# ANNUAL PROGRAMME/PROJECT REPORT (APR)

**Basic programme/project information**
The general characteristic of the national biodiversity is the richness and heterogeneity of species and ecosystems.
To protect this rich biodiversity, the country is currently embarking on a process of developing a more representative network of protected areas, re-evaluating and re-proclaiming all the individual protected areas within the network and appointing properly capacitated institutions to manage these protected areas.
The main objective of the Project is to conserve the biological diversity of Macedonia by strengthening the management effectiveness of country`s protected area system.
The project will assist the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MoEPP) in implementation of the Law on Nature Protection (adopted in 2004) and support the process of developing a more representative protected area network, improving the institutional capacities for establishing and managing a representative protected area network at national and local level and enable re-proclamation and planning process of two pilot protected areas - Strict Nature Reserve Tikves and Natural Monument Canyon Matka.
The project aims to achieve its objective through the following three outcomes:
<u>Outcome 1</u> – A representative national protected area system is designed;
<u>Outcome 2 -</u> Improved systemic and institutional capacity provides the enabling framework for establishing and managing a representative protected area network;
<u>Outcome 3</u>: PA establishment and planning processes field tested and replicated across the PA network.

Programme or project number and title:
00058373 PIMS 3728: Strengthening the Ecological, Institutional and Financial sustainability of Protected Area system in Macedonia

Designated institution:
Ministry of foreign affairs (Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning)

Project starting date:
        Originally planned: 15 January 2008
        Actual: 15 January 2008

Project completion date:
        Originally planned:  31 December 2010
        New:

Total budget (US $):
        Original: 1,000,000
        Latest signed revision:

Period covered by the report: 15 January – 31 December 2008

**TEXTUAL ASSESSMENT**

1. What are the major achievements of the programme or project vis-à-vis the expected results during the year under review? To the extent possible, include an assessment of the potential impact, sustainability and contribution to capacity development.

The major achievements of the project during the first year of review are the following:

- Outcome 1. A representative national protected area system design:

   Output 1.1 The biodiversity data is collated into a consolidated database and integrated into the national Environmental Information System
   - The ToR and selection process for national biodiversity and protected area consultant was completed. The collation of national biodiversity data has started and the first draft Report on Assessment and evaluation of biodiversity and Catalogue of vertebrates on national level were prepared by the National Biodiversity Consultant. The report comprised a part of the available biodiversity data collected from different sources that address the biodiversity sector.
   - The required hardware (server, processor, licenses) for sourcing and maintaining the biodiversity data was acquired.
   - In the next period all these biodiversity data in standardized format will be entered in established biodiversity information system. This will contribute towards strengthening the biodiversity data management capabilities of the MoEPP and decision support systems in biodiversity conservation.

   Output 1.2 A national ecological network is designed to link environmentally important areas and endangered habitats
   - The project has started procedure for engagement of the GIS Consultant. The procedure was closed due to not responsive applications. Furthermore the criteria in the TOR for this position will be revised and the new procedure will be started.

   Output 1.3 Directions for a national protected area system are developed
   - The ToR and selection process for International protected area planning and management consultant was completed and the first mission of the consultant was conducted. As a result of the mission a workshop on protected areas was held and report "Protected Areas in Macedonia" an overview, was prepared by the expert. The report reflects the current state of the protected area system in Macedonia, and includes key issues that requiring attention in the next period.

- Outcome 2. Improved systemic and institutional capacity provides the enabling framework for establishing and managing a representative protected area network

   Output 2.1:Effective institutional models for protected area management are identified and implemented
   - Second mission of the International PA planning and management consultant was conducted and a seminar with the senior team of Administration for Environment was held with detailed assessment of the minimum resource requirements for management of protected areas of various sizes.
   - A second institutional scorecard assessment was conducted by representatives of GEF Project and MoEPP. The current scorecard assessment indicated a few

differences and is lower than the previous one concerning capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders at the individual level.

- A Report on Institutional Options for protected areas system in Macedonia was prepared by the International PA planning and management expert. In the report a range of future options for protected areas governance and management are presented and a set of detailed recommendations for implementing the preferred option are proposed.

Output 2.2: Norms and standards for protected area management planning are developed
- A Report on Protected area management plans Norms and Standards was prepared by the International PA planning and management expert. In the report a set of issues which may limit the capacity for preparing high quality management plan are identified and a guidance notes for protected area management planning and monitoring are provided. Further guidance on how to prepare a management plan will be completed in the next period. The protected areas have limited capabilities and resources to support their management planning process. The further activities will be focused on training and capacity building of the under-capacitated protected area institutions This will enable them to meet their legal obligations for drafting the protected area management plan.

