



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

SERBIA: FIFTEENTH REGIONAL CONFERENCE EN19



"Air pollution in the cities of the Western Balkans causes between 15 percent and 19 percent of the total number of deaths and reduces life expectancy between 1.1 and 1.3 years," the United Nations report said.

The alarming level of air pollution is due to the lack of access to modern sources of renewable energy in the region, but also human neglect. In order to share information on air quality in the Republic of Serbia, fifteenth regional conference EnE19 was held as possible aspects for further improvement. On the occasion of World Day Environment, which is being celebrated throughout the world on June 5 through various activities and campaigns aimed at diverting public attention to numerous environmental problems and the need for environmental protection, the Ambassadors of Sustainable Development and the Environment and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce realized the fifteenth conference EnE19 named "Clean Air - Healthier Future".

The conference was held on June 4th at the premises of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, with an emphasis on air quality in the Republic of Serbia. Representatives of numerous agencies, faculties as well as competent authorities who attended the conference, discussed the challenges and consequences that cause air pollution to humans and the environment itself. Participants share the view that one of the main causes of pollution is urbanization!



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019



Figure 2 – Source: Sustainable Development Goals Sketchnote Project

Minister of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Goran Trivan who also attended the conference, sent a clear message **"We need to think globally and act locally."** President of the Ambassador of Sustainable Development and Environment Aleksandra Madenovic, the co-organizer of the conference, emphasized that: "There is a lot of talk about protection of water and land, but when we need to emphasize the protection of air, we are somehow got use to it that our air is polluted. She also emphasize that there is a need for greater engagement in that area. "If we look at 17 sustainable development goals that include issues of eradication of poverty, and to the joint action, the topic of air pollution itself is integrated with the objective No. 7 concerning the access to energy poverty and goal number 11, which encompasses the sustainable life of cities and as such presented under point 3.9. 1, entitled Air Quality", as shown at the conference itself. The fact is that 9 out of 10 people around the world inhale polluted air, which leads to 7 million premature deaths, so we have to deal with this topic more seriously in the future, and the Ambassadors of Sustainable Development and Environment will try to make this topic even more important.



Figure 1 – Source: EASD



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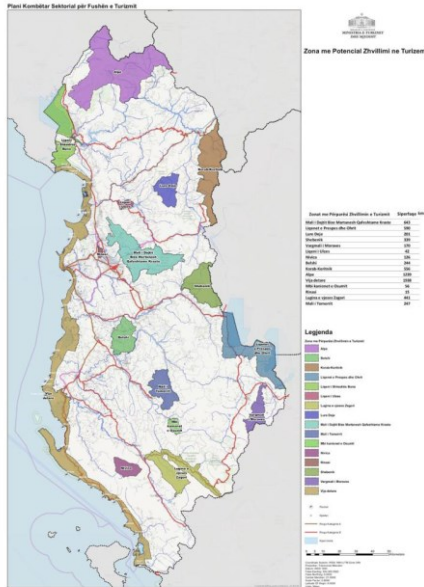


ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019



ALBANIA: THE APPROVED ALBANIAN NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2019-2023

During 2019, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment in Albania approved the National Strategy of Tourism for 2019-2023. A 5-year strategy which has as main aim the development of destinations, areas, products and diversification of tourist offer. As well as, the increased value-added tourism potentials for economic and social development.

Although it is intended to encourage the growth of public and private investments, improvement of tourist services, development of tourist products, reorientation of possible potential and supporting the destination management. The development of tourism in Albania is still far from the potential that the natural, historical and cultural richness of the country represent.

Even it is projected an increasing of visitor's number and nights of stay, the increase of jobs and the incomes from this sector but a number of problems and challenges that are associated with tourism development have been identified, such as: lack of accommodation quality and capacity, popular brands of hotels and tour operators, touristic infrastructure, short touristic season, the provision of a non-qualitative service by the employees in this sector, poor sea and air connection transport.

