



The Digital Agenda for Western Balkans

The European Commission and WB countries, namely: Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia, Kosovo* and Bosnia and Herzegovina, in June, 2018, jointly dedicated to the implementation of the Digital Agenda – as part of the Strategy for better connection among region countries. The Digital Agenda aims to contribute to faster economic growth, modernization of public services, and increased work opportunities. The EU will provide grants to the WB through granting schemes, in total amount of 30 million of EUR, which will support project initiatives in e-Health, e-Administration, e-Public procurement, on-line safety, student researchers and digital development in total.

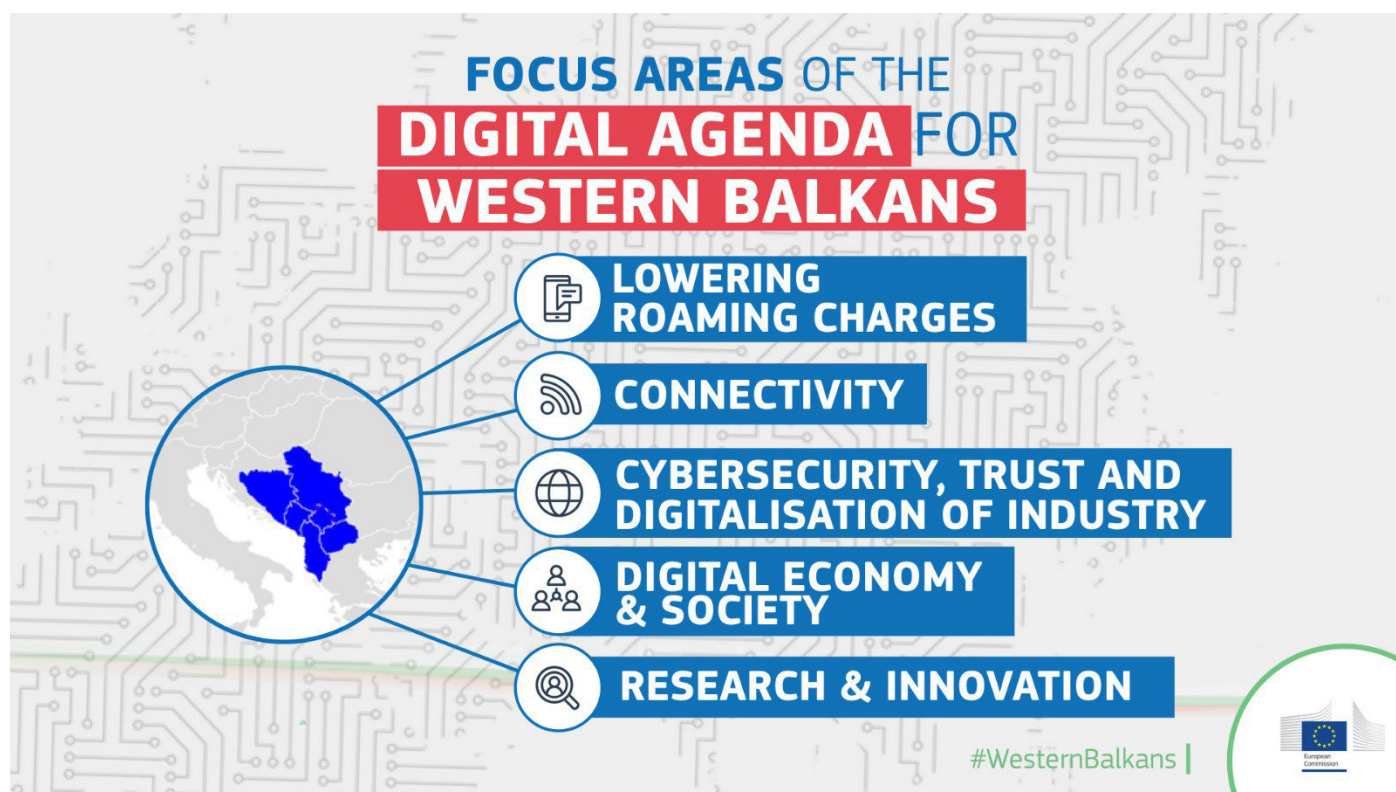


Photo Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/>

“Forum in the Open”

