

Strengthening the regional cooperation/networking in the forestry and water management sector and sustainable development in the river basins of the South-Eastern Europe countries

Situation analysis and recommendations in Albania

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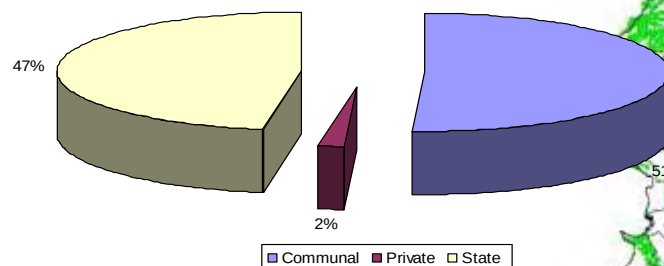


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Forest resources in Albania

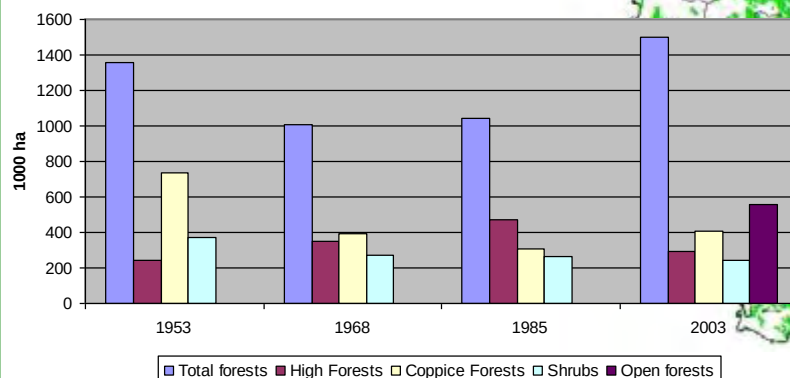
Forest ownership



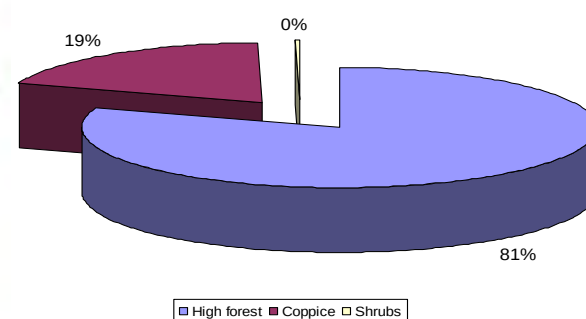
Timber volume by management system (ANFI 2003)

Type	V/ha (m3)	Total (million m3)	%
High forest	131,68	59,11	80,4
Coppice	22,82	14,24	19,4
Shrubs	0,46	0,20	0,3
	59,16	73,55	100,0

Forests area according to different inventories



Total growing stock (million m3)



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Water resources in Albania

- Albania is rich on water resources (29 l/s/km^2)
- Water catchment basin of 43.305 km^2 , (only $28,748 \text{ km}^2$ within national boundaries)
- 7 main rivers (*Drini, Mati, Ishëm, Erzeni, Shkumbini, Semani, Vjosa*).
- Annual river outlet is 39.22 million m^3/vit , (95% on Adriatic, 5% on Ionian sea)
- Lakes cover only 4% of the territory (3 big lakes, 247 small ones)



Strategies toward EU

- Albania signed in June 2006 the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union, which entered into force on April 1st 2009.
- The Government of Albania has prepared and is implementing the National Plan for the Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement as the main monitoring instrument of the political, economic, legal and institutional reforms (part of the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013)
- According to this Strategy “...**Management of environmental resources through a clear command and control... legal framework implemented through a well monitored and enforced system**” is among the strategic priorities of Albania.

National and regional policies

- Constitution of Albania lists preservation of an “ecologically sound environment for present and future generations” and “rational exploitation of forests ...pastures ... on the basis of the principle of sustainable development” expressly among the state’s objectives
- The policy of forestry, according to the National Plan for the Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (2007 – 2012), aims at the sustainable and multi-functional development of the forestry and pastures.
- The plan will preserve and protect bio-diversity, productivity, renovation ability, and potential to fulfil the ecologic, economic and social functions at the local, national, and global level, without causing damage to the other ecosystems.

Transfer of forest to local communities

- In 2008 the MOEFWA, in collaboration with Ministry of Interior and Local Government Units completed officially the transfer of state forest and pastures in 316 LGUs.
- 356 000 ha of forest and 93 000 ha of pasture were transferred in use to the rural communities.
- Natural Resource Development Project, is supporting the decentralization reform of forest management and in the project will support the development of communal forest and pasture management plans in 218 communes.
- The transfer of forest and pastures in use/ownership of LGUs is not completed with the human and financial resources for their sustainable management.
- Sharing of responsibilities and cooperation between the District Forest Service, local government units and communities is still one of the key problems in this process.