Figure 3- Source: The National Tourism Strategy 2019-2023, Ministry of Tourism and Development in Albania.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

BELGIUM: DECISION ON CARBON NEUTRAL EU DELAYED BY POLAND, CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY AND ESTONIA

Four governments have delayed an essential decision for the EU to be climate neutral by 2050, leaving Europe empty handed at upcoming UN climate talks. The EU was expected to formally agree on achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at a meeting of heads of state in the European Council yesterday.

The vast majority governments have now committed to supporting the target. But the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary and Poland refused to back the explicit inclusion of the 2050 deadline – a move the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) strongly denounced.

Achieving net zero emissions requires the almost complete phase out of fossil fuels. The EU has committed to submitting its long-term strategy to the UN in September, as agreed under the Paris Agreement in 2016.



Figure 4- Source: FT Collections, Green politics and policy 2019



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

The decision brought shame on the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary and Poland for threatening the future for the next generations. The clock is ticking and yet their feeble leaders act as if we had another planet to live on. As things stand, Europe is still lacking a date for when it plans to become climate neutral. If the bloc can't get its act together, other world economies will leave us behind and decide on the direction of future climate talks. The stall of the discussions also meant that governments failed to make progress on the revision of the EU budget, or Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), which will set out how much money the EU should allocate to avert climate breakdown. The Commission wants to increase the money available for climate neutral energy and business models from the current 20% to 25% of the new budget – that means from €206 billion in previous years to €320 billion for 2021-2027. The European Parliament and NGOs have proposed respectively a 30% and 40% minimum spending and the exclusion of funds supporting fossil fuels. EU governments are expected to reach an agreement on this by the end of the year.

Europe's failure to stamp out inequalities

Despite the European Union's commitment to leave no one behind, millions of people in Europe are falling victim to widening inequalities, a major EU-wide report 'Falling through the cracks: Exposing inequalities in Europe and beyond' concludes. The report is available at:

<https://www.sdwatcheurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/FALLING-THROUGH-THE-CRACKS-JUNE-2019.pdf>

'Falling through the cracks: Exposing inequalities in Europe and beyond' shines a light on the impact of rising inequalities on people and planet. The report, which makes for sobering reading, maps the reality of various forms of inequality, both nationally and at the European level. The report consists of 15 national reports and 11



Figure 5- Source: <https://www.sdwatcheurope.org>



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

thematic reports exploring key dimensions of inequality, including gender, age, disability, ethnicity and homelessness. The EU, the world's second largest economy, prides itself on its egalitarianism and progressive social model, while glaring inequalities are seen as a problem afflicting other parts of the world. But the reality of the situation is something else.

Many forms of inequalities are widening in Europe. If urgent action is not taken to address these gaping disparities, the EU is at risk of not meeting its commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the one related to narrowing inequalities within and between countries (SDG 10), by the 2030 deadline. SDG Watch Europe is a cross-sectoral civil society alliance made up of over 100 organisations. It advocates for ambitious implementation of the SDGs. Link: <https://www.sdwatcheurope.org/>

Make Europe Sustainable for All (MESA) is coordinated by the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and implemented in 15 European countries by 25 partners. It aims to raise awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Link: <https://makeeuropeustainableforall.org>



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

Out of touch farm ministers miss Europe's climate memo

Concluding from a ministerial discussion on the future of the EU's agricultural policy, European farm ministers have shown total disregard for the urgent need to reform intensive farming so it doesn't exacerbate climate change. The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) criticised the farm ministers for continuing to back public spending for the type of intensive agriculture that ramps up production, exacerbating climate change and leaving environmental ambition to goodwill. Intensive meat and dairy production are responsible for a huge share of the 10% of EU greenhouse gas emissions that come from the agriculture sector, and agriculture emissions are on the rise again. The European elections showed us that political parties of all stripes are now calling for greater European action on climate and environmental issues in response to the public demand for a green overhaul of how our society works. But farm ministers seem to exist in a parallel universe. As crisis after crisis hits the farm sector, this should be a warning sign that our food system needs remodelling. It's time to significantly reduce meat and dairy production to reduce overall emissions – just as many other industries are doing, and public money invested for climate action on farms must result in actual reductions in emissions.



