



## AN AIR POLLUTION ISSUE

### Belgium

*EU climate strategy sets course, now governments must speed up: Energy efficiency and circular economy crucial*

Europe still 10 years behind Paris Agreement. €200bn of annual health benefits by cutting air pollution. The European Union's long-term climate strategy with a vision for a climate neutral Europe by 2050 has been cautiously welcomed by green groups. The strategy sets course for the right destination, but raises concern about dangerous delays on route.

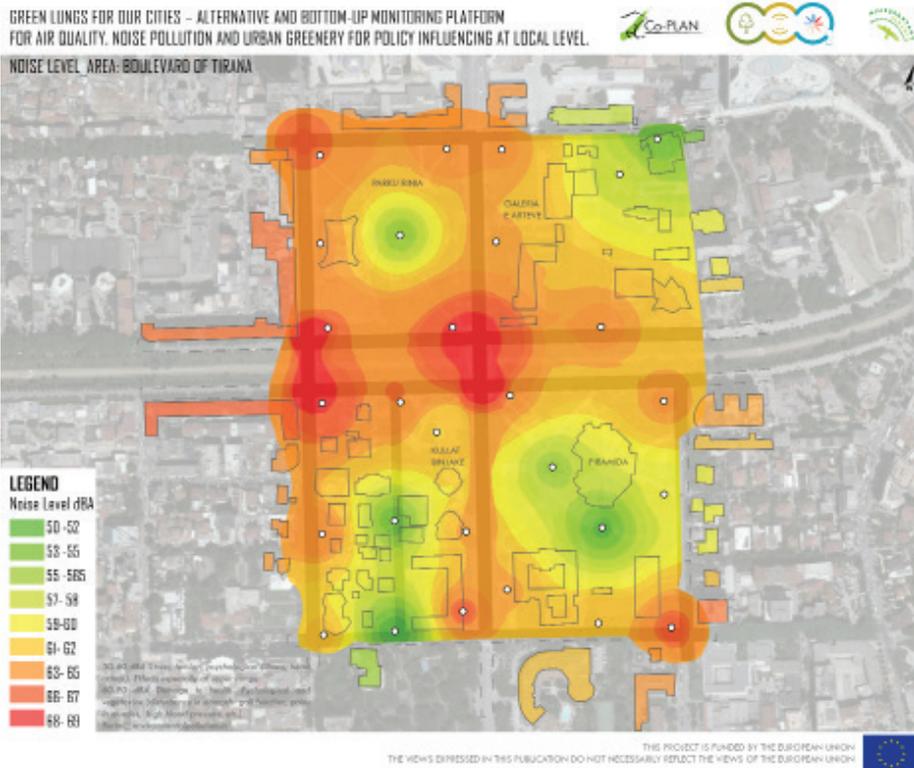
The 'Long Term Strategy for a Clean Planet for All', launched in November in Brussels, spells out the EU's position to fulfill the objective of the Paris Climate Agreement ahead of the next climate COP to be hosted in Katowice, Poland in December.

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) welcomes the strategy's headline message of a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions economy for Europe to protect people and planet from the devastating consequence of climate change. The strategy is right to highlight the crucial role of energy efficiency and the circular economy in achieving this aim. However, Europe needs to complete the journey to net zero ten years earlier by 2040 in order to meet the requirements of the Paris Agreement. EEB Energy and Climate Policy Officer Roland Joebstl said:

"A climate neutral Europe is the right destination and the wide support we have seen for this is very welcome. It's now up to governments, industry and people everywhere to accelerate the speed at which we are moving. Europe – and the world – cannot afford any further delays on this journey."

Stopping valuable energy from being wasted is widely considered as the cheapest and most effective route to cut climate-harming emissions and meet commitments made in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The EU's long term strategy includes pathways for a massive acceleration of energy efficiency and the roll-out of zero emissions buildings across Europe, but fails to harness the potential of action by 2030, leaving cost-effective emission reductions untapped.

In a circular economy waste is prevented and products are reused or recycled. By reusing and recycling more of the four most emission-intensive materials (steel, plastics, aluminum and cement), the EU could reduce the carbon footprint of its industry by 56%, which is roughly equivalent



Big cities in Albania, are facing higher level of noises, compared to the level in previous years. In environments where constant and high levels of noise occur cause health problems such as: disturbance of sleep, high levels of stress and cardiovascular problems (European Commission, 2018). What is pleasing to some people may be extremely unpleasant to others, depending on a number of psycho-sociological factors. That means to say that, any sound could potentially constitute noise, no matter how pleasing or satisfying it could be in any other circumstance, i.e. even low classical music playing in the background could potentially constitute noise to a person suffering a headache.

Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development and Milieucontact Albania are in the process of applying for the next three years an alternative methodology called "Green Lungs for our cities". The methodology is aimed at helping local NGOs to raise awareness on the growing problem of

increasing noise and air pollution, as well as the economic benefits of urban greenery across different cities in Albania.

In September this year, we piloted noise pollution measurements in an area of Tirana. We used a sound level meter in 28 monitoring points, which were selected strategically, performing measurements three times a day, each lasting app. 10-15min. The data was gathered only during working days - Monday to Saturday.

The results showed that there is an excess of allowed rates especially during the lunch period (the standard level of noise pollution during the day should not exceed 55 dB (A), and during the night the 45dB (A)). Through the results obtained on site it becomes evident that the city suffers from noise pollution caused by excessive road traffic, construction sites, and business activities such as bars and restaurants. In most areas where many public and educational institutions are located, the average noise level exceeds 60 dB.



to 300 megatons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year by mid-century. The EEB is calling for requirements that would oblige manufacturers to make consumer products more easily repairable and recyclable by design, as part of the EU Eco-design rules. Ensuring a right to repair and to longer-lasting products will help reduce energy and material waste while also saving consumers money.

Stephane Arditi, EEB Policy Manager for Circular economy, Products & Waste said: "Incorporating reparability into eco-design is win-win for EU governments and citizens, but policy makers must seize this opportunity now."

The long-term strategy also includes calls for a major expansion of renewable energy and clean mobility. It accepts that more investment is required to fund the transition while making unambiguous statements about the costs of inaction and the consequences of runaway climate change. The strategy also highlights some of the co-benefits of cutting emissions, including €200bn of annual health benefits from cutting toxic air pollution.

### **Challenge accepted – Five reasons NGOs won't see you in court: EU governments warned to remove barriers to justice**

Challenging environmentally damaging decisions in court is burdensome and barriers to justice are widespread across the EU, according to the new EEB report published today.

Accessing environmental justice is a struggle in the EU, a new report finds. Despite having some of the most advanced environmental laws, Member States are failing in some cases to ensure access to justice for NGOs and citizens can challenge questionable decisions in the courts.

The 'Challenge Accepted?' report identifies and explains five current barriers to access to justice: 'standing', 'time', 'knowledge', 'money' and 'repercussions' and makes key recommendations to remove these barriers.

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is Europe's largest network of environmental organizations with around 150 members in over 30 countries.

Francesca Carlsson, Legal Officer at the EEB, said: "Time and again in Europe citizens have stood up to dangerous government decisions by challenging them in court. In the UK and Spain, governments have been forced to act on air pollution, in Portugal off-shore oil-drilling was abandoned and in Germany logging in the Hambach forest was stopped – all thanks to legal challenges by citizens' groups.

NGOs must be able to continue to play this important role as watchdogs of Europe's hard-

won environmental protections.

Member States should work to ensure access to courts, allow citizens and NGOs to stand, promote appropriate timelines, limit costs, give capacity to judges, and protect citizens from possible repercussions."

#### **Key facts:**

- In 2003, the Commission had a legislative proposal for a Directive on Access to Justice, but this initiative was blocked by the Member States and remained dormant in the Council for years. In 2014 the proposal was eventually abandoned.

- Timelines can be extremely restrictive for NGOs. Member States should ensure that enough time is allocated to NGOs to take part in the legal process.

- In some countries outside the EU, notably in China and India, there are specialized environmental courts where the judges presiding have the scientific knowledge to hear environmental cases.

- The Anti-SLAPP Directive in preparation doesn't include NGOs, the EEB thinks it is a mistake as NGOs are a key player in the protection of the environment

This report is the first in a series of four. The next report will be released ahead of the European Parliament elections in May 2019, and will focus on Public Participation as a tool for implementing environmental rules in Member States. For more information on the Implement For LIFE project of the EEB, click here.

### **Green NGOs welcome environmental commitments in Brexit deal**

After almost two years of negotiations, an agreement on the UK's withdrawal from the EU, and on the framework for the future EU-UK relationship, has been reached. Green NGOs welcome the commitments in the deal that environmental standards will not be reduced as a result of Brexit.

