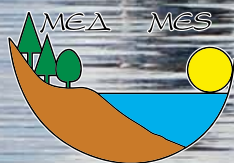
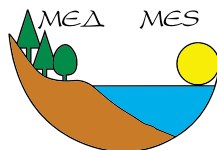


MACEDONIAN
ECOLOGICAL
SOCIETY
2015
ANNUAL REVIEW



ANNUAL REVIEW
MACEDONIAN ECOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

2015



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Foreword by the President of MES

Looking back at all the successes of 2015 I know we have many reasons to celebrate, but ahead of us we also have a lot more work to do if we want to conserve nature in Macedonia.

As the new President of MES I am proud of the fact that besides the staff of our project office I have the support of our membership and partners who remain dedicated to our joint cause. It is of great importance that so many people believe in the work of MES and trust our conservation efforts.

Macedonia is the home of some of the most threatened species of animals, plants and their habitats, and this year was good for some of them: after 10 years of scientific research we successfully added the Balkan Lynx to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and thus confirmed the urgent needed for its protection; after more than 50 years we conducted the first national stork census; through the research along the Bregalnica watershed we participated in the development of the first ecological sensitivity map; the research on Jablanica brought forth a new species of freshwater snail; at Belchishko wetlands we conducted field research which resulted with the first set of full documentation needed for future proclamation of Natura2000 area; and we published the long-awaited paper on jackal distribution in Macedonia. These achievements were presented publically and we tried to educate all stakeholders about them.

The biological diversity of Macedonia is incredibly high and its conservation cannot be the responsibility of just one country. Which is why our work, like the movement of the species we study, crosses the borders of Macedonia; from the cooperation with our neighbours on the forests in the Balkan green belt, the Balkan Lynx Recovery Program, through the joint efforts to protect the nature and wetlands in Prespa, to the conservation efforts for migration flyways and birds that connected us with the Mediterranean and Africa. Similarly, our supporters and partners come from different parts of the world; from Japan and USA, to our long-lasting partnerships in Germany, UK and Switzerland, the outstanding volunteers and interns from France and Spain, to the highly appreciated partners from the Balkans who probably understand us the best.

When key habitats and wildlife are threatened by inappropriately planned infrastructure and construction projects we will raise our voice with science backing us, because we believe that we will win all battles with dialogue and virtue.



Although we continue to work for nature and people with our full capacity, the threats we face are too big for us to overcome singlehandedly. Many species, habitats and our health are at stake and we need your assistance and support to change that.

MES is successful only when supported by members, volunteers and local partners. Your support is our strength, without it we cannot expect success, without it we cannot take a firm stand in the name of working for nature.

Professor Slavcho Hristovski, PhD.

President of MES

Foreword

by the Executive Director of MES

The biological diversity of Macedonia is one of our greatest treasures and the main inspiration for the continued work of MES. In 2015 we conducted many research and applied projects, we were dedicated to field research at a large scale, we worked in areas for which there was very little scientific data – especially in Eastern Macedonia, we cooperated with locals throughout the country and the results make me more convinced than ever that our work is important.

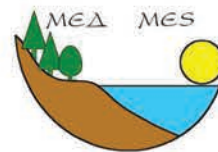


Aware of the irreplaceable role our contribution makes in Macedonian society we are seriously facing the need to strengthen our capacities. The growing challenges we face daily as well as the support we get strengthen our team and it deserves to work in a fully professional project office. Which is why in the next year I will firmly insist on upgrading the organizational structure of MES. We need institutional strengthening based on clear strategic goals, long-term working plans, recognizable vision and mission appropriate to the current conditions. In a time of fast and constant communication we will stay relevant only if we are acknowledged as a source of true scientific action and a factor in the improvement of living conditions for all plants, animals and people in Macedonia.

MES has a solid base and deep roots, we are one of the oldest organizations which has been continuously active since the 70's. Therefore, I have no doubt that MES backed by the greatest scientists and professionals in Macedonia will continue to provide a critical overview of the threats to nature while developing new and innovative ways for future nature conservation.

At the end of the year I have to thank my team, the presidency, the assembly, all of the incredible volunteers and everyone who supported us – integrity is on our side, collectively we are unstoppable and each year to come can only bring greater success.

Robertina Brajanoska, MSc
Executive Director of MES



Macedonian Ecological Society
announces the
5TH CONGRESS
OF ECOLOGISTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
WITH INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION
Ohrid, Macedonia
19th-22nd October 2016



Lj. Stefanov

Macedonian Ecological Society is pleased to announce the 5th Congress of Ecologists of the Republic of Macedonia, with international participation. This will be our first truly international Congress, with editorial board comprised of scientists from nine countries in the region. It will provide a platform for presentation of the latest scientific research in ecology in the countries of the Balkan region and South-east Europe. The Congress will also provide a rare opportunity for exchange of experience and knowledge among ecologists, conservationists, environmentalists and practitioners in forestry, agriculture, chemistry, economy and other related disciplines.

The international character of the Congress will guarantee better communication among scientists of the region and increased quality of the presentations. The presentation will be distributed into nine sections, covering broad topics reflecting the wide range of research done over the last several years. The 5th Congress of Ecologists of the Republic of Macedonia aims to fill a major gap in international scientific meetings in the region and will thus maintain and advance the cooperation in ecology as a whole.

Macedonian Ecological Society

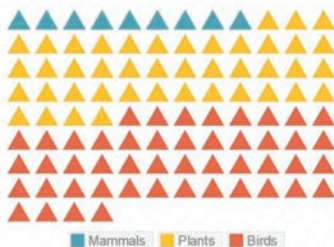
2014-2015

As a national organization MES strives to cover the territory of Macedonia



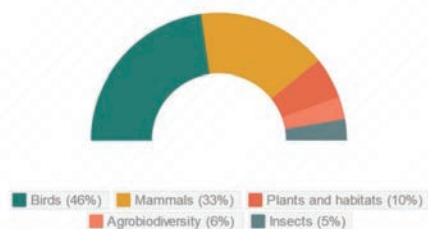
In 2015 MES worked in 5 protected and 18 potentially protected areas

Many MES projects focus on biodiversity conservation



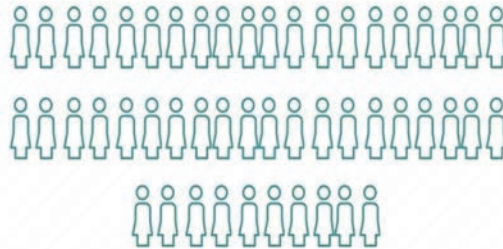
In 2015 MES worked on the conservation of over 100 species

Large part of MES efforts is based on field research



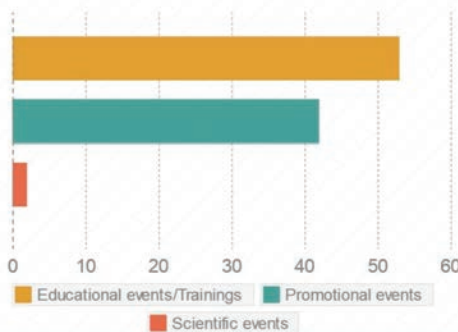
In 2015 MES had a total of 225 field days

Volunteers and supporters multiply MES success



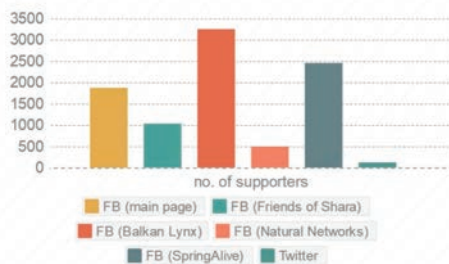
In 2015 MES had the support of over 1000 volunteers

MES is a transparent organization with constant public presence



In 2015 MES organized 97 public events

MES uses social media to promote its work



MES has over 9000 supporters on social media

MES cooperates with organizations from Macedonia and abroad



In 2015 MES cooperated with 37 organizations

* MES remains an active partner/member of several organization: EEF-European Ecological Federation, PlantaEuropa, CEEweb – Central and East European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity, ECNC – European Center for Nature Conservation and during 2015 we initiated the process for becoming a full member of BirdLife International as well as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Organisation and structure

According to the Statute, the Macedonian Ecological Society is governed by its members through representatives which are suggested and elected to the MES Assembly, the highest body of the Society. Other governing bodies of MES are the Presidency and the Supervisory Board. The role of the governing bodies is to provide development of the Society through strategic orientation and the development of working programs as well as dedication to capacity strengthening.