Figure 6- Source: <https://makeeuropesustainableforall.org/>



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA: TIME TO TALK ABOUT AIR POLLUTION IS NOW!

Even though summer months are not that critical when it comes to air pollution, with the beginning of the heating season, the problems of air pollution will again be our prime-time topic.

So, the time to start alarming about this very much existent problem is **NOW!**

According to a report published in the European Heart Journal on March 12, 2019, the average person living in Europe loses two years of their life to the health effects of breathing polluted air. Europeans are exposed to more air pollution than the global average. But exposure isn't distributed evenly across the continent. According to air monitoring databases, those living in Eastern Europe and the Balkans are typically breathing more toxic particulate air pollution than their neighbors in Western Europe, due to more reliance on coal-fired power plants to generate electricity, higher use of wood and coal stoves for heating, and fewer pollution-mitigation policies overall.

We can only hope that the responsible authorities in our Western Balkan countries will not wait for the heating season to begin, to start tackling the air pollution problem that torments us all.



Figure 7- Source: Air monitoring database, 21st June, 2019



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

From planning to implementation-where do we stand?

On November 15, 2018, the Government announced a new two-year Plan for reducing air pollution, according to which, if the planned activities are realised, the air pollution in Skopje should be reduced by 50%, and in other cities affected by the air pollution, by 30 to 50%.

For the implementation of this plan, the government has foreseen 1.5 million euros in addition to 20 million euros for environmental measures within the ministries of education, economy and transport and communications. The basic principle of this new Plan for reduction of air pollution is to tackle, or prevent, sources of pollution.

Among other priority measures, such as: monitoring and replacement of all instruments in the 18 monitoring stations and application of modern mathematical models for modelling and proper forecasting of air pollution; increased inspection controls; public campaigns; changes in the legislation; the plan foresees dealing with the sources of pollution (household heating, transport, industry, construction, waste). Probably this is how we should read this latest public call for energy efficiency incentives announced by the Ministry of Economy. Namely, as part of the implementation of the program for promotion of renewable energy sources (RES) and energy efficiency in households, the Ministry of Economy of North Macedonia has announced a public call worth around 500,000 Euros for subsidising the purchase of solar collectors and PVC or aluminium windows. Households that choose to buy solar thermal systems (collectors, water reservoirs and related equipment) can get a refund up to a maximum of 30% of costs, but not more that around 250 Euros. The only requirement for households to receive these incentives is that they have not received them at previous public calls made by the Ministry of Economy. From the previously announced public calls, around 9,000 households received incentives for improving their energy efficiency, totalling around 2.6 million Euros for the purchase of solar collectors or PVC or aluminium windows. A public call for the households for refunding part of the cost (up to 400 Euros) of purchasing a pellet stove will be announced in the third quarter of 2019. For this purpose, the Ministry has allocated about 325,000 euros. For the other measures foreseen with the plan, we are still waiting to see how and when they will be realised.

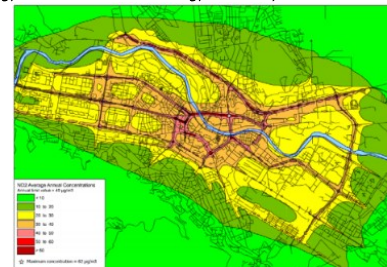


Figure 8- Source: Annual average concentrations of NO₂ from road traffic in Skopje calculated with dispersion model



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FLASH NEWS!

2019 World Environment Day: Clean-up action around the Viachevo Lake in Kavadarci

To mark the 2019 World Environment Day, on 5th June, Macedonian Env.net team took part in the joint clean-up action around the Viachevo Lake in Kavadarci. The event was organized by Eco-Life (Kavadarci), and 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges (Skopje) in cooperation with the high school "Djorce Petrov" and the local authorities from Kavadarci.