Under the Withdrawal Agreement, both the UK and the EU have committed to ensuring that the level of environmental protection as provided for by existing "law, regulations, and practices" will not be lowered after the UK leaves the EU. Importantly, both parties have also pledged, in the accompanying Political Declaration, to build on these commitments in the negotiations on their long-term future relationship, which will begin after March next year.

On Sunday Nov 25, 2018, EU27 leaders further emphasized the importance of maintaining "ambitious level playing field conditions...in

particular in the field of environment" when it comes to these future negotiations. Green NGOs welcome this commitment which will be essential in order to avoid any future undercutting of the EU's environmental standards.

The UK Parliament and the European Parliament are expected to vote on the proposed deal in December and January respectively.

Now it is critical that the UK puts in place robust new domestic arrangements for environmental monitoring, reporting, oversight and enforcement to ensure that its commitments under the Withdrawal Agreement are fully complied with in practice.

Jeremy Wates, Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau, said:

"We would have preferred to see stronger language linking the level of future UK access to the EU single market to the UK's alignment with EU laws protecting the environment as they evolve in the future. However, the various references to the importance of ensuring a level playing field provide some measure of reassurance that the UK will not be able to gain a competitive advantage by undercutting future EU environmental standards."

Green NGOs now call on the UK and the EU to ensure continued progress on environmental ambition in the next phase of negotiations, fully in line with EU policies, and will be following the process closely.

*N.B. This generally positive assessment of the environmental content of the deal should not in any way be understood as implying that pursuing Brexit according to the deal would be better for the environment than the UK remaining in the EU.*

### **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

I – Entity Republika Srpska requested the withdrawal of the Third Environmental Performance Review-EPR III of Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the announcement, the Report is full of mistakes and inadequate information. The laws, bylaws, protected areas, the institutional jurisdiction are named mistakes that are of utmost importance to be corrected, after which the Report would be distributed and available to the EU and public, in general.

II – Local communities are still fighting against the sHPPs in BiH. At the beginning of November, citizens gathered in Jablanica, in order to protest against sHPP on the river Doljanka. This area represents intact nature, valuable for scientist, nature lovers and tourists. The river is well known for fly-fishing activity, potentially ruined by the sHPP construction.

III – BiH still did not provide the answers to the EC

questionnaire. Additional questions are related to the political criterion (106), while in the economic criterion, the European Commission asked 33 additional questions. Below is chapter 19 - Social Policy and Employment (43), Chapter 14 - Transport Policy (39), and Chapter 26 - Education and Culture (36).

## Italy

*Save the date:*

### 3 – 14 December – COP24 hosted in Katowice, Poland.

Climate change presents the single biggest threat to sustainable development everywhere and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable. This year's summit will include: 24. Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24), 14. Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the Conference of Signatories to the Paris Agreement. About 20 thousand people from 190 countries will take part in the event, including politicians, representatives of non-governmental organizations, scientific community and business sector.

### 14-18 January 2019 – First substantive session of the working group for the Global Pact for the Environment in Nairobi, Kenya

Under the belt of the UN General Assembly Resolution "Towards a Global Pact for the Environment" adopted last May, the working group ad hoc open-ended will meet to put the basis for a technical and evidence-based report that identifies and assesses possible gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments with a view to strengthening their implementation.

## Kosovo

*The Ombudsperson issued the Report with a recommendation on the failure of the competent authorities to undertake actions for the management of waste containing asbestos*

During November, The Ombudsperson delivered to the competent bodies the Report with Recommendations concerning the failure of competent authorities to fulfill obligations for management of material containing asbestos within the territory of the country.

The Report aims drawing attention of competent authorities, respectively of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP) as well as municipalities, on the need to undertake immediate preventive measures in order to reduce the negative impact to the environment and human health.

Based on the investigations conducted, the Ombudsperson, pursuant to Article 135, paragraph 3 of the Constitution of Republic of Kosovo, as well as Article 18, paragraph 1.5 and 1.7 of the Law on Ombudsperson, recommends that:

1. The Government to undertake immediate measures for management of waste with asbestos content, as foreseen with the Law No. 04/L-060 on Waste.

2. The Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP) to undertake additional measures for management of waste containing asbestos;

3. Municipalities, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, to promptly undertake measures for implementation of obligations deriving from the Law No. 04/L-060 on Waste and the Administrative Instruction No. 22/2015 for the Management of Waste Containing Asbestos.

4. The Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning to immediately begin, through various forms, information and awareness rising on asbestos impact on human health and environment, as well as on forms of management.