The Assembly has 21 members which were elected at the annual Assembly meeting held in March 2015, and they are as follows:

Prof. Slavcho Hristovski, PhD. - President	Prof. Ljupcho Grupche, PhD. – Honorary Member
Prof. Vladimir Dzabirski, PhD. – Deputy President	Prof. Dana Prelic, PhD. – Head of Urban Ecology Section
Metodija Veleviski, PhD. – Secretary General	Prof. Zlatko Levkov, PhD. – Head of Hydrobiology Section
Prof. Ljubcho Melovski, PhD. – Member of Presidency	Ms. Valentina Slavevska Stamenkovic, PhD. – Head of Landscape Ecology Section
Prof. Todor Anovski, PhD. – Member of Presidency	Prof. Trajche Stafilov, PhD. – Head of Environmental Protection Section
Prof. Aleksandar Trendafilov, PhD. – Member of Presidency	Prof. Srecko Georgievski, PhD. – Head of Agroecology Section
Prof. Nikolcho Velkovski, PhD. – Member of Presidency	Prof. Maja Jordanova, PhD. – Head of Ecological Education Section
Ms. Marjana Shushlevska – President of Supervisory Board	Ms. Aleksandra Cvetkovska, PhD. – Head of Young Ecologists Section
Prof. Milica Ristovska, PhD. – Member of Supervisory Board	Mr. Trajche Naumoski, PhD. – Member
Ms. Suzana Andonova – Member of Supervisory Board	Ms. Irena Andreevska – Member
Ms. Robertina Brajanoska, M.Sc. – Executive Director	

Since 2006 the MES office has been successfully developing and in 2015 we have reached the number of 18 employees, managed by an Executive Director. The MES of-

office provides project management and scientific support which is aligned with the strategic plans of the organization according to its mission. The holistic approach to project implementation is further structured in programs which outline the main fields of effort. Namely, the internal organization reform of the MES office through the implementation of Programs which were initiated in 2014 and continue to be implemented in 2015 in order to increase the efficiency and streamline MES capacities. We have also reviewed the opportunities to link MES Programs with the Sections.

MES program and project coordinators present before you the activities of 2015, as well as our plans for further action.





Finalized Activities



1. Program „Protection of Plants and Ecosystems“

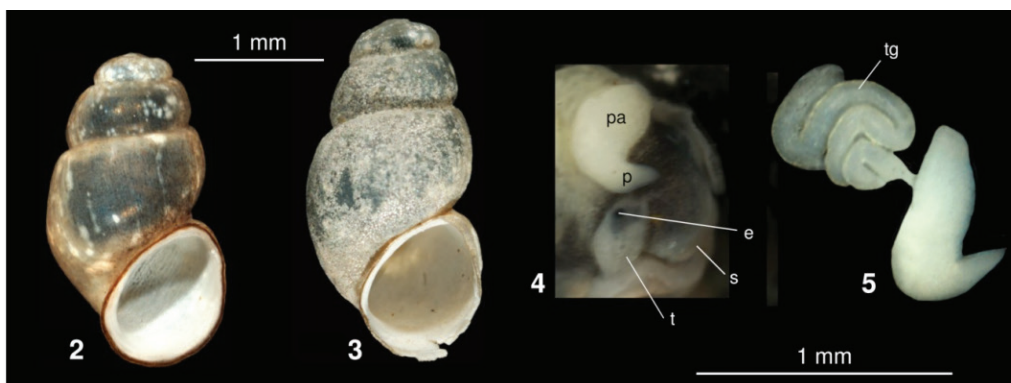
In accordance with the outstanding importance of certain ecosystems and the services they provide as a basis for human life while taking their threats into consideration MES is implementing actions for ecosystem conservation. The implementation of such projects determines the threats, the current condition and enables sustainable use of ecosystem services as well as promotion and raising awareness.

1.1 Water for the Lakes, Bogs, Streams and People at Jablanica

The protection of the Drim watershed is part of a large project which is implemented in all Drim countries. In Macedonia several civil society organizations are united in the effort. MES is implementing the

project *Water for the lakes, bogs, streams and people on Jablanica*.

Taking into consideration the high level of biodiversity and the great number of rare aquatic habitats on Jablanica, as well as the serious threats they face, the main goal of this project is to provide a basis as well as recommendations for their conservation.



Bythinella melovskii, new species of freshwater snail discovered in the bogs at Krstec, Jablanica



"The research conducted under this project is very important. One of the proofs is the identification of a new species for science; the snail *Bythinella melovskii* Glöer & Slavevska-Stamenković, 2015, found in the bogs near Krstec."



Ivana Lozanovska, Project manager

Besides quantifying the threats to aquatic habitats the other goal of the project is to provide recommendations for sustainable use of water resources through establishing alternative water supply solutions for the population of the region thus decreasing the pressure on aquatic habitats.



The success of almost every aspect of this project relies on the local stakeholders. Through cooperation and open dialogue during our frequent meetings we were able to publish a handbook for sustainable management of the forests on Jablanica (since forests play a major role in conservation of aquatic ecosystems).

As a summary from the field research we developed a report which synthesized data on the condition of water bodies and forests on Jablanica. This report included the threat analysis and recommendations for maintaining and improving the status of these important natural resources.





2. Program “Protection and Study of Birds”

2015 was an interesting year for protection and study of birds in Macedonia. Our focus was wide and the volume of field work was a true challenge for our dedicated team of experts and volunteers.

2.1 Mediterranean Cooperation for Migratory Birds

The project “Capacity Building for Flyway Conservation in the Mediterranean” was implemented on the territory of Macedonia with a special focus on wetlands which play an important role as stopover sites for migratory birds. Having in mind that migratory bird conservation cannot be achieved by any country working alone, we are cooperating with 11 countries from the Mediterranean which share the flyways and many of the threats. Our main achievements come from detailed field work during winter and spring migration which determined the main threats connected to illegal bird killing and negative effects from energy infrastructure. We have also been very



Rallus aquaticus (Water Rail)



focused on education and building capacities among local volunteers.

Our own capacity for migratory bird conservation have also been strengthening through experiences from work and participation to educational events; such as the illegal bird killing workshop in Madrid, the online education on the impact of physical planning on birds and the established mentoring cooperation with the Bulgarian BirdLife partner BSPB. In 2016 MES will participate in a workshop for lobbying and defining best practices for windfarms and

birds through sensitivity mapping for construction of windfarms which will also lead to a national workshop on the same topic.

One of the most important ways for us to ensure migratory bird conservation and their flyways is through gaining public support. Thus, we have sought out opportunities to stay in the public eye by organizing public events such as the Euro BirdWatch Day and the World Migratory Bird Day. Volunteers have been especially welcome to attend these events. Additionally, we are also filming video material which will il-

illustrate the work we have done during this project.



“Maintaining continuity in the study of migratory birds is the key to defining future conservation action. However, this continuity cannot be achieved without the recruitment and training of new supporters and researchers. In the long run, this is the greatest benefit from this project.”

Danka Uzunova, Project Manager

Next year we remain committed to creating new capacities for field researchers and establishing a deeper relationship with responsible people from relevant institutions and businesses.

