

SIDE EVENT

Addressing Pollution in South East and Southern Europe

Outcome of the Ministerial Conference “Innovative Solutions to Pollution in South East and Southern Europe”

Fourth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

12 March 2019

18:00 to 19:30 hours - Conference room 1

Nairobi, Kenya

Background

Pollution is a universal challenge that does not respect national boundaries and contributes to the death of millions of people every year. It has been estimated that approximately 19 million premature deaths take place each year because of the way societies use natural resources: this is having tremendous impacts on our biodiversity and ecosystems.

South East European countries¹ share high quality environmental and natural resources, yet also face serious challenges related to environmental pollution. For example, in the Western Balkans, cities rank among the worst in Europe for air pollution, most waste water is not treated before ending up in the sea or rivers, and waste is dumped in illegal landfills.

On 4-5 December 2018, countries from South East and Southern Europe gathered in the framework of the “Innovative Solutions to Pollution in South East and Southern Europe” Ministerial Conference to discuss how pollution can be curbed to the benefit of the environment, health and economies. The Conference, organised by UN Environment and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, with the support from the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, presented practical examples of innovative solutions in the field of pollution monitoring, reduction and prevention.

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey

Objective of the side-event

At the side-event, a presentation on the state of pollution in South East Europe and the “Joint Regional Vision on Innovative Solutions to Pollution”, will be followed by an interactive discussion among high-level decision makers, NGOs and private sector from South Eastern Europe. This discussion will have a special focus on the next steps to implement the outcomes of the Belgrade Conference through regional cooperation.

Draft programme

18:00 – 18:05	Interactive Presentation “Pollution in South Eastern Europe” by Mr. Harald Egerer, UN Environment
18:05 – 18:15	Opening remarks by Ms. Joyce Msuya, Acting Executive Director of UN Environment,
18:15 – 19:00	<p>Panel discussion: Pollution in South East Europe, The next step</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Srdjan Sušić, Secretary General, Association for Packaging and Environmental Protection of Serbia</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Mr. Goran Trivan, Minister of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia • Ms. Orneta Çuçi, Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism of Albania • Ms. Ana Petrovska, State Secretary of the FYR of Macedonia • Mr. Giovanni Brunelli, Head of Division, Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, <i>tbc</i> • Mr. Gaetano Leone, Coordinator, UN Environment / Mediterranean Action Plan • Ms. Bistra Mihaylova, Policy Officer, Women Engage for a Common Future
19:00 – 19:15	Discussion, questions and answers
19:15 – 19:25	<p>Regional cooperation to beat pollution in South East Europe</p> <p>Harald Egerer, UN Environment and Head of the Conference Secretariat</p>

19:25 – 19.30	Closing remarks
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Key partners

- Government of the Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Environmental Protection
- Government of the Republic of Italy, Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea
- UN Environment

Contacts for further information

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