



ALBANIA: "IT IS IMPORTANT TO START DRAWING LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE"

TECHNICAL NOTE: RECONSTRUCTING THE CITY FOLLOWING A NATURAL DISASTER- POST EARTHQUAKE URBAN RESILIENCE

POLIS University | Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development | A.U.A - Albanian Union of Architects and Urban Planners

Figure 1- Cover of Technical Note
Source: <http://www.co-plan.org/en/auto-draft/>

RECONSTRUCTING THE CITY FOLLOWING A NATURAL DISASTER- POST EARTHQUAKE URBAN RESILIENCE

After the events of natural hazards, it looks like we are challenging another struggle... 'The Earthquake one'. The events of the end of November 2019 triggered a foretold crisis regarding safety, quality of planning and construction, and administration and governance of territories in Albania, which were manifested on all levels and dimensions. This happening stands now as an undeniable proof of our failure in city making, despite the efforts mobilized



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

in some sectors, or institutions. It is altogether more evident that institutions and the society are unprepared to handle, mitigate or prevent major crises of a destructive nature.

The issue of post-disaster, resilient reconstruction in Albanian cities is complex and calls for an integrated, comprehensive and transparent approach. In order for cities to perform successfully and make citizens feel safe and comfortable in their urban environment, it is necessary to plan **for resilience**. This applies to both the overall planning processes and post-crisis reconstruction, regardless of the nature of the disaster. What could we have done differently, and what should we do differently in the future?

International Symposium

“Today’s Challenges of Construction Industry and Resilience to Natural Hazards”

On December 6, 2019, POLIS University, Faculty of Architecture and Engineering, Co-PLAN, and the Albanian Union of Architects and Urban Planners, with the support of the Embassy of Japan, organized a scientific and awareness-raising forum on “Challenges of the Construction Industry and Resilience to Natural Disasters”. This one-day event brought together professionals and technicians, scientists, academics, experts from public institution, media, students and civil society representatives in a discussion on city development and the challenges of construction and reconstruction in Albania. The activity focused on the two major seismic events that occurred in September and November 2019, which had significant consequences on human lives, as well as substantial socio-economic impacts.

Experts from POLIS University and Co-PLAN, Tirana Polytechnic University, the Institute of Geosciences, Energy, Water and Environment (IGJEUM), the Municipality of Tirana, and other independent professionals and city activists contributed actively to the forum. A group of experts from Japan and New Zealand brought their countries’ experience in coping with natural disasters, post-crisis response, and societal recovery, as well as in planning and reconstructing resilient cities, in anticipation of future crises.



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MONTENEGRO: GREEN HOME FILES CRIMINAL COMPLAINT OVER SHPP PLAN

Green Home filed criminal complaint over Bijelo Polje SHPP plan. Criminal case is raised with the Supreme State Prosecution Office of Montenegro against officials it claims are responsible for abuse of power in the procedure of project development for small hydropower plant Lještanica. The facility is envisaged to be built at the water supply source at the eponymous river. The case has reached the Constitutional Court in a separate process, while locals disputed the land expropriation.



Figure 2- Source: Green Home



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

Site visit

Green Home with local communities organized site visit in Bijelo Polje with aim to introduce media with the problem of the unsustainable building of sHPP “Ljestanica” and breaking the law throughout the procedure.

In previous period consortium “Hydro Ljestanica” submitted an application for a building permit for the construction of a small hydroelectric power plant, and public hearing was held on 17th of December. This was the great opportunity to organize site visit for media in order to emphasize the problem of sHPPs “Ljestanica” on national and regional level.

Site visit was divided in two parts. First part was a protest in front of Municipality of Bijelo Polje, before the public hearing begins. The second part was participation in public hearing on the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the construction of sHPP Ljestanica. In cooperation with local communities, comments on this document were prepared, and presented during the public hearing.

Forum in open

NGO Green Home organized Forums in open – Info day about climate change. Forums was held in three different cities – Podgorica, Budva and Berane, most popular cities in Montenegro. The aim was to raise awareness and point on one of the most discussed topics today – global climate change crisis, in the way that could easily catch the people’s attention. Forum consisted several components – performance act, interactive way of conversation regarding current climate change issues, as well as examples of what we can do about it interactive and educative games for children. The main focus of the Forum was the photo exhibition – Climate is changing, so should we. Since COP25 was happened at the December, we use this opportunity to organize Forums in open during this time and point at climate change issue.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

SERBIA: SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

There are three key approaches heading to resource efficiency: 1) extended producer responsibility systems; 2) green public procurement, and 3) business partnerships along the value chain.