2.2 Macedonian Participation in the Development of the European Breeding Bird Atlas

MES successfully completed the first phase of the development of the European Breeding Bird Atlas through the collection of quantitative data regarding the birds of Macedonia. This, mainly field research, activity is important in the establishing of a basis for bird protection in Macedonia.

MES has secured funding and logistic support for the continuation of this activity and will participate in the 20th bird numbers conference in Germany.



2.3 Macedonian Storks, Counted!

After more than fifty years we completed the national stork census. The census provided data on the abundance and distribution of storks in Macedonia and our data will be used for the international stork census.



“The stork census was completed mid-July, just before the juvenile storks leave the nest. This was a complex activity and we are very grateful to all volunteers and stork-lovers that helped.”
Ksenija Putilin, Stork Census Coordinator

We recorded 817 nests with 3661 storks, the greatest nesting density was registered in Kochani Fields where we recorded 2 storks per square kilometre. Active nests have 2,5 juveniles on average and are mostly located on electrical polls. This information is indicative of the importance the energy sector and agriculture play in wetland regions.

The data was collected from over 1000 villages and this tasking effort was successful thanks to the support of 22 active MES volunteers.

2.4 The Egyptian Vulture in Macedonia

In 2015 we attempted to capture and mark an adult individual with satellite transmitters. The activity was conducted in the period between 03.08.2015 and 07.08.2015 on the territory of Negotino where we know that a larger group of Egyptian Vultures feeds. The attempt was unsuccessful and no individuals were captured.

The research was conducted with the goal to get more precise information on the migration (flyway and duration) of adult individuals. The numbers for this bird in Macedonia have dropped 58% in the last 30 years and only approximately 20 couples remain.





3. Program “Protection of Wild Animals”

This program covers activities related to direct and indirect conservation of wild animals and their habitats. In 2015 we worked on almost all animal groups. However, we dedicated the greatest attention to research and conservation efforts aimed at the Balkan Lynx.

3.1 The Balkan Lynx, a Critically Endangered Species According the IUCN Red List

The tenth anniversary of our involvement with the *Balkan Lynx Recovery Program* in 2015 came together with an important milestone which raised the visibility of the Balkan Lynx at a global level. Namely, in November the Balkan Lynx was added to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and designated as critically endangered. Even though the status is disappointing this was an important step towards securing the conservation of this big cat.

In 2015 we also organized an international Balkan Lynx symposium in Albania which brought together scientists and stakeholders from several countries. The symposium was closed with the promo-

tional video which sums up the 10 years of effort in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro.



“While this is an amazing scientific achievement for us, we have no time to celebrate, the Balkan Lynx needs even more visibility and dedicated support. However, we are encouraged because the IUCN Red List provides ‘political’ recognition and global publicity.”

Dime Melovski, Program Manager

Other lynx related activities continued with a usual dynamic. We conducted the fourth systematic research with photo traps in the National Park Mavrovo. However, besides the key area of Mavrovo we also conducted research in Jablanica, Nid-



ze, Ilinska and Plakenska Moutains and the southern slopes of Stogovo.

The protection of the Balkan Lynx and the research work is greatly supported by the monitoring network which grows every year and includes hunters, game-keep-

ers, foresters and locals. Their contribution to our work strengthens local conservation capacities, creates the basis for good cooperation and trust which leads to the successful completion of goals.





4. Program “Management of Protected Areas”

Protected areas have an important role in maintaining biodiversity and the natural state of ecosystems. This program is our way of actively engaging in communicating information regarding the improvements required by protected areas by organizing trainings, providing consultation and direct action in many areas. In 2015 we were mostly focused on actions and initiatives for proclaiming new protected areas.

4.1 Initiative for Establishment of Trans-boundary Biosphere Reserve “Osogovo” between Bulgaria and Macedonia

Encouraged by the proclamation of the trans-boundary biosphere reserve Ohrid-Prespa in 2014 CSOs from Macedonia and Bulgaria started an initiative for the establishment of a similar trans-boundary reserve in Osogovo.

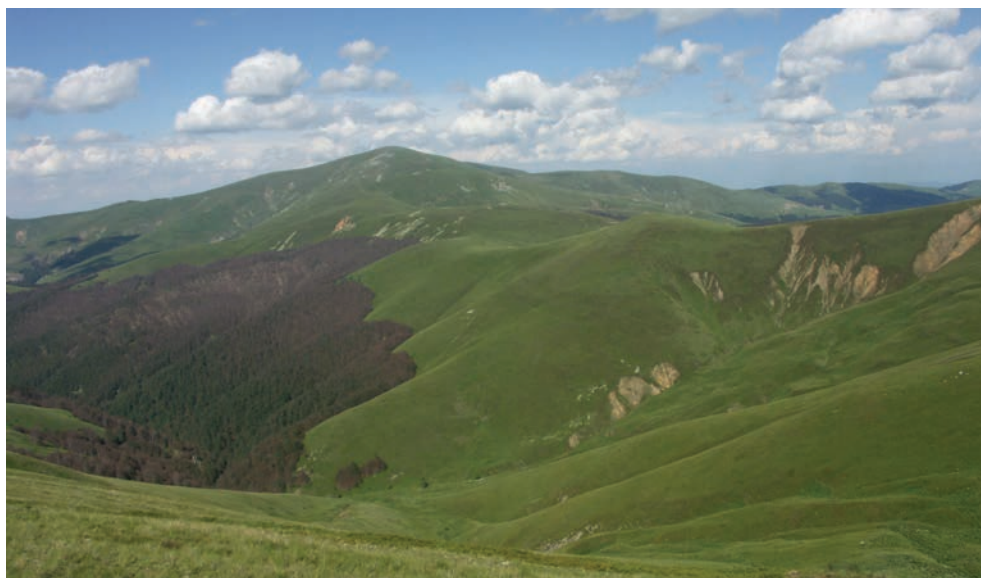
This initiative is a great opportunity for MES to finally use all of its local knowledge and experience gained in the North-east of Macedonia.

“Our dedicated work of nine years in the region of Osogovo Mt. which included detailed research, local and regional cooperation as well as intensive lobbying has prepared us for an excellent new initiative, establishing a trans-boundary protected area – Biosphere Reserve ‘Osogovo.’”



Despina Kitanova, Program Manager

The establishment of this biosphere reserve will be the final step in an arduous and lengthy process. This process will have to be initiated by the creation of positive connections and cooperation with key stakeholders, improved practices for management with natural resources and promo-



tion of the values of this region. We have been focused on these activities throughout the first part of 2015. One of the most important steps we took was the identification of High Nature Value Forests together with the Forestry Agency from Kochani. Jointly we organized several workshops on this

topic.

The project progresses in its new stages we will remain focused on support for sustainable forestry in the Osogovo region through the strengthening of capacities of stakeholders in this area and the further identification of High Nature Value Forests.





4.2 PrespaNet

The network created by three civil society organizations from Albania, Greece and Macedonia continued to implement joint activities in 2015. In 2015 MES participated in the development of a cross-border strategy for Prespa; this strategy provides the directions for future projects which will be implemented at a trilateral level. Developed according to international methods this Strategy contains parts related to conservation, promotion and sustainable management.

As part of the promotion effort the trilateral team jointly produced two issues of the PrespaNet Newsletter and a calendar for 2016. Our teams also cooperated during the annual social weekend, which was organized in Albania this year. MES also worked together with the Municipality of Resen on the development of a new Local Environmental Action Plan - since one of the major goals of PrespaNet is to provide support for the local self-government and the local population.



