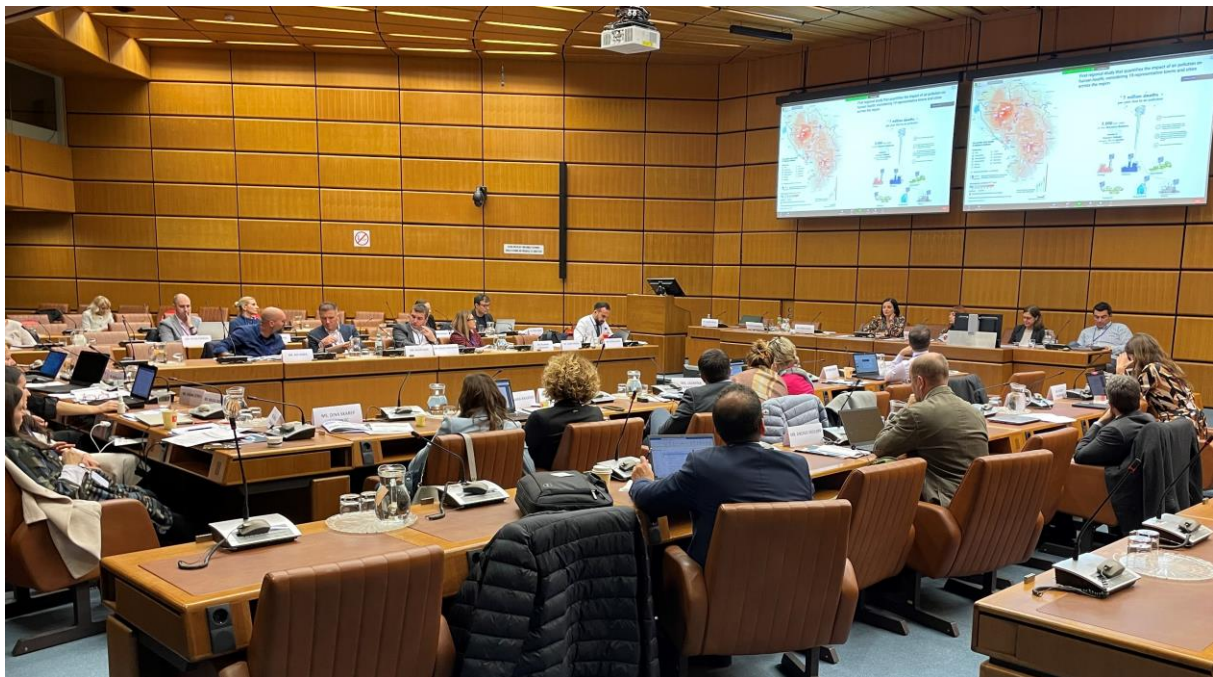


Summary Report - Western Balkans forum: Environmental / Climate achievements and future challenges

Regional exchange organized by the United Nations Environment Programme, 17 & 18 November 2022¹



¹ <https://www.unep.org/events/conference/western-balkans-forum-environmental-climate-achievements-and-future-challenges>

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Summary of the event	4
2.1 November 17, 2022 – DAY 1	4
2.2 November 18, 2022 – DAY 2	6
Annex 1 – Agenda of the Western Balkans Forum.....	30
Annex 2 – List of Participants (in presence and on-line).....	35
Annex 3 - Power Point Presentations	40
Annex 4 – Questions and Polls results	41

1. Introduction

The Western Balkans is a region heavily affected by climate change and pollution, but at the same time a rich European biodiversity hotspot, which needs to be protected for future generations.

Since its establishment, the UNEP Programme Office in Vienna Office has been implementing an array of projects aiming at addressing the main environmental and climate challenges in the Western Balkans, with the support of GEF and other donors.

This event aims at presenting the results achieved through the most significant projects implemented by UNEP together with its partners in the past years, thus contributing to the achievement of the Agenda 2030 goals and, at the same time, supporting the process of approximation of the Western Balkans Economies to the EU standards.

The main objectives of the event were:

- To present the UNEP mandate, strategy and its portfolio in the Region, together with the main environmental challenges and needs.
- To identify achievements and needs of the 6 WB Economies, at Economy and regional level.
- To present the international cooperation in the region, the existing initiatives and future opportunities.
- To discuss UNEP role in supporting the Western Balkans Economies in implementing the Agenda 2030 and the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.

The event was organized in presence at the Vienna International Centre, and on-line; a zoom link was also provided.

A total number of no. 52 participants (no. 39 in presence and no. 13 via zoom) attended the Forum, mainly representatives of the Western Balkans institutions, international development and cooperation agencies, regional entities, EU and international organizations.

The list of participants, both on-line and in presence, is attached to this report in the Annex 2. The following paragraphs are providing a brief description of the main topics presented and discussed.

Two videos and some other visibility material developed within UNEP initiatives was also distributed during the event.

2. Summary of the event

2.1 November 17, 2022 – DAY 1

During the first day of the event, UNEP presented its mandate and strategy providing an overview of its current portfolio

The purpose of UNEP presentation was to showcase the technical expertise of UNEP within the biodiversity, climate change, pollution, land degradation neutrality and the comparative advantage in the region.

Besides, the Global funding opportunities for biodiversity, land degradation, chemical and waste were also presented.

All the power point presentations, videos and others are attached to this report in the Annex 3.

In the second part of the day 1 the “National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Initiative – relevance for the Western Balkans” was also presented. The proposed initiative aims at establishing a regional mechanism to support the countries in reviewing their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP). The PPT is attached to this report (Annex 3).

During the discussion on the NBSAP the existing Biodiversity Task force was also mentioned, which includes the WB6 and contributed actively to the development of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. The participants called for coordination between the various initiatives at regional level. There is a need to continue implementation of the biodiversity national strategies and the biodiversity pillar of the Green Agenda for the WB with concrete funded projects.

With reference to the climate and the need to mainstream climate and biodiversity, the upcoming EU Directive on renewable energy was also mentioned. The Directive aims at responding to the current energy crisis, accelerating the EU independence from oil and gas focusing on renewable energy. In this sense the protection of nature and availability of natural resources is essential.

Here below the main conclusions of the discussion:

- Coordination of existing and future initiatives at regional level is required
- To strengthen the interlinkages between climate , biodiversity and sustainable land management remains a high priority.
- Biodiversity maps are missing in the region, it is important to streamline biodiversity and climate into national planning documents such as spatial planning.
- The EU acquis should be considered as main driving force in the region in terms of environmental protection agenda.

At the end of the first day a link to polls questions in several environmental sectors was also provided. All participants provided their feedback which was further discussed during the Round Table planned for the second day of the event. The list of questions submitted to the participants is attached to this report in the Annex 4.

2.2 November 18, 2022 – DAY 2

The second day of the event envisaged a presentation of partners' priorities for the Western Balkans Region, as well as the main strategic goals of the international cooperation agencies and the respective development strategies.

The round table/dialogue among the WB economies' representatives and the international community on the environmental priorities (funding, current and future calls for projects, existing strategies and a way forward) was essential to identify and discuss the actions necessary to address significant environmental and climate issues..

The first session started with a short statement from the WB6 representatives, who presented a brief description of the respective achievements and the main challenges:

ALBANIA

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) is the leading ministry for Environmental matters and the focal point for GEF and GCF.

The MTE / Government of Albania consider Biodiversity and protected areas as a priority for the next four years.

In the past year Albania increase the % of protected areas from 17 to 21,5% of total land mass, and the Albanian Government is committed to reach the 30% by 2030

In February 2023 the Government will officially proclaim Vjosa, the last wild river in Europe, as National park, while the Albanian Alps National Park has been recently proclaimed.

In the coming months Albania will start, supported by UNEP, a GEF project on the protection and development of the Albanian Alps. The project will contribute to achieve the Government's objectives.

Albania was the second country in recovering touristic sector after the COVID-19 pandemic, and according to a recent survey, the 40% of tourists preferred protected areas to coastal area, a significant shift demonstrating that protected areas are the preferred sector and need to be further developed.

The main priorities are related to the conservation of protected areas, promotion and development of sustainable tourism (Ministry of Tourism and Environment is responsible for both sectors).

ARMENIA

(To stimulate the interregional exchanging of experiences a representative from Armenia attended the Forum as well.)