Around 40 participants (high-school students, teachers, eco-activists, local authority representatives and journalists), rolled-up their sleeves to clean the area around the small lake in Viachevo, often used by the citizens of Kvardarci as a recreation and picnic area. The event had also an educational component: participants were presented with some key facts about the World Environment Day and discussions about the role of each individual, from the oldest to the youngest, in school and at work, in keeping our environment clean and sound. It has been quite encouraging to note that the locality this time looks much better, in terms of waste littered all and everywhere around by irresponsible visitors, compared to our last year's action at this very same location, when a big pile of more than 200 kg of (plastic, metal, glass, paper and textile) was collected. It does give hope that things can move in a positive direction. All in all, waste wise, and educationally speaking, it was a very successful event.



Figure 5- Short lecture at the site for the students and local government representatives from Kavadarci, 5th June, 2019 / Source: 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

THERE IS NO HEALTHY FOOD FROM A POLLUTED SOIL!

Soil pollution can be invisible and might seem far away to us, but everyone (and everywhere) is affected. It poisons the food

we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe. On 12th June, 2019 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges organized a presentation of the results from the research of the state of soil pollution by heavy metals carried out in the Skopje region. Findings are far from encouraging: while the concentrations of lead and cadmium in the tested sorts of vegetables and fruits are below the level of maximum permissible limits, the concentration of arsenic is 1.5 times above the maximum permissible limit.

It is interesting to note that our country is lacking a law on maximum allowed concentrations of heavy metals in the soil. As noted by the experts and participants "soil is a very important resource, but also a complicated medium, which is very difficult to clean out of heavy metals,".

The research was part of a project implemented by Vila Zora from Veles, in cooperation 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges - Skopje, Eko Zivot – Kavadarci and Eko Gerila - Tetovo, and supported by USAID.



Figure 16– Source: 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

Kosovo: The Japanese Government invests 4 million euros for the protection and monitoring of air quality in Kosovo

In order to increase the capacity for air pollution control in the Republic of Kosovo, the Government of Japan has supported the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of Kosovo with 4 million USD. This investment, besides studying air pollution sources and human capacity building, will also contribute to measuring air quality, aiming at creating a sustainable system for air quality management in Kosovo.

Part of this donation is also the technical measuring equipment of the air, such as: measures equipment for measuring emissions of NO_x, SO₂, CO, CO₂ and O₂, and other equipment which can be used from the Ministry to control the air quality in Kosovo.

"Let's do it Kosovo" hosts the largest environmental forum evergreen Kosovo

In a space surrounded by greenery and with the participation of relevant environmental representatives such as: representatives from public institutions in Kosovo, international institutions, civil society, environmental experts, professors, students, volunteers and many participants, "Let's Do It Kosovo "organized the Environmental Forum" EverGREEN Kosovo ".



Figure 12- Source: atrc, Kosovo



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

This Forum was organized for the purpose of developing environmental policies and initiatives that contribute to raising citizens' awareness of environmental protection as well as the maximum engagement of responsible actors in combating the pollution phenomenon.

The discussion was divided into different panels, in which they discussed:

- The First Panel with Mayor of Kosovo Municipalities: the best practices of municipalities in relation to environmental challenges, experiences of current mayors, ongoing activities, and future activities for sustainable environmental development. Challenges on waste management, river maintenance, public spaces, sewage treatment, forest burning, maintenance of cleaned landfills and more were discussed.
- The second panel, with emphasis on the cooperation of public-private sectors in the field of environment.
- The Third Panel discussed the role of civil society, youth and international actors in addressing environmental challenges. There was a need for greater co-operation between institutions with civil society groups and young people, in order to achieve an all-inclusive stakeholder involvement in combating environmental challenges. Civil society representatives and youth groups considered it a challenge to waste management, as there is a lack of funds in this regard



Figure 13- Source: atrc, Kosovo



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

What does the latest EU country progress report state on air quality?

