



## Press release

### *Project to improve safeguarding of Lake Ohrid region*

#### **Transboundary Platform Meeting, Ohrid, October 2015**

The second Transboundary Platform Meeting of the project ***Towards strengthened governance of the shared transboundary natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ohrid region*** will take place in Ohrid on 2 October this year. The meeting is part of the project to strengthen cooperation between the Albanian and Macedonian governments for the protection and sustainable development of Lake Ohrid and its surroundings.

About 30 representatives will participate in the Transboundary Platform Meeting, including officials from the two countries' environment and culture ministries, and from the region's municipalities. UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Convention (ICOMOS and IUCN), will also attend the meeting alongside representatives of the European Union.

Their work will seek to address the main factors affecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ohrid region, notably issues relating to unplanned urban development, waste management and habitat alteration as well as the destruction and depletion of natural resources.

Two-thirds of Lake Ohrid is inscribed on the World Heritage List on the Macedonian side of the lake. The protection of this site would be further reinforced by extending World Heritage status to the remaining third of Lake Ohrid, which is located in Albania. This is why the project supports efforts by the national authorities to prepare a nomination file for the extension of the World Heritage property.

The Transboundary Platform meeting intends to improve and facilitate bi-lateral cooperation between representatives from both Albanian and Macedonian local and central administrations, the tourism sector, and those in charge of urban and rural development, culture, nature protection, resource management and the environment.

The region's efforts to balance conservation with sustainable development are laid out in the 2005 bilateral Agreement between the two countries for the Protection and Sustainable Development of Lake Ohrid and its Watershed. The project is coordinated by UNESCO in partnership with the authorities of both countries, as well as the three Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Convention (ICOMOS International, IUCN and ICCROM), and is financed by the European Union (EUR 1,700,000) with the co-financing by the government of Albania (EUR 170,000).

**A press conference on 2 October 2015 at 11am at the Hotel Inex Gorica (Naum Ohridski no.5-7, 6000 Ohrid) will present the Lake Ohrid region transboundary initiative.**

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For more info, please visit: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/lake-ohrid-region>

In Albanian: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/137777>

In Macedonian: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/137776>