November 2023: Population status assessment of crayfish (*Astacus astacus* and *Austropotamobius torrentium*) – **Activity 1.1.3**: Monitoring activity

In November 2023, the organization "Biologists of Albania" conducted another round of monitoring for two crayfish species in the lakes of Ohrid, Great Prespa, and the rivers of the Shebenik-Jabllanice National Park, specifically in the Qarrishta and Rrapuni areas. The monitoring was carried out using traps with bait at 7 stations in Lake Ohrid, 5 stations in Great Prespa, and 2 stations in the rivers of the National Park.

During the monitoring, the presence of one crayfish species was confirmed in the lakes of Ohrid and Great Prespa. A notable observation was the relatively low number of individuals captured during this season. Additionally, questionnaires were continued with random encounters of residents or fishermen at the monitoring stations to gather further information.



October 2023:
Population status assessment of crayfish (*Astacus astacus* and *Austropotamobius torrentium*)..

Activity 1.1.1: Field observation, Consultation with lectures and students at the University of Korca.
Activity 1.1.2: Collecting information from 80 residents (including fishermen and local inhabitants) through a questionnaire survey.
Activity 1.1.3: Construction of equipment (traps) and conduct monitoring activities.
Activity 1.1.4: Conducting field sampling (in situ) of water physico-chemical parameters.
Activity 1.1.5: Assessment of environmental parameters.

In October 2023, the organization "Biologists of Albania" conducted the initial activities of the project titled "*Population Status Assessment of the Globally Threatened Crayfish Astacus astacus and Austropotamobius torrentium in the Lakes of Prespa, Ohrid, and Rivers of the Shebenik-Jabllanice National Park, Albania."* These activities included assessing the area for determining the monitoring of the two crayfish species in the lakes of Ohrid, Great Prespa, Small Prespa, as well as in the rivers of the Shebenik-Jabllanice National Park, specifically in the Qarrishta and Rrapuni.
Simultaneously, habitat assessment was carried out, considering factors such as substrate structure, erosion, shoreline damage, water level, pollution point sources, etc. Additionally, in-situ measurements of physicochemical water parameters were conducted, and traps were set up for species monitoring.
In 7 villages within the study area, 80 questionnaires were realized to residents, fishermen, and representatives of the protected area administration. These questionnaires aimed to gather information on the presence/absence of crayfish species, trends in their populations, and other relevant details.
Furthermore, to ensure scientific information and inviting for collaboration in the study, a meeting was held with representatives from the Department of Biology-Chemistry, Master's Science students, and lecturers at "Fan Noli" University of Korca.