8th June, 2018, Jegunovce and Popova Shapka, Macedonia

Jugohrom Ferroalloys, located at the foot of the Shara Mountain, in the municipality of Jegunovce, has been recognised as one of the major air polluters in the Polog Region. The maximum allowed concentration of dust is 30 mg / m³, and they emit daily 3400 mg / m³. Daily dust emissions are 50 tons of 13 different emitters. For years, it has demonstrated little willingness to fulfill environmental measures and reduced air pollution. That was the reason why experts and CSOs demanded from the government to temporarily close the factory and put more pressures on its management, which the government ultimately did in November, 2016. Finally, in April 2017, the management of Jugohrom started with the installation of filters, which is one of the basic conditions for re-operation of this plant. However, besides the air pollution, the plant will have to find a solution to deal with its waste - the landfill for chromic mud, which is a potential danger for the Vardar River, and in case of a major disaster there is a danger of indirect pollution of the water source for Skopje, the well of “Rasche”

The ENV.net team from Macedonia, in cooperation with the members of the Platform for Green Macedonia, organised a meeting and a site-visit to the Municipality of Jegunovce and Popova Shapka. In this activity were present media and local authorities and CSOs in addition to highlight environmental issues and climate changes effects. Dedicated to marking the World Environment Day, June 5, proclaimed by the United Nations in the distant 1974, which has grown into a global platform for informing the public over the years that the protection and improvement of the human environment is one of the main issues of today. Each year, the World Environment Day is focuses on topics that should draw the attention of the global public to the most pressing environmental issues. The motto for 2018 “Beat Plastic Pollution” is a call for action to combat one of the greatest environmental challenges of our time. In that sense, the purpose of the meeting held



in the Municipality of Jegunovce, attended by representatives of local CSOs and activists from Jegunovce and Tetovo, representatives of the local self-government of Jegunovce and Tetovo municipalities, the OECD Mission office in Tetovo, as well as representatives / journalists from the local media, was to highlight key environmental issues of local importance, to encourage greater cooperation between the local authorities and local CSOs and the media on environmental issues of relevance to the local community, and to stimulate a discussion on the impact of the key problems on environment, and the potential for sustainable economic development of the local community. Also the events (the meeting and the on-site-visit) aimed to encourage local media coverage and qualitative follow-up of the environmental issues of interest to the local community. The focus of the meeting in the municipality of Jegunovce, and then the visit to the site around Popova Shapka's tourist settlement was not only to identify the challenges, but also to stimulate discussions on identifying the possible solution (with a contribution of the competent authorities). The appeal, that urgent, concrete action is needed by all concerned to solve the problem of communal waste, specifically at the site of the winter recreation

centre of Popova Shapka, is neither the first, nor the only one. The Platform for Green Macedonia pointed to the Shara mountain issue as one of 10 hot spots in 2014.

Nearly a year ago, "Let's Save Popova Shapka" initiative organized a wide-scale civic action to collect waste from the terrains of the mountain, thrown by reckless visitors.

But the Shara mountain, which offers stunning natural beauties, sadly hidden behind a heap of waste that bear the signature of irresponsible local citizens and tourists, as well as the institutions competent to solve this problem, is troubled by other problems.

At the beginning of 2018, we asked the authorities to take concrete actions aimed at restoring and clearing the mountain in order to make it again attractive and profitable, to be found again on the map of different groups of visitors and fans of the mountain from health, sports, tourist and economic aspect. But, little to nothing has been done.

In that sense, at the site "Forum in the Open" we held a press conference, calling the authorities to take concrete actions, and asking for:

- Regular cleaning of waste (communal and other waste)

- Installation of utility equipment (bins and waste containers)
- Road infrastructure (proper road and parking)
- Communal infrastructure (sewage and potable water system)
- Completion of the started projects (the ski lift, artificial snow system)
- Proclamation of the Shara Mountain a National Park.

We offered:

- Assistance in mapping the critical points missing communal utility equipment (bins and waste containers)
- Active involvement in actions undertaken by the competent local and national authorities, civil society organizations and self-organised citizen groups (like the initiative for saving Popova Shapka) for raising the public awareness among the local population about the need for conscientious and responsible behaviour towards the mountain;
- Cooperation with the competent authorities not only in identifying the challenges and problems, but also in implementing the solutions.