4.3 Local Initiative for Proclaiming Shar Mountain a National Park

Shar Mountain is one of the areas where MES has been working for very long in order to see this mountain proclaimed a national park. In 2015 we initiated the formation of a local action group known as “Friends of Shar”. This platform was formed with the goal to provide local implementation of actions and mobilization of all local stakeholders which support the idea of National Park Shar Mountain. Currently the platform has 113 members and is very active on social media as well as in organizing many local publicity events. In order to provide forums for public discussion of the benefits of Shar Mountain getting a protected status we organized several informational gatherings with all platform members as well as local stakeholders.



In the framework of the project “*Biodiversity Conservation through Sustainable Management of Resources in Shar Mountain*” we are also conducting a researching the public opinion regarding the future protected status of Shar Mountain.



4.4 Documented Biological and Ecological Values of Bregalnica River Watershed

The main goal of the project dedicated to the Bregalnica watershed was to analyse the gaps in ecological data and to develop an ecological sensitivity map for the region. While the project was implemented by the consulting company Dekons-Ema, MES was involved in field research with all its capacities. The results from this tasking research effort were summed up in several

documents: Biological Diversity of Bregalnica River Watershed; Landscape Diversity of Bregalnica River Watershed; Report on the Status of Protected Areas and Ecological Sensitivity Map.

The data received from this effort are of great importance for future planning and development in this region. The East Planning Region is the beneficiary of this data set and is obligated to include it in the development of all future strategies and plans. The Report on the Status of Protected Areas is of special importance as it provides



an overview of all existing protected areas as well as all proposed protected areas which were evaluated according to the new research data.

4.5 Small Grants for Local Organizations for Promotion of Proposed Protected Areas

In 2015 for the second time we implemented the Small Grants Program for the region of Ilinska and Plakenska Mountain, as part of the *Balkan Lynx Recovery Program*. The goal of the program is to introduce the local population to the need for nature protection, establishing new protected areas and the benefits from them. Six local organization were awarded with small grants and worked on research and promoting birds, oak forests, Greyish Oak and the need to protect natural rarities and map natural values.

Most of the projects were focused on promoting identified natural values from the area of Ilinska and Plakenska Mountain as well as education and raising public awareness. The mountaineering club Bigla 2013 and Polenka worked on the promotion of high-altitude mountain habitats on Ilinska Mountain and the well-preserved oak forest at Mrenoga. The elementary school “GoceDelcev” from DemirHisar implemented education activities for its students and for the general audience focused on the Greyish Oak at Sloeshtica. The Municipality of DemirHisar i.e. the organization Brzh-dani 2010 promoted and managed the area



around the springs of Crna River and the springs at Popolzhani. Art Point – Gumno implemented activities related to raising awareness for local bird species at Ilinska and Plakenska Mountain and the Belchani springs. As a result from the project activities we developed proposals for protection of natural rarities Mrenoga, Greyish Oak – Sloeshtica and Popolzhani Springs. With the goal to strengthen capacities and improve cooperation with local partners we organized trainings for project cycle management and allocation of funds.

The same program also awarded small grants in the region of Jablanica. The focus of all five projects awarded in that region was directed at the need for proclaiming Jablanica a cross-border protected area and our continued cooperation with local envi-





ronmental organizations. Two of the grants, awarded to “Soroptimist” via the elementary school “BrakaMiladinovi” from Struga and the mountaineering club “Zakamen” implemented education activities for students and nature-lovers and also promoted natural values such biodiversity while highlighting the importance of sustainable use of resources. The local pharmacy “Lekofarm” was awarded a project which promoted medicinal plants and educated locals about the sustainable ways they can be har-

vested. Being aware of the need to create local networks for civil organizations we supported the project of “Enhalon” who united local environmental organizations. It is also important to highlight the support we provided for the Municipality of Vevchani for the preparation of their management plan for the protected area (monument of nature) Vevchani Springs. The projects and their public presentations opened a public debate for all important and current ecological issues in the Jablanica region.





5. Program “Agroecology”

The main goal of this program is to promote high nature value farming. We are focused on traditional agriculture which was practiced for hundreds of years and includes extensive grazing and small farms with different agricultural crops with low use of fertilizers. Different types of landscapes are created as a result of these practices and the interaction between people and nature. High nature value farming assists biological diversity conservation and landscape conservation as opposed to intensive agricultural production which put a lot of pressure on the environment.

“In the villages of the Bregalnica River watershed there is a tradition to maintain local varieties. Thus, a family might plant two or three different varieties on small plots and use them primarily for private use. Unfortunately these old landraces are maintained by locals who are between the ages of 50 to 70 while younger farmers are focused on commercial agriculture or are quickly abandoning villages.”



Evgenija Jordanovska Neckovski - Project Assistant

During 2015 we cooperated with experts from the Faculty for Agricultural Sciences and Food in order to identify local agricultural crops and indigenous domes-

tic animals of the Bregalnica River watershed in order to provide recommendations for their conservation.

The research was conducted in the framework of the project activity “Ecological Data Gap Analysis and Development of Ecological Sensitivity Map for the Bregalnica River Watershed”.

The research and the field research registered and quantified indigenous breeds of cows (busha), sheep (pramenka), domestic Balkan goat, buffalo and the Macedonian primitive pig. The results from old landraces of crops are impressive and indicate that some are threatened and quite close to extinction – especially varieties of wheat, oats, broomcorn, millet, beans, green beans, chickpeas, broad beans, squashes, muskmelons, watermelons etc.





6. Program “Environmental Protection Polices”

Efficient conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity demand good legislation. In the framework of this program and through various projects MES has provided analysis and input for many environmental policies by participating in the development process for strategic documents and legal framework.

We continued to support the review process for the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) throughout 2015 by participating in the strategic evaluation process for the NBSAP, establishing the clearinghouse mechanism and similar tasks. The project is implemented by the UNEP office in Vienna and the Ministry for Environment and Physical Planning and financially supported by GEF.

Within this program we are also very focused on aligning national legislation with that of the EU (especially the Bird and the Habitats Directives) which represents the basis for establishing the Natura 2000 ecological network. Our actions have been dedicated to strengthening local capacities as well as providing scientific data and expert support for responsibilities that arise from EU legislation in the area of nature protection. One of the most important activities conducted in regard to Natura 2000 was the development of complete documentation which will assist the proclamation of Belchishko Wetland as a Natura2000 site in the future.



MES provides expert support to relevant government institutions regarding nature and environment policies through direct involvement in the process of their development or by providing input during the development of strategic documents and legislation..

Robertina Brajanoska - Program Manager



7. Program “People and Nature”

This program is the basis for development of all actions that concern implementation of project activities in the field since we believe that active participation of all stakeholders at every stage is paramount to successful project implementation. By combining our expertise with local knowledge we are able to develop acceptable solutions for biodiversity conservation and gain local support.

Our recent focus has been the strengthening of capacities for local organisations which identify with our vision and mission – this effort has led us to the establishment of many formal and informal partnerships and networks which allow for improved communication and increased effectiveness

7.1 People, Plants, Nature – a Success Story about the Dedication of Several Civil Society Organizations in Macedonia

Looking back to 2015 we are glad to note the success of the network of local civil society organizations which operate in proposed Important Plant Areas (IPA) and share our interest in promoting plant diversity in Macedonia. This network is the product of unrelenting efforts to promote plants since 2007 when we and our long-standing partner PlantLife UK jointly implemented the project for identification of IPAs in Macedonia.

“The communities in all of the IPAs were happy to contribute to the protection of ‘their’ areas and jumped



at all opportunities to prove they care about nature and especially plants. It was through them that our project received its true dimension. Benefits were mutual – the project needed these people and the people needed this project.”

Natalija Melovska, Program Manager

Four IPAs with 11 partners were the main stakeholders in our 2015 efforts; the following important Plant Areas have been chosen: IPA Shar Mountain, IPA Ilinska Mt., IPA Pelister and IPA Osogovo. Each



of the chosen IPAs was represented by one or more local organization which organized public events and addressed the need for plant protection and their value. They organized over 20 events which ranged from educational camps to botanical hiking trails, introduction to plant biodiversity through photography and creating herbaria, to establishing educational hiking trails for children.

