 – 11:00 *Coffee break*
- 11.00 - 11.45 **Appropriate Assessments**  
*By Edward Idle/Tim Bines*
- Processes and decision-making
  - Ministerial role
- 11.45 – 12.30 **Monitoring and Communication at Mali Shar**
- Who needs to know about the AA?
  - What information is needed to monitor?
  - How will the information be collected and by whom?
  - Who needs to know what is going on?
  - Who will communicate with them?
- 12:30 – 13:30 *Lunch*
- 13:30 – 14:15 **Internal communication and its management**  
*By Edward Idle/Tim Bines*
- Staff in the NP
  - Ministry

- Other Ministries and agencies
- Volunteers
- NGOs

14.15 – 15.00

**Communication methods**

- IT and modern techniques (blogs and tweeting)
- Meetings
- Leaflets and Newsletters
- Local Centres

15:00 – 16:00

**Review results of the training and wrap-up**

- Identify how to continue process and responsibilities (if possible).
- Comments and feed back (especially from the National Representatives)
- Recommendations for the next training

16:00

**Closure and travel back**



## **Annex 4**

### **Sheets**

(under separate cover)

Presentations to be found on [www.renanetwork.org](http://www.renanetwork.org)





## **Annex 5**

Evaluations

**SUMMARY POST-WORKSHOP EVALUATION**

**FULL TITLE OF THE TRAINING: RENA WG2 CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**Activity 3.1 Nature Protection**

**LOCATION OF THE TRAINING: National Park Mali Sharr, Kosovo\***

**DATES: 15 – 17 May 2012**

**1. Statistical Information**

1.1	Workshop Session	Regional training
1.2	Trainer Name	Imre Csikos/ Tim Bines/Edward Idle/
1.3	Name and Surname of Participants (evaluators)	As per participants' list.

**2. Your Expectations**

Please indicate to what extent specific expectations were met, or not met:

My Expectations	My expectations were met		
	Fully	Partially	Not at all
1. To learn about NIAs and MP	9	9	
2. Natura 2000	7	6	
3. To exchange experience/group work	5	5	

**3. Workshop and Presentation**

Please rate the following statements in respect of this training module:

Aspect of Workshop	Excellent	Good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Unacceptable
1 The workshop achieved the objectives set	30%	60%	10%			
2 The quality of the workshop material provided	35%	45%	15%		5%	
3 The content of the workshop was well suited to my level of understanding and experience	30%	65%	5%			
4 The practical work was relevant and informative	35%	60%	5%			
5 The workshop was interactive	75%	20%	5%			
6. The mix between theory and practise allowed sufficient opportunity to implement acquired knowledge and skills	35%	45%	20%			
Aspect of Workshop	Excellent	Good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Unacceptable
7 Trainers were well prepared and knowledgeable on the subject matter	80%	20%				
8 The duration of this workshop was neither too long nor too short	20%	50%	30%			
9 The logistical arrangements (venue, refreshments, equipment) were satisfactory	65%	35%				



10 Attending this workshop was time well spent	65%	35%				
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**4. Comments and suggestions**

I have the following comment and/or suggestions in addition to questions already answered:

Workshop Sessions: Expected more on Natura 2000, the agenda wasn't followed to the letter (1), Good (1).

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Trainers: Interesting and experienced (1), Pleasure to work with (1), Excellent (3), Extraordinary (1)

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Workshop level and content: Very good (1), Good examples of court cases and impacts on Natura 2000, but more knowledge needed for local NP staff to prepare the MP and the workshop put great efforts in trying to achieve that (1). Very well adjusted to participants (1)

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Other:

1) More trainings would be welcomed.

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2) More group work between participants of the G1 and G2.

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3)

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