



## NORTH MACEDONIA

Concerning the situation in the Republic of North Macedonia, the current legal environment that profiles the circularity of the economy, defined by a corpus of laws, regulations, and strategic national documents and action plans, does provide basis for implementation of the concept of circular economy in the country.

Even though the notion of “circular economy” explicitly entered in the legal framework through the new Law on Waste Management and the Draft Industrial Strategy with a focus on Manufacturing, the concept of circularity in the economy is not entirely new.

The use of secondary raw materials as resources, in particular various types of metal and paper, has been long present in the country economic cycle of production and trading activities. In addition, the concept of “prolonged life” of products, be it machines, vehicles, home appliances, or textile or wood made products has long been present and

practiced in the country, though the reason for such approach probably needs to be sought after in the modest economic might of the population, and not in the high awareness for preserving the resources. The shifts towards consumerism have largely contributed to changing of demand and supply habits, both at individual and society level.

Still, there is a strong need for many improvements in the current legal framework that will enhance the country’s ability to make better use of its resources and the lifecycle of materials, products and services.

Our economy is still mainly oriented to the "creation, use and disposal" of material resources in a linear way. In circular economy, systems are designed to make better use of valuable materials and products, for not as much of use of primary resources, and for greater economic opportunities.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





As a candidate country for accession to the EU, the Republic of North Macedonia needs to apply all European standards and best practices, as well as to comply with the EU legislation, and to find a way to manage waste, which is an important segment in the change from linear to circular economy.

Ensuring a waste management system in accordance with the prescribed standards will not only contribute to a better environment, but will also contribute to the protection of human health and will ensure the implementation of the circular economy in the country.

In that respect, the EU targets should be the key indicators for sustainable waste management. However, for some EU measures, the target dates envisaged with the plan have already been breached, and for others the dynamics are feasible and realistic in the Macedonian context. Additional time for implementation will be negotiated as part of EU accession negotiations.

The interest of the wider society, including scholars, researchers, NGOs and media, relating to circular economy potentials and practices in the country has also been present and increasing in the past two-three years, manifested in a form of case studies, conferences, media articles and CSO initiatives that explicitly target the concept of circular economy. Yet, the level of knowledge and awareness among all concerned parties (authorities, business sector, CSOs, citizens and the media) is still at a low level.

## Findings

Using the approach and logic of the EU proposed Monitoring framework and indicators, key findings can be summarized as following:

- **Production and consumption** - Limited progress can be observed towards more circular trends in production and consumption, in terms of waste generation.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





- **Waste Management** - Waste management generally shows slow but positive developments, yet with significant room for improvement for recycling across the key waste streams.
- **Secondary raw materials** - The contribution of recycled materials to overall materials demand is relatively low. Trade in secondary raw materials is increasing.
- **Competitiveness and innovation** - Republic of North Macedonia is categorized as a "modest innovator" compared to other European countries (Over time, performance has increased relative to that of the EU, and 2020 it increased by 10.8 index points compared to EU in 2012, but 4 index points behind compared to EU in 2019).

## CE Initiatives

In the recent years, there have been a number of initiatives and actions, which promote the concept of circularity of

resources (materials, goods, and services) in the economy cycle, even though many have not been explicitly named as "circular economy" activities. As the space is limited, we will name just a few:



### "Trash for Cash" initiative

Reverse Vending" machines operate on the same principle as standard vending machines (put money, get output), but are called a "reverse vending machine" due to the reverse process (put a product, get a money return).



The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.





The Centar Municipality Public Parking Enterprise and the Municipality of Centar (one of the ten municipalities in Skopje), announced pioneering the idea of Reverse Vending Machines (RVM) for plastic and glass bottles this year in order to motivate the local residents to get involved in the process of selective waste disposal.

All residents who will be involved in this process of selective waste disposal will receive subsidies (a certain amount of money on the new Green Pay Card), allowing them to buy with discounting in certain markets, shops, bars, etc., or to pay for the services provided by the parking company.

### ***Making insulation materials from textile waste:***

The company Netam from Skopje manufactures mattresses, quilts, pillows and bed linens. The collected textile waste from their production, but also from other sources, is recycled and processed into products such as insulating panels, rolls, geotextiles and other insulating materials that are then used in construction



### ***From waste oil to energy: Eco system for used cooking oil recycling***

In 2009, Sunilens introduced an innovative waste management system – collection, transportation, storage and treatment of used cooking oils and fats of vegetable origin. By using modern technology, developed logistics network and continued education of used cooking oil producers, their system guarantees further utilization of the energy potential of UCO – as feedstock for production of



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





renewable energy (biofuels). With this circular, green energy business model they contribute to cleaner environment and mitigation of climate change challenges.