But we also stressed that if the local and central government authorities do not take any action and ignore this appeal, the further activities will certainly continue to organize mass protests!!!



Photo: Forum in the Open - press conference at Popova Shapka, 8th June, 2018



Photo: Meeting at the Municipality of Jegunovce, 8th June, 2018

Montenegro

Completed works on the repairing of non-sanitary waste disposal site "Vrtijeljka" in Cetinje

Vrtijeljka unsanitary dump site is located 6 km away from The Old Royal Capital of Cetinje and had been used for solid waste disposal since 1987. The average amount of waste deposited annually to this dump site is 21,500 tonnes. The work on repairing non – sanitary waste disposal has started in 28th of December 2016 and now is finished.

The work on unsanitary dump included reallocation of certain quantities of existing waste for the purpose of profiling the landfill body, making circumferential channels and excavating pit absorbing atmospheric waters, as well as developing a system for biogas removal, overlapping, cultivating and enclosing the terrain.

This project is implemented as part of the Operational Program Regional Development 2012-2013, which was adopted by the Montenegrin Government in March 2012 and by the European Commission in December of that year. The program is funded from the EU pre-accession funds i.e. IPA funds through Component III - Regional Development.

The main objective of the Program was to improve living standards and environment in Montenegro, in accordance with national policies and strategies, as well as with EU policies and standards.

More news from Montenegro:

Meeting NGOs with the Chief negotiator

In 12th of June a meeting between representatives of NGOs and chief negotiator for EU integration - Aleksandar Drljević was organized. The main aim

was the invitation for cooperation of CSOs, because of the considerable role which they have in the process of EU integrations. During the meeting representatives of NGOs emphasized that have to be revised action plans for the chapters 23, 24 and 27.

Albania

Plastic is old fashioned

The excessive use of plastic bags is one of the key reasons why Albania has been severely polluted over the past 25 years. In order to hinder further littering related to disposable plastic bags, the government has decided to ban the production or exportation of plastic bags.

In support of this decision, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment followed with an initiative to clean Albania from waste.

Both developments, will be supported by the

adoption of Regulation no.232, dated 24.04.2018 "For some amendments and additions to decision no. 177, dated 6.3.2012, "On the packaging and their waste".

The regulation aims to protect, preserve and improve the quality of the environment and public health through:

- prevention of the negative impact of packaging and their waste,
- reduction and recycle of waste production from packaging by increasing their reuse,
- final reduction of plastic bags.

The decision sets out rules for the production and importation of all types of packaging and the management of their waste at all stages, and defines the entities responsible for their management. The public awareness on using the recyclable or multi-purpose bags, firstly started in Tirana Municipality but is intended to extend to the entire territory.



Photo: Plastic bags distributed in all areas; Co-PLAN, 2018

Bosnia Herzegovina

Republika Srpska government gave the 30 years concession to the company "Eol prvi", to build the wind farm "Trusina", on the mountain Trusina near Nevesinje. The project will build 15 wind turbines with a total installed capacity of 49.5 MW, and will be the source of power to 40,000 households (about 160,000 inhabitants), with annual production amount to app. 160 GWh of electricity.

- Republika Srpska Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining announced public call for 50 years concession for solar power plant in the area of municipality Ljubinje. The estimated installed power will be 65 MW and the estimated annual production of 104 GWh of electricity. Public call is opened until 27th of July, 2018.

- The local community of Krupa na Vrbasu expressed their opinion regarding the HE Krupa, articulating a clear bold "NO" to the investor. The HE dam would be 18-20m high, with a budget of 56 million EUR, and foresees the reconstruction of main road through the Vrbas valley. Since there are already 2 dams, namely Bočac 1 (in function) Bočac 2 (still in the phase of implementation), the local community consider the Krupa dam not reasonable and or beneficial to the local community (it would serve

only to the investor).

- Representatives of the initiative "Save the Blue Hearth of Europe" delivered over 120,000 signatures to EBRD in London. Signatures were collected from all over the world, in support of the initiative aimed at stopping the investments in HPPs construction in Balkan countries.

