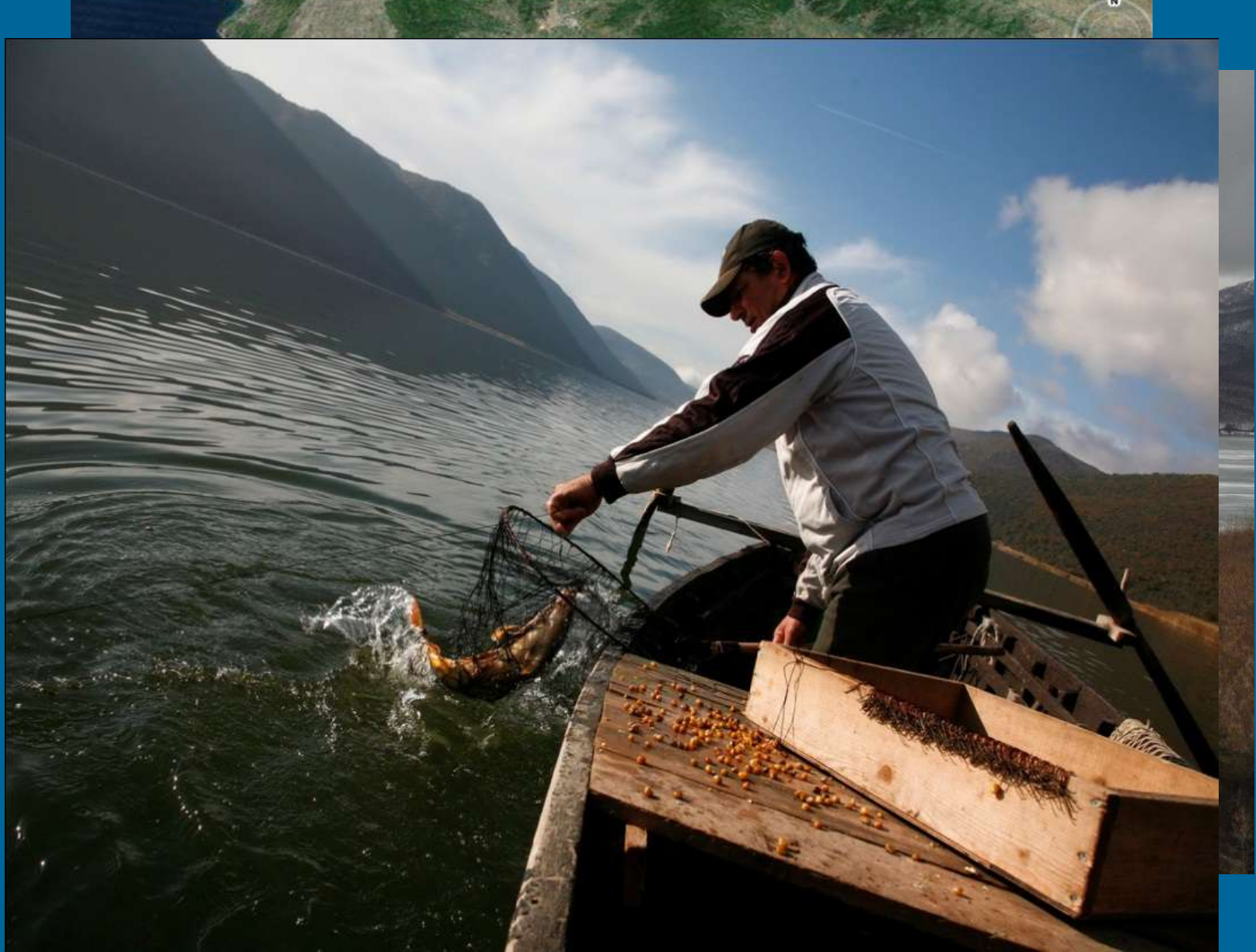




The Prespa-Ohrid Nature Trust – financing transboundary conservation in Southeast Europe

