

## The importance of Albanian wetlands:

Albania is one of the Mediterranean countries where wetland ecosystems are represented by a very rich network of wetland areas. Along the coastline of the country there are many ecosystems of significance such as lagoons, sand dunes, river outlets, riparian forests. The coastal area is also noted for a rich and diverse hydrographic network composed by many rivers and river outlets. Moreover, in the inland Albanian territory numerous lakes, either natural or artificial and a dense hydrographic network provide high wetland diversity.

Those wetlands support a high biological richness, especially in terms of game birds. Thus, marine habitats represent some of the few still remaining natural habitats in the Mediterranean. Such habitats compose a very important site for numerous animal species such as fish, amphibians and reptiles, nesting birds and mammals. Many of those species that compose an important part of the natural heritage are Globally Threatened. That indicates the importance of conservation of the biodiversity in Albania's wetlands.

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## Capacity Building on Conservation of Albanian Wetland Ecosystems



MedWet

## The ALWET project general and Specific Objectives:

The inventory of a country's wetlands is a basic prerequisite for their conservation and wise use. The general ALWET project objective is to build capacities, transfer know-how and establish the basis for the maintenance of national wetland archives in Albania. The specific objectives are:

*"To build capacities of Albanian scientists involved in wetland inventory and electronic data management through":*

- the elaboration of three training seminars and
- the production of a training package on the application of the MedWet method for inventorying wetland sites, on data management using databases and on the use of modern technology tools (Geographic Information Systems- GIS and Remote Sensing) for analyzing and interpreting inventory data and for producing thematic maps;



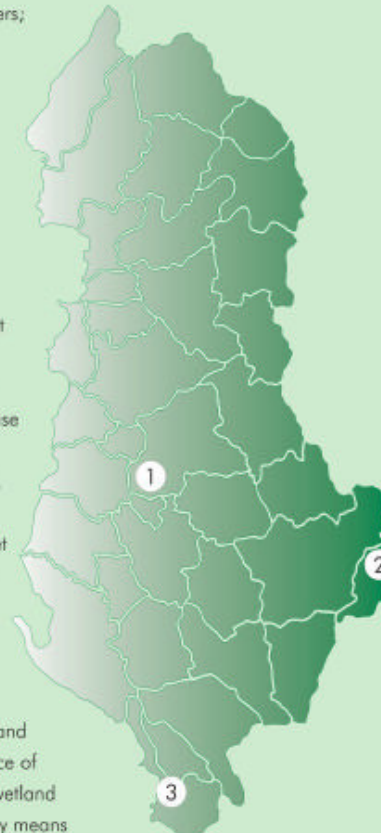
- to support the continuation, in the future, of wetland inventory and data management efforts in Albania, through the training of future trainers;

- to operate a Data Bases and GIS department at ECAT Tirana, to serve as a national focal point for the maintenance of wetland archives;

- to apply the MedWet Wetland Inventory method in three pilot sites, create a Data Base and GIS archive and produce habitat maps.

- to install the MedWet database software at national bodies;

- to raise the public awareness for the wetland conservation and promote the importance of maintaining national wetland archives as a necessary means to that end.

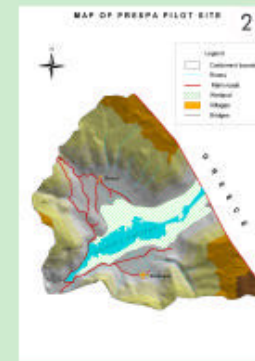


## Pilot sites where the MedWet Wetland Inventory method will be applied



### Dumrea Lakes

represent a unique wetland complex site, composed of 85 individual lakes. They have been the subject of severe interventions and damages in the last decades, due to lack of legal protection, management and low environmental awareness.



### Small Prespa Lake

is an important wetland ecosystem, favoring breeding and feeding of rare water bird species. Best known for hosting the largest breeding colony of the Dalmatian pelican in the world. It is the first ecologically protected area in the Balkans running across different countries.



### Butrinti Lake

represents a unique wetland site in the Mediterranean Region housing a wide variety of habitats and species. It is an important economic resource for more than 8000 inhabitants and a focus for tourism as well.