



ALBANIA: "Forest burning continues, the same this year"

During the last days of July and also during the month of August, there were forest fires in some areas of Albania.

The fires started in the area of Lezha in the vegetation and forests in the administrative unit of Zejmen. A considerable area of forests and shrubs have been burned in this area. Further as a result of the continuous wind, the fire has spread to the forest areas of the Rubik administrative unit, part of the municipality of Mirdita. In this area, mountain tourism has been

developed for several years, which gets hit whenever there is burning or damage to the forest fund in the area, but also endangered the dwellings that are in that area.

The municipality of Mirdita has requested assistance from the Civil Emergencies at the Ministry of Interior for air intervention and the latter has responded positively by sending a helicopter to help this situation. This has allowed the situation to normalize despite irreparable damage.



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Photo from the fire hearth in the area of Lezha. (Source portavendore.al

- <https://portavendore.al/2020/08/03/zjarret-pushtojne-vendin-bashkite-te-pafuqishme-per-shuarjen-e-flakeve/>)

There were also fires in the area of Torovica in Lezha, which started near Bushat, Shkodra, but spread due to constant winds during the night. Also, in the Ballëdre administrative unit there have been fires in the forests of the area where residents have come together to put it out, in the absence of the relevant authorities. Entire areas of forests and shrubs have been burned in the area of Kakarriq but also in the mountain of Renc, also in the territory of Lezha region.



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NORTH MACEDONIA: EARTH OVERSHOOT DAY

The Global Footprint Network calculated that this year the Earth Overshooting Day is August 22. It is sadly to note, but it turned out the planet Earth needed this unfortunate COVID 19 pandemics to ease the pressure on environment resources and pollution. Lockdowns and other restrictive measures aimed to prevent the spreading of the coronavirus and ease the effects on people's health, affected and slowed the economic activities to a great extent. According to experts, the so-called ecological footprint dropped 9.3%, a record annual pullback in at least half a century. Air and water quality significantly improved. But the world still managed to spend 60% more than what is renewable, which means so much is consumed that we would need 1.6 Earths.



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This short-term relief cannot save the planet....

In the region covered by the ENV net project, all states already had their overshoot days except for Albania. It will theoretically exhaust its credit on October 24, 2020.

Here is the list:

- April 5 – Belgium
- May 14 – Italy
- June 10 – Bosnia and Herzegovina

- June 12 – Montenegro
- June 26 – Turkey
- July 18 – Serbia
- July 22 – North Macedonia
- October 24 – Albania

Experts and activists are unanimous in their position that only sustainable recovery can really prevent the destruction of the planet.



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Strategic assessment of the planning document “National Waste Management Plan of the Republic of North Macedonia 2020-2030”

On August 21, 2020 the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning announced that they are starting the procedure for conducting a strategic environmental impact assessment of the planning document "National Waste Management Plan of the Republic of North Macedonia 2020-2030"¹

The new National Waste Management Plan (NWMP) 2020-2030 for the Republic of North Macedonia. focuses on finding practical, acceptable and financially feasible solutions and ways to finalise the activities that remained unrealised during the period of the previous NWMP (2009-2015).

¹ <http://www.moep.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NPUO-2020-2030-final-draft.pdf>



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The main activities presented in NWMP 2020-2030 are aimed at improving the standards for household waste management in RN Macedonia, especially the problems of environmentally unsafe waste disposal at municipal non-standard landfills, which urgently need to be closed and new regional waste management centres need to be established. Also, NWMP 2020-2030 aims to regulate the management of industrial and medical waste as well as the special waste streams.

A novelty compared to the previous national plan is that as part of this plan are included programs for special waste streams (packaging waste, waste batteries and accumulators, as well as waste electrical and electronic equipment), which aim to provide specific guidelines for achieving the goals set out in the relevant laws on special waste streams, especially in the part of the quantities released on the market of these materials and products, as well as future forecasts and development trends in the next ten years.



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Public campaign for declaration of Shara Mountain a National Park.