5. The Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, with the exception of information restricted by law, to make available to the public the NGO "Pro Vitae" Report on asbestos research of all public buildings in Municipality of Peja and Istog.

6. The Committee for Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Development, Environment and Spatial Planning of the Kosovo Assembly to seek responsibility from the Minister of MESP for the failure to undertake measures provided for in the Law No. 04/L-060 on Waste, Administrative Instruction No. 22/2015 for the Management of Waste Containing Asbestos.

## The Ombudsperson Institution and the Kosovo Justice Institute organized the round table "Preventing and Combating Environmental Problems"

On November 22 - The Ombudsperson Office in cooperation with the Kosovo Justice Institute organized the round table "Preventing and Combating Environmental Problems". The purpose of organizing the roundtable is to discuss the reason for the delays of environmental cases in the Prosecution and the Court as well as to find ways to overcome the challenges of preventing and combating environmental problems. At the roundtable were representatives of the competent institutions for environmental protection at the local and central level, representatives of the justice bodies, Kosovo Police, representatives of International Organizations, Embassies, Civil Society and Citizens.

The Ombudsman, Hilmi Jashari emphasized to the attendees that the situation of the environment is affecting Article 2 of the European Convention, the right to life, while delays in making decisions on these cases affect Article 6, the right to a fair trial of the Convention European Convention on Human Rights, and Article 13, the right to an effective remedy. The People's Advocate stated that it is a positive obligation of the state to guarantee the rights of citizens to the citizens.

From the discussions it was understood that there are no statistics on these cases in the prosecutor's office and the court, there are delays and these issues do not fall into the priorities of the prosecutorial and judicial system.

<https://oik-rks.org/2018/11/22/institucioni-i-avokatit-te-popullit-dhe-instituti-i-kosoves-per-drejtesi-organizoi-tryezen-parandalimi-dhe-luftimi-i-problemeve-te-mjedisit/>



### Conference on Air Pollution and Urban Planning was held on 29 November in Kosovo National Library, Pristina, Kosovo, organized by French Embassy in Kosovo and Balkan Green Foundation.

The French Embassy in Kosovo and Balkan Green Foundation (BGF) organized a Conference on Air Pollution and Urban Planning at the National Library of Kosovo in Pristina.

This high-level conference enabled participants to discuss policy challenges related to air quality in Pristina and its links with urban planning, where French experts exchanged with Kosovo counterparts on EU-related requirements and policies in the area of air quality and best practices related to urban planning.

The municipality of Pristina faces long-lasting problems related to rapid urbanization, such as deficiencies in waste and water management and

insufficient environmental friendly policies in the field of transportation or energy. Among those issues, the poor level of air quality, specifically during the winter, despite being very well-known, has not yet been addressed successfully.

The first panel focused on air quality in Pristina and deal with air quality monitoring, the main sources of air pollution (residential heating, road traffic and industrial emissions) and its impact on environment and public health.

The second panel helped designing solutions to improve air quality in Pristina and initiate ecological transition in relation to urban planning such as transportation, energy efficiency, and green areas

### Kosovo had 3,700 deaths per year from polluted air

The European Environment Agency has announced that Kosovo had 3,700 deaths per year

from polluted air, ranking the first in Europe. In other words, polluted air has caused the loss of life of 0.2% of the population.

The European Environment Agency has published data on deaths in absolute value in the report "Air Quality in Europe - 2018".

The report presents the latest official air quality data reported by more than 2,500 monitoring stations and refers to 2015.

In Serbia, this indicator is 0.18% of the population, about 13 thousand deaths, and in Macedonia 0.14% of the population or 3,000 deaths, ranking second and third countries respectively in Europe. Despite the figures, according to these measurements, Macedonia is found to have a higher concentration of air pollution particles than all other countries in the region.

<https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-quality-in-europe-2018>



Source: 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges

### Montenegro

#### a) Proposal of the European Parliament Resolution for Montenegro

Most of the hydropower projects in Montenegro are declared as against the European conventions and laws and have to be revised according to the proposal for the **European Parliament Resolution**. Discussion of this document was planned for 28th of November in European Parliament.

#### Statement of the Energy Community Secretariat on small hydropower development

Hydropower is a natural resource which needs to be exploited in a responsible manner and in line with European rules, but also with general principles such as transparency, legal certainty and accountability. Opposition by the local communities should be taken very seriously by developers and authorities alike. The Secretariat encourages constructive dialogue and is ready

to mediate upon request by either side". More information about the statement can be found at the Energy Community website.