10th European Green Belt Conference, Eisenach, 16-18 October 2018

The Prespa basin and the wider region



Transboundary collaboration in the Prespa Park – the early years (2000-2010)



- **Informal transboundary collaboration scheme:** the PPCC and Secretariat supported by NGOs
- **Signing of the 2010 Agreement** (3 countries + EU) without entry into force led to the dismantling of the informal scheme without a formal one to replace it



Transboundary collaboration in the Prespa Park – The current phase (2011 onwards)



- Permanent network of environmental NGOs, the **PrespaNet** “strives to enhance the natural values of the Prespa region, for biodiversity and people, through joint actions across borders”
- Other instances of transboundary collaboration, e.g. among PAs and Municipalities

The need for PONT



- **Two major donors**, MAVA and KfW
- **MAVA to close down** in 2022 > discussions on how to keep supporting conservation work of SPP and beyond
- **Scarcity of national public funds**, uncoordinated planning, piecemeal projects, **low capacity of PA authorities** > KfW consistently supporting PAs
- **Need for long-term sustainable financing of key actors**
- “Project-based”, short-term solutions ≠ **model of financing conservation with long-term commitment, transparency, accountability, collaboration and coordination** between all actors involved

The establishment of PONT



- MAVA approached KfW and assigned WWF GR a feasibility study
- Study recognized the need for stable and reliable funding in the region, defined the geographic and thematic scope of the new fund, as well as its legal form and financial management
- Resolute commitment of the two donors made the **establishment** of the Prespa-Ohrid Nature Trust in **just two years in late 2015**
- During **2016-2017** focus on establishing its strategy, its investment policy and a professional investment committee and its operational rules for co-funding projects.
- PONT is the **first conservation trust fund in the Balkans** and the **eight transboundary such fund in the world**

The mission of PONT

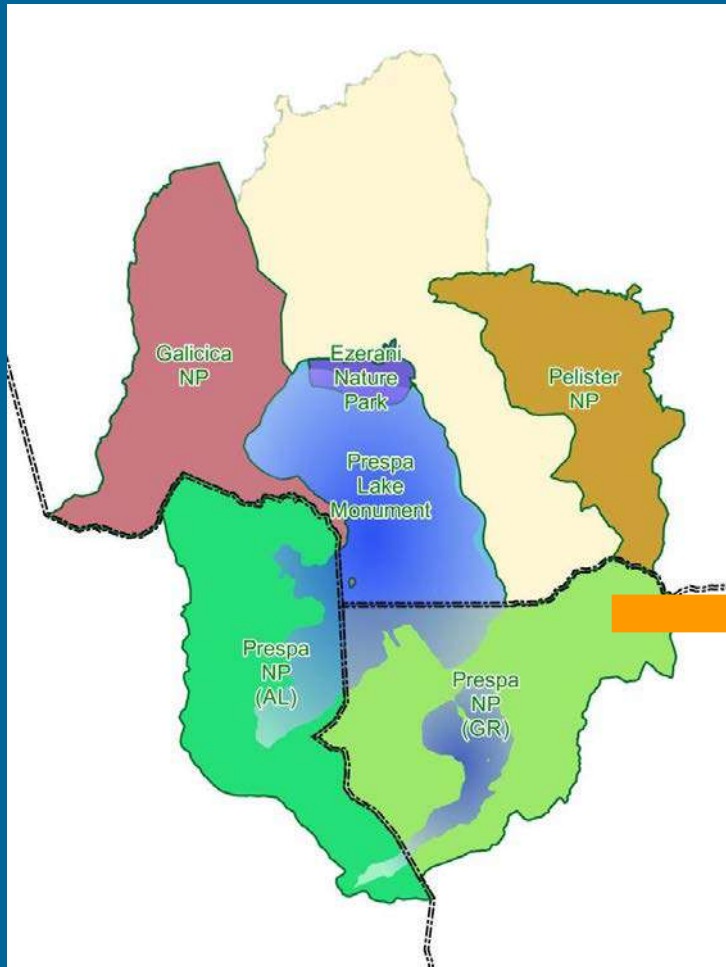


... to “provide long-term financing for the conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity, natural processes and ecosystem services in Prespa and its wider area for the benefit of nature and people in the region”