**env.net** **BALKAN BRIDGES**

### CE Initiatives in North Macedonia

**Dietary supplements from egg shells.** The company Bionovel produces calcium as a dietary supplement from egg shells. Egg shells are very similar to the structure of human bones, and the calcium contained in egg shells is most easily absorbed by the human body.

**If you add value to waste glass, then you get to a profitable level...**

Akron is a company that deals with waste glass. Most of their products end up in the North American market as a repro-material for the production of composite materials used for interior solutions.

***If you add value to waste glass, then you get to a profitable level...***

Akron is a company that deals with waste glass. Most of their products end up in the North American market as a repro-material for the production of composite materials used for interior solutions.

## Concluding notes

The introduction of EU regulations and standards requires new complementary waste management mechanisms, especially economic mechanisms. In order to comply with the Circular Economy Package, Macedonia will need to monitor the introduction of production processes and standards in order to minimize resource waste and improve the recycling rate of used products. Successful compliance with the new regulations will require improved cooperation activities and shared responsibilities among all stakeholders.

Green public procurements and support of innovations that have recycling, re-use and prolonged life of goods and services in focus, are paramount for more significant investments by the economic actors in smart innovative and sustainable growth, modernization and patents.

Traditional inspection methods will need to be supplemented with new enforcement mechanisms based on preventive measures. There is an urgent need for



The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.





improved protocols and integrated system for data collection and reporting on waste management.

Quality data generation (and availability) is prerequisite for designing evidence-based strategies and for further monitoring of the progress in any sector, including the developments in the sectors that are fundamental for the circular economy. Setting a national monitoring framework with indicators and a baseline will provide for following the progress and developments of circularity of resources and services in the economy, but also for assessing the social and environmental effects because of these actions.

Cases of practicing circularity of recyclable materials and services in the chain of economic activities (production and consumption) are present and attract business and public attention; yet they are not visible enough to trigger bigger impact, like in creating jobs and adding value.

Finally, the role of information provision, awareness raising, education, training and capacity building on the concept of

circular economy should not be underestimated. The fact is that Macedonian companies and other relevant stakeholders (business community, citizens) are still relatively uninformed of the potential benefits of the circular economy concept. It is essential for the government and other concerned parties to be engaged and to systematically address this gap in the coming years through a structured approach and plan.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





## ITALY:

The **REPORT ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN ITALY** prepared by The Circular Economy Network (this network promotes, collects, and disseminates studies and research; defines key indicators and analyses national performances; evaluates critical issues and identifies possible solutions; develops strategies and policies and to propose to decision makers; disseminates the best practices) shows that the Italian economy is the most circular among those of the principle European nations (Italy, Germany, France, UK and Spain). The trend is stable, although Italian circularity is growing slower than in other countries. Up to now the circular economy in Italy has a turnover of eighty-eight billion euros and employs more than half million people.

### The most important issue concerning environment

Milan joined The Circular Economy hundred, a Network of business, innovators, cities, governments and universities that provides a pre-competitive space to learn, share knowledge, and put ideas into practice. Milan is very strong in the Food Policy's results achieved so far, especially in the

fight against food waste; moreover, it is strong in the sustainability in the field of fashion and design initiatives.

### Save the date

22nd January - Circularity - making the economy go round - Policy Talks with Virginijus Sinkevičius - How the Commission intends to meet these challenges and achieve its ambitious targets for a circular future?

The Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius will answer to this crucial point. Read more:

<https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/en/news-and-events/all-events/circularity-making-economy-go-round-policy-talks-virginijus-sinkevicius>

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

Climate Change Adaptation Grant Programme in Turkey (CCAGP). The global objective of this call for proposals is:



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





enhancing climate change adaptation in Turkey. The specific objective of this call for proposals is: to improve resilience of communities and cities, protect natural resources and ecosystems and enhance adaptation capacity of vulnerable economic sectors.

Closing Date: 28th December 2020

Read more:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1608019973569&do=publi.detPUB&searchtype=AS&zgeo=11962938&aoet=36538%2C36539&ccnt=7573876&debpub=&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubliList=15&page=1&aoref=170484>

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

Sofia summit – western Balkans commit to green deal agenda and common regional market. The sign of the declarations made on the Sofia Summit will serve as catalysts towards regional sustainable development and European

Union Market. The agreement on Green Deal will have an important role in strengthening the basis for environmental protection, propelling regional traction in furthering sustainable development efforts, decarbonization, and clean energy transition.

Read more: <https://www.balkangreenfoundation.org/en-us/press/213/sofia-summit-ndash-western-balkans-commit-to-green-deal-agenda-and-common-regional-market/>



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





## BELGIUM:

Hidden subsidies for major polluters, while public forced to pay Officials are shielding the coal industry from tens of millions of euros in mandatory water bills while making the public pay, an investigation has revealed.

