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<b>Implementing Agency</b>	World Bank
<b>Region</b>	Albania and Macedonia
<b>Focal Area</b>	International Waters
<b>Project Title</b>	Lake Ohrid Management Project
<b>GEF Allocation</b>	US\$4.41 million
<b>Cofinancing</b>	US\$0.27 million (Governments of Albania and Macedonia)
<b>Total Financing</b>	US\$4.68 million
<b>Dates</b>	June 1998–June 2002
<b>Environmental Problem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited treatment of wastewater and uncontrolled agricultural runoff as well as other nonpoint source pollution, threatening unique biodiversity and ecosystems of transborder lake</li> </ul>
<b>Project Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the institutional, legal, and regulatory framework for environmental management of the lake.</li> <li>• Develop water quality and ecosystem monitoring.</li> <li>• Formulate, in a participatory process, an operational watershed management program.</li> </ul>

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Lake Ohrid, which lies between Albania and Macedonia in a mountain valley, is one of the world's oldest lakes and one of the largest reserves of biodiversity in Europe. It possesses unique flora and fauna that are extinct elsewhere; ten of seventeen fish species are endemic. Lake wetland areas are important habitat for various aquatic birds and spawning grounds for fish.

The lake's shores have long been settled. Today, with three shoreside cities and high numbers of summer visitors, the lake is experiencing increasing pollution from both agricultural runoff and wastewater discharges either into rivers that feed the lake or directly into the lake itself. Less than 25 percent of wastewater in the lake's catchment is treated. Unfortunately, inflow and outflow of water in the lake is slow, and the lake's water is exchanged only once every sixty years. Pollution of the lake, therefore, is increasing. Runoff has led to increases in the lake's phosphorus content; if nothing is done, the lake could eventually become eutrophic.

**The Project** This project objective is to conserve and protect the natural resources and biodiversity of Lake Ohrid by developing and supporting an effective cooperation between Albania and Macedonia for the joint environmental management of the Lake Ohrid watershed. Key performance indicators for the development objective are:

- Average lake nutrient concentrations below the critical level which sustains the lake oligotrophic state;
- Reduced nutrient and microbiological loads in the lake's tributaries and inflows;
- Key ecosystem health and stability indicators maintained within safe limits; and
- Actions taken by the LOMB to promote and support government's conservation and protection policies.

**Activities**

- *Institutional, legal, and regulatory framework.* This component will establish a Lake Ohrid Management Board to promote permanent cooperation between the two countries. The board will agree on common objectives, operating rules, and procedures; review project implementation; and discuss fund-raising strategies to implement an environmental program for the lake. The component will also support

technical training; work to harmonize laws, regulations, and standards between the two countries; and strengthen management and enforcement of municipalities bordering the lake.

- *Monitoring framework.* This component will support a well-coordinated monitoring program by purchasing monitoring equipment and developing a monitoring system to track water quality, discharges into the lake, and other data.
- *Lake Ohrid Participatory Watershed Management Program.* This component will aim to mobilize the groups within the watershed to transform the strategic program developed in the feasibility study into an action plan.
- *Public Awareness and Participation Program.* This component will, (i) increase public awareness of environmental issues related to Lake Ohrid; and (ii) increase community participation in activities to conserve and protect Lake Ohrid and its watershed.

- Benefits**
- Protect the Lake Ohrid basin by establishing an effective international framework for long-term basin management, and by undertaking some priority actions to control the major sources of pollution and watershed degradation
  - Establish basis for cooperation between Albania and Macedonia and provide basis for preparing regional development strategy serving both countries.
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The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a financial mechanism that provides grants and concessional funds to developing countries for projects and activities designed to protect the global environment. GEF resources address climate change, biological diversity, international waters, and depletion of the ozone layer. Activities concerning land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation as they relate to the four focal areas, are also eligible for funding.

GEF is a joint venture of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the World Bank. These three agencies implement GEF projects.

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