The current environmental programme covers the period 2021-2026. The main objective of programme is the protection, conservation and rational use of natural resources, balancing social justice, minimization of pollution and impact on the environment.

All the environmental legislation adopted is in compliance with the priorities defined in the partnership agreement between Armenia and the EU.

Following the signature of the partnership agreement several important legal and institutional reform have been implemented.

Among other things, more than 1000 legal acts were adopted, the NDC was also updated recently. Important projects supporting this process have been implemented on a country and regional level.

Several other pieces of legislation are in the phase to be and drafted / revised and adopted.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM)

The Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (ESAP) was recently adopted for the next 10 years until 2030+.

All strategic docs relevant for biodiversity and CC are included in the Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (ESAP).

BiH signed the Sofia declaration, accepting all the related commitments

ESAP has 7 chapters (environment and climate change) with all the relevant sectors addressed, defining strategic goals and needs. It includes the extension and improvement in the management of protected areas.

The involvement of the population and relevant stakeholders in the establishment and management of protected areas, and the promotion of sustainable tourism, remains an issue.

Regarding climate change the NDC was updated 2 years ago for both mitigation and adaptation measures (the national adaptation plan is also part of ESAP).

Following the adoption of the global biodiversity framework, the national biodiversity strategy has also to be updated, and an accurate assessment is required before updating the existing strategic documents.

In this sense the representative of the environmental fund stressed the importance of the environmental information system, recently established.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND WATER MANAGEMENT OF REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA

Land degradation is a significant issue. A project will start by the end of the year, the focus of the project is the achievement of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) in several sectors: forestry, agriculture and water management.

The following main priorities have been identified for the coming period:

Nature Based Solution: to be used as a tool for the achievement of land degradation neutrality for all 3 sectors.

The implementation of additional activities in the coming period, will depend on the availability of funds (GEF, GCF).

Following an agreement among the focal point of the three Rio conventions, projects and programmes, to be more effective, should address biodiversity, climate, LDN in an integrated way and not as a separate topic.

KOSOVO*²

Central and local authorities are engaged in the implementation of Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, developing environmental policy, further harmonizing the legislation with the EU acquis and improving its implementation.

Currently the drafting of the Strategy for environment and sustainable development 2022-2031 is on-going it includes five thematic strategies (air quality, biodiversity, hydro-meteorological activities, improving capacity strengthening the environmental education and raising awareness. An action Plan for the implementation of the green agenda will be also incorporated in all the strategies. The Municipalities have also an important role in implementing the Green Agenda and the related strategies.

The Air quality Law is in force, the Law on climate is in the drafting phase, and the estimated time of adoption is the end of the year 2022.

Law on EIA fully transposing the EIA Directive, has been finalized as the Law on Integrated Prevention and Pollution Control. The waste management strategy and the strategy for climate change have been adopted and implemented

The Decarbonisation strategy is in the drafting phase and it will also contribute to the implementation of the green deal agenda. The road map for circular economy strategy will be also finalized soon

The reference person for EU4 Green project, KS identified the reference persons to improve the project impact.

The management for the National Park Bjeshkët and Nemuna has been finalised (funded by SIDA), the Red List was also finalized according to IUCN methodology, and it is now important to define a strategy. Forest inventory for development of forest sector and to address reporting obligations has been prepared and implemented by the Region Forest Group in cooperation with the forestry agency of Kosovo*

The following main needs and priorities have been identified:

² *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Kosovo* needs further technical assistance for the development of the strategy on decarbonisation, as well as the sectorial action plan after the strategy for environment and sustainable development has been approved.

Concerning climate adaptation Kosovo* needs an early warning system improvement for risk assessment and management, infrastructural projects, river basin management improvement especially regarding floods risks, increasing response to wild fire risks, increasing water capacity collection, increasing agriculture adaptation to climate change impact such as drought.

Concerning climate mitigation Kosovo* needs to improve data collection for all categories for GHGs and air emission inventory, implementation of methodology according to IPCC, projection of GHG and modelling.

Greening transportation sector to reduce emission, increasing energy efficiency standards in buildings and energy efficiency projects are also necessary.

Kosovo* express its wish to join the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement.

A new plan for waste management to improve the application of the circular economy approach is also needed.

MONTENEGRO

Regarding Biodiversity conservation 4 main criticisms and priorities have been identified:

1. Lack of awareness regarding biodiversity conservation. Lack of awareness intended as general public but also decision makers. The support of UNEP in promoting the importance of biodiversity with a focus on protected areas and Natura 2000 network is needed.
2. Lack of capacities within the institutions and organisations in the directorate of nature protection. The support of UNEP would be very much appreciated in engaging external expertise concerning biodiversity and particularly data collection and management, management of protected areas
3. Lack of knowledge in biodiversity conservation. It is required to strengthening the capacities of the national experts through trainings and masters courses,

in several sectors related to biodiversity conservation and management of protected areas

4. Poor equipment: hardware, software. Capacity of managers of protected areas, especially marine protected areas and the monitoring equipment need to be improved.

Integration of biodiversity in sectoral policies is becoming more and more an issue and a priority. That's why UNEP should provide adequate expertise to support the WB countries in addressing international and EU challenges.

Regarding Climate change the following main achievements and priorities have been identified:

Government adopted the document updating the NDC and it has been requested to MN to reduce GHG emissions to up to 35% compared to the baseline 2019 year, but MN has the ambition to reduce further its emission up to 45% by 2030, this is based on the mitigation measures adopted in the energy sector, industrial processes, agriculture, land use, waste.

MN adopted in 2019 the law on climate change, which contains 2 main obligations:

1. Adoption of the national adaptation plan and 2) low carbon development strategy both documents addressing the main challenges regarding mitigation and adaptation framework. In the future MN shall establish a stable and binding NDC.

It is very important to address NDC ambitious toward net zero emission and just energy transition.

The LULUCF regulation is also very important for the country, and the establishment of a monitoring and verification system is very important and requires support.

Other priorities identified are the needs to strengthen the capacities for climate projections as well as the implementation and improvement of EU legislation.

Regarding land degradation: the national action plan for combating land degradation and mitigation prepared by GEF with the support of UNEP needs to be updated by 2030 (This is one of the main priority in the coming period)

Montenegro was also developing successfully the national draught plan, which defines priorities and measures to address draught, institutional set up, etc. The plan was developed under the coordination of the Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism with the support of the UNCCD.

IN 2016 the secretariat to the convention launch an initiative to establish a voluntary land degradation draught target, Montenegro joined this initiative and received support from the UNCCD secretariat for the implementation of the activities necessary to achieve the target. The outcomes of these activities showed that the most common cause of land degradation in Montenegro are fires and urbanization.

The report submitted to the UNCCD secretariat identified 15 hot spots for national and voluntary targets and 25 measures to achieve LDN by 2030.

Based on these proposed measures should be transformed into concrete actions, therefore Montenegro is interested in receiving global mechanism support for the development of concept notes for LDN transformative projects.

A project idea application has been already prepared for agro-environmental measures, sustainable use of land, mitigation and achievement of the land degradation goals. The project was included among the project in the national programme of priority activities within the framework of the GCF, which was suggested as a potential fund to support the project.

The ministry of Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism established in February 2022 a working group including stakeholders related to land management issues, to develop project ideas and project proposals. The first meeting took place in September 2022.

According to the UNCCD procedure the next step is the engagement of the implementing agency, which should work together with the national and international consultants and the working group as well, on the preparation and implementation of the project in case it is funded.

NORTH MACEDONIA

The Minister of Environment and Physical Planning Mr. Naser Nuredini intervened on-line to meeting, stressing the importance of the Sustainable development, and the implementation of Regional projects to address the main regional issues especially regarding the establishment and management of transboundary protected areas.

Additional priorities identified by the delegation of North Macedonia are:

- The establishment of ecological network to be approved, in compliance with the Law.
- Priority areas for the implementation of restoration activities based on application of the nature based solution shall be identified, as the new law on nature protection and conservation prescribes the compulsory application of the nature based solutions.

Besides, it was mentioned that at the last meeting for GCF a regional dialogue was launched to discuss regional issues and priorities. This dialogue will be lead by North Macedonia.

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Representative of the Department for Chemicals Management of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and focal point to the Stockholm Convention (participating online) has provided inputs in written form. He expressed interest in further cooperation with UNEP, emphasizing the need for strengthening cooperation with the scientific and research sector in the area of risk assessment of chemicals of international importance (POPs, SVHC) and assessment of exposure to these chemicals, as well as need for capacity building for the implementation of EU legislation related to chemicals (REACH and POPs EU Regulations).