The hidden subsidies are distorting the market and supporting a major polluter of the climate, air and water just as governments agree further action against climate heating, warned the European Environmental Bureau (EEB).

The NGO spent months analysing opaque data on water use for a report published today called Mind The Gap, Mapping hidden subsidies for the coal and lignite industry. The report focuses on Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, Europe's top three producers of lignite, a particularly harmful form of coal. It found that

governments are failing to impose annual fees worth an estimated €54 million per year, as required under the EU Water Framework Directive. The figure is based on comparable fees paid in the minority of territories that do require industry to pay. The total amount is higher when the coal sector beyond lignite is included.

The directive required governments by 2010 to put in place water pricing policies that ensure an "adequate contribution" by both individuals and companies in order to conserve water and cut pollution. Throughout Europe, pricing has been applied for private citizens, who pay on average €5.50 (Germany), €3.42 (Czech Republic), €2.75 (Poland) per cubic metre to water companies, which add a premium for services like treatment and delivery. But pricing is either exceptionally low or entirely missing for lignite companies. This despite the fact that other industrial sectors are forced to pay, and that just nine lignite



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





mines pump a billion cubic metres of water per year, nearly five times more water than is used by the residents of Berlin.

Following pressure by environmental groups, one German federal state forced lignite companies to pay for all the water they drain – North Rhine-Westphalia. But coal firms there pay 100 times less per cubic metre than the equivalent amount of tap water for private citizens.

EEB industrial production policy officer and report author Sara Johansson said: “While households pay a high price for their water bills, climate villains are pumping tens of millions of cubic metres a year for free. It is a scandal. The polluter should pay. That rule is plain and simple and it is written into the EU directive. But the governments of Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic have looked the other way for a decade,

subsidising their lignite industry and creating market distortion. The European Commission should take action against these countries to protect its reputation and the environment.”

Coal is a major contributor to climate change and air pollution from coal plants causes 20,000 Europeans to die prematurely each year. Coal plants are also the biggest man-made source of mercury pollution. Plants in the three countries emitted 9.5 tonnes of the powerful neurotoxin in 2017. Mercury is the most common cause of the 60% of Europe’s lakes and rivers that fail clean water standards set by the same directive. Even after a mine is closed, water drainage and pollution can continue for decades or in perpetuity. Data on industrial water use in the three countries is hard to access, making it difficult to identify users and polluters of water bodies and apply the Polluter Pays



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





Principle, a legal aspect of the directive. The EEB is calling for improvements.

Sustainable batteries: Revised EU laws can pave way for greener transport

EU officials want to make durable, repairable, and recyclable batteries the norm. From transport to energy storage, this is the way forward to reduce the environmental impact and downside risks of our increasingly electrified economy. The European Commission has adopted a new legislative proposal today to boost the market for sustainable batteries, including those used for electric vehicles, trains, energy storage, smartphones and home appliances.

The news comes following publication of the EU's Sustainable and Smart Mobility strategy – a plan to reduce transport emissions by 90% by 2050 – and the announcement by the European Investment Bank to

allocate more than €1 billion to battery-related projects.

As a key part of the European Green Deal, the proposal represents a much-needed step forward to reconcile Europe's quest for the electrification of our economy with the need for resource efficiency and sustainability.

Batteries are necessary to phase out diesel and petrol cars and replace fossil fuels with clean energy in other sectors of the economy. However, the extraction of raw materials used to produce them has led to the depletion and pollution of waterways, soil and other natural resources in many areas of the world. The carbon footprint of the battery production chain is also huge – see figures below.

This new legally-binding framework – an update of the existing EU batteries directive published in 2006 – will focus on:



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





- Ensuring sustainable sourcing and mandatory due diligence across the supply-chain
- Boosting the production of longer lasting and reusable batteries
- Improving recyclability of batteries by upgrading targets and incentivising recycled content to reduce the extraction of primary raw materials
- Aiming to phase out non-rechargeable batteries from the market
- Improving the separate collection of batteries for recycling and reuse
- Replacing some of the most toxic technologies with clean alternatives

- The proposed measures will be discussed by the European Parliament and national governments before becoming part of an EU-wide, legally-binding regulation in 2021.