Kosovo

Kosovo Sustainable Development Week (KSDW)

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning in cooperation with the European Union Special Representative (EUSR/EUO), the German Government (GIZ), and Kosovo Civil Society Consortium for Sustainable Development (KOSID) organized the first Kosovo Sustainable Development Week (KSDW) high-level international conference examining Kosovo's main environmental challenges, such as: energy,



Photo: KSDW Conference, ATRC, Kosovo, 2018

solid waste, water, environmental violation and climate change. The conference brought together international and national environmentalist and authorities to lecture and raise awareness on the pressing issues. The conference was a five-day event during May 30th to June 5th, which started with an environmental high-level forum.

More news from Kosovo:

The thematic discussion with civil society organizations in Kosovo focused on Environment chapter, regarding EU Progress report for Kosovo for 2017.

In 28th of June 2018, ATRC organized the thematic discussion with around 20 active environmental organizations in Kosovo with regard to EU progress report for 2017. The main purpose of the meeting were the findings and recommendation of environmental chapter (Chapter 27). Main themes of discussion focused on findings related to air and water quality, waste management, and horizontal legislation. During the roundtable participants expressed their concerns regarding the lack of secondary level legislation and the need for approaching investments in the environment sector. Municipal level highlighted three major problems

essentially, the lack of waste management in rural areas, the quality of drinking water and a major concern of air quality in urban areas.

Local organizations should play an active role, through advocacy campaigns to put pressure to municipalities for initiating and approving secondary legislation on environmental issues

Belgium

Energy efficiency compromise fails Paris Agreement

The European Union has tonight agreed to increase its energy efficiency by 32.5% by 2030. This figure falls well short of the binding target of at least 40% that would represent the most cost-effective route to delivering the Paris Agreement. After talks failed in first half of June, a meeting between governments and MEPs tonight reached a compromise for the EU's 2030 energy efficiency target and a set of binding measures defined in the

Energy Efficiency Directive (EED).

Responding to the news Roland Joebstl, EEB Policy Officer on Energy and Climate said: "The outcome of the negotiations is disappointing as anything less than a 40% improvement means delivering the Paris Agreement will be more difficult and more costly. Energy efficiency is the cheapest and most effective route to cut climate-harming emissions and protect citizens from devastating climate change. Put quite simply: we cannot achieve the Paris Agreement without tapping the full potential of energy savings."

Last week negotiators agreed a new renewables target of 32%. The Bulgarian presidency then worked hard to reach the agreement on energy efficiency before handing over the EU presidency to Austria at the end of the month. Energy efficiency stakeholders from across industry and civil society had been calling for a binding 40% energy efficiency target which would reflect the most cost-effective energy savings potential. As part of the compromise the negotiators agreed to review the level of the target in 2023, leaving the door open for the targets to be raised in five years' time.

Despite support from leading countries like France and Sweden for a higher efficiency target of 35%

the final result of is merely a door-opener for higher ambition in 2023. Europe must do more on energy efficiency to protect EU citizens from harmful climate change. We count on the climate frontrunners to stick to their commitments in five years. In addition to the target the Directive also continues the annual energy savings obligation set by Article 7 of the EED, requiring Member States to establish policies that deliver new action and delivering new savings for households, the service sector and small businesses.

EU governments dust off rarely used treaty article to take Commission to task on environmental justice failings

EU Member States have today invoked a little-used treaty article to call on the European Commission to take steps to address the EU's shortcomings when it comes to complying with international law on environmental justice. The EEB welcomes June 18, 2018 Council Decision to invoke Article 241 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union which requires the Commission to address UN findings that show the EU is in breach of the Aarhus Convention [1] – an international convention on environmental rights which all EU countries and the EU itself are party to.

The European Commission initially sought to reject the finding of non-compliance but has belatedly put in place a lengthy process to explore options for resolving the problem. EEB Secretary General Jeremy Wates said: "The fact that EU governments felt that they had no other option but to take the almost unprecedented step of invoking Article 241 of the Treaty shows the extent to which the Commission has gone out of its way to resist public accountability before the courts." However, the EEB regrets that today's Decision only gives a deadline of September 2020 to put forward new draft laws, effectively leaving it to the next Commission – and that it only states that the Commission should do so if deemed 'appropriate' following a study. This is clearly a lowest-common-denominator decision where some Member States have been influenced by the Commission's foot-dragging approach. Nonetheless, the Decision is a significant step in the right direction and reflects the recognition that the EU's credibility as a defender of the rule of law on the international stage has been severely damaged by its reluctance to address the access to justice deficit in the EU's highest courts.