#### b) Montenegro – Country news

##### **Government of Montenegro has established the EKO FOND**

The Government of Montenegro adopted the decision on the establishment of the **EKO FOND**, an obligation towards the EU Directives and the Law on Environment.

The task of the Environmental Protection Fund is to provide funds for the implementation of projects, which aim to preserve all components of the environment and rational use of natural resources as basic conditions for sustainable development.



### Oil and gas exploring has started in Montenegrin part of the sea

In 2016, the Government of Montenegro signed the contract with the Italian – Russian consortium for the exploration of oil and gas. The contract is related to the 4 blocks in the Municipality of Ulcinj. After that, the Government has signed the contract with the Greek Company Energean for 2 blocks in municipality of Bar. The seismologic survey has started in the beginning of November. This project has not been accepted by the ecological NGOs and local communities who are living on the coast. A group of citizens with the support of NGOs has started four - days protest marsh against the seismological survey. The protest has been led by Mr. Mirsad Kurgaš from the SOS for Montenegro NGO. He has walked four days from Ulcinj to Herceg Novi and informed people about the project. Also, the activists have lunched the petition against the seismological survey. You can sign the petition here:

<http://chnng.it/xvyN5v9X8D>

### ENV-NET initiatives

*Round table – Effective campaigns against the building the sHPPs*

NGO Green Home has organized the round table: “Effective campaigns against the building the sHPPs”. The main aim of the round table was to discuss about effective campaigns against the building of sHPPs and to agree on joint actions between the different stakeholders. The event was attended by the representatives of NGO Zelena Akcija from Croatia, Centre for environmental protection from Banja Luka, Bosnia and Hercegovina, local NGOs from Montenegro as well as local communities. The first session of the round table was presentations about the effective campaigns in the region and current

state regarding the sHPPs in Montenegro. The second session was related to the working groups and developing the joint actions. Green Home will comprehend all proposed activities and put these actions into one action plan which will be implemented in the following years.



Round table\_©Green Home

### Meeting with the representatives of DG NEAR and DG Environment

*The European Delegation to Montenegro has invited the environmental NGOs to the meeting with representatives of DG NEAR and DG ENVIRONMENT in order to discuss about the Chapter 27. Representatives of NGO Green Home attended the meeting and presented the crucial findings from Country Specific Report for Chapter 27 and 15, which is produced through the ENV.Net project.*



Photo\_Info session\_©Green Home

### Financial support to third parties

NGO Green Home has announced the call for NGOs and media for submitting the project proposals. The deadline for submitting the project was 10th of December, 17:00h. More information about the call, please find on the following link: <http://www.greenhome.co.me/index.php?IDSP=1117&jezik=lat>  
In order to introduce NGOs and media with the subgrants call, NGO Green Home has organized the info session in the EU INFO CENTRE.

### Protest against the unplanned and unsustainable development of sHPPs

Green Home supported and joined the protest against the unsustainable and unplanned the building of sHPPs which was organized on 7th of November in Budva, the same day when was organized 3rd International Summit and



Protest against the unsustainable and unplanned development of sHPPs

Exhibition Hydropower Balkans. The protest was attended by the local communities from Plav, Šavnik and local communities from Albania, as well as the local and national NGOs as well. This was the initiative of Balkan River Defense.

Save the date:

**11th of December 2018 - International Mountain day**

### Republic of Macedonia

*Measures for combating air pollution, or for hibernation till salvation?*

Air pollution put Skopje, Tetovo and Bitola among the top-ten for 2017

The Republic of Macedonia, according to the latest report by the European Environment Agency for Air pollution in Europe, is ranked worst among all European countries, with the most polluted air in the cities. Skopje, Bitola and Tetovo are among the 10 most polluted cities in Europe in 2017. According to the latest analysis by the World Health Organization (WHO), air pollution is the main cause of over 1300 deaths per year, and an increased number of people with respiratory diseases, costing the state about 2.5% of annual GDP for additional health care services.

Due to a number of socio-economic factors, air pollution is increasing from year to year, and the situation is deteriorating (and becomes alarming). Certain analyses and modelling of emissions of polluting substances from the household heating in Skopje indicate that pollution will increase by 30% by 2025 unless urgent systemic measures for emission reduction are undertaken. These figures

will be even higher if emissions from other sectors, such as transport (with annual fastest rising share in air pollution) are added.

With the beginning of the heating season, the problems of air pollution are again our prime-time topic.

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

For the implementation of this plan, the government foresees 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 the reduction of air pollution is to tackle, or prevent,

the heating distribution network.