Piotr Barczak, a Policy Officer for the Circular Economy with the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), said: “The proposal is the way forward to reduce the environmental impact and downside risks of our increasingly electrified economy. If produced from responsibly sourced materials, more efficient and durable batteries can help mitigate the environmental impact of mining. At the same time, they can also make Europe less dependent on imports from third countries by boosting the internal market for secondary raw materials”



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2020

Rita Tedesco, Programme Manager at ECOS, said: 'The electrification of transport is an important step forward but we should not embrace it with our eyes closed. We are pleased to see the European Commission's ambition for Europe to have the world's most sustainable battery industry, but more can be done to ensure batteries are reused after their first life and properly recycled. We will remain vigilant: most of the technical aspects that will make these ambitions a reality will be decided by standardisation organisations and ECOS will work to make sure they do not hinder the Commission's ambition.' If recycling rates do not grow sufficiently by 2050, the reserves of copper, lithium, nickel and manganese in existing mines will be exhausted and much of the depletion will be due to the batteries required by electric vehicles. The production of a long capacity battery for a typical electric vehicle can result in almost 9 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – the

equivalent of the electricity use of more than one household over a year. The extraction of raw materials such as lithium costs enormous amounts of energy and water. In the Chilean region of Salar de Atacama, mining activities consumed 65% of the region's water supplies, forcing local farmers to buy water from other areas. Because of increasing demand for electric vehicles, the global lithium-ion market is set to grow by up to 30% each year. Three quarters of EU urban population exposed to toxic air as governments fail to cut emissions. Most Europeans living in cities are still breathing air that is dangerous to their health, confirms the European Environment Agency (EEA) in a new report released (<https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-quality-in-europe-2020-report>), but governments are not doing enough to cut toxic emissions at source, campaigners warn. Data show that harmful emissions,



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





especially from farming and domestic heating, are not decreasing fast enough. Almost every EU member state in 2018 exceeded air pollution limits recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Margherita Tolotto, Senior Policy Officer for Air and Noise at the European Environmental Bureau, said:

“How many wake up calls do government officials need to take on air pollution? Their delay is costing us our health and a safe environment. They know what needs to be done to improve air quality: cleaner energy and industrial production, greener and smarter transport, and sustainable farming.”

Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Italy breached EU limits for fine particulate matter (PM2.5), one of the most dangerous forms of air pollution which caused about 417,000 premature deaths in 41 European countries in 2018. EU laws

require member states to respect binding emissions reduction targets set in the National Emission Ceiling Directive (NEC), and to detail their plans to cut air pollution. Yet, one year and half past the deadline, the Italian plan is still in draft form while Greece, Luxemburg and Romania have presented no plan at all. The EEA report recognises that long-term exposure to polluted air makes people more vulnerable to respiratory diseases such as Covid-19.

“It’s time our governments stopped playing with our health. Respecting EU air quality laws is the minimum they must do”, said Tolotto.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





## KOSOVO ENVIRONMENT 2020, REPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS

On 08.12.2020, the Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency has published the report: Kosovo Environment 2020, Report of Environmental Indicators ", which is the first publication of its kind to assess the state of the environment based on the national list of indicators environmental, which includes a longer period of time.

Such an assessment analyzes the trends of the state of the environment, the pressures exerted on the environment, the driving forces that bring the impacts on the environment but also the effectiveness of environmental policies in improving the state of the environment.

Until now, the Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency has drafted annual reports on the state of the environment, and specific reports on the environmental sectors, air, water, waste, nature, etc., which have included time periods of 1 to 5 years. Also the data and indicators used in the context of the assessment of the situation in these reports and assessments have mainly included shorter periods of time.

The drafting of the report uses standard methodologies applied by European Union organizations such as the OECD, the European Environment Agency, EUROSTAT or other organizations. Indicators have also been used, the development and processing of which is based on methodologies that are defined by these organizations.

<http://www.ammk-rks.net/?page=1,7,564>



MJEDISI I KOSOVËS 2020  
RAPORT I TREGUESVE  
MJEDISORË



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





## "LET'S DO IT" CONTINUES MONITORING MEDIA REPORTING ON THE COUNTRY

"Let's Do it" continued to monitor media reporting on environmental issues and issues in the country during November.

For the month of November, a total of 27 electronic media were monitored. Of these, 19 of them have been active in reporting cases where there has been pollution and environmental degradation, environmental violations or even various developments in the field of environment.

In contrast to October, a doubled number of reports were identified in November. In total, 148 reports have been made, 102 of which are for air pollution which as a problem is actualized during these cold months of the year.

30 reports were made on soil pollution, but also on records of various environmental activities that focused on its protection. As for the reports on water pollution, during this month only 11 of them were made.

It is worth mentioning that during November, deforestation was reported - 3 reports, which as an environmental violation in this cold period of the year is related to the need of citizens for heating.

Also, in November it was reported about the positive measures taken for the conservation of biodiversity, such as the ban on hunting, as well as the need to apply renewable energy in our country.