At the UN level, In 2019, the final UNEP resolution, inter alia, invites Member States, among others, to develop sustainable public procurement policies and update their public procurement legal frameworks in line with Sustainable Development Goal target 12.7 (promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities).

At the EU level, the Commission has adopted the new and revised EU Green Public Procurement criteria including circular economy aspects and promoted their uptake through guidance documents and training sessions. The Commission is leading by example in its own procurement. Under the Public Procurement Strategy; EU supports schemes and voluntary criteria for green public procurement (Public Procurement Act (2015)).

In Serbia still there is no specific strategic document on the circular economy. In terms of that, following the logic and structure of the circular economy action plan, public procurement accounts for a large share of production and consumption and can drive the circular economy.

But first step has been done in green public procurement through stakeholder synergy. There is a project run by Safer Chemicals Alternative (ALHem) in Serbia, with overall goal to contribute to developing and fostering the green public procurement (GPP) in Serbia by building CSOs capacity to support public authorities to engage in GPP, as well as other stakeholders involved in this process in order to reduce adverse impact on health and the environment.. At the policy level it is advocating for National Action Plan for Green Public Procurement, while at the technical level project is aimed to develop the Green Criteria and Technical Specifications for 4 product groups.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

In the frame of this project, advocacy is undertaken to competent authorities to adopt the National Action Plan (NAP) for GPP. Environmental Ambassadors for Sustainable Development participated in workshops organized to introduce GPP criteria to CSOs in Serbia. EASD also signed initiative for adoption of NAP for GPP, becoming the part of the network of CSOs willing to advocate for GPP.

GPP Guidance is developed based on EU GPP criteria/technical standards/specifications for four types of products (paper, IT equipment, cleaning service and furniture), as well as Brochure of good examples of GPP implementation in practice and Guidance for Green Procurement for CSOs. All material available at: <http://alhem.rs/zelene-javne-nabavke/>.

Through Eco-schools network some of GPP criteria has been tested (paper and cleaning service) in small scale procurement, as pilot initiative, in order to receive any feed-back how selected criteria is working in practice, in line with official public procurement procedures. More similar actions will be supported in following period through Eco-schools network in Serbia.

Some of the elements of GPP are incorporated in Green Key criteria (eco-label in the tourism sector, awards for excellence in the field of environmental responsibility and sustainable operation within the tourism industry. The Green Key program is present in Serbia from 2014, there are 4 hotels awarded (Radisson Collection Old Mill, IN hotel, Hilton Belgrade and Mona hotel) and under the set of more than 120 criteria, there are elements for sustainable public procurement incorporated. This is especially related to commitment that suppliers and service providers that Green Key hotels cooperate with, have to have their own environmental policy in line with sustainable use of the resources.



Figure 3- Source: <http://en.alhem.rs/green-public-procurement-through-stakeholder-synergy/>



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TURKEY: EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT BUREAU CONDUCTED ITS WATER WORKING GROUP MEETING IN BRUSSELS

TEMA Foundation Experts working on river basin planning attended the Water Working Group meeting organized by European Environment Bureau in Brussels for the dates of 17-18 December. The working group agenda was quite busy since the Water Framework Directive has recently gone through a fitness and the conclusions were presented in the WG meeting. The WG members assessed the projects which are threatening in their countries and shared experiences to fight against. TEMA presented its EU funded participatory river basin management planning project and received feedbacks from the participants.

Just Transition Round Table Meeting by TEMA Foundation, CAN Europe and IPC on 20 December in İstanbul

The concept of just transition, opportunities and bottlenecks of a climate friendly transition have been discussed for the first time in Turkey on 20th December. The round table started with presentations of TEMA, CAN and IPM representatives on transition opportunities on agriculture and energy as well as the experiences from Europe. Following the presentations, the local and national CSOs, international bodies, unions, university representatives, mayors and industrial NGOs discussed the framework, cases from the local coal economies, opportunities and potential



Figure 4- December EEB-WWG
Source: TEMA



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019



Figure 5- Coal Plants

Source: TEMA

threats. It is important the concept has been started to be discussed by stakeholders from NGOs and social stakeholders instead of industrial stakeholders since the concept can be easily converted to a compensation mechanisms for coal plant operator.

