

Regional meeting on Collaborative Approaches to Environmental Pollution and One Health in the Western Balkans

Theme: Depollution activities and One Health Approach for Sustainable Development in the Western Balkans

Location:

- UN House, Zmaja od Bosne bb, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (1st day, 4 December)
- Hotel Europe, Vladislava Skarića 5, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (2nd day, 5 December)
- Hybrid option - Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99521454199>

Dates: 4-5 December 2024

Participants: Representatives of the Western Balkan environmental authorities and UN Agencies - UNEP, WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNECE, World Bank, RCOs.

Conference Overview

As the Western Balkans face significant environmental issues—ranging from air pollution to hazardous waste—the need for integrated strategies has never been more urgent. This conference will serve as a platform for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaborative action, ultimately advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

One Health is a unifying approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. This conference seeks to bring together stakeholders in the Western Balkans to tackle critical challenges related to chemicals, waste management, and pollution. By fostering a collaborative approach, we aim to enhance community health, protect ecosystems, and promote sustainable development.

Objectives

- **Enhance Understanding:** Improve awareness of pollution challenges in the Western Balkans and about One Health principles as they relate to environmental health.
- **Foster Collaboration:** Build partnerships among governments and communities to implement One Health strategies.
- **Identify Priorities:** Pinpoint key issues regarding chemicals, waste, and pollution that require immediate attention and coordinated action.
- **Promote Sustainable Practices:** Encourage the adoption of innovative approaches for managing chemicals, waste, and pollution.

Conference Structure

- **Discussion:** Exploring the Interconnections: One Health and Environmental Pollution in the Western Balkans
- **Format - Moderator:** An expert in One Health and environmental policy to guide the discussion.

Objective:

To examine the multifaceted relationship between One Health and environmental pollution, highlighting

the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health, and to identify actionable strategies for addressing these challenges in the Western Balkans.

Overview:

This event will bring together experts from various fields—including public health, environmental science and environmental pollution, and policy—to discuss the complex linkages between environmental pollution and its adverse health impacts, through a One Health lens. Experts will explore how pollution affects health outcomes across different sectors and the importance of an integrated approach to mitigate these impacts.

Key Discussion Points:

1. Understanding One Health:

- Define the One Health approach and its relevance to public health, animal health, and environmental sustainability.
- Discuss how the health of humans, animals, and ecosystems are interconnected, particularly in the context of pollution.

2. Sources and Impacts of Environmental Pollution in the Western Balkans:

- Identify major sources of pollution in the Western Balkans (e.g., industrial waste, agricultural runoff, air pollution).
- Examine the health implications of environmental pollution on human populations and wildlife, with a focus on vulnerable communities.

3. Case Studies and Best Practices:

- Present case studies that illustrate successful One Health interventions addressing environmental pollution.
- Share best practices from the region and globally that can be adapted to the Western Balkans context.

4. Policy and Community Engagement:

- Discuss the role of policy in addressing environmental pollution through a One Health lens.
- Highlight the importance of community engagement and public awareness in promoting sustainable practices and health outcomes.

Agenda – Day 1: 4 th of December, 2024			
Title	Collaborative Approaches to Environmental Pollution and One Health in the Western Balkans		
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the intricate relationship between One Health and environmental pollution, emphasizing the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health, and to identify practical strategies for addressing these challenges in the Western Balkans. To present new UNEP environmental initiatives in the Western Balkans addressing chemicals, waste and pollution challenges, and supporting evidence-based policymaking and action to reduce air pollution from high-impact sectors and their effects on human health. 		
Location	Day 1: UN House in BiH, Zmaja od Bosne bb, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina Hybrid option: Zoom link: https://zoom.us/j/99521454199		
Date	4 th of December 2024		
Duration	1 day from 13:30 to 16:45		
Participants	Invited government representatives from all Western Balkan economies, European and international organizations' representatives		
Time (minutes)	Item	Speaker	Description
Introductory session. Moderator: M. Grabovac - UNEP			
13.30 -14.00	Registration of participants and welcome coffee		
14.00 – 14.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory statements 	UN BiH RC BiH Government representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory statements
14.20 – 14.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction and presentation of the agenda and UNEP Chemicals and Pollution Action: regional perspective 	T. Marques - UNEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief introduction Presentation of the Agenda and purpose of the event. UNEP chemicals and pollution action: regional perspective
14.30 - 14.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of UNEP pollution and One Health portfolio 	E. Stefanoni, P. Sagredo Martin - UNEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief overview of UNEP's current regional pollution portfolio and One Health activities