It recognises that although the legislative alignment with EU Acquis is almost complete, its implementation remains weak. The lack of sufficient administrative and financial resources is still the main obstacle to putting in place air quality improvement measures. Air pollution levels are high in major cities. Insufficient human, technical and financial support for the national air quality monitoring network resulted in several interruptions. A special allocation to fund air quality improvement measures has been introduced in the 2019 state budget for the first time. As noted in the latest EU country report, in the coming year the country should in particular implement air quality improvement measures by ensuring efficient coordination between central and local authorities, and the allocation of sufficient financial resources.

Sub grantee organisation Kosova Live

1. Have you ever thought about how we might make media products eco-friendlier? These 20 young boys and girls from throughout Kosovo, worked in four teams to ideate new age media products that might not damage the environment, but even help it flourish. They looked at ways that they could make laptops use less energy, create professional cameras that use solar energy, decrease protective packaging for projectors and even invent a "botanical" billboard. The CircMedia project is financed by the European Commission, supported by Env.net and ATRC, and implemented by KosovaLive.

Link: https://m.facebook.com/kosovalive.org/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10157038464120520&ref=bookmarks

2. So much positive energy in our Circmedia: Systems thinking workshop where more than twenty youth from throughout Kosovo learned about Circular Economy. During the workshop, participants read and analyzed case studies about Venlo and Amsterdam, which are leaders in stimulating the circular economy. They were further inspired from watching short documentaries about the latest innovations in circular economy. In the end, they put all their learning into play by ideating and presenting potential solutions that may stimulate the circular economy in Prishtina, solutions that may fight off pollution and protect the environment. The workshop was led by Annea Hapçiu, Innovation and Intrapreneurship advisor at KosovaLive. This project is financed by the European Union, supported by Env.net and ATRC, and implemented by KosovaLive.

Link: https://m.facebook.com/pg/kosovalive.org/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10156958347695520&ref=bookmarks



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

Italy: Media professionalism programme 2018 - Civil Society Facility Media

The global objective of this call for proposals is to strengthen participatory democracy and the EU integration process in Montenegro by empowering and stimulating an enabling professional and financial environment for pluralistic media. The specific objectives of this call for proposals are:

- To foster independent and investigative journalism in order to obtain quality media production in the areas related to Montenegro's European integration process, both for national and local media.
- To strengthen free, fair, professional and ethical journalism in Montenegro, with a special focus on media self-regulation.
- To raise awareness about disinformation/information influence and strengthen media literacy.

Discover more:

Budget: 1.000.000 (EUR)

Deadline: 3rd September 2019

Spotlight on a particular grass-root initiative different for every issue

July is going to be a very key month for environmental activists and civil society organizations (CSOs) from across the Balkans. They are organizing protests under the slogan **"Our rivers – No DAMage!"** over hydropower projects threatening to leave local populations without homes, arable lands, drinking water, and irrigation supply, or the landscape they have enjoyed for generations.

The protests are going to happen from 6 to 16 July 2019 in Albania, Serbia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Greece.

To know more, click here: <https://balkangreenenergynews.com/cgi-sys/softsuspendedpage.cgi>



Figure 14- Source: <http://ekolist.org>



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

Bosnia-Herzegovina: Scanning of important developments on Regional and Country Level