The campaign will be conducted by directly involving, informing and consulting the local population, private businesses and all stakeholders who gravitate to the area of the future national park, in order to be well informed and familiar what a national park is, what are the benefits, including socio-economic aspects and why Shar Mountain should be protected by law as soon as possible. The organisations from the platform "Friends of Shara" will also join

the campaign through specific field activities. For a better understanding of the process, a public presentation of the Shara Mountain Valorisation Study will be conducted, and greater coverage of the topic in the media will be provided through regular press briefings on the process. In order to ensure a high degree of transparency of the process, special sub-pages² are opened on the website of the

² http://www.moep.gov.mk/?page_id=22568



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MoEPP where the documents related to the process will be regularly published.



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ITALY: SAVE THE DATE

7th September - International Day of Clean Air for blue skies to improve air quality, enhance global awareness of air pollution, and promote necessary action. Improving air quality and reducing air pollution will have a positive impact on people's health, climate, and ecosystems worldwide. At the same time, it requires the kind of immediate, integrated and decisive actions to which national governments have so far proven averse.

Read more: www.cleanairblueskies.org

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

Call for Project Proposals “Strengthening regional cooperation to promote civic space in the Western Balkan countries”. The overall objective of this Call is to support regional networks and initiatives in the Western Balkan region by financially backing projects that will contribute to wider participation of civil society groups and enhanced regional cooperation among CSOs in promoting civic space. The funding is to build strong regional connections by encouraging the regional networks to share their knowledge, experience and skills in



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addressing the discrepancies and bottlenecks identified in the development of civil society in the region.

Grants will be awarded to regional networks and initiatives with missions and demonstrated experience in the thematic area of this Call, with special focus on the enabling environment and accountability.

Closing Date: 15th September 2020

Read more:
<http://www.balkancsd.net/regional-cs-hub/regional-cs-hub-regional-action-grants/>

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

The role of CSOs in the EU enlargement process. Civil society organizations from the Western Balkans should be represented at the Conference on the Future of Europe, stressed CSOs in the declaration at Zagreb EU-Western Balkans Summit.

The declaration was signed by civil society organizations from Western Balkan countries and EU member states, working on issues of fundamental rights and the rule of law, democratic institutions, civic engagement, environmental protection, combating corruption and protection of migrants, who



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support the processes of European integration of the Western Balkan countries and advocating for their accession to the European Union. Read more: <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2020/05/06/csos-from-wb-and-eu-issued-a-declaration-on-zagreb-eu-western-balkans-summit/>



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KOSOVO: MEMORANDUM SIGNED TO OPEN THE WAY TO THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROJECT IN PRISTINA

The Minister of Economy and Environment, Blerim Kuçi today together with the Chief Executive of the Regional Water Company have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the Wastewater Treatment Project in Prishtina. The purpose of this memorandum is to regulate the duties and responsibilities of the signatory parties for the full and successful implementation of the wastewater treatment project in and around Prishtina. This memorandum paves the way for the start of project implementation procedures as it clarifies the competencies between the two

parties and ensures the commitment of funds from the Ministry of Economy and Environment.

"The signing of this memorandum is important for the initiation of procedures for an important project such as wastewater treatment, shows the determination in the promises we have given to international partners who have supported this project, which in this case is the French Government. ", Said Kuçi.

This memorandum comes as a result of the International Agreement between the



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Government of Kosovo and the French Government for financial cooperation. This memorandum was preceded by the Implementation Agreement.



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MONENEGRO: PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR MEETING THE FINAL CRITERIA IN CHAPTER 27 - ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Ministry of tourism and sustainable development has organized Public hearing on the Draft Action Plan for meeting the final criteria in Chapter 27 – Environment and Climate Change. According to this plan Montenegro has committed to recycling 50 percent of paper, plastic, metal and glass waste by 2030. Also, the state intends to carry out the recycling of at least 70 percent of non-hazardous construction waste by that deadline, in order to meet the final criteria from the chapter related to the environment and climate change.

Green Home has submitted comments to this plan.

Monitoring of *Posidonia oceanica*

NGO Green Home in cooperation with NGO MedCEM and NGO MES, as well as with Institute for marine biology conducted monitoring of sea meadows of *Posidonia oceanica*. Monitoring was conducted on 5 locations between Crni cape and cape Skočiđevojka. On all 5 locations two dives per day were carried out on 3 different depths. Monitoring was carried out by the divers with



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knowledge about marine biology as well as experts in the field. Dr Vesna Mačić from the institute for the Marine Biology informed divers about methodology of the monitoring process.