Following the Right to Clean Air campaign coal plants, the President vetoed the draft bill extending the deadline for environmental investment of the coal plants

The article 45 proposal (The bill proposing to extend the exemption of the environmental investments of the coal plants) had been rejected at the parliament with a joint motion of the political parties at the parliament following the campaign carried out by the Right to Clean Air Platform where TEMA is an active partner, back in February 2019. The proposal was brought to the agenda of the parliament again in November 2019 (As article 50). Following the campaign of the Right to Clean Air Platform, the article was vetoed by the President of Turkish Republic and sent back to the Parliament where the proposal was canceled. The president justified the veto by referring to the violation of Turkish Constitution about the right to live in a healthy environment.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 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.

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES COP25, TOOK PLACE FOR THE DATES OF 2-13 DECEMBER IN MADRID (SPAIN)

COP25 took place for the dates of 2 -13 December in Madrid (Spain) following the cancellation of the event by Chile just one month before it was due to begin. 2020 is a crucial year for the Paris Agreement. States must have present new plans, the so-called NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions), guaranteeing the main aim of keeping the planet's temperature below 2°C with respect to the pre-industrial era, making efforts so that it does not exceed 1.5°C. COP25 in Madrid was the last conference before this happens. As such, the Parties have the obligation, which can no longer be postponed, to establish clear rules so that the measures signed in the Agreement come into force. One of the critical points, and most difficult to resolve in COP25, will be the definition of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, in which the participation of the private sector is essential. The main aim of this article is to construct the basis of an emissions trading system that concludes in a global carbon price, i.e., a market that permits countries to exchange, buy and sell carbon credits and in this way reduce emissions. (Ref: <https://www.activesustainability.com/climate-change/cop25-madrid-what-can-we-expect/>) The summit became unsuccessful because countries such as Australia, Brazil and USA blocked the negotiations of Article 6 which were unfortunately postponed to the coming year. Apart from that, items such as timing and loss and damage mechanism were not successful. However, COP25 aimed to finalize its rules of practice as to increase the ambition of all stated to achieve 1.5C rise.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

Save the date: upcoming month highlights from the region

- a. Important calendar dates (national/international marked days)
- b. Activities expected to take place
 - Union of Chambers of Engineers and Architects Expert Meeting on Kanal İstanbul Project, 7 January
 - Symposium on Climate change and Water, 8-9 January
 - Union of Marmara Municipalities Union, Conference on Air Pollution as an SDG, 22 January
 - TEMA Foundation Experts meeting on land use planning in Turkey, 27 January

Funding opportunities for grass-root CSOs, media and individuals (activists)

TEMA announced the 2nd cycle of the subgrant programme of the Env.net3 project. The deadline for the application is 15th January 2020.

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

Approximately 100.000 citizens of Istanbul were mobilized to submit petition demanding cancelation of Kanal İstanbul Project throughout the month. It is one of the largest petition mobilization in İstanbul. İstanbul people have serious concerns about poor preparedness against earthquake and water supply problems of the city. People think that the channel project is not a priority.



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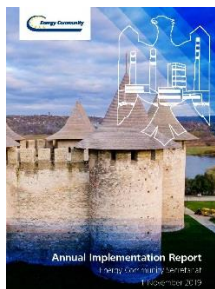
ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

NORTH MACEDONIA: ENERGY COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT 2018/2019 ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT



The Energy Community Secretariat, in its latest Annual Report outlines key actions and achievements in the period from 1 September 2018 to 1 October 2019. As stated in the report, during the reporting period, notable progress was made in putting in place the national and regional preconditions for regional electricity market integration in the "Western Balkan 6". Regional projects for day-ahead market integration, cross-border balancing and coordinated capacity calculation, were completed. Implementation of the supporting agreements, roadmaps and methodologies developed under these projects by the Contracting Parties is still to follow.

The Energy Community, as an international organisation brings together the European Union and its neighbours to create an integrated pan-European energy market. The organisation was founded by the Treaty establishing the Energy Community signed in October 2005 in Athens, Greece, and is in force since July 2006.

The key objective of the Energy Community is to extend the EU internal energy market rules and principles to countries in South East Europe, the Black Sea region and beyond on the basis of a legally binding framework.

Members of the Energy Community are all EU member states, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine, in a capacity of Contracting Parties, and Armenia, Norway and Turkey, as Observers.

Based in Vienna, Austria, the Secretariat is the only permanently acting and independent institution of the Energy Community. The Secretariat assists the Parties and institutions of the Treaty, enforces the implementation of the Treaty's acquis and monitors the state of implementation.