The second session focused on the international cooperation in the region, existing initiatives and future opportunities

The session started with a brief speech of the representative of the **Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security** former Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition.

Mr. Angelini was illustrating briefly the approach of the Ministry's development strategy in the region stressing the longstanding collaboration between UNEP and the Italian Ministry as well as the importance of the regional dimension in addressing pollution issues.

The representative of the **Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations** provided an overview on the economic and investment plan for the Western Balkans and the funding opportunity of the green transition within the period under IPA III

The main sources of funding are IPA and the related economic and investment plans for the WB

The Green Transition, including the green agenda for the WB, sets a goal of 9 billion EUR in grants for the next seven-year period till 2027. It will facilitate the investment up to 20 billion EUR through the Western Balkans Guarantee Facility recently established, focusing on the green transition.

Some updates on the main flagship of Economic Investment Plan (EIP) were also provided:

The implementation of EIP is on-going 1,2 billion grant have been already allocated mainly in the transport sector and investment for renewable energy, energy efficiency.

The Western Balkans Investment Framework is a regional fund gathering the WB6, EC, EU MS, several multilateral Financial Institutions, and transport and energy community, RCC.

The WBIF has 2 streams: The first is combination of loans and grant for public infrastructure (environment and energy investment) and blending for private sector, (it includes financial support for SMEs for the green transition)

The second on Financial guarantees which is relatively new and has priority relevant for the green agenda. This has been implemented through 2 windows: 1) dedicated to the European Investment Bank, and 2) an open access guarantee for other financial institutions, which operates through calls for proposals addressed to partners in WB and IFIs.

For the guarantees there is currently an open call for proposal, which are related to the green transition and the energy support package.

Several other Regional programmes were also presented.

The European Commission recently announced in November 2022 the Energy Support Package for the Western Balkans for a total amount of 1bln EUR, besides the 9 billion EUR, allocated to implement the green agenda.

An amount of 500 mln EUR will be disbursed through the IPAIII budget for 2023 (immediate term) and 500mln on a short and medium term via the WBIF.

Countries are currently planning how these funds will be disbursed.

The EU4Green project was also briefly presented. Its inception phase is almost completed. It involves the WB6. This initiative is not a pure TA project, it is a politically important project for the European Commission.

The comprehensive presentation is attached to this report in the Annex 3.

The representative of the **Regional Cooperation Council** join the meeting on-line delivering a brief speech on the activities of RCC, and providing a brief overview of the Green Agenda for Western Balkans and Action Plan.

In particular it was stressed the importance of the financial support for the implementation of the green deal, as the green transition is a very high and demanding for the WB countries, requiring the mobilisation of public and private investment.

RCC coordinated the process for the finalisation of the text and approval of the green agenda and action plan in 2020, and it is currently strengthening its regional structure, establishing working group at regional level, etc. to ensure the coordination for the implementation of the Green Agenda for the WB.

The first report on the implementation of the Green Agenda for the WB will be released at the beginning of the next year to assess the progress of the Green Agenda implementation.

Green Agenda implementation is very demanding requiring structural changes within the region.

Standing regional Working Group on Rural development, biodiversity and nature protection pillar lead by IUCN is working for the implementation of the corresponding pillar of the green agenda and Action Plan.

Regional activities are also included and very important especially for circular economy, preventing plastic pollution, marine litter.

International cooperation for enhancing the Green Agenda for WB is extremely important. The coordination among different players, especially donors, might be very challenging and support is needed in this sense.

The representative of the **Transport community (TC)** presented briefly the main mission of the Transport Community as well as the Strategy for Sustainable and Smart Mobility in the Western Balkans. The Strategy has 3 main goals: Sustainable mobility, Smart Mobility and Resilient Mobility.

The Strategy has a specific focus on clima-proofing to integrate the climate change measures into the development of infrastructure, in order to improve the resilience of infrastructures.

The need to improve resilience of transport infrastructure is in all the TC strategic documents, it has been agreed with the Commission and the Countries, and it became also a national priority.

TC wants to build up on the results achieved through the Climaproof project (presented during the first day of the event) funded by the Austrian Development Agency and implemented by UNEP, in particular on the Regional resilience strategy.

The follow up will be a technical assistance project which will focus on capacity building, to improve climate resilience to the TEN-T road and rail networks in the WB.

Deadline for the application: 28/11/2022, duration is 11 months. The proposed TA is going to implementing partially the strategy developed within the Climaproof project.

Please refer to the PPT attached to this report (Annex 3) for more information about the initiative and the TC activities.

The floor was given to Peter Vajda representing the **Energy Community** who introduced briefly the Community as an international treaty between EU as a whole and the parties, which include the WB6.

It was also mentioned the Cleaner regions initiative, which is a regional initiative in the WB6 and including also Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia.

The initiative was proposed by some mayors, which approached the secretariat.

The initiative was launched the last year, and among other things is developing an Air quality planning. The next stage will be the development of several related projects.

Synergies could be established with several participants to the meeting.

The representative of the **Austrian Development Agency** presented the Strategy and main initiatives of the Austrian Development Agency.

Ms. Wibmer announced the recent approval of the ADA three-years programme by the Council of Ministers.

It represents the main ADA's policy document for 2022-2024, and it has an increased focus on environment and climate dimension. Environmental protection is one of the overall goals of the AD cooperation. One of the 3 priorities in the ADA policy document is the safeguarding of environmental and natural resources, with 2 sub-goals: 1) climate change adaptation and mitigation and 2) biodiversity and natural resource management.

Two goals enshrined in the policy document 1) increase programme and projects in support of environment and climate up to 60% up to the year 2024, 2) to avoid the use of fossil fuels in ADA's initiatives.

Over the last year, a regional policy for the WB has been developed which was approved by the Ministry of foreign affairs but not adopted yet. The final draft and it is already the basis for the next year programme and the focus on environment and climate is visible.

The new strategy will have a 3 focus thematic areas and 1 of the focus area will be climate and environment in support to the Sofia declaration and green agenda. Within this goal there are some aspects to be touched. ADA will not be focusing on decarbonisation, it will work more on climate change and strengthening government framework, increasing resilience for climate-proofing, nature based solution, integration of climate change adaptation with disaster risk reduction, one specific focus area is also vocational trainings, improving skills introducing green skills. Climate resilience integrated water resource management at RB level, including transboundary waters, regional initiatives for the management of shared natural resources, protection, restoration of ecosystem services will be also part of the programme.

Currently ADA is developing a projects pipeline in the water sector, the climate regional platform for adaptation with UNEP.

Besides, ADA will be supporting the continuation of the biodiversity task force and implementation of the biodiversity pillar of the green agenda, sustainable forest management and watershed management.

The representative of the **Italian agency for international development (AICS)** briefly introduced the strategy, which is based on the acquis communautaire, to support countries to access EU, as well as on the SDGs.

The Regional offices recently got the mandate from the headquarter in Rome to develop their own strategy tailor made to the specific needs of the region/countries.

Currently the office in Tirana is elaborating the next strategy for the period 2023-2027 one of the outcome will be to merge SDG 8.9 and SDG 11.4: to promote sustainable tourism and cultural heritage. It is particularly important for AICS to be closer to the local communities.

The projects related to the promotion of sustainable tourism are currently on-going: NaturAL, NaturKS, NaturBiH. AICS is mainly working with municipalities and local NGOs. There is grant scheme of 200/300.000 for the NGOs to sub-grant and support local communities. On the other hand AICS is also supporting the local institutions, in the development of the management plans for protected areas. After drafting the plan, it is important to focus on implementation.

The development of a regional initiative can be also considered in the future.

The representative of the **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency** introduced the Strategy and main initiatives of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The PPT presenting the strategy is attached to this report in the Annex 3

Round table discussion and polls results

The third session was dedicated to the discussion of the polls results.

Here below are summarised the main priorities identified, the complete set of questions and the elaboration of the feedback provided by the participants are described in the Annex 4 to this report.

Regarding the main **priorities for biodiversity conservation** at national level the 75% of the responses identified the need to improve the effective management of protected areas, capacitating PA personnel and financing of management plans of PA.