Posidonia oceanica is endemic specie and it is habitat to numerous other species. Negative impacts on habitat of sea meadows are

primarily illegal anchoring and poaching. Results of monitoring will give us data about preservation status of the sea meadows of this specie.



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TURKEY: HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OF TEMA FOUNDATION PARTICIPATED IN THE WORKSHOP ON STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DIRECTIVE

Ministry of Environment and Urbanization has organized an online workshop on the development of the implementation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive on 21.08.2020 and 22.08.2020. Ceren Pınar Gayretli Head of Environmental Policies and International Affairs of TEMA Foundation participated in the workshop and submitted recommendations for implementation of SEA directive. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulation was completed and entered into force in 2017. However, the

two provisional articles granting exemptions to fisheries and forestry sectors until 2020; and industry, energy, transportation, waste management, and telecommunications sectors until 2023 are in contradiction with the objective of the Regulation. As well as, some significant sectors such as energy and transportation are not subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessments Directive. There are still a few examples of the implementation of this directive. The following topics were discussed in the workshop.

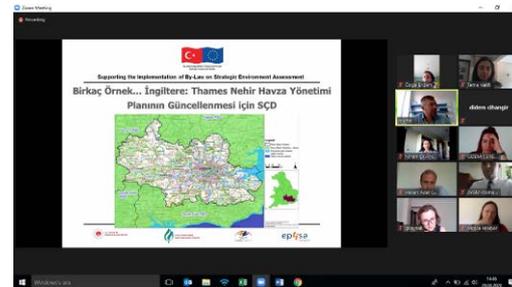
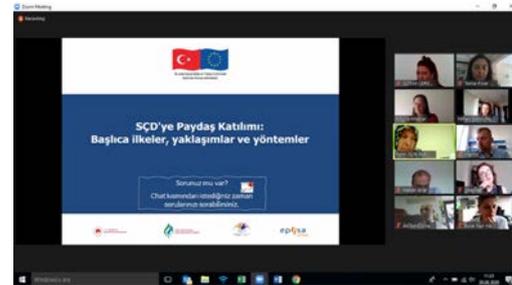


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- Turkish Bylaw on SEA its application in Turkey implementations
- Introduction to SEA: purpose and objectives, its benefits and added value, key principles of its efficient application
- SEA process: steps in SEA and examples of SEA from EU countries and Turkey
- Stakeholders participation in SEA: main principles, approaches and methods
 - examples from EU countries
 - experience from Turkey so far



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TEMA Foundation Held Its Field Coordination Meeting!

Field Coordination Meetings where 500 people consisting of representatives, members and volunteers of TEMA from all over Turkey. The meeting organized by TEMA Foundation on 21-22-23 August were held online this year due to the pandemic condition.

Professor Bülent Gülbuçuk opened the meeting by providing an overview of Turkish Agriculture.

Professor Ziya Selçuk, Minister of National Education, made a presentation on “Role of Nature for Education, and Children”.

An evaluation was made showing the success of representatives, members and volunteers of TEMA on the field campaigns. Then, the

program continued with presentations about the targets of the field campaigns for 2021. At the end of the day, Associate Professor İbrahim Yurtseven made a presentation on "Forest and Water".

On the last day of the meeting, "Hayrettin Karaca Volunteering Awards" were given to the volunteers after the video of A. Nihat Gökyiğit, Founding and Honorary President of TEMA.

The highlights of the meeting were as follows:

In the presentation of "Studies on Mining Legislation" by Hülya Çeşmeci, Deputy Head



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of the Department of Environmental Policies and International Affairs, highlighted that the amendments made in the Mining Law in 2004 were "an important breaking point" and mining activities have been expanded by making regulations on a permit and environmental impact assessment with the law. The protected-areas including forests, protection forests, afforestation areas, special protection zones, national parks, natural parks, agricultural areas, water basins and areas with similar natural and cultural riches have been opened to mining activities. To date, unfortunately, there is no single protection status in our country that protects nature, agricultural areas and cultural assets against mining activities. In the light of this information, she emphasized that the

participants should be made aware and the importance of this issue should be raised locally.