Approximately 1600 volunteers participated in our activities - hikers, teachers, students and government representatives all donated their time and effort to raising awareness about plants.

One of the results we are most proud of are the tight bonds and dedicated coop-

eration between all partners included in the project and their successful networking. This exemplary achievement was crowned with the organization of a joint event. Additionally, all contacts established with locals and volunteers were essential in the success implementation of project activities.

In an effort to create an action to unite all IPAs involved in the project we organized a travelling exhibition of art inspired by plants in each of the regions. Photos, drawings, paintings and even songs and riddles travelled through all areas and were finally displayed in the EU Info Centre in Skopje.

This project convinced us that civil society organizations in Macedonia can work together towards a joint goal; this will re-



main the reason why we and PlantLife will continue to work together on similar projects. The activities from this project will be continued in 2016 in a new one-year phase.

7.2 Cross-border Cooperation for Better Management with Natural Resources from the Jablanica-Shebenik Mountain Range

The Locals living in the foothills of the Jablanica-Shebenik Mountain Range have the key role in nature protection; so we selected five municipalities from Macedonia and Albania which became directly involved in project activities which introduced sustainable development and rational use of natural resources. We are convinced that this types of recommendations and skills when implemented by locals will create a good environment for proper management with the environment and the natural resources of the future cross-border protected area.

As a guide for sustainable use of natural resources we developed several docu-



ments, a study on sustainable use of natural resources on Jablanica, book on natural values on Jablanica and a booklet “People and Nature” which outlined best practices for use of natural resources in successful entrepreneurial undertakings in the region. Although, the project was completed in 2015, we continue to cooperate with many of the stakeholders and we hope to be able to continue with efforts in the region. Hopefully, we will continue with the practice of re-granting for small projects in the region since they have proved to be good for creating capacities among local organizations and municipalities.



7.3 Cheshinovo-Obleshevo, Stork Village – Stork Memories Preserved from the Past and Formed for the Future

Ever since the Municipality of Cheshinovo-Obleshevo became part of the European Stork Village Network it has been actively involved in all conservation efforts we suggested and has even gone beyond our expectations. Activities in our Stork Village have been mostly dedicated to raising local and regional awareness, strengthening local capacities and preserving the strong bond between people and storks. We believe this bond is the key to ensuring sustained conservation actions for storks and their habitats.



The municipality of Cheshinovo-Obleshevo went beyond our expectations by proudly adding storks to their coat of arms, erecting welcome boards which display the European Stork Village Logo and boast the vibrant stork population of the region and designating May 6th Stork Day.

Together with the Municipality we developed a three year Local Action Plan for the Development of the Stork Village and we expect to raise sufficient funds for its implementations.

The outstanding cooperation with this Municipality and the local population is an encouragement for future steps in developing joint conservation projects.

“The implementation of projects in the Stork Village always relied on the willingness of the local community. Their cooperation and dedication has helped us achieve outstanding results which went above and beyond our projected goals.”



Ksenija Putilin, Project Coordinator





8. Program “GIS Analytics and Data Base Management”

The need to establish a separate GIS analytics and data base management program arose from the ever-growing scope of project activities related to developing different cartographic materials, data bases as well as mapping analysis (habitat viability, changes in species distribution, changes in habitat distribution etc.) through modelling and use of different software support (Larch, MaxEntetc.).

The dynamic of the MES team in charge of data bases and GIS analytics is closely tied to activities in other MES projects.

However, most of the work carried out in 2015 was in the scope of the project “Ecological Data Gap Analysis and Development of Ecological Sensitivity Map for the Bregalnica River Watershed”.

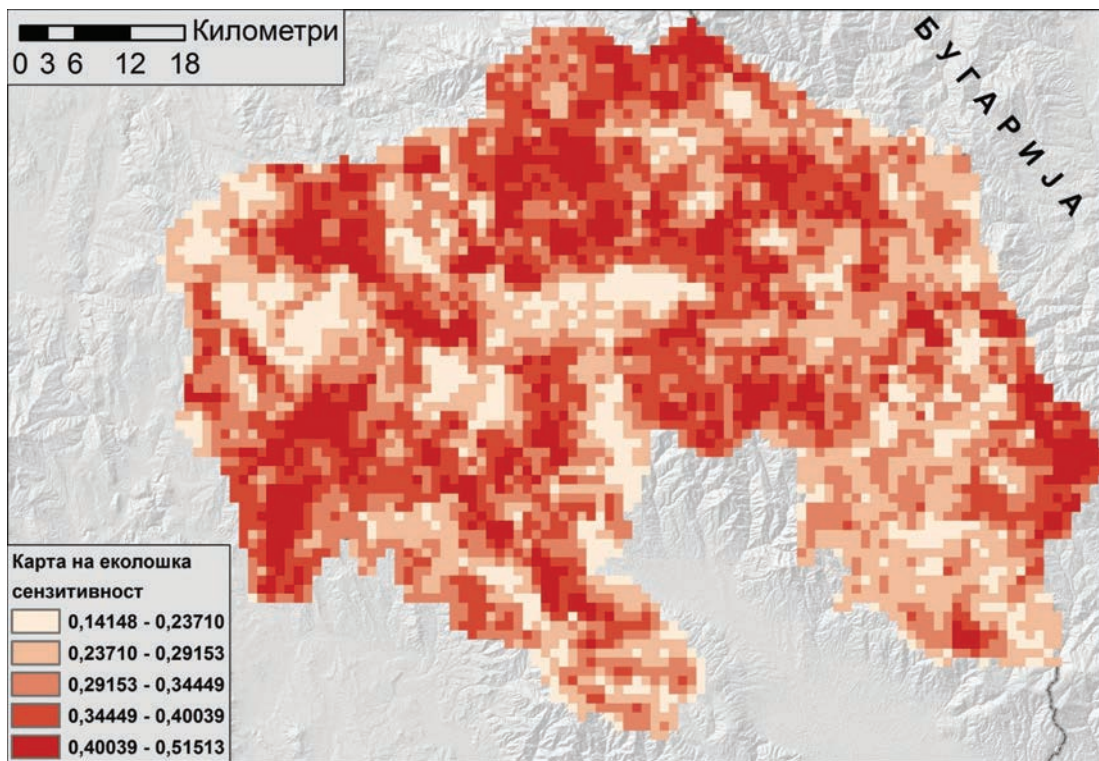
The analysis of ecological sensitivity consists of integrated biodiversity data and their value, existence of core areas in different habitats, functionality of bio-corridors as well as inanimate factors that influence biodiversity. As a result we now have a map which combines sensitivity and importance which largely confirms findings from expert team research, most of the areas deemed most sensitive correspond to newly proposed protected areas.

Continued analysis based on GIS are used in mapping Balkan Lynx distribution which are used in both the Balkan Lynx Recovery Project and the Blue Heart of Europe campaign and significantly contribute to efforts to prevent damaging plans for

“It is a pleasure to see the result of several years of hard work done by over 50 researchers depicted on a single map, which is relatively clear to everyone. I remain hopeful that the proposed areas will receive the protection they undoubtedly deserve.”



Vasko Avukatov, Program Manager



construction of hydropower dam in the key area of Mavrovo.

In 2015 we also contributed to protection of forests. Thus, for Shar Mountain we started the initial efforts for developing a methodology for forest loss as an indicator for potential conflicts from the proclama-

tion of a national park in the region and the need for firewood, issues with illegal logging and erosion risks. In close cooperation with experts from Bulgaria and the Faculty of Forestry from Skopje we have also digitalized and marked High Nature Value forests on the territory of Kochani.