Other measures foreseen in the plan include: amendments to the Law on Vehicles (introduction of environmental stickers); subsidies for purchasing electric and hybrid vehicles; special winter traffic regime on the days when the pollution is higher; amendments to the Law on Industrial Emissions; transparent publication of all companies with valid A and B integrated licenses; urgent realization of the plan for greening, with the funds from the compensation for the construction of the Vodno gas pipeline; enhanced controls on construction activities; etc.

An additional benefit from the implementation of these measures and activities for reducing air pollution should be the fulfilment of the objectives of the Paris Agreement, i.e. reduction of greenhouse emissions, increased percentage of energy efficient facilities and increased use of

country will need at least seven years to reduce the air pollution. The question is how until then? Well, the wind, the rain, or maybe hibernation for salvation.

### Regional debate on EU Sub-granting scheme in the Western Balkans

*EU Sub-granting scheme as a financial infusion for organizations*

*"We, as the EU, want to support the democratic progress throughout the country and in the region. Sub-granting scheme is a flexible instrument that we use to reach out to small organizations that do not have the capacity to carry out larger projects," said Nicola Bertolini of the EU Delegation in Macedonia at the opening of the Debate on Sub-granting organized by the Civil Resource Centre.*



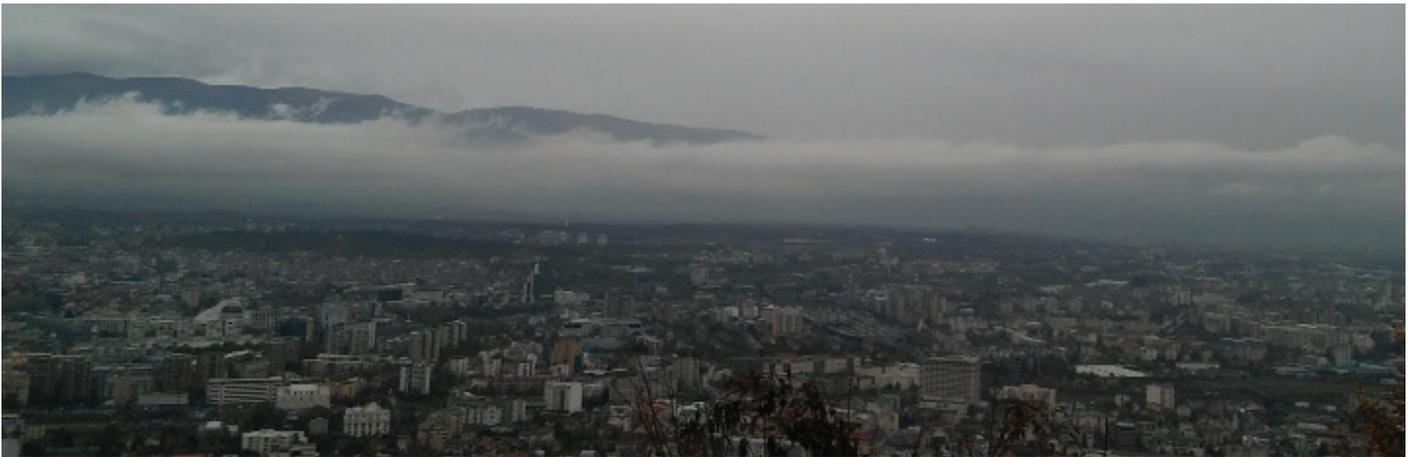
Regional debate on sub-granting, Skopje 30th October, 2018 / Source: Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation

sources of pollution. It foresees several priority measures, such as: monitoring and replacement of all instruments in the 18 monitoring stations and application of modern mathematical models for modeling and proper forecasting of air pollution; increased inspection controls; public campaigns; changes in the legislation; dealing with the sources of pollution (household heating, transport, industry, construction, waste).