Output 2.3. Options to sustainable finance the management of the protected area network are developed and implemented
- The ToR for 2 international consultants (Financing Consultant and Ecosystem Valuation Consultant) were prepared and advertised. The procedure for financing consultant was closed due to not responsive applications. The procedure for engagement of Ecosystem Valuation Consultant was closed due to prolonging the procedure and canceling the engagement by the first recommended consultant. However the new TOR (with combination of the both positions) will be prepared and the new procedure will be started early next year.
- The national legal consultant in consultation with the stakeholders has produced the Draft Report on legislation for protection of nature: improved framework. He continued a consultation process with representatives of MoEPP – Sector for nature related to preparing of the amendments of the Law on Nature protection and the by-laws.

Output 2.4. The capacity of the MoEPP to support protected area establishment and management planning process is developed.
- The TOR for the national training consultant was prepared and it will be advertised in January 2009. When the selection procedure for the national training consultant will be completed, the international PA planning and management expert will provide the initial guidance on the training needs.

- Outcome 3. Protected areas establishment and planning process field tested and replicated across the PA network

Output 3.1. Secure the legal and institutional tenure of Tikvesh Strict Nature Reserve and Canyon Matka Natural Monument and document lessons learned.
- All available information, maps and data on biodiversity values and other natural values for two pilot protected areas are collected and data gaps are identified by the

National Biodiversity Consultant. The national biodiversity consultant has recommended engagement of consultants to cover these data gaps.

- Through active participation of the stakeholders, the management planning process for 2 pilot protected areas Tikves and Canyon Matka has started (stakeholder assessment and threat assessment are done and the composition of the core planning team was identified).
- In the next period the members of the core planning group should be formally nominated by the institutions and organizations. Also the key members of the wider consultative group for each pilot site should be identified.

2. What major issues and problems are affecting the achievement of programme or project results?
   - The process for re proclamation of protected areas in accordance with requirements of the Law on nature protection is proving to be slow and expensive, dependent on external funding and demanding on the resources of the MoEPP. With exception of few PAs (3 National Parks, 4 Strict Nature Reserves and 6 Monuments of Nature) most PAs have no management authority appointed and no financing for biodiversity conservation. Some of the sites are very small such as individual trees with exceptional habitual features or geo morphological forms. Slow progress for re proclamation of all PAs will lead to a system that is never complete and the country couldn`t meet the national protected area expansion target (the spatial plan envisage an increase of PA coverage from 7.4% to 11.6% by 2020).
   - Delay in nomination of the National Project Director by the MoEPP.
   - Translation of the documents and reports cause delays in obtaining of feedback from the stakeholders

3. How should these issues or problems be resolved? Please explain in detail the action(s) recommended. Specify who should be responsible for such actions. Also indicate a tentative time-frame and the resources required.
   - In order to make revalorization and re proclamation of PAs in Macedonia it is need to prepare an action plan and conduct site visits to all PAs in Macedonia in order to state the current condition of biodiversity in PAs. This will enable the representatives of MoEPP to collect information and data on changes in status, condition or extent of biodiversity in PAs (The threats to PAs, declining or improving of their status and condition). In parallel the engaged national legal expert will work on preparing the amendments of the Law on nature protection and simplification of the procedure for re proclamation of small PAs. It is foreseen all monuments of nature, parks of nature with area less than 100 ha as well as individual trees or geo morphological forms to be re proclaimed with decision of the MoEPP instead of decision of the Government/ Parliament.
   The time frame for the site visits of PAs is Feb – June 2009, responsible parties for this action are MoEPP- Sector for Nature, Project and national BD consultant. Time frame for amendments of the Law is Jan – May 2009 and responsible parties for this action are national legal consultant, MoEPP and Project.

   - The National Project Director should be nominated as soon as possible by decision of the Minister. It is expected that the State Secretary of MoEPP is going to be nominated as NPD and co – authorized signer of the project documents while the Director of Administration for Environment will be deputy signer. This action should be taken till the end of January 2009 at latest.

- Translation of the documents and reports should be done either through the company that provides translation services engaged by UNDP or individual translator engaged by Project.