Regular Annual Reports on Implementation, prepared by the Energy Community Secretariat, present the progress in the implementation of the European legislation of the members of the Energy Community which are Contracting Parties to the Treaty, covering the following 10 sectors: electricity, gas, renewable energy, energy efficiency, climate, environment, competition, statistics, infrastructure and oil.



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What does the latest Annual Implementation Report say about North Macedonia?

As noted in the "Annual Implementation Report 2018/2019", published by the Energy Community Secretariat on 18 November 2019, North Macedonia, which had fallen behind under the previous Government, made an impressive return and established itself as reform champion in all energy sectors, a performance which unfortunately was not recognized by everybody. In the category "Regulatory Authorities" the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) is rated at 78% and is in the first place out of the 9 regulatory bodies of the Contracting Parties to the Energy Community Treaty. The report notes that ERC has demonstrated the ability and commitment to develop high quality regulatory rules within the timeframe defined by the Energy Law. In the past 17 months, the ERC has successfully implemented the Energy Law and the EU Third Energy Package, through the adoption and approval of 33 bylaws, which was a major challenge, given the short deadlines and complexity of issues that regulate the energy sector. Also, it has successfully



A detailed description of the methodology used for calculating the implementation indicators is available on page 204 of this Report. Source: compiled by the Energy Community Secretariat.

State of Implementation / 7

Figure 6- Source: 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019



North Macedonia



Figure 7- Source: 4x4x4 Balkan Bridges

implemented: certification of the electricity transmission system operator; legal, functional and operational separation of the electricity distribution system operator; the operation of the universal electricity supplier; liberalization of the energy markets; lower energy prices and tariffs and services for the consumers. At the same time, this report notes that Macedonia is "the champion of reforms in all energy sectors". The overall average of implementation of the reforms is 59%, which ranks the country in second place out of the 9 countries, where Macedonia's annual growth rate is 10%, which is the highest of all 9 countries.

As noted in the panel "Energy Security in the Eastern Mediterranean" held in Washington in the framework of the South East European and Eastern Mediterranean Conference "New Strategies - New Perspectives", organised by the Delphi Forum, Macedonia, as a small country, must be and is open to any kind of cooperation with other countries, especially when it comes to cooperation in the energy sector, since, in terms of electricity production, the country is largely dependent on the production of coal-fired power plants.

The transition to greener energy production facilities using renewable sources is needed. In its latest regular annual report, the Energy Community noted the progress in implementing energy sector reforms and identified our country as a champion in implementing energy reforms.

The adoption of the Energy Law in May 2018 and the implementation of all reforms arising from this Law in line with the projected dynamics bring many opportunities for development of the energy sector in Northern Macedonia, especially when it comes to renewable energy sources. A successful tender procedure for the construction of the first 19 MW of installed capacity of photovoltaic power plants on state land is in progress.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

The tender was well designed and the conditions very attractive to investors, It started with a positive premium offer, but with the handover between interested companies, not only will the state not pay premiums, but the companies will also pay to the state about 2 and a half million euros to build these 19 MW photovoltaic power plants, which is a positive step in increasing the production of electricity from renewable sources and one of the best projects in Southeast Europe.

Regarding gas supplies, country's main priority was the construction of a gas inter-connector between Macedonia and Greece, which would be connected to the transatlantic gas system and natural gas terminals via the Aegean Sea. A feasibility study for the route for this pipeline has been prepared, and in the process of preparing are an environmental impact assessment and a baseline study. Funding has been provided through the European Investment Bank, which means we are already in the final phase before the announcement of the tender procedure for construction of the gas inter-connector. Together with the Republic of Greece we should work on this project, thus increasing the competitiveness of gas supply, which also means security and more favourable prices for various end consumers.

To summarise, North Macedonia has made notable progress, yet a lot needs to be improved, in particular in the sectors like climate and infrastructure, where implementation progress is still at an early stage.

Meeting of the Sector Working Group on Environment and Climate Action,

On 19 November 2019, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning organized a working meeting for the members of the Sector Working Group on Environment and Climate Action, with aim to present the structure of the performance assessment framework and environmental sector indicators.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

Mr. Nasser Nuredini, Minister of Environment and Physical Planning, and Mr. Nikola Bertolini, Head of the Sector for Cooperation in the Delegation of the European Union, gave the introductory speech and explained the key objectives of the meeting.



