

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, UN WOMEN, 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	- 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: Matea Grabovac - UNEP			
13.30 -14.00	Registration of participants and welcome coffee		
14.00 – 14.20	Introductory statements	UN BiH RC, Dr. Ingrid Macdonald BiH Government representatives: Mr. Mirza Hujić, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH; Ms Stojanka Dražić, Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology of Republika Srpska;	Introductory statements

Agenda – Day 1: 4 th of December, 2024			
		Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism	
14.20 – 14.30	Introduction and presentation of the agenda and UNEP Chemicals and Pollution Action: regional perspective	Tomas Marques - UNEP	- Brief introduction - Presentation of the Agenda and purpose of the event. - UNEP chemicals and pollution action: regional perspective
14.30 - 14.40	Overview of UNEP pollution in the Western Balkans	Elena Stefanoni - UNEP	Brief overview of UNEP's current regional pollution portfolio
14.40 – 14.45	District heating and energy efficiency solutions for improved urban air quality, health and wellbeing	Celia Martinez Juez - UNEP Cities Unit	Potentials of district heating and energy efficiency solutions to support action on clean air
14.45 – 14.55	Overview of the One Health approach	Pablo Sagredo Martín - UNEP	Brief overview of UNEP's One Health activities
14.55 – 15.15	Environment and Health in the Western Balkans	Sinaia Netanyahu, WHO Regional Office for Europe ¹ , Mirza Palo, National officer, WHO BiH	Linkages between environment and health: the main regional issues from WHO perspective
15.15 – 15.30	Overview of UNECE activities on pollution in the Western Balkans	Sarangoo Radnaaragchaa, Regional Adviser on Environment UNECE	Brief overview of UNECE's regional instruments and initiatives on pollution in the context of the Western Balkans
15.30 - 15.45	Children and Air Pollution in the Western Balkan	Marc Lucet - UNICEF representative in BiH	Brief overview of UNICEF's current initiatives on pollution and children's health in the Western Balkans

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

Agenda – Day 1: 4 th of December, 2024			
15.45 – 16.00	UN Women ongoing and planned activities in the Western Balkans	Arielle Allouche, UN Women	Ongoing and planned activities, highlighting the interlinkages among climate, pollution, and gender.
16.00 – 16:15–	Common drivers of air pollution and climate change and their impacts on human health	Juliette Laurent - Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)	Overview of common drivers of air pollution and climate change and of CCAC's AQMx knowledge management platform
16:15– 16:45	Discussion and main conclusions of the Introductory session	All participants with the moderator	

Agenda – Day 2: 5 th of December, 2024			
Title	Collaborative Approaches to Environmental Pollution and One Health in the Western Balkans		
Objective	- 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 project for BiH, UNDA project 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			
08.30 – 9.00	Welcome Coffee		
9.00 – 9.10	One Health challenges in the Western Balkan	Rusmir Goletić, Balkan One Health Network (BOHN)	Brief description of main OH challenges and priorities in the Western Balkan
09:10 – 12.30	Session I - One Health and Air Pollution: to address the public health challenges posed by pollution and explore integrated strategies for improvement. Moderator(s): Olivera Kujundžić, Pablo Sagredo Martín, UNEP		
9:10 – 9:15	Introduction to the session	Moderator(s)	Brief description of the session and agenda
9:15 – 9:35	Air pollution in urban areas. A case study in the Western Balkans	Claudio Belis – European Commission, Joint Research Centre	Presentation of the study on the assessment of health impacts and costs attributable to air pollution in urban areas using two different approaches. A

Agenda – Day 2: 5th of December, 2024

			case study in the Western Balkans
09:35 – 09:55	Air Quality: The World Bank's Insights on Economic Costs and Health Implications	Esma Kreso, Senior Environmental Specialist - World Bank in BiH	Air Quality and its economic & health Implications: World Bank's Insights and Assessment
09:55 – 11:00	Statements from representatives from the six WB economies	Representatives of the WB economies	Air quality data available, Brief overview of the existing policies, challenges, priorities and responses / adopted measures
11:00 – 11:15	Technological Pathways to address Air Pollution	Nadine Allemand - CITEPA	Best Available Techniques and technological pathways to mitigate emissions from high-impact sectors
11:15 – 11:30	xEco Air software/app	Air quality expert Dejan Lekic	Showcase a tool for real-time air quality data dissemination from various sources, including government networks and citizen science platforms, emphasizing the importance of providing information on air quality exceedances of legal limit values
11:30 – 11:45	Use of new technologies for health impact assessment	Branislava 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
11:45 – 12:15	Discussion		
12.15 – 13.30	<i>Lunch break & Coffee</i>		
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(s): Maja Colovic Daul - Expert, Pablo Sagredo Martín - UNEP		
13:30 – 13:40	Introduction to the session	Moderator(s)	Brief description of the session and agenda

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13:40 – 13:55	Overview of the latest developments in global and regional chemical and waste policies addressing pollution	Janyl Moldaliev - UNEP expert	Overview of the latest developments in global and regional chemical and waste policies addressing pollution
13:55 – 14:05	Global Framework on Chemicals, overview and upcoming opportunities	Rebecca Marlen Chudaska – UNEP expert	Vision and scope of the GFC and funding opportunities
14:05 – 14:10	New UNDA funded UNEP project on pollution and waste management in Serbia and BiH	Aleksandra Siljic Tomic - UNEP	Brief overview of the new UNEP project on pollution and waste management in Serbia and BiH
14:10 – 14:25	Tackling the Illegal Waste Trade	Kajetan Pradetto, UNODC	Tackling the Illegal Waste Trade
14:25 – 14:40	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
14:40 – 14:55	UNEP Special Programme-funded interventions in Serbia	Sonja Roglic, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Serbia	Presentation of Special programme – funded projects in Serbia
14:55 – 15:55	Statements of the six WB economies	Representatives of the WB economies	Brief overview of the existing policies, challenges, priorities and responses / adopted measures
15:55 – 16:30	Discussion and closing up	All participants Moderator UNEP	