In the list of media with the most reports, even this month, leads the portal "Kallxo.com" with 47 reports. It is worth mentioning that "Kallxo.com" is the only portal that has reported on a daily basis the degree of air pollution in Pristina. Then we have "Ekonomia Online" with 15 reports, "Indeksonline" with 10 reports, "Kosova Sot" and "RTV 21" with 7 reports, "Epoka e Re", "Periskopi", "Gazeta Blic", "RTK Live" with 6 reports each, "Klan Kosova", "Zëri" with 5 reports each, "Veriu Info", "Insajderi" with 4 reports, "Arbresh.info", "Koha.net" with 3 reports, "Kosovarja", "Kosovapress", "Telegrafi" with 2 reports and "NOA" with 1 report.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





## SERBIA: Conference SDG 13 - Climate Action

Local action to combat Climate Change / Expert Meeting of Eco-School Coordinators within the International Eco-School Program

Environmental Ambassadors for Sustainable Development, one of the partners in the ENV.net project supported by the EU, organized a final on-line conference on climate change, under the ENV.net project, with special reference to SDG 13 - Climate Action. The conference participants, representatives of the Eco-Schools network in Serbia, had the opportunity to hear the latest global and national information on climate change, where we are currently on the global map of reducing climate change effects and all activities undertaken by Serbia in the fight against climate change. The conference presented educational material, a picture book for younger grades and a

poster for older grades of primary and secondary school, which will be distributed to Eco-schools and available in digital form. The production of publications was supported by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, through the support program for civil society organizations in 2020. Three topics were addressed at the conference by several keynote speakers:

1. Climate Action - Fight against Climate Change, Responsible Consumption and Impact in Local Communities, through the Eco-School in Serbia Program (Sustainable Development Goals 13 and 12), Prof. Dr Andjelka Mihajlov, thematic expert
2. Examples of good practice - Responsible nutrition in Eco-schools (Sustainable Development Goals 12 and 13), an example of involving the Eco-School in direct



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





work with students, Ms. Biljana Knežević - Elementary school "Desanka Maksimović", Belgrade.

3. Educational package (Goal 13 - Climate Action and Goal 4 - Quality education), Ms. Marina Drndarski - Elementary School "Drinka Pavlovic", Belgrade and Radmila Jokic – Primary and Secondary School "Vuk Karadzic", Sombor.

Part of the author team of the "Climate box" Aleksandra Mladenović, Prof. Dr Andjelka Mihajlov, Ms. Marina Drndarski, Ms. Zorica Milosavljevic, presented the Educational Climate Box, its content, tools and application in primary and secondary schools at a webinar for Eco-School coordinators, as a professional development of teachers within the international program Eco-school. The Climate Box is an innovative, interactive textbook whose adaptation and application in Serbia is being worked on by the Environmental

Ambassadors of Sustainable Development, the Association of Citizens Zlatibor Circle - Cajetina, and Mixer with the support of UNDP Serbia.

The annual meeting of Eco-School coordinators within the Eco-School program was held successfully online. In the meeting participants discussed activities during the Covid-19, climate change as a current topic. Some of the Eco-schools acquired status for the first time and some of them are in various stages of status renewal. The Eco-school program in Serbia has been active since 2012, currently 130 educational institutions are included in this international program in Serbia, and it is necessary to meet certain criteria ("seven eco-school steps") in order to gain the status of an international Eco-school. Status is renewed every two years.

Eco-schools represented key stakeholders during the implementation of env.net project in Serbia. Their role



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2020

was to involve local communities, institutions, organizations and media to be part of env.net network at the local level, to raise their awareness and to build capacities to be able to deal with climate change and circular economy.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





## **TURKEY: “Envnet III Regional Conference on Circular Economy for Western Balkans and Turkey” was held online on December 9, 2020**

Envnet III Regional Conference on Circular Economy for Western Balkans and Turkey was held online due to pandemic on December 9, 2020. The all-day conference was live-stream on Zoom and YouTube. More than 200 participants attended the zoom webinar and over 1700 people have watched the conference from TEMA's YouTube channel. The number of watchers of the conference from the Youtube record continues to increase. Circular economy issue was handled at both national and regional and international scale and good practices were explained. Through good examples in global scale, participants and panelists discussed the implementation of circular economy to their economy policies during the conference.

The conference started with the opening speech of Chairwoman of Board of TEMA Foundation, Deniz Ataç. She mentioned to the vicious circle that the linear economy

approach has brought to us and our world. She emphasized the need for changing our economic system from linear to circular for a sustainable and livable world. After Deniz Ataç, Rodion Gjoka, head of Environmental Management and Planning Department of Co-Plan Institute for Habitat Development mentioned about Envnet Project and what the Envnet Project has achieved during last three years.

After the opening speeches, Piotr Barczak, Senior Policy Officer for Waste in European Environmental Bureau, made his presentation on EU Circular Economy Policy of Europe. He also provided information about regulations in different EU countries and shared country based experiences on circular economy. After he mentioned the European perspective, Ahmet Atıl AŞICI, Associate Professor in Istanbul Technical University, mentioned the vision and policies of Turkey in terms of Circular Economy.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2020



Münevver Bayhan and Ferda Ulutaş İşevi from Business Council for Sustainable Development Turkey, talked about best practice examples of circular business models in Turkey. After BCSD, Bart Van Bolhuis, the Consul General of

Netherlands, mentioned perspective and policies of Netherlands on circular economy.