In the workshops session, Gökçe Ahi Tuncel, the Project Coordinator of the Environmental Policy and International Affairs Department explained the importance of protecting water sources by public participation and she explained how to use Water Treat Map which created by TEMA Foundation in 2016 in the scope of Envnet-2 Project.

Please see the map in the below link;

<http://sertifika.tema.org.tr/Ki/SuTehditleriHaritasi/>

The prominent information in the workshop was as follows:



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Turkey's population expected to surpass 100 million by 2050. Turkey will suffer from water scarcity in the next years. As of 2025, the case of using the full potential of Turkey's total available water, more pressure on water resources will increase. Moreover, considering the difference between water distribution and usage rates in basins, utilizing all of the water potential brings water transfer between basins into the agenda. In open channel systems,

serious losses are experienced due to water leaks and evaporation. Water resources in Turkey, mismanagement, lack of legal and institutional infrastructure are under threat for reasons such as climate change and pollution. Gökçe Ahi said that it is also important to provide input data for mapping studies documenting threats on the need for better determination of the presence of water problems in Turkey.



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A Circular Economy Workshop Was Held by Ondokuz Mayıs University Environmental Problems Research and Application Center

Ondokuz Mayıs University Environmental Problems Research and Application Center (OMU ÇEVSAM) hosted a workshop on the "Circular Economy" in the framework of the Sustainable Industry and Circular Economy Campaign Project on 14 August 2020.

OMU Rector Consultant and OMU ÇEVSAM Manager Professor Yüksel Ardalı, Middle Black Sea Development Agency Deputy Secretary General İbrahim Ethem Sahin, Finance Expert Reyhan Erbilgin, Emin Okutan from DCube Circular Economy Cooperative

attended to the workshop in addition to participants from the public and private sectors.

Following the opening speeches, Barış Şahin, Program Management Unit Specialist, made a presentation about Technical Support Program. Then, workshop which was moderated by Prof. Ardalı on "Sustainable Industry" and "Circular Economy" was held.

In the event, alternative solution proposals were presented and discussed with a holistic approach in collaboration with industrialists, entrepreneurs and academicians in order to



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raise awareness about the concepts of sustainable industry and circular economy and to enable strategy change. This session was followed by a questions and answers part.

The workshop included exemplary projects in order to raise awareness on issues such as green economy, zero waste, waste hierarchy, industrial ecology, nature-supported solutions and life cycle determination within the scope of the circular economy approach.

Reyhan Erbilgin, Finance Specialist, said that the key element of a circular economy is the rational management and procurement of raw materials including that of metals, energy, chemicals and industrial raw materials as well

as water and biomass the improvement of such management will contribute not only to reducing the impact on the environment but also to providing economic value added. She cited the e-waste problem as an example.

Emin Okutan from DCube Circular Economy Cooperative mentioned best practice examples of circular economy models and highlighted that the circular economy approach is a new issue in Turkey, and this can provide great advantages for innovative entrepreneurs.

Environment and Advocacy Training Completed!



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"İklim Krizi Savunucuları Yetiştiriyor!" training was organized by Sosyal İklim Derneği one of the sub-grant of Env.Net Project. The training took place in two groups. The first group attended the training on 15-16 August, and the second group on 22-23 August. The first day of the training, the environment and climate crisis issues were discussed. On the second day, trainings were organized to improve the existing skills of participants on advocacy, lobbying, campaign creation and negotiation. Over 50 participants from both İzmir and other cities are joined in the training.

Informative trainings on the causes and consequences of the climate crisis, climate change advocacy and campaign, and ecological

footprint were held in order to raise awareness and promote youth participation to address climate change. At the same time, participants were encouraged to take part in environmental advocacy campaigns going to be organized by the Sosyal İklim Derneği (Social Climate Association) and Kıyı Ege İklim Ağı (Aegean Cost Climate Network).