Agenda – Day 1: 4 th of December, 2024			
14.45 – 14.55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District heating and energy efficiency solutions for improved urban air quality, health and wellbeing 	Celia Martinez Juez - UNEP Cities Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentials of district heating and energy efficiency solutions to support action on clean air
14.55 – 15.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment and Health in the Western Balkans 	Sinaia Netanyahou, WHO Regional Office for Europe ¹ , Mirza Palo, National officer, WHO BiH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linkages between environment and health: the main regional issues from WHO perspective
15.15 – 15.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of UNECE activities on pollution in the Western Balkans 	Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa, Regional Adviser on Environment UNECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief overview of UNECE's regional instruments and initiatives on pollution in the context of the Western Balkans
15.30 - 15.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Air Pollution in the Western Balkan 	Marc Lucet - UNICEF representative in BiH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief overview of UNICEF's current initiatives on pollution and children's health in the Western Balkans
15.45 – 16.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Women ongoing and planned activities in the Western Balkans 	Amila Selmanagic Bajrovic, UN Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOngoing and planned activities, highlighting the interlinkages among climate, pollution, and gender.
16.00 – 16:15–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common drivers of air pollution and climate change and their impacts on human health 	Juliette Laurent - Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of common drivers of air pollution and climate change and of CCAC's AQMx knowledge management platform
16:15– 16:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion and main conclusions of the Introductory session 	All participants with the moderator	

¹ WHO Regional Office for Europe European Center for Environment and Health

Agenda – Day 2: 5 th of December, 2024			
Title	Collaborative Approaches to Environmental Pollution and One Health in the Western Balkans		
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the intricate relationship between One Health and environmental pollution, emphasizing the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health, and to identify practical strategies for addressing these challenges in the Western Balkans. To highlight the launch of environmental initiatives by UNEP in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia: Special programme for BiH, UNDA 16 for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, improving evidence-based policymaking and action to reduce air pollution from high-impact sectors and their effects on human health. 		
Location	Day 2: Hotel Europe, Vladislava Skarića 5, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (2 nd day, 5 December) Hybrid option: Zoom link: https://zoom.us/j/99521454199		
Date	5 th of December 2024		
Duration	1 day from 9.00 to 16:30		
Participants	Invited government representatives from all Western Balkan economies, European and international organizations' representatives		
Time (minutes)	Item	Speaker	Description
Introductory session.			
Moderator: M. Grabovac - UNEP			
08.30 – 9.00	Welcome Coffee		
9.00 – 9.15	Main takeaways from day 1 and introduction of the day 2	T. Marques, E. Stefanoni - UNEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main takeaways from day 1
09:15 – 12.30	Session I - One Health and Air Pollution: to address the public health challenges posed by pollution and explore integrated strategies for improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderator(s): Oliveira Kujundic, P. Sagredo Martin 		
9:15 – 9:30	Introduction to the session	Moderator(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief description of the session and agenda
9:30 – 9:50	Air pollution in urban areas. A case study in the Western Balkans	C. Belis - European Commission, Joint Research Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of the study on the assessment of health impacts and costs attributable to air pollution in urban areas using two different approaches. A case study in the Western Balkans

Agenda – Day 2: 5 th of December, 2024				
9:50 – 10:05	Air quality and Health	Air quality expert Dejan Lekic	• Air pollution challenges in the WB and health: the main regional issues	
10:05 – 10:20	Economic cost of pollution in the WB	Esma Kreso, Senior Environmental Specialist - World Bank in BiH	• Air Quality and its economic & health Implications: World Bank's Insights and Assessment	
10:20 – 11:20	Statements from representatives from the six WB economies	Representatives of the WB economies	• Brief overview of the existing policies, challenges, priorities and responses / adopted measures	
11:20 – 11:35	Technological Pathways to address Air Pollution	Nadine Allemand - CITEPA	• Best Available Techniques and technological pathways to mitigate emissions from high-impact sectors	
11:35 – 11:50	Use of new technologies for health impact assessment	B. Matic Savicevic, Srdjan Mancevic and Snezana Zivkovic, National Public Health Institute, Serbia	• Introduction to the AirQ+ tool and overview of successful application in the cities of Valjevo, Novi Pazar and Leskovac in Serbia	
11:50 – 12:15	Discussion			
12.15 – 13.30	Lunch break & Coffee			
13:30 – 16.15	Session II - One Health and Chemicals & Waste: to explore the impacts of chemical exposure and waste management on health and the environment in the Western Balkans. Moderator: M. Colovic Daul, P. Sagredo Martin			
13:30 – 13:40	Introduction to the session	Moderator(s)	Brief description of the session and agenda	
13:40 – 13:55	Waste management / chemicals and Health	Waste management/chemicals - J. Moldaliev - UNEP - expert	Main waste management and chemicals pollution challenges in the WB and health: the main regional issues	
13:55 – 14:10	Global Framework on Chemicals, overview and upcoming opportunities	UNEP	Vision and scope of the GFC and funding opportunities	

Agenda – Day 2: 5th of December, 2024

14:10 14:30	–	UNEP Special Programme-funded interventions in BiH	Dzejna Milaković Ramadani, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Republika Srpska	Presentation of the Special Programme – funded projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia
14:30 14:45	–	UNEP Special Programme-funded interventions in Serbia	Sonja Roglic, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Serbia	Presentation of Special programme and GFC proposals
14:45 15:45	–	Statements of the six WB economies	Representatives of the WB economies	Brief overview of the existing policies, challenges, priorities and responses / adopted measures
15:45– 16:15		Discussion	All participants	
16:15 16:30	–	Conclusions and next steps	Moderator	