One of the measures in the plan for reducing air pollution is the reduction of the value added tax for heat energy supply from 18% to 5%, by which the Ministry of Environment and the Government expect to convince the citizens to re-connect to

renewable energy sources. However, the citizens are not convinced if and when these measures will show effects. The environmental activists launched a petition "Zero Tolerance for (Air) Pollution and Endangerment of Life", appealing to all citizens of Macedonia to sign it. According to them, it may be the right time to consider filing a lawsuit against the state because it puts the lives of citizens at risk. If all instruments in Macedonia are exhausted and no solution satisfying the citizens is found, they are threatening with a lawsuit at the International Court of Human Rights. The Macedonian Academy of Science and Arts in its recent analysis foresees that the

The call for project proposals under ENV.net sub-granting scheme is currently open and ongoing in all of the project partners' countries. In this context, we wish to share with our readers this information about the regional event related to the topic of sub-granting that was held in Skopje on 30th October, 2018. The event was attended by representatives of the EU delegations from the region and representatives of the civil sector: organizations that implement projects with a sub-granting component and small grants recipients through this instrument. The event gave the opportunity to share regional experiences in the sub-granting. Dario Di



Skopje in November 2018 / Source: 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges

Benedetto of the EU Delegation in Kosovo spoke about the experience there, where 317 sub-grants were awarded within two years. It was noted that there have been cases of overlapping activities, as well as examples of insufficient level of mentoring of the sub-grantees. Tina Divjak from Slovenia pointed to the bureaucratic processes that the donor should adjust according to the size of the project. As she noted if dealing less with bureaucracy, more time could be dedicated to the activities of the project. She also added that “the donor dedicates 20-30% of the project funds to monitoring, to prevent a 2% loss”. Irena Ivanova from the EU Delegation in Skopje spoke about the situation in Macedonia, where 350 projects ranging from 5,000 to 25,000 euros have been supported through the re-granting scheme. She agreed that the procedures should be simplified, but only in the case of better practice and greater transparency. The representatives of organizations from Macedonia that are (have been) implementing sub-granting schemes stressed that they take into account for sub-granting recipients to be young organizations with small budgets and evenly distributed across the country's planning regions. The representatives of the small grant recipients pointed that they were satisfied with the cooperation and agreed that this type of financial support is an infusion for the organizations. Their remarks were related to the complex administrative procedures that did not correspond with the size or duration of their projects, in particular the registration of projects in the Secretariat for European Affairs and the Public Revenue Office. The representatives of the ENV.net team from Macedonia participated at this event, with the aim to get first-hand information on the subject, but also to share the experience from the previous two phases of the ENV.net project.

### **Serbia**

*November 2018. – EU Mission to Serbia dedicated to Chapter 27 issues*

On November 15 and 16, a joint EU-DGs NEAR and ENV mission was in Serbia with objective to raise awareness and build up common understanding on key systemic issues linked to alignment with heavy investments directives of Chapter 27. On November 15, it was planned to meet NGOs. At final meeting on November 16, Chapter 27 Negotiating Position and Technical matters update were presented by NG27 (Negotiation Group 27) and discussed. Members of NT (Core Negotiation Team) for Chapter 27 also participated, as well as representatives of different ministries and institutions.

### **Serbia is preparing a negotiating position for Chapter 27**

Chapter 27 - Environment and climate change, has been characterized as one of the most difficult and most expensive in the negotiation process with the EU. Serbia submitted the first draft of the negotiating position for informal consultations and the EC has already responded giving the additional guidance through some questions. Chairman of the Negotiating Group for Chapter 27 (PG27) was recently at a press conference in the Botanical Garden in Belgrade presented Serbia's progress in terms of this chapter, pointing out that some conditions are very time consuming. That will be the reason why the Ministry of Environment will request delayed implementation, costing Serbia an estimated 11.5 billion euro. He pointed out that the message from Brussels is very clear that no EU funds will be available, if Serbia will not be able to collect the money for environmental protection, based on principles - the polluter pays, the dedicated funds for environmental protection and transfer of these funds in the protection of the environment and green economy. The Second draft of Negotiating

position for Chapter 27 - Environment and climate change, the Ministry of Environment Protection of the Republic of Serbia should submit to the European Commission in December 2018. By the end of 2019, Serbia should prepare a final negotiating position for Chapter 27 and send to Brussels. The Minister of the Environmental Protection, Mr. Goran Trivian expected opening of Chapter 27 by the end of the year.

### **Turkey**

The Zero Waste Project Advancing Circular Economy in Turkey The Summit on the Zero Waste (Sıfır Atık in Turkish) Project was held on 1 November 2018 in Ankara with the participation of First Lady, Turkish officials, private sector, Chairperson of TEMA Foundation, REC Turkey and other NGO representatives. The main purpose of the Summit was to evaluate the project after the launch in October 2017. The Project, initiated by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation and supported by Tema Foundation, is meant to promote recycling, to reduce wastes that are not recycled, to secure resource efficiency and reusing waste materials as well as recovery of wastes. The project will be applied in ministries, municipalities, hotels, restaurants, schools, offices, marinas, hospitals, shopping malls, terminals and universities. In general, Turkey is mostly aligned with EU Acquis related to waste management. Following the first year of the project, Turkey continued to fulfill the requirements of Turkish Regulation on Waste Management (Official Gazette: 29314; 02.04.2015) and other legislative obligations. In addition, the Zero Waste Project aims to advance the circular economy in Turkey. Even though there has been some progress under the project, the main message during the Summit was that Turkey still needs to revise its consumption patterns; to make sure that all wastes are classified by their sources and recycled; and to increase public awareness on climate change.