2. Опиши што гледаш (животен пат на рисот):



МАЈКАТА РИС И РИСОТ ТАТОСЕ СРЕТНАА
МАЈКАТА ЈИ ХРАНА РИСЧИЊАТА,
ЕДНО РИЧЕ ПОРАСНА МАЈКУ,
НО ВОЧЕ О ГОЛЕМ

9. Program "Ecological education"

The goal of the ecological education program is to connect Macedonian youth to nature and incite feelings of responsibility for the environment through broadened understanding of ecology and implementing joint action.

Through the ecological education program we offer opportunities to students in elementary and high school, college students and teachers as well as locals who want to be active in research, protection and conservation of nature. We strive to provide additional value to the formal educational programs but also to create informal educational activities outdoor as well as to provide training for teachers. Our volunteers are often included in education activities and they contribute to their effectiveness.



"Information is of utmost importance. Whether we share it in dialogues, events, campaigns or youth education, it is all the same! What is important is for it to reach the right people, and children might be the best medium for sharing information!"

Svetlana Pejovic, Program Manager

We have longstanding experience in organizing educational programs and they are all linked to specific areas in which we want to encourage local level research and conservation action. We firmly believe that outdoor activities enrich the lives of children and contribute to their mindfulness of nature, creativity, self-confidence, discipline, cognitive development and social interactions.

In 2015 we developed educational activities which supported several MES efforts, such as the Balkan Lynx Recovery Program, the development of the plant monitoring network, the PrespaNet habitats and wildlife awareness raising efforts, raising awareness for the importance of old beech forests etc.

We have also been supporting the work of the Research Society of Biolo-



gy Students (RSBS) for over 20 years by providing them with financial and professional assistance in the implementation of their educational activities. Last year we were actively involved in the summer research camp in the Maleshevo Mountains, where biology students worked on improving their field research skills and collected outstanding data on the flora and fauna of Maleshevo.

The activities of this program are also coordinated with other MES programs, especially in the area of promotion and awareness raising, as well as lobbying for many of our goals and priorities.

The Balkan Lynx

The conservation of the Balkan Lynx rests on several pillars and one of the most important ones is education, especially among future generations. We work with four elementary schools in Mavrovo (Mavrovi Anovi, Rostushe, Trebishte and

Velebrdo) involving 300 students and teachers. The goal of this activity was to challenge current views on nature and create a sense of personal responsibility for the environment.



Promoting the Values of Old Beech Forests

This educational activity was conducted in 2014 while the final presentation was done in February 2015 in Kochani with over 600 children in attendance. This activity included games, interactive lectures, outdoor education and exploring old beech forests and the results from them have encouraged us to continue developing new educational activities with the support of



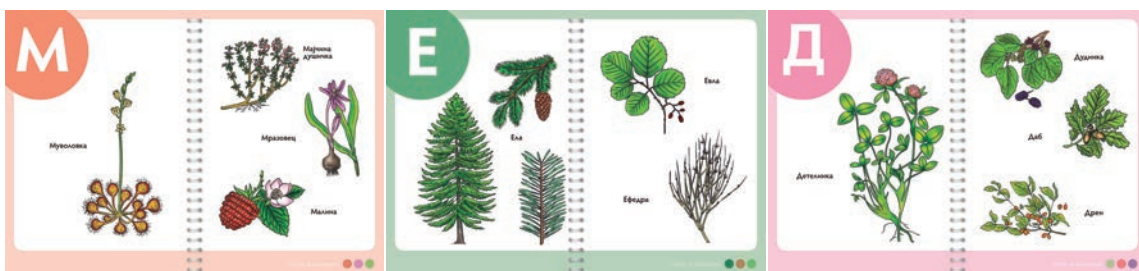
the SCD and the national coordinator – Farimahem. In the next year we will continue to improve the “Woodpecker trail” an educational hiking trail at Ponikva.



Flora of Macedonia

Activities in the framework of the Natural Networks for People and Nature were focused on plant conservation and aug-

mented by education activities for children. Thus, we produced the Plant Alphabet, a booklet highlighting over 100 plant species of Macedonia.



9.1 Strengthening Capacities for Staff, Partners and Supporters

Natura 2000 Training

As a continuation of our capacity strengthening process which was initiated in 2014 and focused on the process of identification and establishment of the European ecological network Natura 2000, in November 2015 MES hosted the second Natura 2000 training. The goal of the training was to dissect the process of proclaiming a Natura 2000 area and the area of choice was the Belchishko Wetland. The

participants were mostly biodiversity experts from MES and close partners from the Faculty of Natural Sciences (Institute of Biology) and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning.



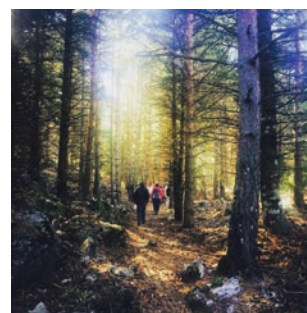
Conference for Sustainable Development Education - Estonia

We provided training for sustainable development education by contribution with a video presentation (Interactive Education – Introduction of the Sustainable Development Concept) which highlighted the activities conducted as part of the “Woodpecker Trail” educational program focusing on old beech forests.



Habitat Mapping

The IUCN habitat mapping training for Important Plan Areas was held in Toloks, Spain in November 2015 and our participant became acquainted with data processing tools such as GIS and DAFOR method for habitat description during field work



Balkan Green Belt

MES participated in the workshop “Protecting Biodiversity in the Balkans - Strengthening cooperation along the Balkan Green Belt” in Greece, funded by the DBU. The workshop presented an opportunity to promote activities in the European Green Belt but also to improve networking along the Balkan Green Belt and organize the next regional conference planned for 2016.



The training covered subject such as communication and field preparations as well as familiarization with the SDF forms which are the cornerstone of the proclamation process. These two trainings were enough to establish the initial capacity and prepare the complete documentation of Belchishko Wetland, the first of its kind in Macedonia.

Sustainable Development in Protected Areas

One representative from MES participated in a workshop in Norway which aimed at exchange of experiences regarding sustainable development in trans-boundary protected areas. At the workshop we presented our initiative for proclaiming Osogovo for a protected area.

Naturregion Balkans

Two MES representatives attended the final event of the Naturregion Balkans workshop which reviewed projects and their sustainability as well the opportunities for networking and fundraising for future projects.

Organic Agricultural Production Training

MES participated in a five day training for organic agricultural production which was organized by the Organic Producers Federation of Macedonia and supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The training was focused on organic production and processing of fruits and vegetables as well as procedures for control and certification. Participants that

passed the final tests received certificates for organic production.

High Nature Value Forests

In Kochani and Ponikva, as part of activities related to protection and promotion of the Osogovo region we conducted a training on the identification of High Nature Value Forests (HNVF) as a precondition for future forest certification. Together with experts from Bulgaria and the management staff of local forestry office of Kochani we implemented the process of identification of high nature value forests using HNVF criteria.



Besides these activities MES also participated in forest certification workshops organized by the Connecting Natural Values and People Foundation(CNVP) by contributing to the definition of forest certification criteria for the national level.

Within the scope of the project Natural Networks for People and Places in Macedonia we have organized two main training activities, one of them was focused on volunteer engagement and retention and the second on Natura 2000 areas and the benefits they bring.



The Balkan Lynx Recovery Program included several trainings and workshops in lynx core areas. In May we conducted the training on collection of field data by using “Oruxmaps” and “Memento database” through a presentation of GIS and spatial analysis for tablets and smart phones. These five workshops were organized spe-

cifically for the staff of the Mavrovo National Park.

At Ilinska and Plakenskat Mt. we organized a workshop for project implementation for local organizations in the region which later were invited to participate on the Small Grants Program.