I – LIR Evolution held the first Forum in open and second Study visit to the springs of the River Sana on June 9th 2019. This specific site was selected, as there are activities to endanger the clean river flow. The environmental problem started in 2006, since the issuance of 107 concessions for small hydro power plants (sHPP) in the Republika Srpska, including the sHPP "Medna", 450 m from the springs of Sana River. The natural environment was destroyed by cutting the trees and building roads in the woods. The municipality Ribnik submitted first lawsuit against this project. The Coalition for Sana was established in 2009, and took over the campaign for the protection of the River Sana. The coalition and municipality jointly conducted several lawsuits against EIA, environmental permit and against the construction of the sHPP "Medna", but the project was implemented. The forum and discussion led was related to initiative to protect the springs with the abyss Mračaj and canyon downstream of Prizren Old Town. Both sites are valuable for conservation and protection and can offer next generations to enjoy in nature. The canyon downstream of Prizren Old Town is already attacked because of the planned construction of a new sHPP. Participants visited springs of river Sana and nearby Pecka – which started with the initiative to install photovoltaic panels and show that there are other renewable energy sources, such as solar energy, not just hydropower. The main conclusion of the Forum in open and study visit, is that water needs to be protected, not to destroy natural sites, and to use other sources of renewable energy - Sun.



Figure 15-Source: LIR evolution



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

II – The European Commission gave positive answer to the pre-accession state of the BiH. The country submitted the answers to the additional questions of the EU Questionnaire. The EC provided the roadmap to the BiH, naming the steps to be done in this pre-accession phase, related to the democracy, human rights and public administration.

III – The Banja Luka District Court issued a verdict that upheld the lawsuit filed by the Aarhus Centre in BiH against the Decision on Renewed Permit for Hydro Power Plant Buk Bijela on the Drina River, issued by the Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and Ecology of the Republika Srpska in May, 2018. The Aarhus Centre submitted a lawsuit in June 2018 for procedural defects in the Ecological Renewal Decision. In addition, the investor of "Elektroprivreda RS" did not request renewal of the environmental permit within the legal deadline, meaning that the Ministry had to cancel the previous license, since the construction of the hydropower plant was not started within four years of its issuance. Public consultations were not held in accordance with the Aarhus and ESPOO conventions, neither in Bosnia and Herzegovina nor in Montenegro. Public consultations held in 2012 were poorly advertised, and comments provided by non-governmental organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro were not taken into account. For the latest version of the HPP Buk Bijela project, the Environmental Impact Assessment Study states that there will be no impact on the Tara River. These claims do not support any evidence, nor are they discussed during consultations. Considering that Tara is the main tributary of the Drina and that the accumulation reaches the Montenegrin border, it is inevitable that some of the effects will arise which the study should have assessed. It is concluded that the Drina River has many natural areas, and could be used and promoted in order to support local habitants and their touristic offer.

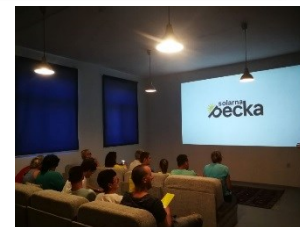


Figure 16- Source: LIR evolution



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

Montenegro: Ulcinj Salina is declared a nature park

Ulcinj Salina, at the session of the Municipal Assembly of Ulcinj, held on June 24, 2019, was proclaimed a protected area - Nature Park. The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism subsequently applied on July 2, 2019. The Ulcinj Salina for the Ramsar area of international significance, the third wetland in Montenegro.

According to the results of the Protection Study, which was made during the proclamation process for the Nature Park, Ulcinj Salina fulfills 6 of the 9 criteria for applying for enrollment in the International Ramsar List of Wetlands.

The Secretary of the Ramsar Convention will consider the attached informational Ramsar List, after that it will publicly announce the proclamation of the Ulcinj Salina Ramsar area and include Ulcinj Salina in the world network of protected wetlands.

There are currently two Ramsar areas in Montenegro: National Park Skadar Lake, which was enlisted in Ramsar list in 1995 and Tivat Solila registered in 2013.



Figure 17- <https://www.tota-montenegro-news.com>



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UNESCO Report: Highway Construction Damaged Tara River

UNESCO mission visited Montenegro late last year. On the basis of the data collected during the mission, a report was prepared and published. The main conclusion of the mission is that the construction of the Bar - Boljare highway has seriously devastated the Tara River riverbed within the area protected by the UNESCO program "Man and Biosphere".