Main challenges and priorities for the forest sector

- Combating Illegal logging
- Controlling forest fires and pest attacks and establishing alarm system across borders
- Counteracting erosion in some of the countries
- Protecting forest biodiversity (flora & fauna) not only in protected areas
- Managing and setting measures for protective forests in relation to flood retention, water supply, erosion.
- Stakeholder consultation and involvement.

Water Management in Albania

- National and regional policy documents related to water management:
- National Water Strategy (1997, updated in 2004),
- Strategy and Action Plan for Sewage Treatment in Urban Areas (2003),
- Strategy and Action Plan for Water Supply, Sewerage and Waste Management in Rural Areas (2003),
- Water Supply and Wastewater Sector Strategy (2007),
- Strategic Action Plan for Sustainable Development of the Skadar Lake area (2007),
- National Environmental Strategy (2008),
- Draft national water strategy.

Priorities for water management:

- Establishment of a clear command and control legal framework for water resources management;
- Groundwater is being exploited by over abstraction leading to a drop in groundwater levels and, saltwater intrusion;
- Surface water is being polluted through discharge of untreated wastewater from urban settlements, as well as from industries and by the extensive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in agriculture;
- Riverbeds are being eroded through unauthorised sand mining leading to unstable morphological conditions, affecting irrigation and flood protection infrastructure;
- Flooding in rainy season leads to large areas being flooded and extensive destruction of property.

Cooperation between forest and water management sector

- Low to no cooperation between structures and institutions.
- Some cooperation on policy level.
- Insufficient cooperation on harmonization to EU policies due to lack of capacities in EU approximation
- Very little cooperation between sectors
- Lack of clear and well defined structures, duties and responsibilities make it difficult in the field or local level.

Recommendations at country level

- Integrate forest management measures into IRBM plans
- Prepare and implement IRBMPs
- Explore possibilities of ecosystem services
- Improve participatory approach to management planning
- Increase capacities in IRBMP
- Develop multi-stakeholder involvement
- Improve communication and sharing of information
- Cooperate on common issues such as protected areas
- Identify best practises and exchange know-how with EU
- Flood control, flood retention and storage

Analysis of cross border cooperation

- Albania has gained extensive experiences with cross border projects on Lake Shkodra (Montenegro) and Lake Prespa (Macedonia).
- Regional cooperation on forest and water management is at a low level
 - Dinaric Arc Initiative
 - Adriatic Sea Partnership;
 - IUCN Office for South Eastern Europe;
 - DRIN Initiative; Ministerial declaration of 5 SEE countries on integrated water management.
- SWG is the main organization currently active in the region and covering rural development issues in all their aspects.

Issues where cross border cooperation is needed

- Integrated River Basin Management plans of international rivers (in accordance with the EU WFD)
- Control of forest logging / prevent illegal forest logging
- Exchange water monitoring data and database systems
- Flood prevention and control
- Cross border integrated (rural development) plans including tourism development, nature protection and forestry
- Harmonization of policies, legal and regulatory framework
- Designation and management of cross border protected areas

Issues where regional cooperation is needed

- Exchange of experiences on rural development and integrated river basin management planning with EU member states
- Exchange of best practises in rural development, forestry and water management
- Awareness raising on sustainable use of natural resources
- Capacity building on sustainable nature resource management through multidisciplinary trainings, exchange of experiences, technology and knowledge/innovation transfer
- Increasing the capacities and knowledge about the implementation of the EU WFD.

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Recommendations at regional level

- Establishment of a regional network on capacity building, exchange and sharing of information, experiences and best practises and bringing experiences and knowledge from EU Member States.
- Develop and implement a capacity building program

Capacity building and training program

- Introduction to the new Common Agricultural Policy of the EU
- Capacity building in the implementation of the EU Water Directive (e.g. capacity in cost benefit analyses of measures, evaluation of ecological status etc)
- GIS application in rural development and water management planning
- Training and awareness raising on the provision and financing of ecosystem services provided by forests
- Training in participatory project development and management planning including stakeholder analyses principles

Proposals for SWG Assistance

- Capacity building on technical and operational level in IRBM planning and EU WFD requirements
- Exchange of experiences with EU member states
- Bring good advice and exchange of best practises
- Exchange of water monitoring data
- Assist with fund raising for projects on best management practises for river basins
- Improve cross border cooperation through existing platforms

Faleminderit/Thank you



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