PONT seeks to:

- Invest and raise funds
- Co-finance key conservation actions as a solid partner providing funding continuity for its beneficiaries
- Incite regional stakeholders and env’l actors to improve the efficiency of management
- Promote transboundary cooperation and a collective ecoregional approach
- Raise public environmental awareness and community engagement
- Engage with governments to leverage funding and political commitments towards conservation

The geographical scope of PONT



- Prespa - Ohrid Ecoregion
- Wider Prespa Area AL & MK
 - Wider Prespa Area GR
 - Ohrid extension AL & MK
 - Biosphere reserve

The funds of PONT

Funding comes from:

1. **MAVA foundation**
2. **KfW**
3. In the future there may be other donors

Two-tier system:

- **Endowment fund** > capital invested in perpetuity with only investment income used to finance grants & activities
- **Sinking fund** to be reduced until 2030 > entire principal and investment income disbursed over a fairly long period (e.g. 10-20 years) until completely spent and thus sinks to zero
- Sinking fund MAVA earmarked to finance the NGO SPP in GR
- KfW funds earmarked for Albania & FYR of Macedonia
- **Only co-funding**



The governance of PONT



- **Conservation Trust Fund** registered as a Foundation under German Law > Offshore transboundary trust fund giving grants in Greece, fYR of Macedonia and Albania
- **Independent** of the German or the recipient governments
- Run by a **Supervisory Board** (MAVA, KFW and WWF-GR are core members and can elect up to 6 more members – currently two more members including G.Shwaderer/EuroNatur) and an executive **Management Board**
- **Regional programme office** in Tirana, **shared-services office** in Frankfurt
- **Blue Action Fund** (www.blueactionfund.org), **Caucasus Nature Fund** (www.caucasus-naturefund.org) and **PONT form the Nature Trust Alliance** (www.naturetrustalliance.org), established in 2016 in Frankfurt, Germany, to provide operational support services (financial management, administration, communications, reporting, etc.), so the Funds can focus on their core missions

