

EGP Council
Friday, 24.11.2017.

Parallel sessions: Balkan Network

Moderators: Zaklina Zivkovic & Borislav Sandov

The session started with presenting two initiatives from the region to show what is happening and find points of convergence:

Presentation by Ljiljana Popovska, chair of DOM (Demokratska obnova na Makedonija) about their fight against the opening of the mines in Macedonia: copper, silver and gold surface mines. Usage of dangerous chemicals for pilling the ore in swimming pools with cyanide solutions and sulfur acid with disastrous effects on soil, water and air. The surface foreseen for mining is 10.000 km² out of 25.000 km² of whole country. Campaign started 1.5 years ago with Ilovica gold mine. DOM objected to the impact assessment study that was done. Another important mining area is Kazandol on the lake Dorjan.

Series of referendums in southeastern Macedonia against opening of the new mines. Demands for decisive reaction from the government.

Knowledge, exchange of opinions, tools, information, guidelines to share and have a joint fight against coal mines.

Zaklina and presentation about Green Public Procurement (GPP) started with inspiration from the EGP. Public Procurement - matching supply and demand to have good services of what the public sector is responsible for. Legal Framework on EU level that GPP rely on. GPP as a tool to achieve their goals - action plan on circular economy is also based on that. There is a public procurement and action plan in Serbia, for example. Balkans context - post-socialist legacy, fossil fuel dependant, energy intensive, resource inefficient economies.

Why GPP? significant consumer and market player important to reduce emissions and switch to more greener economy, greater energy efficiency, renewable resources. Award Criteria for PP: 1. The lowest price, 2. Economically most advantageous bid. The 2. point contains all sustainability criteria, but usually they do not use it in practice as it seems very technical. In Serbia only 5 companies have Ecolabels, and the government should support them and give them the advantage.

Bobi gives an update on COP23 Bonn - big progress on rule book how Paris agreement will be implement, agreement on how the negotiations will continue between COPs, pledge from many countries on how to deliver goals for 2030 and 2050. EU member countries in BN - clear energy package needs to be finalized (target for 2030), common adaptation (funding provided by European Investment Bank for energy transition), Bulgarian presidency over the European Union (priority integration of Western Balkan countries within EU).

Presentation of countries: were there elections, what are the results, any upcoming elections, top 3 priorities in a country.

Albania - not present

Bosnia&Herzegovina - not represented in BN and EGP

Bulgaria - elections just before Liverpool, no one in the parliament. priorities: air quality (Breathe Free), Divestment (climate & energy), nuclear power plant. Mining - working on referendums (gas drilling).

Croatia - Zagreb is ours - here as guests and build connections. formed in February, elections this year. local Green party for local elections in Zagreb, in coalition with orah and other left parties. After 3 months managed to Zagreb je nas is a party. Coalition doesn't have a name. They got 4 out of 51 seats in the assembly, and

more in districts.

Cypus - not here

Greece - no elections, elections late 2018 / 2019 local elections, national and European elections. They are part of the government. Social economy, Circular economy, mining and extraction of oil, waste management.

Kosovo - no representation

Macedonia - local elections in October 2017, DOM in big coalition with social democrats with 23 parties. 20 councillors in 20 different municipalities. 6 in Skopje. 3 councillors from MODOM. 40% are women. The coalitions were based on environmental issues, because for years there is a huge problem of air pollution, and there was a public demand that there is a response from the parties. Mining and green economy, green public spaces (urban planning). Paris agreement ratified, very positive as it leads to renewables and green energy.

Moldova - BN is interesting for Moldova due to many joint problems. Elections are all the time. Threat from Russia. Many people migrating to Balkans??

Montenegro - not represented

Romania - no elections. stressful because there is a fight on corruption. government is responding by modifying a legislation. There is a big society movement. Priorities: corruption, increase subsidies for renewable energy, deforestation, nuclear energy (possible 2 nuclear power plants with Russia or China). Should work more on improving green education, emergency response.

Serbia: Zelena stranka - no elections. Elections in Belgrade, February or March 2017. Annual assembly of the party - voted Green manifest with 10 focal points, and formed a Women Network. WN started a project of cooperation with women from other parties. Nice cooperation in the region, especially Serbia and Macedonia.

Slovenia - preparing for next elections in spring 2018 national, and in autumn local. cooperation with environmental groups and their MEP Soltes. Supported in the 2nd round candidacy of a current resident of Slovenia, together with other 3 parties. Priorities: agriculture.

Turkey - no elections. 3 elections in 2019 - local, national, presidential. the party is not going to the elections. Green Thought Associations is working with climate change, renewable energy.

CDN - network of young eastern european greens. topics: alternative urbanisation, regional meetings.

GEF presentation.

Future of Balkan Network - is it continuing and how?

Proposal for a summer camp on common problems but in a smaller city?

Before next meeting we will have an online questionnaire to get country updates, and we will skip presentations so we can only talk about the future of the network.

What kind of a support is needed from EGP in this case? These meetings are very useful to get information and updates, but could it be more? Joint actions showing that Greens in the Balkan exist. :) Balkan Network should continue however we called it. Let's see how to make it more efficient, how more we can support each other. Do regional projects. How EGP can support. There should be more initiative from the parties - communicate their needs to EGP, come with concrete proposals.