The second ranked priorities with the 58% are: the development of the Nature studies/ecosystem mapping and nature valorization studies, the Restoration of ecosystems and use of novel approaches (e.g. Nature based Solutions) and

Mainstreaming of biodiversity into national planning such as infrastructures, spatial plans.

The following priorities for **Biodiversity conservation at regional level were identified:**

For the 56% it is necessary to define joint action for environmental emergencies such as forest fires/floods/waste issues/hunting etc.

As a second priority with the 50% of score are the Joint sustainable tourism in the transboundary PA programmes and the development of a joint regional WB Biodiversity strategy and action plan.

The following table is summarizing the polls results for biodiversity:

Figure 1 Polls results - Biodiversity

Biodiversity		
#	Question /Answers	%
1.	What are the main priorities for biodiversity conservation in your country (select multiple)?	

Biodiversity		
#	Question /Answers	%
A.	Nature studies/ecosystem mapping and nature valorization studies	58,8%
B.	Increase of protected areas.	52,9%
C.	Effective management of protected areas, capacitating PA personnel and financing of management plans of PA.	76,5%
D.	Enhancement of national ecological corridors and greening of transport infrastructures	17,6%
E.	Biodiversity monitoring and reporting system enhanced	47,1%
F.	Restoration of ecosystems and use of novel approaches (e.g. Nature based Solutions).	58,8%
G.	Development of the innovative financing options for biodiversity conservation?	35,3%
H.	Improving knowledge, education and skills of relevant stakeholders/nature protection actors.	35,3%
I.	Policy revision and compliance with EU Chapter 27	29,4%
J.	Community support, adequate funding and proper research influence the success of conservation effort	11,8%
K.	Adaptation of vulnerable biodiversity to climate change	35,3%
L.	Natural capital accounting	29,4%
M.	Mainstreaming of biodiversity into national planning such as infrastructures, spatial plans etc.	58,8%
N.	Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol	5,9%
O.	None of the above. Please provide different option: _____	5,9%
P.	I do not know	5,9%
2. Biodiversity conservation at regional level need assistance in the following areas?		

Biodiversity		
#	Question /Answers	%
A.	Regional Biodiversity Strategy and a GBD funding framework for the implementation of activities	37,5%
B.	Enhancement of trans-boundary protected areas and joint financing	56,3%
C.	Joint action environmental emergencies such as forest fires/floods/waste issues/hunting etc.	43,8%
D.	Joint effort on monitoring and reporting	50%
E.	Joint capacity building programmes and facilitating joint dialogue on biodiversity conservation	50%
F.	Joint sustainable tourism in the transboundary PA programmes	43,8%
G.	Development of a joint regional WB Biodiversity strategy and action plan (based on the: national NBSAPs, regional consultations, inputs from the experts in the countries).	31,3%
H.	All of the above	18,8%
I.	Other identified regional priorities:_____	6,3%
J.	I do not know	6,3%

Regarding **Land Degradation** the main national priorities identified in achieving sustainable land management are the development of adequate policies for sustainable land management such as soil protection law, soil protection strategy etc – transposition of Chapter 27 related to soil (52%) and the Afforestation activities and/or increase of vegetative cover and the Innovative financing opportunities for addressing soil degradation with the 41%.

Most of the responses consider all the options proposed necessary to combat land degradation at regional level, namely:

- Launching a regional land degradation restoration plan
- Introducing measures to enable the necessary transformative change (such as: the strategy highlights unlocking funding for reversing the land

degradation, and setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress improve knowledge, financing and investments)

- Facilitating regional dialogue - Regional platform for addressing transboundary issues related to land degradation such as forest fires, contaminated sites, landslides etc.

The following table is summarizing the polls results for land degradation:

Figure 2 Polls results Land Degradation

Land degradation		
#	Question /Answers	%
1.	What are the main national priorities in achieving sustainable land management (select multiple)?	

Land degradation		
#	Question /Answers	%
A.	Development of adequate policies for sustainable land management such as soil protection law, soil protection strategy etc. – transposition of Chapter 27 related to soil.	52,9%
B.	Enhancement of soil data collection and reporting, including national erosion and vegetation maps, soil types etc.	41,2%
C.	Enhancement of capacities for preventing and addressing wind and water erosion, forest fires, floods and landslides	23,5%
D.	Addressing land take and restoring soil ecosystems	11,8%
E.	Afforestation activities and/or increase of vegetative cover	41,2%
F.	Remediation of contaminated soil sites	35,3%
G.	Mainstreaming of LDN targets into national planning documentation such as spatial plans, infrastructure plans, forestry plans etc.	52,9%
H.	Applying a combination agro-bio-forestry initiatives	29,4%
I.	Capacitating local communities in addressing land degradation issues	29,4%
J.	Community based restoration activities. Capacitating local communities in agro-bio-diversity initiatives as means to address soil degradation.	35,3%
K.	Innovative financing opportunities for addressing soil degradation	41,2%
L.	All of the above	17,6%
M.	None of the above. Please provide different option: _____	0%
N.	I do not know	5,9%
2. What kind of a scaling up regional activities are necessary in the Western Balkans region to combat land degradation?		

Land degradation		
#	Question / Answers	%
A.	Launching a regional land degradation restoration plan	13,3%
B.	Introducing measures to enable the necessary transformative change (such as: the strategy highlights unlocking funding for reversing the land degradation, and setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress improve knowledge, financing and investments)	20%
C.	Facilitating regional dialogue - Regional platform for addressing transboundary issues related to land degradation such as forest fires, contaminated sites, landslides etc.	13,3%
D.	All of the above	46,7%
E.	None of the above. Please provide different option: _____	0%
F.	I do not know	6,7%

Regarding **Climate adaptation** the main national climate adaptation priorities identified are: Mainstreaming climate adaptation practices in infrastructural plans in the area of tourism, transport etc. – climate proofing of infrastructures development (50%) and Strengthening policies, governance, and capacities (43,8%).

While for scaling up action on climate change adaptation regionally, the following main priority areas were identified: Integrate Nature based Solutions (NbS) and equitable climate-smart planning into adaptation and disaster reduction policy (64%), Increase knowledge and awareness of nature-based disaster risk reduction solutions among decision makers, natural resource managers and local communities, and Increasing ecosystem and community resilience to climate change (42%).

The following table is summarizing the polls results for Climate adaptation:

Figure 3 Polls results Climate adaptation

Climate adaptation		
#	Question /Answers	%
1. What are the main climate adaptation priorities in your country activities for your country (select multiple)?		
A.	Climate change mitigation	31,3%
B.	Mainstreaming climate adaptation practices in infrastructural plans in the area of tourism, transport etc. – climate proofing of infrastructures development	50%
C.	Vulnerable and degraded ecosystems restorations using Nature based Solutions (NbS)	31,3%
D.	Sustainable cities – mainstreaming of NBS and climate adaptation as a tool for adapting to climate change	31,3%
E.	Green Transport initiatives	31,3%
F.	Promoting climate-resilient development	12,5%
G.	Strengthening policies, governance, and capacities	43,8%
H.	All of the above	25%
I.	None of the above. Please provide different option: _____	0%
J.	I do not know	6,3%
2. For scaling up action on climate change adaptation regionally, what kind of regional initiatives/activities are necessary in the Western Balkans region?		

Climate adaptation		
#	Question /Answers	%
A.	Regional climate adaptation network containing all relevant information regarding climate projections, indicators and best practices on mainstreaming of climate adaptation practices	28,6%
B.	Increasing ecosystem and community resilience to climate change	42,9%
C.	Increase knowledge and awareness of nature-based disaster risk reduction solutions among decision makers, natural resource managers and local communities	57,1%
D.	Integrate Nature based Solutions (NbS) and equitable climate-smart planning into adaptation and disaster reduction policy	64,3%
E.	Implement Nature-based solutions for disaster risk reduction and their scale-up	35,7
F.	All of the above	14,3%
G.	None of the above. Please provide different option:_____	0%
H.	I do not know	7,1%

Regarding **Pollution prevention and control**, the main priorities at Country level are: to get assistance with development/revision of policies related to prevention of pollution (73%), to improve data collection and analysis of the effect of pollution on human health and environment (66,7%) and capacity building (53,3%).

Regarding the perception of environmental risk and health risk 81,3% of the responses consider that both risks have a high priority and need to be assessed.