In the recommendations, the Mission proposes to urgently assess and closely monitor the impact of the construction of the highway on the downstream area of the Tara River and to keep UNESCO regularly informed.



Figure 18- Source: Unesco report: highway construction damaged tara river

European Commission report for Montenegro

The European Commission has published the 2019 report on Montenegro.

Report emphasizing the fact that "Montenegro has some level of preparation in this area. Limited progress has been made in further alignment of legislation with the EU acquis. However, significant efforts are still needed on implementation and enforcement, in particular on waste management, water quality, nature protection and climate change. "The 2018 recommendations remain valid and in the coming year, Montenegro should in particular:- accelerate implementation of the national strategy for transposition, implementation and enforcement of EU acquis on environment and climate change, especially in sectors of waste, water and nature protection;- take urgent measures to preserve and improve the ecological value of protected areas and potential Natura 2000 sites such as Ulcinj Salina, Skadar Lake, the Tara river and other river courses;- develop its National Energy and Climate Plan in line with the recommendations of the Energy Community;"



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

Proposal of the Action Plan for Energy Efficiency of Montenegro for the period 2019-2021 with the Report on the Implementation of the Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2016-2018, for the year 2018

Based on the Law on Efficient Use of Energy and EU Directive 2012/27 / EU on Energy Efficiency, this Plan has been prepared. It represents an obligation from the program of re-assignment to the European Union for the period 2019 – 2020.

ENV-NET initiatives

EUROSKOP to better inform the public on Chapter 27

Green Home has joined the environmental campaign, "Euroscope", during which the public events in several cities in Montenegro will be organized in the next five months, with the aim of better informing citizens about Chapter 27. The first event was organized in Žabljak, where 27 years ago, Montenegro was declared an ecological state by a unanimous decision of the parliament. The event was dedicated to the current topic of management of protected areas with a focus on the National Park Durmitor and the Tara River. Another event is the World Environment Day, this year thematically dedicated to air pollution issues, which has been a problem for several decades in that municipality. During the campaign, the mechanisms of public participation in the decision-making process in the field of environment and climate change will be presented, which will give a concrete contribution to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Montenegro.

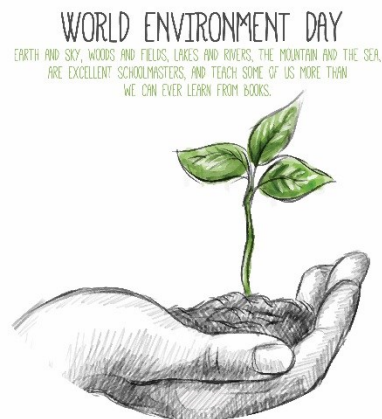


Figure 19- Source: freepik



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

The initiative of local communities against the construction of small Hydro Power Plants on the Bukovica river.

The Minister of Economy and his associates visited the municipality of Šavnik because of the protests of locals on the construction of small Hydro Power Plants "Bukovica 1" and "Bukovica 2". During the visit, a meeting of the representatives of the municipality of Šavnik, EPCG, investors and locals was held. The meeting was preceded by a tour of the river. During the meeting, the villagers organized a protest in order to once again against show disagreement on the construction of sHPP. After the meeting, the Minister of Economy addressed the citizens with a message that the Ministry of Economy is intensively revising the contracts and that the work on the construction of this SHPP will be paused until the audit is completed. The protest was supported by other local communities opposed to the construction of sHPPs. The protest was organized in cooperation of Green Home with the local community.



