



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Ministerial Conference

“Regional Climate Action in the Western Balkans – Accelerating Access to Climate Finance”

Gjirokastër, Albania

5th -6th of April 2019

Draft concept note and agenda

Rationale

The United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the Government of the Republic of Albania, with the financial support of the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, are convening a Ministerial Conference for the Western Balkans focusing on regional climate action and access to climate finance on 5-6 April 2019.

The aim of the Ministerial Conference is to facilitate access to climate finance, including engagement with, and the access to Climate Funds. The Conference will focus on identifying common priorities among the convened countries thus maximizing the potential to identify paradigm shifting and transformative project ideas in the region, while also identifying and maximizing opportunities for synergies with other sources of financing for climate action. The interactive nature of the Conference will stimulate discussions between representatives from convened countries and climate funding mechanisms, which will be a crucial element facilitating the identification of regional priorities and solutions during the Conference. The outcome of the Conference is expected to be the adoption of a *“Joint Roadmap on Climate Action in the Western Balkans”* (known also as Gjirokastër Document) to be later implemented through the conceptualization and development of joint regional projects and programmes. The presence of representatives of environmental funds as well as of numerous accredited entities, is expected to contribute to this exercise of regional prioritization.

Participants

The regional dialogue will bring together high-level governmental representatives from all Western Balkan countries, as well as representatives from interested donor countries, development agencies, international organizations and other relevant stakeholders. For what concerns national representatives, the sub-regional dialogue aims to bring together environmental fund representatives and focal points in order to explore and maximise the opportunity for synergies in regional action against climate change.

Ministry of the Environment
of the Czech Republic

With the support from the Czech Ministry of the Environment



Objectives of the Ministerial Conference:

1. Engage the countries of the region to sustain actions to achieve the targets set out in their national priorities and NDCs while galvanising climate and environmental action in a regional context through the identification of common priorities;
2. Strengthen the strategic engagement of the countries in the region with the available sources of climate finance;
3. Explore opportunities for joint action on climate change and synergies between countries of the region by facilitating the adoption of a “*Joint Roadmap on Climate Action in the Western Balkans*”;
4. Provide a high-level platform for Ministers from the Western Balkan region to present their climate priorities and identify a way forward for joint action.

Date and venue

The Ministerial Conference will take place on the 5th and 6th April 2019 in Gjirokastër, Albania. The language of the sub-regional dialogue will be English with simultaneous interpretation provided in Albanian.

Contacts and further information

UN Environment will serve as Secretariat of the Ministerial Conference. In this regard interested stakeholders can contact Mr. Harald Egerer, Head of Office – Vienna Programme Office (harald.egerer@un.org) and Ms. Ana Vukoje (ana.vukoje@un.org)

FAO as co-organizer of the event will support the logistics to ensure participation of country representatives to the event and will provide technical inputs and content to ensure a fruitful dialogue. In this sense, Ms. Carmen Arguello (Carmen.ArguelloLopez@fao.org)- FAO GCF Advisor for Europe and Central Asia is the main contact person for the event on behalf of FAO.

Preliminary Draft Programme

The Ministerial Conference will be preceded by a Technical Regional Consultation Workshop - “Towards a Regional Strategic Guidance on Climate Change and Adaptation in the Western Balkans Mountainous Regions” held on the 4th of April

5th of April - Day 1

9:30 - 10:00	Registration
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10:00 -11:15	<p><i>Welcoming and opening remarks, moderated by Dr. Ornela Çuçi, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Albania</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania - Mr. Satya Tripathy, Assistant Secretary General, Head, New York Office, UN Environment - Mr. Blendi Klosi, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Albania - Mr. Richard Brabec, Minister of the Environment, Czech Republic (TBC) - Mr. Pa Ousman Jarju, Director of Division for Country Programming, GCF - Mr. Vladimir Rakhmanin, FAO Regional Representative - Ms. Majlinda Bregu, Secretary General, RCC - Mr. Luigi Soreca, EU Ambassador to Albania (TBC) - Ms. Mirela Kumbaro, Member of Parliament, Republic of Albania
11:15 – 12:15	<p><i>Ministerial statements on climate priorities, moderated by Mr. Harald Egerer, UN Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Ministerial Statements</i>
12:15 -13:00	Lunch
13:00 -13:45	<p><i>Session 1- Climate Change in the Western Balkans, a scientific briefing for decision-makers, moderated by Gaetano Leone, UN Environment / Mediterranean Action Plan</i></p> <p>The first session will focus on climate change in the Western Balkans from a scientific perspective while exploring the complementarities of climate action and poverty reduction efforts in the region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Marco Keiner, Director of the Environment Division, UNECE - Ms. Ana Vukovic, University of Belgrade, Belgrade <p><i>Study on Climate Change in the Western Balkans (RCC) – impacts across sectors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prof. Herbert Formayer, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna <p><i>High resolution Climate Change projections in the Western Balkans – a guide for policy makers</i></p>
14:00 -15:00	<p><i>Session 2- Climate Action in the Western Balkans – a snapshot on NDCs, moderator TBC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Country presentations</i>



15:00 -15:45	<p><i>Session 3- Access to climate finance in the Western Balkans, status and main observations, moderated by Ms. Ermira Fida, UN Environment</i></p> <p>Session three will present the engagement of the region with the main climate finance mechanisms focusing on climate action and implementation of NDCs.</p> <p>Speakers from GCF, GEF, AF, EU (TBC)</p>
15:45 - 16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:00 - 17:30	<p><i>Session 4- Building a strategic roadmap for enhanced access to climate finance in the Western Balkans, joint efforts and views, moderated by Dr. Edon Qesari, Albanian Mediterranean University</i></p> <p>Session four will focus on the presentation of priorities by the countries in the Western Balkans, also on the identification of potential regional action and discussion of the Joint Roadmap</p> <p>- <i>Presentation of the Joint Roadmap on Climate Action for Western Balkan countries to access environmental funds (proposals for a joint action plan); Dr. Ornela Çuçi, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Albania</i></p>
17:30 -18:00	Adoption of the “ <i>Joint Roadmap on Climate Action in the Western Balkans</i> ”
19.30-22:00	Official Dinner and Albanian Iso-Polyphony concert

6th of April – Day 2

9:00 - 9:15	Overview of Day 1, <i>Dr. Ornela Çuçi, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Albania</i>
9:15 – 10:30	<p><i>Session 5- Accelerating access to Climate Finance for the countries of the Western Balkans, moderator TBC</i></p> <p>The fifth session will consist of presentations by representatives of invited accredited entities (TBC)</p>
10:30 -11:00	Coffee break
11:00-12:30	<i>Session 6 - Market Place, moderated by Zana Vokopola, Urban Research Institute</i>



	The last session is intended as a “Market Place” session providing an opportunity for national stakeholders and accredited entities to showcase ideas for projects in line with the prioritization contained in the joint roadmap and that have a potential to be presented to the GCF (or other sources of climate finance) in the future
12:30-13:00	Closing remarks
13:00-14:00	Lunch
15:30-17:00	Tree planting activity following with a cultural visit of the city of Gjirokastër, UNESCO World Heritage site.

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