In connection to efforts to strengthen capacities for partner organizations in the Shara region we held a forum on the topic of “*Why Shar Mt. Should Become a National Park*”. The locally created platform “Friends of Shar” was provided with the opportunity to learn more about management of protected areas and their benefits for local populations. The same team participated in a study visit to the National Park Schwarzwald in October, where they



met counterparts with similar visions and objectives.

The Friends of Shar applied their new skills in organizing several publicity events in Macedonia and Kosovo from October to December 2015, one of the bigger events was the “Beans Festival” held in Tearce, Tetovo.

Several representatives from partner organizations from the project “*A Natural Network for People and Places in Macedonia – Strengthening the CSO management and networking*” attended the 11th Alpine Flower Festival which is traditionally held in Bohinj, Slovenia.

During the summer we organized the Fifth Balkan Odonatological Meet-

ing (BOOM) with support from the Biology Student Research Society and the Slovenian Odonatological Society. During the meeting we registered 43 species in the Kavadarci and Prilep regions as well as the DemirKapija Gorge, Pelagonija and Mariovo.





10. Program „Public Relations“

The Public Relations Program as well as the Ecological Education Program bases its efforts on requirements from the other MES programs.

As a transparent organization we continue to share news about our work in traditional and social media. We stay relevant by striving to provide comments on challenges with the environment and biological diversity in Macedonia.

During 2015 we were especially focused on analyzing requirements for improved communication with the Macedonian public and have thus decided we need to develop a Communication Strategy as a clear guide for communication activities in our organization.

10.1 Campaigns and Important Days

Campaign “Spring Alive!”

We have been implementing this educational campaign for six years and have talked to young students the nation over about five common migratory birds: white stork, barn swallow, swift, bee-eater and cuckoo. In 2015 we were focused on the white stork. Our volunteers and staff organized 33 interactive workshops in schools in the Municipalities of Prespa and Cheshinovo-Obleshevo (European Stork Village) with the goal to raise awareness regarding the ecology of this iconic species and the

importance to protect its habitats. Approximately 900 students and 22 teachers from 15 schools in Macedonia participated in this Pan-European and African campaign.



“Early education in proposed protected areas is the key to building a strong local basis for future conservation action.”

Ksenija Putilin, Spring Alive coordinator

“Save the Blue Heart of Europe”

With the goal to prevent the destruction of the Blue Heart of Europe, Euronatur and Riverwatch together with several national partner organizations from the Balkans ini-



From campaign “Spring Alive!”



tiated the campaign “Save the Blue Heart of Europe”.

At the international level the goal of the campaign is to prevent uncontrolled planning of hydropower projects in the most valuable and sensitive river ecosystems in

Southeast Europe. At the national level our goal is to encourage the abandoning of the initiative for construction of dams in the national parks thus protecting the value of Mavrovo National Park.

Our achievements in 2015 have national and international importance; the three national CSOs included in the coordination of the campaign submitted a complaint to the Bern Convention in the European Council. This complaint was submitted in 2014 when the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention decided to open a case

of Macedonia because of the clear breach of four provisions of the Bern Convention. Consequently, in June of 2015 an appointed group of experts evaluated the possible negative impact of hydropower projects in Mavrovo National Park. Later in the year we participated in the 35th meeting of the Standing Committee after which the World Bank withdrew its funding for the hydropower project “Lukovo Pole”.

The campaign had strong public presence through its media campaign, participation in the Balkan River Days conference in Belgrade, EXO nature film festival and the public presentation of results from the five-year-long campaign to protect Mavrovo National Park.

World Wetlands Day – 2nd February

We have been marking the Ramsar Day in Prespa for several years. In 2015 we organized an educational presentation focused on the importance of wetlands in the

local school in Resen. We also handed out leaflets which highlight the importance of Ramsar Convention on wetlands for Prespa.



World Migratory Bird Day – 9th -10th May

In 2015 this day was marked by the first field research which determined the methodology for the National Stork Census. The research was carried out in the region of Gevgelija and Dojran and it involved the local population.





International Biodiversity Day – 22nd May

This important day was given special treatment by holding a lecture on the biodiversity of the Prespa Region in the framework of the promotion of the Prespa monitoring station.

European BirdWatch Day – 3rd and 4th October

On these days we organized a volunteer and member meeting in Prespa. The meeting served as an opportunity to share

latest information from our organization related to volunteer sand bird monitoring. Additionally, our volunteers had the opportunity to learn more about the global family of volunteers that they are a part of through BirdLife. This topic was exceptionally presented by Ms. Claire Thompson from the BirdLife Secretariat.





Живеалишта: да се грижиме за нив?

Места исполнети со вода или места кои привремено или постојано се покривени со вода често ги споредуваат водните живеалишта со депонија, или меканост, спалат и превозенат. Всушност, научните студии покажуваат дека површини исчезнале почнувајќи од 1990 година. Споредно со 1700 изгубени.

Што ја предизвикува загубата и уништувањето на водните површини?

- Главните причини за нивна загуба и уништување се:
- големи промени во искористувањето на земјиштето, особено интензивирање на земјоделството и илпаша,
 - загадување на воздухот и почвата и испусти на органиски материи,
 - пренасочување на водата низ брани, насипи и канализација.

Рамсарска Конвенција

Оваа конвенција се однесува на водни живеалишта со меѓународно значење, и претставува глобална меѓународна акција и меѓународна соработка за заштита и мудро користење на водните живеали и нивните ресурси. Тоа е единствениот глобален договор кој се фокусира на еден единствен екосистем.

Преспанско Езеро е прогласено за Рамсарско подрачје на 3 март 1995 година! Првпат на подрачјето изнесува 18,920 хектара.

Преспанско Езеро е строго заштитен природен резерват и орнитолошки резерват.



(ЗЕМАЈКИ ЈА ПРЕДВИД УЛОГАТА НА ШУМИТЕ ВО ЗАШТИТАТА НА ВОДНИТЕ СЛИВОБИ)



Balkan Lynx

A BIG CAT STANDING LITTLE CHANCE

After many decades of population fluctuations, the Balkan lynx has almost reached its all-time minimum. The Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme strives to secure the survival of this critically endangered cat in a series of protected areas and in co-operation with local people. This long-term project began in 2006 as a joint partnership between two NCOs from Macedonia and Albania, supported by experts from Germany, Switzerland and Norway. In 2013, the project expanded its activities north and welcomed international partners from Montenegro and Kosovo. Only with a strong partnership, continuous monitoring and local stakeholder involvement will the project fulfil its overall goal - to save the Balkan lynx from extinction.

It had three species of the genus Lynx and ranging throughout the Balkans. Balkan lynx are average-sized predators, their weight ranges from 30-35 kg, the weight of adult males, while the weight of adult females ranges from 25-30 kg, which is an average 20-25% heavier than females. Lynx have powerful, slender long legs, with long webbed and broad paws used for climbing. The head shows the work's start, with the ears protruding with hair tuft at the end. The tail is short with an adink tip.

The Balkan lynx is one of the most endangered of the European lynx described so far. The closest relative, the Caucasian lynx, is an average to larger cat than the Balkan lynx. The Balkan lynx distribution is limited to the border area between Albania and Macedonia and is very rare, the animals occur in small, fragmented populations in the north and south. The critical status of this population is not only the limited distribution but also the size of the population with no more than 60 of adult individuals, mostly distributed in only two subpopulations. In 2013, the population and habitat distribution in the area which was a protected park have brought the Balkan lynx to the verge of extinction.

Large populations are usually found in southern and almost absent in small distances. In addition to this, their sex ratio is very unbalanced (1:4) and it is difficult to get a hold of the Balkan lynx. In the past years, the present situation in Macedonia led to the collapse of three main Balkan lynx subpopulations. While the very first Balkan lynx to wear a radio-collar was caught on 14th March 2010, the third female under the Mavrovo NP was not yet released. Since the second radio-collared lynx, being a female, Masha had had a slightly bigger territory, staying in more isolated conditions and avoiding some Mavrovo NP. Masha has a better territory condition and was monitored in collaboration with the local hunting territory. The capture of Balkan lynx will undoubtedly increase the local ecological knowledge needed for the long-term survival of the Balkan lynx.