With reference to the Zero Pollution Action Plan, beside air quality which remains the highest priority in the region, the environmental matrixes of greatest concern are:

- A. Soil: 87,5%
- B. Groundwater: 68,8%
- C. Surface water: 56,3%

Beside the polls results, the following main considerations have been also stressed during the discussion:

- More Regional initiatives and approach are required to better address environmental and climate issues at transboundary level
- Mainstreaming of climate and biodiversity into national planning such as infrastructures, spatial plans.
- Integrate Nature based Solutions (NbS) and equitable climate-smart planning into adaptation and disaster reduction policy
- The implementation of the Green Deal agenda and the green transition is extremely challenging and it requires a further strengthening of the collaboration and coordination among EU, international and regional organizations and donors, in order to increase the impact of the activities implemented
- Countries need support in implementing the Green Deal agenda and in aligning the respective environmental and climate legislation to the EU acquis.
- Regarding pollution prevention and control, beside air pollution, which remains the highest priority in the region, the Soil and groundwater contamination has also been considered a matter of great concern.
- UNEP will soon complete the Pillar assessment process for the indirect management of EU funds, this could be a good opportunities to further strengthen the collaboration with all the partners in the Region.

The following table is summarizing the polls results for pollution prevention and control:

Figure 4 Polls results Pollution

Pollution		
#	Question /Answers	%
1.	What are the main priorities in your country to reduce pollution?	

Pollution		
#	Question /Answers	%
A.	Effect of pollution on human health and environment – data and analysis	66,7%
B.	Assistance with development/revision of policies related to prevention of pollution	73,3%
C.	Facilitating dialogue/awareness raising with different stakeholders rendering from the investment frameworks such as Western Balkans Investment Framework to other sectors such public health institutes	46,7%
D.	Capacity building	53,3%
E.	Transposition of legislation	20%
F.	None of the above. Please provide different option: _____	0%
2. Environmental risk and health risk are different magnitudes, respond to different legislation, and are calculated differently. In your country, it is a priority to assess:		
A.	Health risk	25%
B.	Environmental risk	37,5%
C.	Both have high priority	81,3%
D.	Both have low priority	6,3%
3. Zero Pollution Action Plan provides actions for member countries to prevent and remediate contamination. Which are the environmental matrixes of greatest concern?		
A.	Soil	87,5%
B.	Groundwater	68,8%
C.	Surface water	56,3%
D.	None of the above. Please provide different option: _____	0

Annex 1 – Agenda of the Western Balkans Forum

Description of the event	
Title	Western Balkans forum: Environmental / Climate achievements and future challenges
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To present the UNEP mandate, strategy and its portfolio in the Region, together with the main environmental challenges and needs • Presentation of the international cooperation in the region, the existing initiatives and future opportunities • To discuss UNEP role in supporting the Western Balkans Economies in implementing the Agenda 2030 and the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans •
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In presence: Vienna International Centre – Vienna, <u>conference room CR-4</u> 7th floor, C building • On-line via the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84214163192 Pass code 000000 Meeting ID 842 1416 3192
Date	17 & 18 November 2022
Duration	<p>Two days event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAY 1 envisages a presentation of the UNEP mandate and strategy, its portfolio (Carpathians, Mountains and WB region) and pipeline projects. The intention of the presentations is to showcase the technical expertise of UNEP within the biodiversity, climate change, air quality, waste, water and soil management, LDN and the comparative advantage. Separate presentations shall be held for (1) presenting the overall UNEPs mandate, divisions and policies, EU pillar assessment, an overview of projects and initiatives; (2) presenting the WB portfolio (cooperation w/GEF and GCF), past and ongoing projects and the pipeline projects. (3) Presentation of the Italian cooperation; (4) Presentation of the results achieved

Description of the event	
	<p>through the project ClimaProof I, as well as the objectives of the way forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAY 2 envisages a presentation of the international community and partners' priorities for the Western Balkans Region; round table/dialogue with the WB economies' representatives on the environmental priorities and with the international community (funding, current and future calls for projects, existing strategies and a way forward).
Participants	Representatives from the ministries responsible for environmental protection in the region, donors, international organizations, European Commission, institutions and academia.
Visibility Materials	Videos with info-graphic and synthesis report

Agenda 17 November 2022 - Main challenges and achievement		
Time	Item	Speaker
10:00 - 10:10	Welcoming participants and Introduction of the event	S. Gebert – UNEP Vienna Programme Office, Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (SCC)
10:10 - 10:25	Overview of UNEP mandate, role and cooperation with different institutions	H. Egerer – UNEP Vienna Programme Office, Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention (SCC)
10:25 - 10:35	Introduction – Overview of the UNEP portfolio in the WB Economies	S. Gebert - UNEP SCC
10:35 - 10:40	Video: <i>Protecting and restoring the environment in the Western Balkans</i>	
10:40 – 11:20	Biodiversity portfolio	M. Grabovac, I. Stojanova, V. Buskovic - UNEP

Agenda 17 November 2022 - Main challenges and achievement

<i>Time</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
11:20 – 11:40	Sustainable Land Management portfolio	M. Sazdov, V. Bozgo - UNEP
11:40 – 11:55	Programming for biodiversity and Land Degradation portfolio: Global funding opportunities	E. Esen - UNEP
11:55 – 12:25	Pollution portfolio	A. Siljic Tomic, E. Stefanoni, M. Colovic Daul - UNEP
12:25 – 12:40	Programming for chemical and waste portfolio: Global funding opportunities	E. Touni - UNEP
12:40 – 14:15	Lunch break	
14:15 – 14:45	Climate Adaptation portfolio	S. Gebert – UNEP SCC
14:45 - 15:00	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Initiative – relevance for the Western Balkans	A. Krolopp - The Nature Conservancy Senior Policy Advisor / Head of Biodiversity
15:00 - 16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions & Answers • Discussion on environmental priorities 	All participants and moderator
19:00	Dinner, Stöckl im Park Address: Prinz Eugen-Straße 25, 1040 Vienna (Optional) ³	

Agenda 18 November 2022 - Challenges, needs and future opportunities

<i>Time</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
10:00 –10:10	Opening day II and welcome	H. Egerer – UNEP/SCC

³ The cost of the dinner shall be covered by the participants

Agenda 18 November 2022 - Challenges, needs and future opportunities		
Time	Item	Speaker
10:10–11:25	Environmental, climate challenges and priorities	Statements representatives of economies from the Region(s)
11:25 – 11:40	<i>Video – Shar Planina behind the scenes</i>	
The international cooperation in the region, existing initiatives and future opportunities		
11:40–11:55	The economic and investment plan for the Western Balkans - Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and latest developments	J. Milos - Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
11:55 – 12:10	Green Agenda for Western Balkans - Action Plan	H. Abaspahic - Regional Cooperation Council
12:10 – 12:20	Regional road vulnerability assessment	N. Begovic – Transport Community
12:20 – 12:35	Strategy and main initiatives of the Austrian Development Agency	S. Wibmer – Austrian Development Agency
12:35 – 12:45	Strategy and main initiatives of the Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition	P. Angelini, - Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition
12:45 – 13:00	Strategy and main initiatives of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation	E. Azzone - Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
13:00 – 13:15	Strategy and main initiatives of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	T. Lassila – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
13:15-13.30	Coffee break	
13:30–14:30	Round table on the role of UNEP in the WB and the Mid-Long Term Strategy of UNEP and international community for	All participants and moderator

Agenda 18 November 2022 - Challenges, needs and future opportunities

<i>Time</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
	the future / Feedback and Discussion	
14:30 – 14:45	Conclusions and next steps	H. Egerer, S. Gebert - UNEP

Annex 2 – List of Participants (in presence and on-line)