4. What new developments (if any) are likely to affect the achievement of programme or project results? What do you recommend to respond to these developments?
    - The site visits of all protected areas in Macedonia by representatives of MoEPP, Project and national biodiversity consultant to locate and map all PAs with GPS coordinates and to collect data on the status and condition of PAs as well as PA management effectiveness. The collected data will be entered in the biodiversity information system and enable data sets access, data analysis and assessment of priority areas for biodiversity conservation and setting quantitative conservation targets for habitats and species.

5. What are the views of the target groups with regard to the programme or project? Please note any significant gender-based differences in those views.

6. To date, what lessons (both positive and negative) can be drawn from the experience of the programme or project?
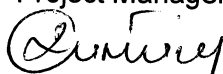   Positive lessons:
   - Good coordination with the stakeholders and their involvement in the planning process and implementation of the project activities is the key element for getting their support to the project.
   Negative lessons:
   - Not responsive applications during procedure for engagement of consultants;
   - Any change of the National Project Director (signer of the project documents) have negative impact to the project implementation.

7. If the programme or project has been evaluated, what is the implementation status of the recommendations made by the evaluators?

8. Do you propose any substantive revision to the programme or project document? If yes, what are they? State justification.

9. Provide any other information that may further support or clarify your assessment of the programme or project. You may include annexes as you deem necessary.


Prepared by: Srdjan Dimitrievic
Project Manager

Date: January 2009

## Brief analysis of progress achieved in the contribution of the programme or project to the expected results.

In the first year of the project implementation, the progress was considerably improved after recruitment of the three individual consultants (International protected area planning and management consultant, National biodiversity and protected area consultant and National Legal consultant).

The International protected area planning and management consultant has conducted three missions in Macedonia and produced three mission reports as well as reports on: 1.Protected areas in Macedonia, an overview; 2. Protected areas in Macedonia, Institutional options; 3. Protected areas management plans in Macedonia, norms and standards. The reports are reflecting the current status of the national protected area system, summarize the issues that require attention in the next period, and provide recommendations for strengthening the protected area system in Macedonia as well as improving the institutional capacity for PA planning and management at central and local level. The consultant has also facilitated 3 workshops on PAs with the stakeholders and the first national seminar on protected area, planning and management. His input contributes for achievement of the following project outputs:
Output 1.3: Directions for a national protected area system are developed
Output 2.1: Effective institutional models for protected area management are identified
Output 2.2: Norms and standards for protected area management planning are developed
Output 3.1.Secure the legal and institutional tenure of Tikvesh Strict Nature Reserve and Canyon Matka Natural Monument (management planning process with stakeholders has started).

The national biodiversity and protected areas consultant has collected all available data and information on the national biodiversity and prepared a Report on Assessment and evaluation of biodiversity and Catalogue of vertebrates on national level. His input contributes for achievement of the following project outputs:
Output 1.1 The biodiversity data is collated into a consolidated database and integrated into the national Environmental Information System
Output 3.1.Secure the legal and institutional tenure of Tikvesh Strict Nature Reserve and Canyon Matka Natural Monument (all available information, maps and data for pilot sites are collected and the gaps are identified).

The national legal consultant in consultation with the stakeholders has produced the Draft Report on legislation for protection of nature: improved framework. He continued a consultation process with representatives of MoEPP – Sector for nature related to preparing the amendments of the law on Nature protection and by-laws that will enable more effective implementation of the Law. His input contributes for achievement of the project output 2.3: Options to sustainable finance the management of the protected area network are developed and implemented.

The Project organized several coordinating meetings with authorities and stakeholders that are relevant for the project activities such as (MoEPP – Sector for nature and other sectors, National Parks, City of Skopje, Municipality Kavadarci and Saraj, MAFWE, Donors, NGOs and other organizations. The MoEPP – Sector for nature, City of Skopje and Municipality Kavadarci provide fully support to the project implementation and have active participation in the project activities

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

| Source of funds | Annual budget ($ '000) | Estimated annual expenditure ($ '000) | Delivery rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| TRAC (1 and 2) | | | |
| TRAC 3 | | | |
| Other | | | |
| Cost-sharing: | | | |
| Government | | | |
| Financial institution | | | |
| Third party | | | 81,88 |
| Trust funds | 128.883 | 105.530 | |
| AOS (where applicable) | | | |