Figure 8-Mr. Fabio Drago, an international expert engaged by the Ministry, presented the structure of the performance assessment framework and future challenges

Source: (accessible at:

[http://paf.vestelglobal.com/PAF/?fbclid=IwAR18xvcwCutdwDinL84Soo0tmzu9MkKxxHUK16STDVjM5qCtmv1-zBSiRM\),](http://paf.vestelglobal.com/PAF/?fbclid=IwAR18xvcwCutdwDinL84Soo0tmzu9MkKxxHUK16STDVjM5qCtmv1-zBSiRM),)



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

Following the presentations, members of the Sectoral Working Group gave their comments and remarks, stressing that the proposed framework is minimalist and without objective values, on the basis of which performance / progress would be measured.

The representative of the ENV.net team from Macedonia especially emphasized the absence of indicators for the circular economy, as well as lack of more relevant indicators for the waste management sector.

The meeting was concluded with recommendations and announcement for a follow-up meeting of the group in January, 2020, in particular as the programming for environmental priorities will have to be finalised during the first quarter of 2020.

Site visits in Bitola and Kavadarci

During December 2019, ENV.net team from Macedonia organised two site visits, one in Bitola (December 21, 2019) and one in Kavadarci (December 27, 2019).

The topics were Circular Economy and Waste Management, with focus on the new laws on waste management and food waste. The events, at which participated over 30 CSO activists, were a good opportunity to present the findings from the second country report on CE, as well as to discuss several new pieces of legislation aimed to improve the waste management system in Macedonia, and the new draft law that should regulate (and diminish) food waste in the chain of food production, distribution and management.



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KOSOVO: THE DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF KOSOVO

The dissolution of the Assembly of Kosovo (October 2019), the national elections and the challenges to establish new Kosovo Government have caused the normal functioning of the Kosovo Government and significant delays in the implementation of the obligations and duties of the Ministries. Such situations of transition and institutional vacuum are often used by informal groups, businesses, and officials to implement projects for their personal interest that are in conflict with the applicable laws and procedures and against public interest.

During December 2019, a Private Construction Company posted on social networks the plan to build an ecological neighborhood on the edge of Badovc Artificial Lake, which supplies drinking water to Pristina and several towns around it. According to official data, this artificial lake, along with the



Figure 9- Batlava Lake Source: atrc, Kosovo



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

Batlava Lake, supplies approximately 800,000 inhabitants, which cuts half of Kosovo's population.

The Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and the Municipality of Prishtina have awarded the Construction Conditions to the Kawa Group Company for Neighborhood Construction in Badovci Lake, in violation of: Article 48 of the Water Law, Article 11 of the Government Decision on Badovci and Section 3.3 of page 57 of the Annex Administrative Instruction on Spatial Planning Technical Norms, which clauses prohibit construction that may endanger water quality in the second protection zone. To stop this initiative and other subsequent construction, civil society and civil society organizations have been mobilized to stop this Project and not allow construction. An online group of citizens has been set up, organized and systematically pressuring the Municipality of Prishtina and the Ministry to rescind the decision and to preserve the lake from degradation. ATRC and Env.Net is part of this group.

As a result of public pressure, the Municipality of Prishtina has decided to suspend Urban Conditions and Construction, until clarified with the Ministry of Environment, if the Environmental Impact Assessment proves otherwise.



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2019

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:

LIR organized the third Study visit and third Forum in open on 27th of November, 2019. Participants were students of the Chemistry Study Program and the Secondary School of Technology in Banja Luka as young people who will profit in the sense that they will go through successful examples of the industry that processes natural raw materials, within ENV.net project. This visit was organized to check on the spot the BentoProduct Company, a bentonite processing company in Municipality of Šipovo. The waste materials and residues present significant problem to the environment if not handled properly. In this factory, the usage of these materials is in round circle, and this is great example of the circular economy in BiH country.

The Article was published in respectful online business portal Akta.ba: <https://www.akta.ba/vijesti/bosna-i-hercegovina-evropska-rok-zvijezda/110647> and on website Faculty of science and mathematics <https://pmf.unibl.org/posjeta-fabrics-bento-produkt/>

LIR organized first Guest lecture on the Faculty of science and mathematics in Banja Luka, on 18th of December, 2019. LIR contracted Professor Suzana Gotovac Atlagic, as great expert in the field of environmental protection, majorly dealing with raw materials and residues that are seen not as waste, but as materials serving as the resource in the processing industry. Participants were students from Faculty of science and mathematics and students from Faculty of mining Prijedor. The discussion was led in the manner that BiH country needs young scientists who will act in future sustainable development of BiH.



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