After the lunch break, a keynote speaker, social entrepreneur Harald Field opened the discussion by asking "in a world where the Covid-19 crisis is experienced, whether the



The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.





# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

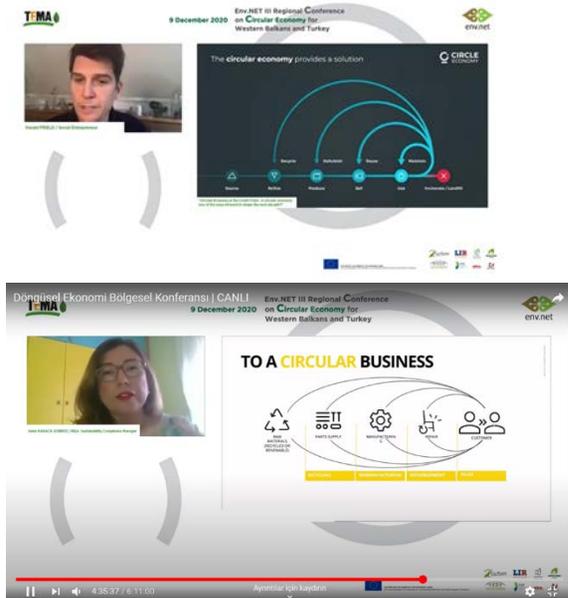
Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2020

circular economy can be one of the ways to shape the future?" He talked about opportunities for circular economy transitions and lessons shall be taken from covid crises in this regard.

Selen Karaca Gürbüz, from IKEA followed the Harald Frieid. She talked about the role of private companies. She explained IKEA's perspective and policies for circular business during her presentation that she called Circular IKEA.



In the last session of the conference, the manager of Punto.sud, Daniele Saibene from Italy and Richard Filcak, Advisor about EU Neighborhood Policies in European Environmental Bureau from Belgium explained facilitator role of EEB and punto.sud for the network and underlined the question of "Why are West Balkans and Turkey important for achieving the EU goals on circular economy?"

In the last part of this session, Env.net project partners; EASD from Serbia, Green Home from Montenegro, ATRC from Kosova, 4X4X4 Balkan Bridges from North Macedonia, LIR from Bosnia Herzegovina Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development from Albania and TEMA Foundation from Turkey) presented country based specific findings on circular economy and their work on the issue.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





9 December 2020 Env.NET III Regional Conference on Circular Economy for Western Balkans and Turkey



## Circular Economy in Albania Status of CE

- Circular Economy in Albania context is at **early stage & must be integrated in the academic curricula.**
- Central and Local government have done little in **fostering and planning a feasible shift/transition period toward Circular Economy.** Example: **Fail to ban the production and export of single use plastic by June 2020** while more than 2 year campaign with a cost of 150.000.000 was spent on campaigns.
- **Strategy, Politics and National Integrated Water Management Plan (2020-2030)**, published by GIZ in collaboration with MTE, claims to **facilitate the transition from linear to circular economy. However each document of +120pg deals with CE only in one paragraph whereas on the other hand it talks the construction of 3 incinerators and does not allocate any resources to segregation, closure of 200 illegal dumpsites, etc.**
- **No subsidies** at any level are allocated by far to start-up or business shifting toward circular economy.
- **EPR** deliberately is not approved as a law. **Public Pays Principle** as well.
- **Natural Resources** are being exploited without any attention to **Impact Assessment or Measures** (gigged rivers, deforestation, increased air pollution etc)



### a. Country base

## “the Canal or Istanbul!”

Kanal Istanbul is an ecocide project designed to extend from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara on the European side of Istanbul. The first tender for the project was held on March 26, 2020. Kanal İstanbul would bisect the current European side of Istanbul and thus form an island between Asia and Europe (the island would have a shoreline with the Black Sea, Sea of Marmara, the new canal and the Bosphorus). The new waterway would bypass the current Bosphorus. The stated

purpose of the project is to reduce the large marine traffic through the Bosphorus and minimize the risks and dangers associated particularly with tankers.

With the attempt of organizing tender, strong and unit action occurred in protecting the terrain. Many civil society organizations including TEMA Foundation established many reports subjected with the harm of the canal on the ecosystem in the area and whole city both. It organized many protests, distributed papers that includes public

opinions, organized walks, petitions and civil disobedience actions by ecologist.