The grant programme and the funding priorities of PONT

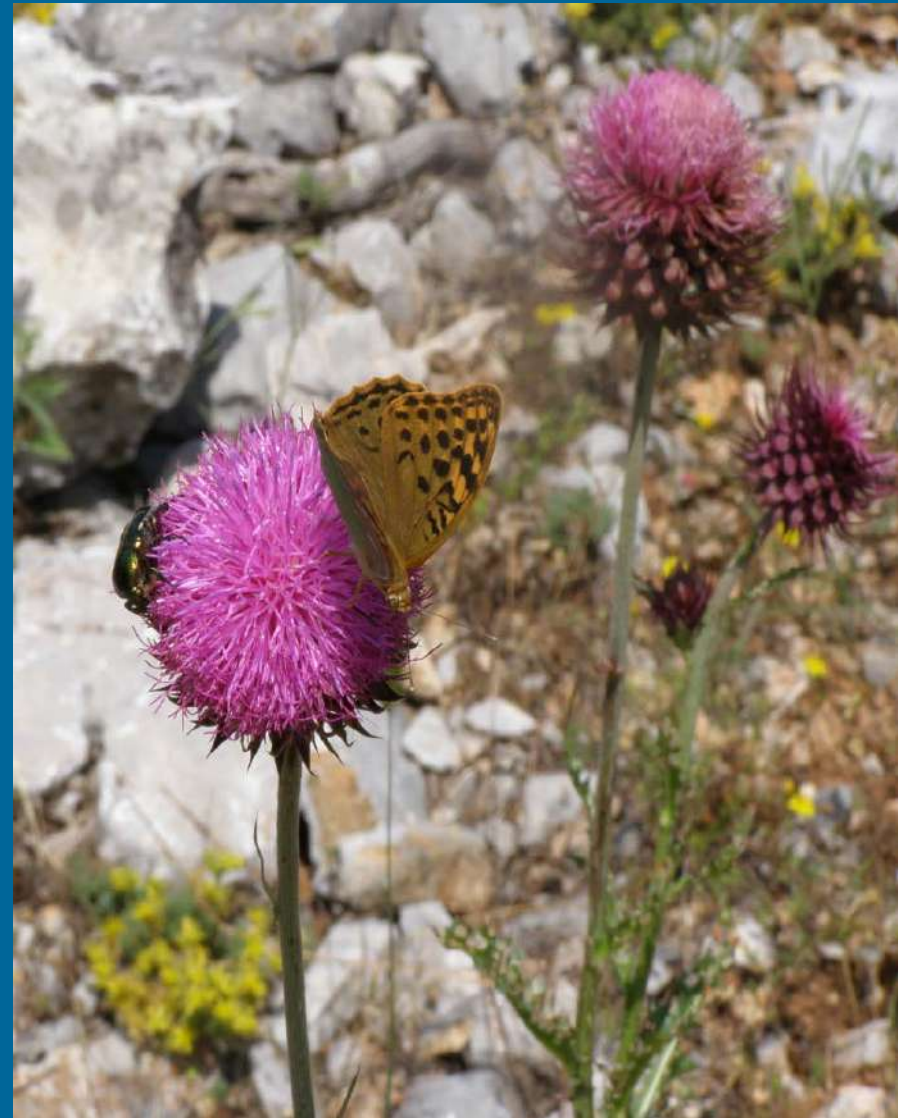


- **Strategic framework** and **funding priorities** in place
- **Initial thematic focus:** 1) Improved Protected Area & forest management; 2) Sustainable use of Protected Areas (incl. recreation & nature based tourism; traditional grazing; sustainable use of resources); 3) Conservation of species; 4) Conservation of habitats & landscapes
- Focus also on **capacity building of grantees**
- PONT started disbursing grants at the end of **2017** to selected recipients
- **Grants PA:** Using the existing PA management plans, operational costs for core routines are financed to achieve each PA's mission
- **Grants EA** (Environmental Actors): 40 priority activities have been identified for financing

The traits of PONT...

... that distinguish it from conventional funding programmes

- ✓ **Private, legally independent grant-making foundation** under German Law > Financing organisation and not implementing
- ✓ **Cooperation:** Public-private partnership
 - **Participation:** Strengthening civil society and inclusion of local people
- ✓ **Fundraising**
 - **Look for possible (co)-funding, create synergies and avoid overlap**
 - **Leverage political commitment and government funding**
- ✓ **Sustainability of conservation action supported:** Long term co-financing of running/recurrent costs
- ✓ **Good governance:** Transparent, accountable and effective, with rigorous monitoring & evaluation / regular independent audits



Ideas for transfer to other sites

- ✓ **One or more international donors with solid commitment** needed to kick start the process
- ✓ **Environmental actor(s) with solid knowledge of situation on the ground** needed to facilitate the initial phase, usually NGO
- ✓ **All-inclusive process for the design and start up phase** of the fund needed to secure buy-in of the states/ governments concerned and of key stakeholders
- ✓ **Sound legal choice of where to establish the fund and who to appoint on the board.** As a rule of thumb the members of civil society should be higher than the number of government people in a board of a trust fund.
- ✓ The area to be supported **must have legal entities that are ready/able to receive the money for conservation** without needing too much assistance, i.e. mature legal organisations with functioning financial and administrative systems (ready to be audited)



Thank you for your attention!



For more see www.pont.org