Industry spending millions to avoid warning labels for cancer-linked chemical

The chemical industry is spending millions to stop people finding out about the potential carcinogenic properties of titanium dioxide, a whitening chemical used in a wide range of products including food and sunscreen.

The Titanium Dioxide Manufacturers Association

(TDMA) urged EU governments not to classify the substance as a suspected carcinogen, according to a confidential letter obtained by POLITICO. [1] They asked "for further time to build the scientific basis" to counter the decision, which would require manufacturers to label their products as carcinogenic in order to inform consumers. They also announced the launch of a €14m "science programme" aimed at countering potential restrictions and defending the commercial interests of its members.

The EEB has condemned the letter as an attempt to undermine the evidence-based process of decision making that is supposed to protect people and the environment. Evidence suggests that titanium dioxide can pose a risk to people. In particular, some nano-particles may be able to penetrate body barriers such as brain or placenta, and accumulate in organs like liver and lungs. [2]

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) found that titanium dioxide is "possibly carcinogenic to humans," prompting France to announce a ban of the substance in food this year. The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) also concluded that it can potentially cause cancer, albeit only if it's inhaled, and recommended the introduction of EU-wide warning labels. EU governments and the European Commission will start discussing the issue on 13 June. [3]

Notes:

[1] Lobbyists try to keep whitener's reputation clean, POLITICO

[2] World Health Organisation, 2010

[3] Agenda of the REACH Committee meeting of 13 June

Serbia

Annual exchange of views on environment and climate change matters ahead of the Subcommittee for Transport, Energy, Environmental Protection, Climate Changes and Regional Development

EU Delegation in Serbia organized an annual exchange of views on environment and climate change matters ahead of the SAA subcommittee. More than 20 representatives of civil society's organizations and Coalition 27 presented their views and findings regarding Serbia's progress in these fields. Some of the findings noted during the

meeting were related to low progress during the last year, in issues such as:

- improving the communication between all actors, media and interest groups involved in environmental concerns;
- financing civil society actions, from several sources of funding, not only through the Government.
- addressing the sectors problems through public awareness and concrete actions at local level;
- proper enforcement of the law;
- managing protected areas and forests;
- lack of transparency evidenced by the EU project on cadaster of small HPPs in Serbia, as small HPPs continue to pose a threat to nature;
- malfunction of some air monitoring stations.

On a negative note it was highlighted that environment and climate change are not included in the new WB strategy and more needs to be done to include them into discussions.

Serbia 2018 Report

Photo: <http://europa.rs/?lang=en>

Turkey

Climate Change and Cities training in Lüleburgaz

TEMA Foundation organised "Climate Change and Cities" training in cooperation with Lüleburgaz Municipality, on June 13, 2018 as part of the project "Fighting against climate with our bicycles" project conducted by the Municipality.

In the first part of the training, the scientific fundamentals of climate change, international negotiation process and climate justice was discussed. In the second part, the effects of climate change on cities, and mitigation and adaptation potentials for cities (especially in terms of water management, waste management and air quality) were discussed. The training ended with a workshop focusing on greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation to climate change in Lüleburgaz, focusing specifically on the Ergene River pollution problem, transportation and waste management issues.



Photo: , Climate Change and Cities training in Lüleburgaz, TEMA, Turkey, 2018

More news from Turkey

Climate Café Talks: Behavioral Economics Experiments for Climate Change and Commons

The fourth in the Climate Café Talks series took place on June 6 at IPC Karaköy with 2017/18 Mercator-IPC Fellow Pinar Ertör Akyazı's talk on "Behavioral Economics Experiments for Climate Change and Commons (İklim Değişikliği ve Müşterekler İçin Davranışsal İktisat Deneyleri)".

Researchers and academics who work on climate change gather every two months to discuss their studies focusing on a specific subject. At Climate Café Talks, they come together to discuss various topics about climate change, from politics to atmospheric sciences, from economics to psychology, on a multi-disciplinary platform.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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

In the framework of the IPA Civil Society Programme, a call for proposals to support civil society for sectorial networking mechanism has been launched for FYROM. The specific objective is to enhance the civil society dialogue with government and to structure the CSOs sectorial consultation mechanism for policy making as well the IPA programming and monitoring. Mainly it focuses on the collaboration between public institutions and CSOs through a permanent dialogue and clear structured mechanism(s) for consultation on public policies, strategies and operational programs; on CSOs increased impact on sector policies and advocacy for change and on regular dialogue within the media community ([read more](#)).