Figure 2G- Source: Green Home, actgreen



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

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TURKEY: AIR QUALITY IN TURKEY IS A BIG CONCERN



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5th June World Environment Day is a United Nations day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action to protect our environment. World Environment Day was organised around the theme of "air pollution" in 2019. During the international day, TEMA Foundation raised concerns over the issue of air quality in Turkey for encouraging awareness to protect the environment and human health. The Foundation announced through the press release that energy intensive sectors and coal-fired power plants are particularly the major sources of air pollution in Turkey. According to WHO, 91% of the world's population lives in places where air quality values are above WHO's limit. Likewise, the air pollution is poor in Turkey. The Right to Clean Air Platform founded by 16 public health and environment organisations including TEMA Foundation released a report on air quality in Turkey and health impacts in May. The report illustrates that 99 per cent of Turkey's population was exposed to polluted air in 2018 based on the WHO's guideline limits. In addition, the number of reported death caused by air pollution between 2016 and 2018 years in the country was 52 thousand people. Again, in 2017, 13 per cent of deaths is due to air pollution in Turkey, according to the report. As in many fast-growing cities around the world, air quality in big cities like Istanbul and Ankara is quite poor. Despite slow improvements, there are no national emission limits for PM2.5 in Turkey.

The EEA reported that PM10 concentrations in 2016 in Turkey was also higher than the EU's daily limit value of 50 µg/m³.

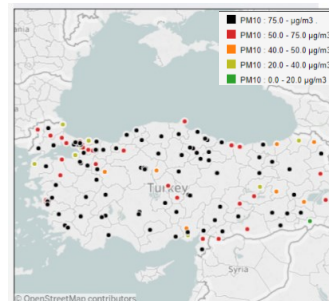


Figure 21- The PM10 percentile 90.41 concentrations in 2016, compared to daily limit under the EU Directive*
Source: Adopted from the EEA website (Available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/air/country-fact-sheets/turkey>)



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Combating the Desertification: 25th of Anniversary of the Convention

On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Convention and 2019 World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) was celebrated in Ankara with the participation of national and international officials as well as academia, and civil society representatives. With the motto of "All for Soil", TEMA Foundation as a leading Turkish environmental organisation carried out various activities during the two forums; "Soil and Climate Workshop for Children" on the 17th and the CSO Forum with the participation of 11 CSOs on the 18th June.

The climate activists 11-year-old Atlas Sarrafoğlu and 9-year-old Rüya Aygüneş opened Soil and Climate Workshop for Children where 25 children participated in. Children presented their posters drawing attention to the protection of soil and climate. The Secretary General of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification Ibrahim Thiaw and Turkish Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Dr. Bekir Pakdemirli attended to the final session of the workshop. Sarrafoğlu said "we must act now against the climate crisis. This is essential for the future of us as children". Aygüneş expressed her expectations for the issue of climate change to be included in the national curriculum as soon as possible. Observation shows in the last five years show that an average of 5.2 million hectares of forest land declines each year. In addition, 12 million hectares of agricultural land is degraded every year. In Turkey, 59 per cent of agricultural land, 64 per cent of pasture and 54 per cent of forest land are eroded at different rates.



Figure 22-Source:TEMA



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

June 2019

As a leading Turkish NGO focusing on land and soil since 1992, TEMA Foundation states that desertification is often misunderstood. Desertification does not mean the transformation of the land to deserts. It means the loss of fertility and the decrease in the vital services of the soil by destroying vegetation instead. The loss of fertility of the land leads to an increase in rural poverty and the migration of people whose income depends on the land.

The causes of land degradation as well as erosion include agricultural land destroyed by non-agricultural usages (industry, urbanisation, tourism, mining, and transportation investments), wrong tillage and irrigation, stubble burning, unsustainable agricultural practices and mining projects affecting the environment.



Figure 23- Source:TEMA

A Good News from Turkey!

The tender of the Eskişehir (Province) Alpu Coal Powered and Coal Mining Project in Tepebaşı Site has been postponed for the 7th time in June 2019. Following this achievement, the tender was cancelled. The Project was as a whole environmentally and socially unsustainable for the country. According to Greenpeace Mediterranean's report, 3.200 people might have lost their lives due to polluted air caused by the power plant.



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