

International Workshop

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation in the Western Balkans - Civil Society, (Local) Politics, International Actors, and the Media in Dialogue



Landscape in Sharri National Park, Kosovo. Photo: H.Brey, 2019

24 - 25 March 2022

Hybrid event at the Hotel Mercure Munich Airport, Freising / Online via ZOOM

Conference committee:

Hansjörg Brey, Executive Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

Gabriel Schwaderer, Executive Director, EuroNatur

Gudrun Steinacker, former Ambassador, Vice President of the Southeast Europe Association,
Vienna

Conference assistance:

Viktoria Somogyi, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

Conference Language: English

Programme

WEDNESDAY, 23 MARCH 2022

Arrival of Participants Dinner

THURSDAY, 24 MARCH 2022

09:00

Opening / Welcome

Hansjörg Brey, Executive Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

Christiane Hullmann, Head of Western Balkans Division, German Federal Foreign Office, Berlin
(Online)

Thomas Potthast, President, EuroNatur, Radolfzell / Tübingen (Online)

Manuel Sarrazin, Special Representative of the German Government for the Western Balkans /
President of Southeast Europe Association, Berlin/Hamburg (Online)

09:30

PANEL I: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation in the Western Balkans: The State of Affairs, Challenges, Conflicts of Interest

Chair: **Gudrun Steinacker**, Former Ambassador, Vice President, Southeast Europe Association, Vienna

Keynote:

Maša Perović, Expert, Sustainable Environmental Management / Southeast Europe Communications Coordinator, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe, Belgrade

“Improving biodiversity conservation in the Western Balkans: finding the ‘silverbullet(s)’”

(To be followed by an open discussion)

Points of Discussion:

- *Biodiversity as an important asset for the region*
- *Nature conservation and its perception by decision makers and the public*
- *Nature conservation under pressure / conflicts of interest*

10:30

Coffee Break

11:00

PANEL II (ROUND TABLE): The Acquis of the EU, the Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans: What Challenges Ahead?

Chair: **Simon Ilse**, Director Office Belgrade, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Belgrade

Panelists:

Antoine Avignon, Program Manager/Chapter Desk for environment and climate in Serbia, EU Delegation, Belgrade **(Online)**

Goran Sekulić, Program Officer, WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) Adria, Belgrade

Pippa Gallop, Southeast Europe Energy Advisor, Bankwatch, Zagreb **(Online)**

Points of Discussion (Follow up to the Online-Panel on 30 November 2021)

- *The protection of nature and the environment (Chapter 27 of the Acquis) within the reform process / European integration*
- *Biodiversity Strategy 2030*
- *The Green Agenda and the Action Plan: Steps Ahead*
- *The role of civil society and other social actors in shaping and implementing the Green Agenda*

12:30

Lunch

14:00

PANEL III: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation as Elements of a Comprehensive Strategy for Protecting the Environment and the Climate: Synergies and Trade-offs

Chair: **Hansjörg Brey**, Executive Director, Southeast Europe Association, Munich

Keynotes:

Eszter Kelemen, Senior Researcher, Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Budapest

"Biodiversity and climate change interlinked: threats and opportunities from a global perspective"

Michael Hošek, Managing Partner, Integra Group/EUROPARC Federation President, Prague

"The task of nature conservation: to conserve/protect, restore, or adapt?"

Panelists:

Aldin Hodžić, Expert Associate, Center for energy, energy efficiency and environment, Sarajevo

Alen Kiš, Expert for Nature Conservation, Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province (INCVP), Serbia, Novi Sad

Points of Discussion:

- *Climate protection and biodiversity*
- *Nature conservation, agriculture and rural development*
- *Nature conservation and energy transition in conflict?*

15:30

Coffee Break

16:00

PANEL IV: Nature Conservation, Economic Interests, and Infrastructure Projects in Conflict: Case Studies

Chair: **Gabriel Schwaderer**; Executive Director, EuroNatur, Radolfzell

Part 1: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo

Panelists:

Aleksandër Trajçe, Executive Director, **Bledi Hoxha**, Researcher and Project Coordinator, **(Online)**, Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA), Tirana
Betilda Ahmeti, Project Coordinator, EcoAlbania, Tirana,

Amila Čitak, Project Manager, **Sunčica Kovačević**, Project Assistant, Aarhus center in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo

Bardh Sanaja, Project Coordinator, Environmentally Responsible Action (ERA), Pristina
Liridon Hoxha, Coordinator for Federal Programme Biodiversity, German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Bonn

17:30

Short Break

17:45

Part 2: Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia

Panelists:

Ksenija Medenica, Acting Executive Director, Center for Protection and Research of Birds Montenegro (CZIP), Podgorica; **(Online)**

Andrijana Mićanović, Project Coordinator, Biodiversity Researcher, Montenegrin Ecologists Society, Podgorica

Goran Gugić, Senior Ecologist for Protected Area Management, Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism, Ulcinj Salina

Iskra Stojkovska, Executive Director, Environmental Citizens' Association Front 21/42, Skopje

Sandra Jovanović, Project Manager, Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia (BPSSS), Novi Sad

Iva Marković, Program Director, Polekol/Pravo na vodu/Right to water, Belgrade

Points of Discussion:

- *Case studies from WB 6 countries: Actors, conflicts of interest, state of protection*
- *Usage of water power*
- *Building / tourist infrastructure in coastal and mountainous areas*
- *Traffic infrastructure: Roads and airports*
- *Illegal logging and poaching*
- *Waste and sewage*

19:30

Dinner

FRIDAY, 25 MARCH 2022

09:00

PANEL V: Domestic and Trans-border Cooperation in Nature Conservation: Actors, Activities, Success Stories, Perspectives for the Future

Chair: **Sissi Samec**, International Consultant, Vienna

Panelists:

Iskra Stojanova, Project Coordination Specialist, United Nations Environment Programme, (UNEP), Vienna

Linda Cavdarbasha, Deputy Minister, Department of the Environment, Pristina **(Online)**

Mytaher Haskuka, former Mayor of Prizren / Universiteti i Prishtinës "Hasan Prishtina", Pristina

Bekim Bytyqi, Sharri National Park, Prizren **(Online)**

Robertina Brajanoska, Executive Director, Macedonian Ecological Society, Skopje **(Online)**

Aleksandër Trajçe, Executive Director, Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA), Tirana,

Xhevat Lushi, Executive Board Member - Country Director Kosovo / **Hajrush Kurtaj**, Natural Resource Management Advisor, Connecting Natural Values and People (CNVP), Pristina

Genti Kromidha, President of the Board, Institute for Nature Conservation, Tirana / BioNet Network

Points of Discussion:

- *CSOs: local, national, international*
- *Local and national administrations and administration of protected zones*
- *Cross border projects of nature conservation*
- *The example of Shar/Sharri National Park as a cross-border project*
- *GLZ BioNet network*

10:30

Coffee Break

11:00

PANEL VI (ROUND TABLE): Biodiversity und Nature Conservation as Questions of Survival: The Role of the Media

Chair: **Gregor Mayer**, Correspondent for Southeast Europe, German Press Agency , Belgrade

Panelists:

Una Hajdari, Independent Journalist, Pristina **(Online)**

Lorin Kadiu, Executive Director / Journalist, Citizens Channel, Tirana

Dina Đorđević, Journalist, Center for Investigative Journalism in Serbia; Belgrad **(Online)**

Adelheid Feilcke, Director, European Department, Deutsche Welle, Bonn (**Online**)

Mustafa Canka, Independent Journalist, Ulcinj (**Online**)

Points of Discussion:

- *Coverage of issues of biodiversity, its loss, environmental crimes by domestic (Western Balkan) and international media*
- *Challenges to nature and environment and the role of investigative journalism (methods, multi-mediality, etc.)*
- *Experiences of SLAPP actions or other means of media repression?*
- *Experiences and expectations of activists and other stakeholders with/towards media reporting*
- *Journalism and activism - where do you draw the line?*
- *Environmental awareness (building) as a challenge to the media*

12:00

CONCLUDING PANEL: Perspectives, Options for Further Action, Further Steps

Chair: **Sissi Samec**, International Consultant, Vienna

12:30

Lunch

13:30

Excursion

*Meeting and guided tour at **Biohof Lex** at Emling about 30 kms from Freising. The farm estate has a long experience in organic farming with an amazing diversity of products from local cereals to seeds of wild flowers and a special sense for combining food production with respect to nature conservation. Our tour will be guided by Mr Martin Simon, who is both member of the Lex family and employed at the local Nature Conservation Authority.*

Solid footwear and outdoor clothing are recommended!

End of the Conference

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