Solving the global climate change crisis is going to rely on, in one way or another, changing human behavior. It was emphasized how individual actions that affect emissions and consumption of natural resources must be shifted to align with necessary GHG emissions reductions in this training.



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BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In December 2019, the investor "Medic otp" submitted a request for approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the project of a plant for thermal treatment of hazardous waste in the settlement of Karakaj in the city of Zvornik, which was put on public review from 31.1 to 31.3.2020. At the public hearing in Zvornik, concern was expressed about the justification of the project and a large number of questions were raised but not resolved, because the investor did not attend the hearing. The plant will not be built, because the RS Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and Ecology rejected the request of the company "Medic otp" for construction, after the

identified shortcomings that make the project unfounded for the continuation of the procedure. The main reason for rejecting the request is the location of the incinerator in the settlement of Karakaj, which has 2,828 inhabitants.

A large number of associations, individuals and experts sent objections to the project to the competent ministry, and as they point out from the Mountaineering Ecological Society (PEK) Korak, which is among the initiators of the initiative to stop this project, they are satisfied with the decision. In addition to numerous organizations and associations from the civil



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sector, comments on the study were submitted by the RS Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the RS Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, the Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage, and the city of Zvornik and two local communities.

This example represent great example of the joint efforts, commitment and influence, where private investor is obliged to implement project in line with laws and procedures, while respecting local habitants requirements and environmental protection.

The Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism announced that Canton 10 of FBiH

had issued a permit to company “Krom reciklaža” after seven trucks with waste from Italy unloaded waste in Bosansko Grahovo and Drvar. This was strongly opposed by public, especially the residents of the municipalities.

The inspection of FBiH gave a month of time to the company "Krom reciklaža" to transport textile waste with a total weight of almost 300 tons to the industrial zone of the municipality of Drvar to the location Pasijaci, and to ensure its incineration.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there is significant number of textile companies that as part of routine produce several hundred tons of technological post-industrial textile waste in the



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annual production process. This example is specific, since the waste came from Italy, and since it is medical (COVID) waste – gloves, protective clothes, and other unidentified medical waste. Data from the Federal Bureau of Statistics state that in 2009 this type of waste was to about 40,000 tons, but that it is non-hazardous. The document of the Draft Waste Management Strategy in RS states that there are so-called black spots, in particular, sites that are highly burdened with waste after long-term inadequate management of technological waste, for example waste from the leather and textile industry, and that there is no central waste storage facility in RS entity. The local population is engaged in stopping this process

because they believe that this project represents a direct danger to their quality of life and health. The incinerators are not a solution to turn to, but a source of new problems and great pollution. The initiative organized by several CSOs and habitants and is sent to the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism to stop this process.

Energy Financing Team SE Bileća inked a deal for its first photovoltaic unit. After EFT Group's subsidiary launched the initiative for a concession to build a 60 MW solar power plant, the Republic of Srpska started the procedure in January. The Ministry of Energy and Mining of the Republic of Srpska said Minister Petar Đokić and head of Energy Financing Team SE Bileća Ranko Čokorilo signed the concession



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contract for the construction and operation of a photovoltaic system in Bileća. EFT Group's firm will sell the electricity from the solar power plant on the market and it has the right to export it.

The 60 MW facility is scheduled to be built in three years, according to the announcement. The deal was agreed for 50 years. (<https://balkangreenenergynews.com/eft-signs-concession-for-60-mw-solar-power-plant-in-bileca-in-bih/>)

Ten units of coal-fired power plants in total will be shut down by the end of 2023 in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia as a consequence of the implementation of the EU's Large Combustion

Plants Directive (LCPD), according to the Energy Transition Tracker. The shutdown of the facilities with an installed capacity of about 1,000 MW will mean a temporary end of operation for thermal power plant Pljevlja in Montenegro and, for now, permanent closure of TPPs Kolubara A and Morava in Serbia. The Energy Community Secretariat has launched Energy Transition Tracker to monitor the process in the Western Balkans. Balkan Green Energy News published the details of the development of the power exchanges in the region, and now we reveal the activities that are underway to reduce the emissions footprint.

(<https://balkangreenenergynews.com/ten-units-of-western-balkan-thermal-power-plants-must-be-shut-down-by-2023/>)



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