HOME-RANGES OF THE THREE RADIO-COLLARED LYNX



11.3 Volunteer Activities

MES as a national organization with a large scope of activities has a constant need of volunteers, interns and supporters. In 2015 we worked with outstanding people from Macedonia and Europa. Their engagement was invaluable and the fact that over 1000 of them joined us is a clear indication of the high regard of our mission. Volunteers and interns worked with us in the field and in the office; on their own or with our guidance they were indispensable in our scientific and social achievements

“As an intern in MES I expended my knowledge regarding the Balkan Lynx. During my involvement with the expert team from MES they generously shared information about the research and the need to conserve the population. This was an once-in-a-lifetime experience for me”. – Nathan Horrenberger, student from France.

“My mentors from MES unselfishly included me in all field research, regardless whether it was focused on insects, birds or mammals. They helped me process and

analyse all my field data as well. I hope that the bio-photos that Nathan and I gave to MES archive are enough to express our gratitude” – Paulin Mercier, student from France.

“I started volunteering for MES two years ago, because I love nature, especially birds and spiders. MES included me in the bird monitoring network right away and I have actively participated to many field efforts but also in the office. Through MES I also found out about the Biology Students Research Society. In 2015 I was glad to join the national stork census and cover my region. Working with MES I feel I am part of a big family” – Slave Nakev, student from Macedonia.

“I have a hard time finding words about my volunteer experience in MES. I can tell you that you can experience it only in the Macedonian rice fields, the shores of our lakes, the places where you can watch storks make their first flying attempts, where Red-crested Pochards cheer up the blues with their stunning orange. These sights leave me speechless and I cannot wait for my new adventures with MES.” – Bisera V-

lahova, student from Macedonia.

“Field research with MES reminded me of my childhood, when we picked tea from the mountains. I am very glad my students will have similar memories, Shar Mountain is full of wonderful plants.” – Lidija, teacher from Macedonia.



List of projects in 2015

Project	Duration	Project Area	Partners (National and International)	Financier
Balkan Lynx Recovery Program 3	01. 2013 - 12. 2015	Western Macedonia (lynx distribution area); greatest focus on Mavrovo National Park, Jablanica, Shar Mountain and Ilinska-Plakenska Mountain	EuroNatur, Germany; KORA, Switzerland; PPNEA, Albania; CZIP, Montenegro; Finch and ERA, Kosovo	MAVA, Switzerland
Save the Blue Heart of Europe	2013 - 2016	Mavrovo National Park	EuroNatur, Germany; Riverwatch, Austria; Eko-Svest and Front 21/42	MAVA, Switzerland
Stork Census	01.03.2014-31.10.2015	Macedonia	/	NABU, Germany
A Natural Network for People and Places in Macedonia – Strengthening the CSO management and networking	12. 2013 – 06. 2015	Ilinska-Plakenska Mt. Osogovo Mt., Pelister National Park and Shar Mt.	Plantlife, UK; Art Point Gumno, Sloeshtica; MC Ljuboten, Tetovo; CED, Tearce; Grashnica, Ohrid; Pelister National Park; Youth Cultural Center, Bitola; and the Municipalities of Kochani, Probishtip and Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	European Union and Plantlife
Water for lakes, bogs, streams and people on Jablanica Mt.	2014 - 2016	Jablanica	Municipalities of Struga and Vevchani, villages Podgorci, Labunishta, GornaBelica, Jablanica, Piskupshina, Lukovo, Modrich, Drenok, State Public Enterprise “Macedonian Forests”	Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF)

Project	Duration	Project Area	Partners (National and International)	Financier
Enhancing transboundary protection and development of the Jablanica – Shebenik mountain range by active local involvement	09.2013 – 04.2015	Macedonia and Albania – Municipalities of Vevchani, Struga, Librazhd, Steblevo and Rajca	PPNEA Albania and Euronatur, Germany	EU
Trans-boundary Biosphere Reserve Osogovo	01.2014 – 08.2015	Osogovo Mt.	Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation (BBF), Bulgaria and Euronatur, Germany	Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS)
Capacity Building for Flyway Conservation in the Mediterranean	03.2015- 01.2017	Macedonia	Turkey (DogaDernegi), Lebanon (Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon), Cyprus (BirdLife Cyprus), Malta (BirdLife Malta), Montenegro (Center for Protection and Research of Birds of Montenegro), Morocco (Groupe de Recherche pour la Protection des Oiseaux au Maroc) and Tunisia (Les Amis des Oiseaux)	MAVA, Switzerland
Stork Memories: Preserved from the Past, Formed for the Future	12.2014 – 12.2015	Cheshinovo – Obleshevo	Municipality of Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	CICONIA Foundation
Пролеттадоаѓа!	01.03.2015- 01.06.2015	Macedonia	OTOP	Mitsubishi Fund for Africa and Europe

Project	Duration	Project Area	Partners (National and International)	Financier
Biodiversity conservation through sustainable management of resources in SharPlanina	12.2014 – 06.2017	Shar Mt.	Euronatur, Germany; CDI, Tetovo; CED, Tearce and MC Ljuboten, Tetovo	Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU)
PrespaNet	01.2015 – 12.2015	Prespa	SPP, Greece and PPNEA, Albania	MES, SPP
Ecological Data Gap Analysis and Development of Ecological Sensitivity Map for the Bregalnica River Watershed	06.2014- 16.12.2015	Bregalnica River Watershed	Dekons-Ema	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation



Financial Overview

In 2015 a diverse portfolio of international foundations and organizations provided support the work of MES and its projects. We have to highlight the long-term support of donors and sponsors which provide support for conservation activities in Macedonia and the region: the German foundation Euronatur, the Frankfurt Zoological Society, the MAVA Foundation, Pronatura, the German Federal Environmental Foundation, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, BirdLife International, PlantLife as well as the European Union.

MES faces the challenge of attracting the interest of national foundations as well as the business sector in order to develop joint efforts for protection of the environment and nature conservation. Another significant form of fundraising that we will focus on will be the broadening of the membership base and the potential increase of private donors.

Financial Report (revenues and expenditures)

The final balance of MES as of 01.01.2015 is **9.043.422, 00** denars (transferred from 2014 for realization on ongoing projects), while on 31.12.2015 the balance was **8.845.583, 00** denars. Total revenue for 2015 was 17.760.972, 00 denars, and total expenses 17.607.575, 00 denars. These funds were used for project implementation and some of those will continue during 2016 as well.

Overview of revenues

Table 1 represents revenues in separate line items.

Overview of expenditures

Table 2 represents expenditures from 2015 according to the final balance in cumulative items.

Table 1. Revenues from 2015

Revenues	Amount (MKD)
Revenues from interest rates and positive exchange rate discrepancies	1.413,00
Revenues from project grants	17.607.575,00
Revenues from memberships	13.500,00
Donations	43.404,00
Other Revenues	82.312,00
Transferred revenue surplus from previous year	9.043.422,00
TOTAL	26.791.626,00

Table 2. Expenditures from 2015

Type of expenditure	Amount (MKD)
I. EXPENDITURES, MATERIAL EXPENDITURES, SERVICES AND DEPRECIATION (Used materials, used energy, transport and other services, promotional material, rents and other material expenditures)	2.566.360,00
II. OTHER EXPENDITURES (Turnover commission, interest rates, insurance premiums, daily allowance for official travel, travel costs, negative exchange rate discrepancies and transferred means)	8.526.598,00
III. CAPITAL AND OTHER COSTS (equipment)	374.732,00
IV. SALARIES AND COMPENSATIONS	6.455.106,00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES (I + II + III + IV)	17.922.796,00

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