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

| Programme support objectives (PSOS) or immediate objectives | Indicators | Achievements |
|---|---|---|
| **Objective** A comprehensive, representative and effectively managed national protected area system is in place | 1. Increase in number, and extent (ha), of protected areas formally proclaimed in terms of the Law on Nature Protection | In 2008 4 PAs in total has finished the formal re-proclamation / proclamation procedure of in terms of Law on nature protection (1. NP Pelister; 2. MN Smolari Waterfall; 3. MN Markovi Kuli; 4. MN Kuklica) |
| | 2. Increase in number of protected areas with an effective and properly resourced management institution | 4 PAs (1. NP Pelister; 2. MN Smolari Waterfall; 3. MN Markovi Kuli; 4. MN Kuklica). |
| | 3. % contribution of formally proclaimed PA estate to meeting the country representivity targets | 2 PAs 4705.7 ha in total (NP Pelister 4,650 ha extension of area and MN Kuklica 55,7 ha) |
| | 4. Financial scorecard for national systems of protected areas | 43.55% |

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|---|---|---|---|
| **Outcome. 1** | A representative national protected area system is designed | 1. % of viable populations of endemic and threatened taxa occurring within the formally proclaimed protected area network | <15% |
| | | 2. Extent (as a % of total area) of different habitat types/ biome represented within the formally proclaimed protected area network | Forest: 6%<br>Dryland/ grassland: 2%<br>Mountain: 4%<br>Wetland: 7% |
| | | 3. % alignment of land use planning and land uses in Macedonia with ecological network requirements | 0% |
| **Outcome. 2** | Improved systemic and institutional capacity provides the enabling framework for establishing and managing a representative protected area network | 1. Number of protected areas with approved management plans | 1 PA (NP Pelister) |
| | | 2. Total government operational budget (including HR and capital budget) allocation for protected area management | 160,000 US$/annum |
| | | 3. Increase in competence, levels and standards of the protected area institutions | 34 |
| **Outcome. 3** | PA establishment and planning processes field tested and replicated across the PA network | 1. % increase in competence levels of protected area institutions for pilot PA's | 34 |
| | | 2. Number of protected areas with delegated management institutions | 8 |
| | | 3. Number of protected areas exceeding a minimum baseline METT score of 30 | 8 |
| | | 4. Additional resources (US$) allocated by the GM to fund the re-proclamation processes in other (non-funded) protected areas | 30,000 US$ |
| **Annual output targets** | | **Achievement of outputs** | **Proposed output targets for the next year** |

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|---|---|
| **Outcome 1.** A representative national protected area system is designed | |
| Output 1.1 The biodiversity data is collated into a consolidated database and integrated into the national Environmental Information System | Output 1.1 The biodiversity data is collated into a consolidated database and integrated into the national Environmental Information System |
| | A part of the available biodiversity data collected from different sources that address the biodiversity sector. Draft Report on Assessment and evaluation of biodiversity and Catalogue of vertebrates on national level were prepared |
| Output 1.2 A national ecological network is designed to link environmentally important areas and endangered habitats | Output 1.2 A national ecological network is designed to link environmentally important areas and endangered habitats |
| Output 1.3 Directions for a national protected area system are developed | A report "Protected Areas in Macedonia" is prepared reflecting the current situation with PA system and including key issues that are requiring attention in the next period. |

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|---|---|---|
| **Outcome 2.** Improved systemic and institutional capacity provides the enabling framework for establishing and managing a representative protected area network | | |
| Output 2.1: Effective institutional models for protected area management are identified and implemented | A Report on Institutional Options for protected areas system in Macedonia was with detailed recommendations for implementing the preferred option are proposed. | Output 2.1: Effective institutional models for protected area management are implemented |
| Output 2.2: Norms and standards for protected area management planning are developed | A Report on Protected area management plans Norms and Standards was prepared with guidance notes for protected area management planning and monitoring are provided. | |
| Output 2.3: Options to sustainable finance the management of the protected area network are developed and implemented | Draft Report on Legislation for protection of nature: improved framework including proposed amendments of the Law on Nature protection | Output 2.3: Options to sustainable finance the management of the protected area network are developed and implemented |
| Output 2.4: The capacity of the MoEPP to support protected area establishment and management planning process is developed | | Output 2.4: The capacity of the MoEPP to support protected area establishment and management planning process is developed |
| **Outcome 3.** PA establishment and planning processes field tested and replicated across the PA network | | |
| Output 3.1.Secure the legal and institutional tenure of Tikvesh Strict Nature Reserve and Canyon Matka Natural Monument and document lessons learned. | All available information, maps and data on biodiversity values and other natural values for two pilot protected areas are collected and data gaps are identified. | Output 3.1.Secure the legal and institutional tenure of Tikvesh Strict Nature Reserve and Canyon Matka Natural Monument and document lessons learned |