Deadline: 07/09/2018 Budget: 500,000 EUR

More funding opportunities (Click on the logo)



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GREEN DATES SPOTLIGHT

Global Overshoot Day (in 2018 it will be 1 August)

Earth Overshoot Day marks the date when we (all of humanity) have used more from nature than our planet can renew in the entire year.

By Aug. 1, 2018, the Global Footprint Network anticipates that humanity will have exhausted more of Earth's resources (1.7 Earths) than it can regenerate within one year through overfishing, overharvesting forests, and emitting more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than ecosystems can absorb. How will you #MoveTheDate?

Links:

<https://www.overshootday.org/>

Brave women of Kruščica win court case against dam construction

The small group of women from the village of Kruščica, BiH have stood guard on the access bridge, 24 hours a day, for over 300 days, in order to prevent the construction of a hydropower plant.

The cantonal court of Novi Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the second week of June ruled that the environmental permit for dam construction on the Kruščica River should be annulled immediately, meaning that any further construction work on the proposed dam is illegal. A successful example of a small group of activists advocating to protect their community and river by using a bottom-up approach ([read more](#)).



The brave women of Kruščica have stood guard on the access bridge, 24 hours a day, for over 300 days, in order to prevent construction of a hydropower plant. © Andrew Burr

"NATURE PROTECTION – NATURE-RESPONSIVE DEVELOPMENT"

Among all areas in the field of environmental protection, it seems that in Serbia, nature protection has low priority and interest of decision makers, despite the fact that all recourses for the

human well-being arrive from the nature.

There are several crucial problems actors in nature protection in Serbia face: very slow designation of areas under protection (According to Spatial



Photo: Ada Ciganlija Pygmy cormorant *Microcarbo pygmaeus* habitat-photo N. Sekulic

Plan of the Republic of Serbia, Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, No. 88/1, should have been protected 10% of the Territory of Serbia by 2015, and 12% by 2021). This caused lack of active protection measures and management problems, but also insufficient control and monitoring. The main reason for non-compliance of sectorial policies is the lack of cooperation between different sectors and insufficiently consistent implementation of laws, including inefficient identification and inadequate processing of offenders in the field of nature protection. And the last, but not the least, is lack of funds, so increased investment in this area is necessary.

The Nature Protection Law of the Republic of Serbia has introduced a new instrument for nature protection – Appropriate Assessment, as the basic mechanism for the protection of the European ecological network, Natura 2000. The Regulation on Appropriate Assessment is one of the key regulations for transposing and implementing Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive. The process of developing the Regulation on Appropriate Assessment, in which representatives of civil society organisations participated, was completed by the relevant Ministry, but the Regulation, although announced and planned for 2017, has not yet been adopted by the Government. According to the new plan, the adoption of this document is expected in June 2018.

The field of nature protection in Serbia is regulated by the Law on Nature Conservation and other legal and sub-legal acts directly or indirectly related to nature and natural resources. The Law on Nature Protection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia" No. 36/09, 88/2010 and 14/2016) regulates the protection and conservation of nature, biological, geological and landscape diversity. The harmonization of legal acts in the field of nature protection with the acts of the EU is still in the progress, enabling implementation of European and international standards in the field of environmental and nature protection. The implementation of rules and principles of the international conventions Serbia signed and ratified, contribute to the improvement and harmonization of environmental protection.

Towards Natura2000

Full transposition of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC is expected by the end of 2020, through adoption of the amendments to the Law on Nature Protection and the Decree on Ecological Network. Serbia has started the process for identification and designation of Sites of Community Importance (SCI) that will continue until 2020 in view of the establishment of the ecological network. Serbia plans to achieve full implementation by 2020. The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC is in the stage of transposition by the Law on Nature Protection, Law on Game and Hunting (OGRS, No. 18/10) and implementing legislation. Serbia has prepared a preliminary national list of

species listed in Annex I of the Directive (88 local species and 46 migratory species), as well as a preliminary list of Special Protection Areas SPA (43 sites). Serbia has taken measures to ensure that hunting of Annex II species does not jeopardize the conservation efforts while certain types of capture and killing are prohibited.