In addition, an integrated waste management system is necessary for each province and town in Turkey. Importantly, informal dumping sites and landfilling methods still remain problematic in the country. In this respect, Turkey commits to reducing municipal landfill from 88,7 % in 2014 to 65 % in 2023. The current informal dumping sites will be rehabilitated across the country under the National Waste Management Action Plan (2016-2023). According to Turkish Statistical Institute, the total amount of waste in Turkey was 45 million tonnes and total municipal wastes accounted 31,6 million tonnes in 2016. The updated rates on regular storage and other methods used by municipalities are as follows: municipal garbage 28,8 %, recovery 9,8 % and others 0,2 %.

### Women Leaders Discussed Climate Change in Turkey

Climate change is felt on a local scale greater than ever. In many countries, women are more vulnerable than men to climate change and play a leading role in securing sustainable agriculture practices, heating, energy use, drought, water and food security as well as education for sustainable development at local level. The workshop entitiled "Women Leaders for Climate" organised by TEMA Foundation, and funded by Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, brought together 20 women from the Marmara Region with volunteers of TEMA Foundation in the provinces, Turkish NGOs, and journalists in order to discuss local climate-related issues. During the workshop, women leaders come together to discuss issues, such as: promoting women leadership for combating climate change at local level, contributing to increased awareness on women empowerment, reducing greenhouse gases and local vulnerability to the harmful effects of climate change, providing education on sustainability and climate change and providing a forward-looking initiatives. Following the presentations, the groups focused on the most significant impacts they experience in their towns and finding solutions to climate mitigation and adapting to life in a changing climate. At the end of the workshop, the general feeling among the women leaders was that municipalities, schools, NGOs and teachers are at the frontline of adaptation and mitigation concerns. They underlined the importance of linkage between women leadership and combating climate change. They also proposed the following solutions in eliminating local climate-related impacts in their home towns by: providing green spaces and corridors in urban areas, using local transportation, reducing household

wastes and organising advocacy campaigns in cooperation with local people, municipalities, TEMA volunteers, teachers and other NGOs.

### This year's Slogan: "Protect Soil; Protect Climate"

During 12 and 18 November, TEMA Foundation initiated several events entitiled "Fighting With Erosion". This year's slogan is "Protect Soil; Protect Climate". Turkey is prone to erosion due to its topographic and climatic conditions. The degree of erosion is increasing as a result of human activities and climate change. With a high proportion of Turkish land, erosion is seen in 86 % of country's land. The web page of "Soil TEMA" ([www.topraktema.org](http://www.topraktema.org)) was also updated.

### EBRD Release of Draft Energy Sector Strategy

On October 25th, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) released a new draft of the strategy in the energy sector. The public consultation was open until 9 November 2018. TEMA Foundation took this opportunity to deliver comments and recommendations on the draft. Following the public consultation meetings in Istanbul, Ankara, Warsaw, Almaty, Kiev,

Belgrade and Casablanca, the Board of Directors will discuss all comments and recommendations delivered. The EBRD will then finalise the strategy by the end of 2018, when the Board will approve the strategy. Based on the current situation at global level mentioned above, we included a critique concerning fossil fuel-based investments in the short and mid-term commitments of the EBRD. As we all, rapid and substantial decarbonisation is required in order to stay in the line with the Paris Agreement temperature increase target. The draft strategy focuses on four strategic pillars, as follows: decarbonisation and electrification, well-functioning energy markets, cleaner oil and gas value chains and energy efficiency. In general, the draft strategy promotes expanding the use of natural gas. In this regard, natural gas should not be promoted as an option toward low-carbon economy. The bank should revise the strategy to eliminate gaps between the global policy objectives and state one. The bank should also encourage countries like Turkey to ratify the Paris Agreement and as well as to adopt and implement ambitious NDCs. For more information on the draft strategy: [www.ebrd.com](http://www.ebrd.com)

