

Buna Delta Protection Project



"Habitat restoration and protection of the Buna river through this project will create the possibility for the Buna to be used as a tourist destination for both Albania and Montenegro, not only as a border between our two countries, but as a passage to navigate to Shkodra through the Buna, while enjoying additional touristic attractions in a natural surrounding"

Mr. Blendi Klosi, Minister of Tourism and Environment of Albania

Located on the Adriatic coast, the Bojana/Buna River is shared by Montenegro and Albania. It contains the most important wetlands of high ecological value in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Actions are needed to preserve these ecosystems that are home to rare and endangered species, such as the Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*), the Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*), and the Golden Jackal (*Canis aureus*), as well as the Pedunculate Oak tree (*Quercus robur*) whose forests are considered endangered.

CONTEXT

As part of its strategy for Mediterranean coastal wetlands, the MAVA Foundation is supporting the "Buna Delta Protection Project" focusing on the Buna River-Velipoja Protected Landscape (BRVPL).

The site, designated as a Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar Site), is one of the four Mediterranean coastal wetlands highlighted by the MAVA Foundation to develop best practices that will serve as references for the Mediterranean region.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Increase the knowledge base and awareness of ecosystem services and values, integrated coastal wetland management, and sustainable land use practices.
- Improve management of the area by applying innovative conservation programmes and creating business models and incentives for the local communities.
- Enable a multi-stakeholder governance and transboundary mechanism to address the key threats, and support knowledge transfer and joint planning.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The goal of the project is to ensure the long-term conservation of species and habitats in the Buna River Velipoja Protected Landscape with particular emphasis on halting or significantly reducing unsustainable development and water abstraction.

In order to address these threats by 2022, a multifaceted action plan will be implemented, including knowledge and awareness, capacity development and site-based measures, as well as improved governance for the site.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Development threats affecting high value wetlands reduced and further degradation of habitats prevented.
- Restoration activities on damaged wetlands and coastal habitats implemented.
- Incentives for sustainable land management piloted and innovative conservation and resource management measures implemented.
- Effective management of the BRVPL ensured through the development of capacities of site managers and increased stakeholder engagement.
- Governance models enabled that address the drivers of unsustainable land use and management practices.
- Sustainable tourism and land use practices promoted in order to address socio-economic issues and human well-being.
- Marketing opportunities created for local businesses.
- Public participation increased at the site level by supporting the BRVPL stakeholder committee.
- Transboundary cooperation stimulated through a platform for exchange and collaborative management.

Duration: 2018 - 2020

More information: <http://bit.ly/bunaproject>

Budget: 1 294 848 €

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This work was carried out by MedWet as part of the portfolio of Mediterranean wetland projects.

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FUNDING



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