Serbia plans to achieve full implementation by 2020.

International Agreements

Regulation (EC) No 338/97 and 865/2006 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating the trade therein (the CITES Regulation) are reflected in several national pieces of legislation such as the Law on environmental protection, Law on nature protection, the Penal Code, the Rulebook on transboundary movement and trade in protected species. The CITES Regulation is being partially implemented through different measures: sanctioning of offences, a monitoring system for the issuing of export permits, public information and awareness raising, monitoring of compliance with commensurate inspection and enforcement. Full implementation is expected to be achieved by 2020.

All provisions of Regulation 511/2014 on Nagoya Protocol will become directly applicable in the Serbian legislation through the Law on Ratification of Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS) by 2020. Serbia stated that certain provisions of the Regulation (EEC) No 3254/91 prohibiting the use of leg-hold traps are implemented. The use of leg-hold traps is prohibited by national law.

Raising public awareness

Awareness about the importance of nature protection has changed among the general public, compared to 10 years ago, but this process will be faster and most significant, if decision makers paid more attention and show willingness for inter-sectoral cooperation. The quality and degree of conservation of nature becomes an indicator and standard of a healthy environment, which is especially important for urban areas where wildlife habitats and their conservation require special attention.

Recent joint events organized by Environmental Ambassadors for Sustainable Development (EASD), Institute for Nature Conservation of the Republic of Serbia and Serbian Chamber of Commerce, aimed at raising awareness among key actors and decision makers about the need for nature conservation, in order to provide all necessary ecosystem services. International Day for Biological Diversity, on May 22, is the official date dedicated to warn and develop general awareness of the importance and necessity of preserving biological diversity, hence stopping the decline in the number of species, ecosystems and genes on the planet.

On May 20, 2018, EASD organized an event celebrating the International Day for Biological Diversity, where they presented the habitat of the pygmy cormorant and the fungus *Myriostoma*



coliforme at Ada Ciganlija in Belgrade.

On this occasion, the expert associates of the Institute Nenad Sekulić, PhD, and Ivana Jovanović, visited those two habitats with student of the Elementary School "Drinka Pavlović", in order to point out the importance of protecting the habitats of rare species in urban areas.

Pygmy cormorant *Microcarbo pygmaeus* is a strictly protected species in Serbia which bans any use of this species and implies a permanent ban on its killing and disturbance. The overwintering of the pygmy cormorant was for the first time recorded in Belgrade in mid 1990s. Regular monitoring revealed that in a relatively narrow area on the Sava River in Belgrade, this endangered species of waterfowl was overwintering in large numbers. The number of pygmy cormorants overwintering in the willow trees reaches over 6,000 individuals, which means that about 10% of the entire European

population of the pygmy cormorant overwinters on the this riverbank. Taking into consideration that it is a species that has limited distribution and an unfavorable status of protection globally, it is clear that this is an extremely important habitat for the preservation of this species. The largest threat to the preservation of the overwintering populations of the pygmy cormorant in Belgrade is the destruction of their natural habitats and the remaining willow trees on the riverbanks of the Sava River.

The site at Ada Ciganlija in Belgrade represents the only known habitat of the fungus *Myriostoma coliforme* in Serbia. Their fruiting bodies were initially discovered in 1993 and they were repeatedly found in different seasons when adequate climate conditions were presented. This species is critically endangered in Serbia because of their extremely limited range, restricted area of distribution and exposure to strong anthropogenic impact.

The 14th Regional Conference "Environment to Europe" was held on June 5, 2018 in Belgrade on the topic of "Nature Protection – Nature-Responsive Development". The conference was organized by EASD in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia. The Conference was an official event marking the World Environment Day in Serbia and an official event within the European Week of Sustainable Development.

Conference participants agreed on the same notion that we are all part of the nature and by protecting birds, fish, plants and landscapes we are trying to improve our quality of life. In the process of sustainable development planning, decision makers responsible for transport, energy and agriculture, must take into account their impact on nature and the environment. Taking this into account, experts wanted to point out the possible consequences of irresponsible development on nature and to start thinking about whether nature is protected enough.



Photo: EnE 18 Conference, EASD, Serbia, 2018