Since 2014 when Kanal Istanbul project was first announced, TEMA has been an active stakeholder of the process, following the public opinion



tema.org.tr | social media icons | kanalil



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





formed on the subject. During the time TEMA filed a law case to cancel the EIA decision of Istanbul Channel Project. TEMA Scientific Committee determined of the impacts of the project through site visits. They contributed many reports. The outputs of the reports were used on the law case of EIA cancellation.

Besides TEMA conducted many communication campaigns to raise awareness about the impacts of the project and created public opinion via infographics.



Considering the urgency of the issue, TEMA has prioritized the canal project for 2021 as in 2020. TEMA will use abilities and knowledge by acting in partnership with other non-governmental organizations, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, various activists and advocates.

The environmental problems and the problems of the EIA process of Kanal İstanbul project also mentioned in the EU Progress Report for 2020. In the report, the Commission mentioned that;

*... Turkey has achieved some level of preparation in the area of horizontal legislation. Implementation of the Directive on Infrastructure for Spatial Information is still at an early stage. Provisions in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) legislation that waive licencing and other restrictions for strategically important investment projects remain a major concern. Procedures for transboundary consultations are not aligned with the EIA and the Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) Directives. **The existing EIA legislation continued to be implemented. However, there were concerns about the application of the rule of law in court decisions on environmental issues, about public***



The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.





# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2020

*participation as well as about the right to environmental information. The public concerns on the Kanal Istanbul Project, for the artificial sea-level waterway connecting the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara, led to several court cases against the EIA positive decision. In March 2020, the first tender was launched for the planning phase of reconstructing two historic bridges located in the area where the canal is expected to be built. A comprehensive impact analysis is required for this major project that will impact riparian states of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Turkey is still not party to the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions. Turkey aligned with the SEA Directive in some sectors. Alignment on environmental liability remained limited*



The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.





## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The final study visits and forum in the framework of the ENV.net project was dedicated to companies associated with chain of collection of secondary raw materials, was organized on 16th of December 2020. This time the participants were the 4th year students of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, professors of the Banja Luka High School of Technology and other guests from high schools. Similar to the previous visits, the aim was to raise awareness of the ongoing development of the recycling system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of the public is not aware of the fact that many successful companies are engaged in collecting different groups of materials, metals, polymers, paper and glass. The visit included three locations.

Prizma komerc is a private company with over 35 years of tradition in collecting and exporting various metals on a larger scale, together with its partners. The company buys very small quantities of scrap metal from citizens at their registered counter, but also collects tons of scrap metal from larger machine companies. Employees follow up on modern scientific developments and methods such as green methods for recycling electronic waste, which is one of their ambitions for the future.

Euro Beta is the first and currently the only recycling operator working in the City of Banja Luka. They organize the collection and storage of recyclable materials and promote a culture of recycling among young population. They are also in charge of setting up recycling containers throughout the city. The company's staff introduced the visitors to the current legislation and how they can apply for the installation of recycling "islands" in their local communities.

Grand Promet is a paper collection company that currently employs over 30 people. They offer the opportunity to small collectors and citizens to sell the collected paper at their counter, while at the same time are collecting large quantities of cardboard and paper from shopping malls and factories. It should be emphasized that the collected paper is mainly processed in the factory "Natron-Hayat" from Maglaj, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is a large paper factory with over 65 years of tradition, and which has excellent environmental standards. Depending on the prices on the international market, the collected paper is sometimes exported, but most importantly, it always finds its way from this company to the recycling factories.

This visit, similar to the previous ones, which was made thanks to the ENV.net project, was dedicated to raising awareness. Visitors, especially high school teachers, but also students who will soon



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2020

become teachers, will be able to encourage their communities and pupils to collect secondary raw materials and explain their movements in the recycling chain. Citizens' doubts about the real fate of raw materials separated in colorful containers on recycling "islands" are the main problem slowing down efficient recycling. By disseminating information and sharing experiences gained in real companies that strive to collect and make a living from recycling, citizens will begin to trust the chain and contribute to increasing recycling, making the environment cleaner.

Air pollution presents significant problem in major cities in BiH. The Government of FBiH authorised Fund for environmental protection of FBiH to purchase two automatised monitoring stations for air quality measurement. The stations enable simultaneous measurement of physical and chemical indicators of air quality and meteorological parameters as part of the network of air quality monitoring of importance for the Federation of BiH. The monitoring stations will be used by Federal hydrogeological institute and will be placed in Bihać and Livno.

According to indicators measured in Sarajevo, in December this city was at the top 10 list of the most polluted air in the world (data measured by Swiss IQ Air measuring 10000 places all over the world). Similar air quality is in Banja Luka, Tuzla, Zenica, where this is noticed each time when the heating season starts and polluters

level is increased in the air. A study of the impact of air pollution on human health in Zenica, conducted in 2018 by the Institute for Health and Food Safety Zenica, showed that the effects of air pollution (high concentrations of PM2.5 particles) can be associated with 17.6% of all deaths in Zenica, 20.8% deaths from lung cancer, 38% of all deaths due to ischemic heart disease, as well as 30% of strokes.

