

## INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN KOSOVO

### PROGRAM FACT SHEET

## CHALLENGE

Water is fundamental for our lives and for our planet. Yet, this precious and limited resource is facing unprecedented challenges. Global population growth, rapid urbanization, industrial development and unsustainable production and consumption patterns are exerting increasing pressures on our freshwater resources around the globe. Millions of people die every year from diseases linked to poor hygiene and unsafe water. Climate change is adding to these pressures. Over the past years, we have seen more floods and droughts than ever before. And in water-scarce regions, the increasing demands for water are leading to instability and forced migration.

Kosovo is among the most water stressed countries in Southeast Europe. Its need for fresh water has long exceeded supply because of lack of investments in water infrastructure, inefficient use of water in agriculture and high levels of pollution. Kosovo's water resources are rapidly deteriorating, and climate change is increasing water-related risks.

The management of water resources in Kosovo is complex as it shares its four river basins (Drini i Bardhë, Ibër, Morava e Binçës and Lepenc) with neighboring countries. And currently, institutions do not have sufficient capacities to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and they do not have a coherent framework for planning the management of water resources. There is also very little pressure from citizens and civil society to address environmental degradation.

Kosovo has made significant progress over the past years by working on new legal and institutional frameworks and formulation of water strategies and action plans. However, much more investment and coordinated action is needed to ensure a sustainable water future for all the citizens of Kosovo.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The **Integrated Water Resources Management in Kosovo (IWRM-K)** Program is a 12-year transformational initiative funded by the Swiss government in the amount of 20 million Swiss francs.

In its first phase (2020–2024), the Program aims to establish the planning framework, the knowledge and the institutional capacities needed to transform the country's water resource management.

By working with decision-makers, civil society and citizens on tackling key water challenges, this Program will help replace an outdated, traditional, and fragmented approach with more comprehensive and dynamic ways of managing water resources at river basin scale, in line with the principles of the EU Water Framework Directive.

Over the coming years, this Program will help address the root causes of Kosovo's severe challenges in relation to water. By building capacities to tackle these challenges, it will help ensure sufficient water for Kosovo's people, economy, and ecosystems.



## Integrated Water Resources Management In Kosovo

## EXPECTED RESULTS

Over the next four years, this Program is helping develop a **shared vision of where people want Kosovo to be in 12 years from now**, through:

### Plans and Measures:

- To gain a better **understanding of water stresses, their root causes and corresponding management responses** – all of which will be incorporated in the country's first-ever River Basin Management Plans.
- The Program is mapping all successful water actions undertaken to date and **scale up measures that have worked and address systemic deficiencies**.
- **Grant schemes** are being designed to support practical solutions that will help **reduce pollution and water use in farming and industry**.

### Legislation, Institutions and Knowledge:

- **Modern water legislation** will be developed and introduced.
- The **institutional and organizational capacity development for water resource management** is being supported among partner institutions through a series of trainings and peer-to-peer exchange.
- **Top water science courses** are being introduced in national universities, while also creating **on-the-job training opportunities** for young professionals, experts, and researchers.
- The current **water monitoring and Water Information systems** are being upgraded.

### Stakeholder participation, Civil Society Organizations and Awareness Raising:

- New **stakeholder participation mechanisms** will ensure democratization of water resource management.
- **Stakeholders and CSOs are being empowered** to partner with the Government on water resources management through targeted training and grants.
- **A series of communication and awareness raising** activities at national and local levels will spur action, and position water resource management as a top priority on the country's political agenda.

All of this will lead to the development of a sustainable modern model of water governance – **securing a water future for every child, woman and man in Kosovo**.

### Program Title:

Integrated Water Resources Management in Kosovo (IWRM-K)

### Donor:

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

### Implementation:

Skat Consulting Ltd., St. Gallen, Switzerland  
Environment Agency Austria, Vienna, Austria

### Partners:

Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure (MESPI) with its main constituent agencies (e.g., River Basin District Authority, Environment Protection Agency, Hydrometeorological Institute, Water Division, Environment/Water Inspectorate), the Inter-Ministerial Water Council, other ministries, water companies, municipalities, educational institutions, and CSOs/NGOs

### Budget:

Total for 12 years: **approx. CHF 20 million**  
Phase 1 (May 2020 – April 2024): **CHF 8.7 million**  
Government co-funding (expected): **CHF 1,7 million (4 years)**

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