WESTERN BALKANS FORUM - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS			
Name	Position	Contacts	Confirm
ARMENIA			
Ruzanna Grigoryan	Ministry of Environment of Armenia	ruzanna.grigoryan@env.am	In presence
AUSTRIA			
Sandra Wibmer	Austrian Development Agency	sandra.wibmer@ada.gv.at	In presence
Mathias Glawischnig	Austrian Development Agency	-	In presence
Violeta Philippitsch	UBA - Austrian Environmental Agency	violeta.philippitsch@umweltbundesamt.at	On-line
ALBANIA			
Sofjan Jaupaj	GEF and GCF FP	Sofjan.Jaupaj@turizmi.gov.al	In presence
Daniel Pirushi	Director of NAPA	daniel.pirushi@turizmi.gov.al	Cancelled
Valmira Bozgo	UNEP	valmira.bozgo@un.org	In presence
BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA			
Mehmed Cero	Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism/CBD Focal point	mehmed.cero@fmoit.gov.ba	In presence
Miloš Jokić	Assistant Minister for Project Coordination and Development Ministry of Physical Planning, Civil engineering and Environment	m.jokic@mgr.vladars.net	In presence
Kristina Ropic	Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry Of RS/ CCD Focal point	k.ropic@mps.vladars.net	In presence
Marijana Kapovic Solomun	UNCCD report project officer/RS	marijana.kapovic-solomun@sf.unibl.org	In presence
Svetlana Lazić	Associate, Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and	lazicsvetlana@yahoo.com	In presence

WESTERN BALKANS FORUM - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS			
Name	Position	Contacts	Confirm
	Forestry Of RS/ CCD Focal point		
Srđan Todorović cc Zoran Lukač	Environmental and Energy Efficiency Fund RS, Director of the Fund for Environment and Energy Efficiency of the Republic of Srpska	srdjan.todorovic@ekofondrs.org ; zoran.lukac@ekofondrs.org	In presence
Adi Habul	Environmental Fund FBiH	Adi.Habul@fzofbih.org.ba ; info@fzofbih.org.ba	In presence
Matea Grabovac	UNEP	Matea.grabovac@un.org	In presence
EU			
Jelena Milos	DG NEAR	jelena.milos@ec.europa.eu	On-line
Claudio Belis	EC JRC Senior researcher on air quality	Claudio.BELIS@ec.europa.eu	On-line
ITALY			
Paolo Angelini	Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition - Coordinator for cooperation in Eastern Countries	angelini.paolo@minambiente.it	On-line
Enrico Azzone	Italian Agency for International Cooperation and Development – Tirana Office (resp. for WB)	enrico.azzone@aicstirana.org	In presence
Marco Falconi	ISPRA	marco.falconi@isprambiente.it	On-line
KOSOVO*			
Armend Agushi	Environmental Protection Agency	Armend.agushi83@gmail.com	In presence
Visare Hoxha / Istrefi	Environment and Waters Protection Department - Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure	visare.hoxha@rks-gov.net	In presence

WESTERN BALKANS FORUM - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS			
Name	Position	Contacts	Confirm
MONTENEGRO			
Danijela Cabarkapa	Head of Division for Climate Change	danijela.racicc@gmail.com	In presence
Tamara Brajovic	Director General of the Directorate for nature protection	tamarix601@gmail.com	In presence
Milica Ojdanić	Adviser II, Division for Climate Change	mudresam@gmail.com	In presence
Dina Skarep Radonjic	Senior Advisor, Directorate for nature protection	dina.s@t-com.me	In presence
Biljana Kilibarda	UNCCD NFP Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology, Montenegro	biljana.kilibarda@meteo.co.me	On-line
Vasilije Buskovic	UNEP	vasilije.buskovic@un.org	In presence
NORTH MACEDONIA			
Vesna Indova	Head of EU Department. Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	vesnaindova@yahoo.com y.indova@moepp.gov.mk	On-line
Vlatko Trpeski	Head for Department of Nature at Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	V.Trpeski@moepp.gov.mk trpeski@yahoo.com	In presence
Jasmina Petkovska	Head of Department for International Cooperation at Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	jasminapett@gmail.com	In presence
Sandra Andovska	Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic affairs	sandra.andovska@gs.gov.mk	In presence
Metodija Sazdov	UNEP	metodija.sazdov@un.org	In presence
Liljana Dinev	UNEP	liljana.dinev@un.org	On-line
Fjolla Halili	UNEP	fjolla.halili@un.org	On-line
SERBIA			

WESTERN BALKANS FORUM - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS			
Name	Position	Contacts	Confirm
Marija Dragovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection, UNCCD FP	marija.dragovic@eko.gov.rs	On-line
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Aleksandra Siljic Tomic	UNEP	aleksandra.siljictomic@un.org	On-line
REGIONAL ENTITIES / EXPERTS			
N. Begovic	Transport Community	Nbegovic@transport-community.org	In presence
Haris Abaspahic	Regional Cooperation Council - Senior Expert on Green Agenda	haris.abaspahic@rcc.int	On-line
Aleksandra Bujaroska	Energy Community Secretariat	aleksandra.bujaroska@energy-community.org	In presence
Peter Vajda	Energy Community Secretariat Environment Expert	peter.vajda@energy-community.org	In presence
Peter Poszgai	Energy Community Secretariat Governance Expert	peter.poszgai@energy-community.org	In presence
Maja Colovic Daul	UNEP Consultant	maja.daul@gmail.com	In presence
SWEDEN			
Titta Lassila	SIDA SWEDEN - Programme Specialist Environment and Climate Change	titta.lassila@sida.se	In presence
UKRAINE			
Vladislav Danilchenko	Ministry of Environment Ukraine	vladislav.danilchenko@ukr.net	On-line
UNEP			
Harald Egerer	UNEP-SCC	harald.egerer@un.org	In presence
Sonja Gebert	UNEP-SCC	Sonja.gebert@un.org	In presence
Iskra Stojanova	UNEP-SCC	Iskra.stojanova@un.org	In presence

WESTERN BALKANS FORUM - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS			
Name	Position	Contacts	Confirm
Elena Stefanoni	UNEP-SCC	elena.stefanoni@un.org	In presence
Eloise Touni	UNEP - Task Manager for Chemicals and Waste, GEF	eloise.touni@un.org	On-line
Janyl Moldalieva	UNEP Bruxelles - Programme Officer	zhanyl.moldalieva@un.org	On-line
Ersin Esen	GEF Task manager	ersin.esen@un.org	In presence
OTHER ENTITIES /INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS			
Andras Krolopp	The Nature Conservancy Senior Policy Advisor / Head of Biodiversity	akrolopp@tnc.org	In presence
Christian Melis	OSCE	Christian.Melis@osce.org	In presence
Arno Behrens	World Bank	abehrens@worldbank.org	In presence
<i>*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.</i>			

Annex 3 - Power Point Presentations

Link to PPT Day 1: <https://we.tl/t-Wxa35cltPk>

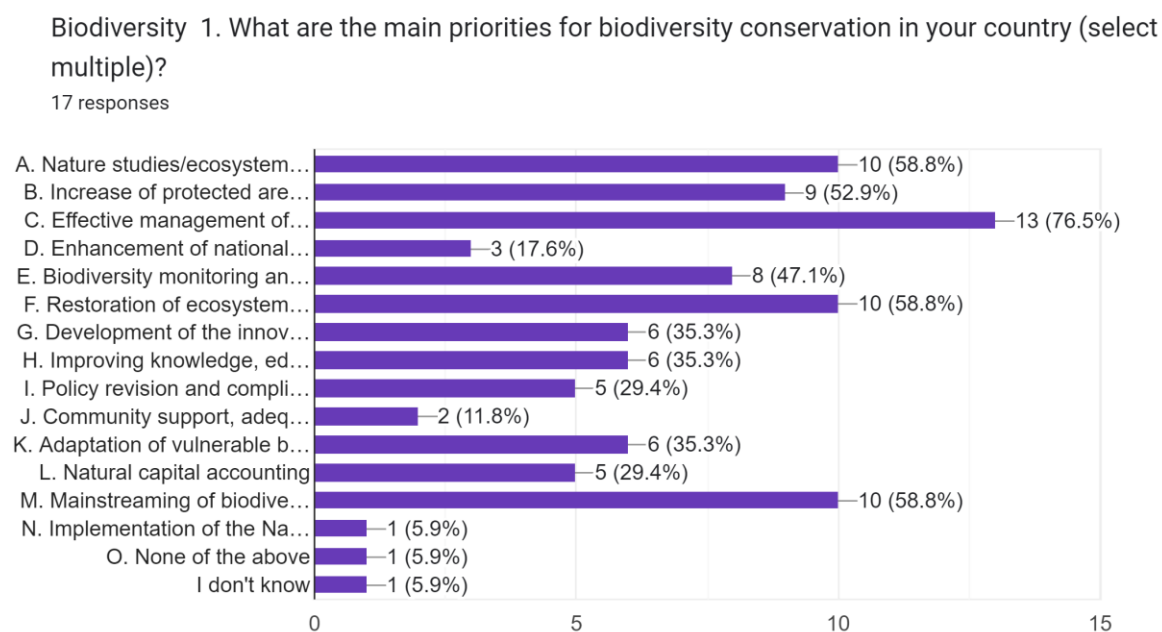
Link to PPT Day 2: <https://we.tl/t-iUkSphEFST>