Sweden agency for environmental protection SEPA is implementing project in BiH in which the monitoring stations will be set up in Doboje, Trebinje and two in Sarajevo.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





## ALBANIA: First stages of circular economy in Albania during 2020

More than five years ago the EU Commission introduced the Circular Economy Package<sup>1</sup>, which defines economy as 'where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste is minimized'. In the New Circular Economy Action Plan<sup>2</sup> for a cleaner and more competitive Europe, to fulfill the ambitions, the EU needs to accelerate the transition towards a regenerative growth model that gives back to the planet more than it takes, advances towards keeping its resource consumption within planetary boundaries, and therefore strives to reduce its consumption footprint and double its circular material use rate in the coming decade.

The transformation from a linear economy based on the 'take-make-dispose' approach towards circular economy allows for a more ecological use of natural resources, low carbon emission, energy saving, and environmental protection, considering that natural resources are depleting at a fast pace.

The concept of 'circular economy' is still at an early stage in Albania. For the first time the concept of circular economy has been used in the Strategy of Integrated Waste Management in 2018, where is also mentioned the concept of "Zero waste" so that the waste is collected and treated as raw materials and management is done under the concept of circulatory systems, serving the criterion of use and preservation of raw material resources.

---

<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> Circular Economy, closing the loop, the production phase of the circular economy (2)  
[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/production-phase-circular-economy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/production-phase-circular-economy_en)

<sup>2</sup> A New Circular Economy Action Plan  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1583933814386&uri=COM:2020:98:FIN>





In the Strategy Policy Paper and Integrated National Waste Management Plan 2020-2035<sup>3</sup> published by GIZ in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, the main aim, mentioned at the very beginning of the document is the transition from linear economy to circular economy.

The current legal framework, including national regulations and national strategic documents and action plans, does not provide a basis for the implementation of the concept of circular economy in the country. Therefore, there is an urgent need for enhancements in the current legal framework that will increase the country's ability to better utilize its resources and the lifecycle of materials, products, and services.

During this year the Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development in the frame of Env.Net, organized the second regional Conference on Circular Economy, which was held in

Tirana on March 5-6, 2020. In this conference analyses from each country in the region were introduced, followed by discussions of the European perspective, of challenges when it comes to the application of Circular Economy principles, and the role that needs to be played by municipalities to further promote this economic model.

During this conference were shared some findings of the study of raising awareness on the importance of circular economy and also, presented new initiatives activities of the local businesses in Albania applying Circular Economy principles. It was discussed about the application of circular economy in practice which was addressed by the representatives of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment in Albania and also representatives from private companies with practice experiences

---

<sup>3</sup> The document of Strategic Politics and National Integrated Waste Management Plan 2020-2035

[http://turizmi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Dokumenti-i-Politikave-Strategjike\\_AL.pdf](http://turizmi.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Dokumenti-i-Politikave-Strategjike_AL.pdf)



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*





Other projects in the frame on circular economy are implemented from NGOs in Albania with the support of Env.Net and the European Union.

In January 2020, EDEN Center finalized the project "Highlighting the Circulating Economy - as a new approach to an active society"<sup>4</sup> implemented through Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development, with European Union funds, ENV.Net Factoring the Environmental Portfolio for the Western Balkans and Turkey in the EU Policy Agenda.

The project aimed to increase understanding and reinforce critical thinking about the circulating economy through practical model approaches to the daily life of cities.



Circular Economy (Source: Center for Competitive Skills)

During September, the Center for Competitiveness (CCS)<sup>5</sup> organized an activity to raise awareness and create a network of cooperation, within the project "Raising awareness of CSOs and SMEs on the importance of the Circular Economy following the package of the Circular

<sup>4</sup> EDEN Center

<http://www.eden-al.org/index.php/al/lajme/678-ekonomia-qarkulluese-nxites-per-bashkine-e-tiranes>

<sup>5</sup> <https://competitiveskills.org/ekonomia-qarkulluese-2/>



The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.





# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Electronic Newsletter

Western Balkans and Turkey

December 2020

Economy of EU”, funded by European Union. The event was attended by representatives from academia, the private sector (businesses and chambers of commerce), civil society and state institutions and presented some results of a study done in this field.

According to this study, 24 % of the public declared to be familiar with CE, but 15% have corrected information on CE as per definition. 51 % of businesses declared to be familiar with CE, but 44% have the correct knowledge on CE as per definition. But, according to the survey question about Which of the statements applies to the CE, only 15% of the public have the correct information on the circular economy.



*The publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of ENV.Net and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*

