PROJECT FACTSHEET

Funded by the European Union

Prespa Green & Blue Initiative: Empowering Conservation through Research, Education and Communication



Duration: 19.03.2025 - 19.03.2029

Countries:
North Macedonia

EU contribution: € 2 000 000

Total budget: € 2 352 105

Implementer:
MAKEDONSKO EKOLOSKO DRUSTVO

Social media:
facebook.com/MES.org.mk,
instagram.com/macedonian.ecological.society

Website(s): prespa.mes.org.mk/

Project description:

The 'Prespa Green & Blue Initiative' aims to strengthen long-term conservation and sustainable development in the transboundary Prespa region through education, research, habitat restoration, and communication. Led by the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES), with partners from Greece and Albania, the project builds on decades of experience to create a coordinated network that unites science, local communities, and protected area managers.

The initiative trains young environmental stewards, teachers, and park staff through newly established information and training centres. It enhances biodiversity monitoring and data sharing, restores key habitats such as wetlands, reedbeds, and riparian forests, as well as supporting the reintroduction of endangered species. By linking research with practical conservation action, the project strengthens institutional capacities and promotes evidence-based management of Prespa's unique ecosystems.

Public awareness and sustainable, nature-based tourism are advanced through joint campaigns, events, and cross-border cooperation. Ultimately, the initiative empowers local actors to protect Prespa's natural heritage, while fostering dialogue and unity across borders.

Expected results:

• Empowered youth and educators – Local students, teachers, and young researchers gain practical knowledge, skills, and motivation to engage in environmental protection and sustainable development in the Prespa region.
• Strengthened institutional capacities – Protected area management bodies and the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES) are better equipped with trained staff, improved monitoring systems, and technical tools to manage species and habitats of national and EU/Natura 2000 importance.
• Restored and resilient ecosystems – Priority habitats such as wetlands, reedbeds, and riparian forests are rehabilitated, contributing to the recovery of endangered species and improved ecosystem resilience.
• Informed and connected communities – Increased public awareness, environmental dialogue, and cross-border cooperation foster greater understanding and joint stewardship of Prespa's natural resources.
• Sustainable tourism and outreach infrastructure – New information and training centres, nature-based tourism offers, and joint communication campaigns promote environmental education, local livelihoods, and long-term conservation visibility.