Annex 4 – Questions and Polls results

Biodiversity

- 1. What are the main priorities for biodiversity conservation in your country (select multiple)?**
- A. Nature studies/ecosystem mapping and nature valorization studies
 - B. Increase of protected areas.
 - C. Effective management of protected areas, capacitating PA personnel and financing of management plans of PA.
 - D. Enhancement of national ecological corridors and greening of transport infrastructures
 - E. Biodiversity monitoring and reporting system enhanced
 - F. Restoration of ecosystems and use of novel approaches (e.g. Nature based Solutions).
 - G. Development of the innovative financing options for biodiversity conservation?
 - H. Improving knowledge, education and skills of relevant stakeholders/nature protection actors.
 - I. Policy revision and compliance with EU Chapter 27.
 - J. Community support, adequate funding and proper research influence the success of conservation effort.
 - K. Adaptation of vulnerable biodiversity to climate change.
 - L. Natural capital accounting
 - M. Mainstreaming of biodiversity into national planning such as infrastructures, spatial plans etc.
 - N. Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol
 - O. None of the above. Please provide different option: _____
 - P. I do not know.

Figure 5 Polls results on biodiversity conservation

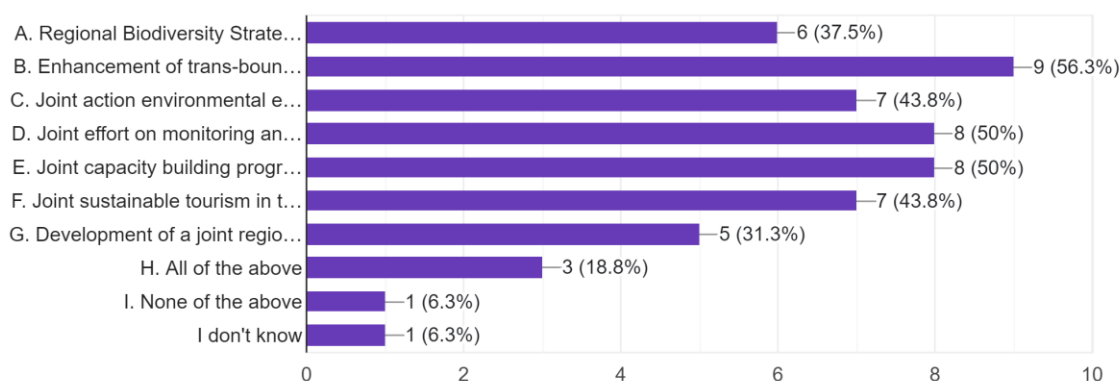


2. Biodiversity conservation at regional level need assistance in the following areas?

- A. Regional Biodiversity Strategy and a GBD funding framework for the implementation of activities
- B. Enhancement of trans-boundary protected areas and joint financing
- C. Joint action environmental emergencies such as forest fires/floods/waste issues/hunting etc.
- D. Joint effort on monitoring and reporting
- E. Joint capacity building programmes and facilitating joint dialogue on biodiversity conservation
- F. Joint sustainable tourism in the transboundary PA programmes

- G. Development of a joint regional WB Biodiversity strategy and action plan (based on the: national NBSAPs, regional consultations, inputs from the experts in the countries).
- H. All of the above
- I. Other identified regional priorities: _____
- J. I do not know

Biodiversity 2. Biodiversity conservation at regional level need assistance in the following areas:
16 responses



Land degradation

2. What are the main national priorities in achieving sustainable land management (select multiple)?

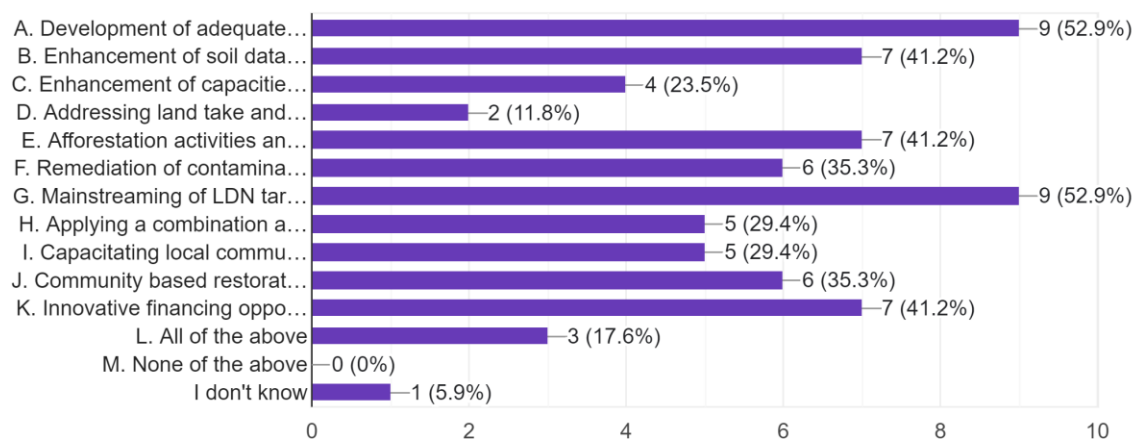
- A. Development of adequate policies for sustainable land management such as soil protection law, soil protection strategy etc. – transposition of Chapter 27 related to soil.
- B. Enhancement of soil data collection and reporting, including national erosion and vegetation maps, soil types etc.
- C. Enhancement of capacities for preventing and addressing wind and water erosion, forest fires, floods and landslides
- D. Addressing land take and restoring soil ecosystems
- E. Afforestation activities and/or increase of vegetative cover

- F. Remediation of contaminated soil sites
- G. Mainstreaming of LDN targets into national planning documentation such as spatial plans, infrastructure plans, forestry plans etc.
- H. Applying a combination agro-bio-forestry initiatives
- I. Capacitating local communities in addressing land degradation issues
- J. Community based restoration activities. Capacitating local communities in agro-bio-diversity initiatives as means to address soil degradation.
- K. Innovative financing opportunities for addressing soil degradation
- L. All of the above
- M. None of the above. Please provide different option: _____
- N. I do not know

Figure 6 Results polls priorities for SLM

Land degradation 1. What are the main national priorities in achieving sustainable land management (select multiple)?

17 responses



3. **What kind of a scaling up regional activities are necessary in the Western Balkans region to combat land degradation?**
- A. Launching a regional land degradation restoration plan
 - B. Introducing measures to enable the necessary transformative change (such as: the strategy highlights unlocking funding for reversing the land degradation, and setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to ensure better implementation and track progress improve knowledge, financing and investments)
 - C. Facilitating regional dialogue - Regional platform for addressing transboundary issues related to land degradation such as forest fires, contaminated sites, landslides etc.
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above. Please provide different option: _____

Figure 7 Activities to combat Land degradation

Land degradation 2. What kind of a scaling up regional activities are necessary in the Western Balkans region to combat land degradation?

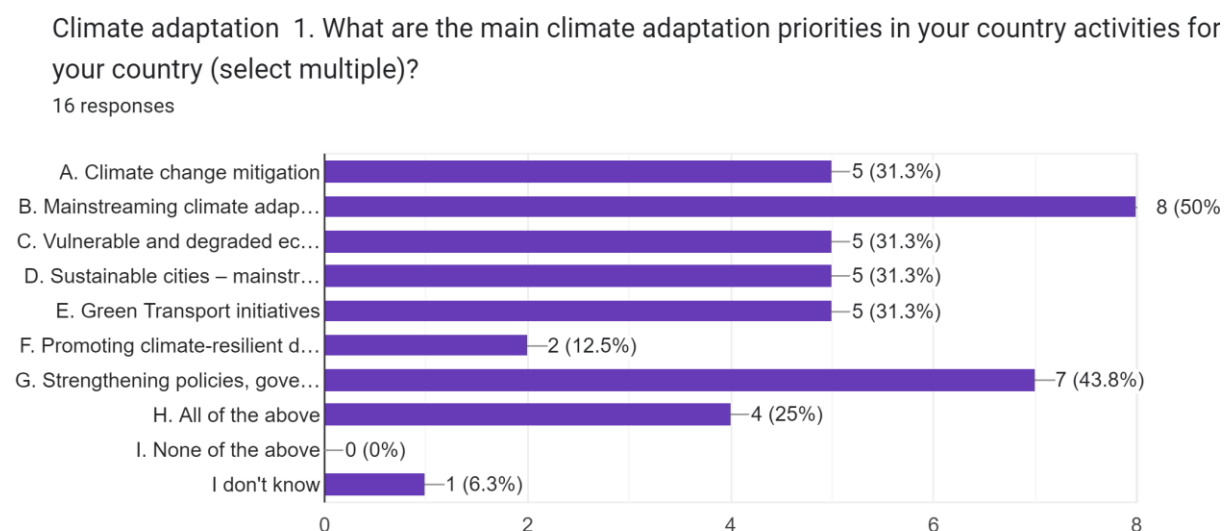
15 responses



Climate adaptation

1. **What are the main climate adaptation priorities in your country activities for your country (select multiple)?**
 - A. Climate change mitigation
 - B. Mainstreaming climate adaptation practices in infrastructural plans in the area of tourism, transport etc. – climate proofing of infrastructures development
 - C. Vulnerable and degraded ecosystems restorations using Nature based Solutions (NbS)
 - D. Sustainable cities – mainstreaming of NBS and climate adaptation as a tool for adapting to climate change
 - E. Green Transport initiatives
 - F. Promoting climate-resilient development
 - G. Strengthening policies, governance, and capacities
 - H. All of the above
 - I. None of the above. Please provide different option: _____

Figure 8 Climate adaptation priorities



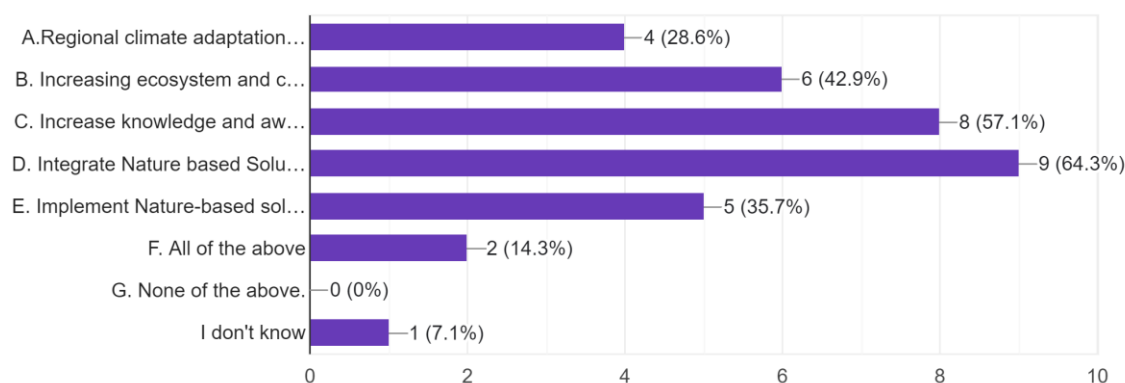
2. **For scaling up action on climate change adaptation regionally, what kind of regional initiatives/activities are necessary in the Western Balkans region?**

- A. Regional climate adaptation network containing all relevant information regarding climate projections, indicators and best practices on mainstreaming of climate adaptation practices
- B. Increasing ecosystem and community resilience to climate change
- C. Increase knowledge and awareness of nature-based disaster risk reduction solutions among decision makers, natural resource managers and local communities
- D. Integrate Nature based Solutions (NbS) and equitable climate-smart planning into adaptation and disaster reduction policy
- E. Implement Nature-based solutions for disaster risk reduction and their scale-up
- F. All of the above
- G. None of the above. Please provide different option: _____

Figure 9 Actions on climate change adaptation at regional level

Climate adaptation 2. For scaling up action on climate change adaptation regionally, what kind of regional initiatives/activities are necessary in the Western Balkans region?

14 responses

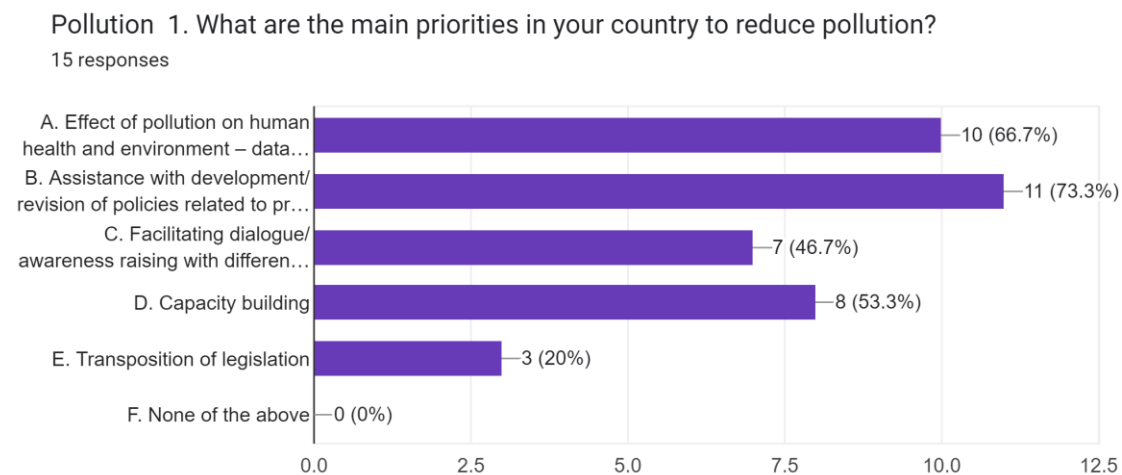


Pollution

4. What are the main priorities in your country to reduce pollution?

- A. Effect of pollution on human health and environment – data and analysis
- B. Assistance with development/revision of policies related to prevention of pollution
- C. Facilitating dialogue/awareness raising with different stakeholders resulting from the investment frameworks such as Western Balkans Investment Framework to other sectors such public health institutes
- D. Capacity building
- E. Transposition of legislation
- F. None of the above. Please provide different option: _____

Figure 10 Pollution priorities at country level



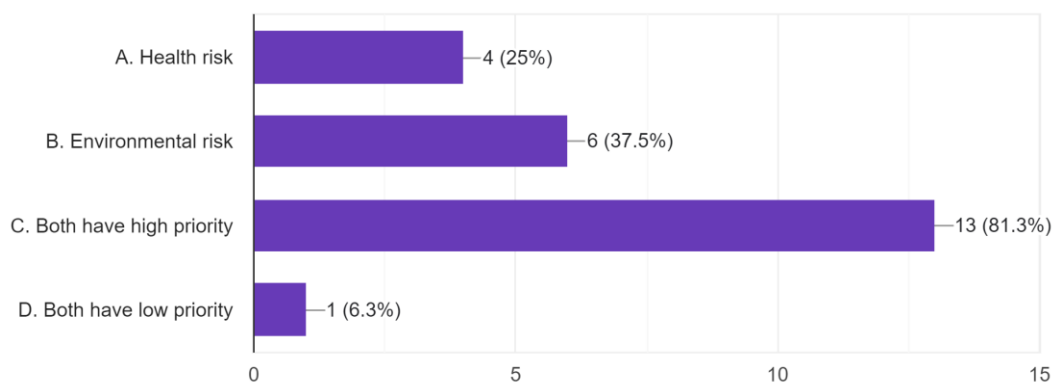
5. Environmental risk and health risk are different magnitudes, respond to different legislation, and are calculated differently. In your country, it is a priority to assess:

- A. Health risk
- B. Environmental risk
- C. Both have high priority
- D. Both have low priority

Figure 11 Environmental risks and health risks

Pollution 2. Environmental risk and health risk are different magnitudes, respond to different legislation, and are calculated differently. In your country, it is a priority to assess:

16 responses



6. Zero Pollution Action Plan provides actions for member countries to prevent and remediate contamination. Which are the environmental matrixes of greatest concern?

- D. Soil
- E. Groundwater
- F. Surface water
- G. None of the above. Please provide different option: _____

Figure 12 - Environmental matrixes of major concern

Pollution 3. Zero Pollution Action Plan provides actions for member countries to prevent and remediate contamination. Which are the environmental matrixes of greatest concern?

16 responses

