

Newsletter

Dear reader,

The latest issue of our newsletter brings you an exclusive report on the regional conference “Climate Change Adaptation in South East Europe” which took place in Zagreb, Croatia. Find out about the content of the conference as well as the first impressions of the participants. Furthermore, we are especially proud to present the publications of climate vulnerability assessments produced in Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Should you wish to know more about how climate change affects these countries or what the possible recommendations for adaptation are, please see more details in the texts below. In the previous months, national CSO networks involved in the Forum also organized activities to raise public awareness in the areas related to climate change adaptation. On the regional level the message **“The Climate has changed... Have you?”** will guide our upcoming activities.

This newsletter also offers an overview of the regional situation in the previous period, with a look on the summer heat wave. We also bring you the announcements of interesting upcoming conferences, possible funding opportunities as well as note-worthy publications.

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Special report

Regional conference in Zagreb



“Climate Change Adaptation in South East Europe”

Hosted by the Croatian Red Cross, the regional conference of the SEE Forum on CCA took place in Zagreb, from 10 to 11 October 2012. Over 80 representatives from civil society organisations, Red Cross National Societies, hydro-meteorological and research institutes, companies and governments from Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as experts from UNDP, the Environment Agency Austria and from international organisations participated in this regional conference.



Day 1

On the first day keynote speakers gave an overview of climate change challenges in the SEE region and globally, highlighting the importance of mainstreaming climate change adaptation on all levels in order to enable sustainable and resilient growth. Presentations on economic costs and social aspects of climate change contributed to further understanding the complexity of climate change related consequences and the necessity of further investing in policy work, education and awareness-raising. In the afternoon sessions, participants had the possibility to get an overview of the project outcomes, in particular the results achieved by each national network on CCA and the regional work over the last two years.

In the evening the question [“The Climate has changed... Have you?”](#) marked the last program point for this day: find out more later in this newsletter.

Day 2



The second day covered various presentations, providing a valuable input on climate change challenges related to different sectors, such as energy, water, biodiversity and human health. The Montenegrin NGO Green Home presented its activities in the field of environmental protection and energy efficiency, a UNDP representative from Macedonia gave details on the implementation on the EU Water Framework Directive and its implementation in Macedonia, whereas the WWF highlighted that ecosystems as life support systems are considerably being put under

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pressure by climate change, which is further increasing the ecological crisis around the world. The Croatian example of the heat wave and cold wave response system, elaborated by the Croatian National Institute of Public Health, served as practical example of how countries can adapt to climate-related consequences and protect human life.

A presentation on climate change and implications for EU candidate countries by the Montenegrin Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism highlighted the sometimes difficult, but essential cooperation between CSOs and governments in environmental protection and climate change adaptation. In this context, the Bureau for Social Research explained the challenging situation of CSOs in Serbia, characterized by a lack of transparent and efficient civil participation and funding. However, examples of good practice in CSO participation in the development of laws and strategies show that steps towards improvement of CSO inclusion are being taken and that there is fruitful cooperation between CSOs and governmental institutions.

The afternoon of the second day was used to discuss future scenarios of the regional SEE Forum on CCA and its activities. Along the recommendations elaborated at the previous conference in [Sutomore](#) (12-13 June 2012), conference participants discussed which regional activities shall be implemented by November 2012.



Through intense discussions on the future of the SEE Forum on CCA, the conference contributed to further identification with the regional forum of network members from Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia and to the development of sustainable perspectives for future cooperation.

All presentations and materials are available on our [website](http://www.seeclimateforum.org).

Voices of Participants



**Mr. Andreas Beckmann,
Managing Director of the
WWF Danube Carpathian
Programme**

What are your impressions of the conference?

I am most impressed by the relatively diverse mixture of participants – people not only from different countries, but also from different background, from the fields of environment, disaster relief, health and agriculture, and from civic organisations, authorities and even the Serbian national railways! In my experience, there is not so much communication, let alone cooperation, between these different areas and sectors in Central and South-Eastern Europe on any issue, let alone one as “new” as climate change. The issue of climate change is of key importance to all of us in all areas of work and activity, from environment to health, agriculture and disaster response, but it is rather complicated and “intangible”. So seeing such interest and cooperation from among such a broad range of backgrounds is impressive and gives hope for future action to address climate change as well as other serious challenges facing us in the region.



This project is co-funded
by the European Union



Special report

How do you assess the project outcomes of the SEE Forum on CCA presented on the first day?

The world café was a great way to present these results, giving people the chance to interact more closely and directly, to discuss and learn from each other – which has got to be a key objective for an event like this one. It was good to see the diversity of project activities undertaken across the different countries.

What might be future scenarios of the SEE Forum on Climate change Adaption?

I hope and trust that this will not be a “flash in the pan”, that this project will lead to future cooperation and activities that go beyond the end of time dedicated to the project and EU funding. There was an interesting dialogue on the second day between authorities and NGOs from different countries of the region regarding how they work together, or rather do not work together. Honest dialogue like this can hopefully lead to mutual understanding and respect and fruitful cooperation. We will have to see to what extent the platforms or networks that have been established will indeed continue, but I already see some interesting relationships and networks that have been created that will almost certainly continue. From the perspective of WWF, we have been especially interested in the “innovative” partnership with the Red Cross and humanitarian organisations, organisations of cities and towns and Serbian railways that have been initiated by this project. We look forward to continuing this cooperation in future.



**Mr. Zlatko Drasko,
Serbian Railways,
Department for
Environmental
Protection**

Since when has climate change adaptation been an issue for the Serbian railways?

The Serbian railways have established a department for environmental protection in 2010 in order to manage climate-related damages on the railway infrastructure caused by extreme heat waves or floods. For our company, the economic component plays an important role as climate change has been causing high costs and we are trying to reduce these economic losses through adaptation. That is also why we participate in activities of the Serbian network “Climate Forum” and follow developments in the strategy for CCA in Serbia.

What are your impressions of the conference?

I think the conference is a very interesting gathering, through which an important exchange of experience and best practices is ensured.



**Ms. Vesela Lambevaska
Domazetova, Rural
Development Network of
Macedonia**

What is the main aim of your network?

The network for rural development in Macedonia is a network of NGOs from different sectors, such as agriculture, handcrafts, ecology and women's empowerment. The aim of the network is to exchange information, which is quite

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difficult in rural areas, and to provide activities and tailor-made trainings for member organisations, such as entrepreneurship or project management.

How is this linked to the issue of climate change adaptation?

The topic of climate change is particularly important for the agricultural sector that is very much linked with rural development and the situation of smaller farmers for example. We are interested in gaining further knowledge on this topic and developing projects.

What are your impressions of the conference?

I learned a lot from the presentations given by our Croatian colleagues, in particular regarding the reaction to extreme weather events. However, I would be interested in getting more information on concrete adaptation measures that can be implemented in rural areas, in particular to support the situation of small farmers.



Mr. Marinko Metlicic, Head of Disaster Management, Croatian Red Cross

The Croatian Red Cross has established and coordinated a network on CCA over the last 2 years - how do you assess the network's achievements retrospectively?

To my mind the national climate vulnerability assessment report, as well as the regional synthesis report, are the most important results of our joint project, on which our network can build for future

activities. Besides that, we have produced a TV spot aimed at raising awareness on the consequences of climate change and the necessity of adaptation, which was aired on the main square in Zagreb and which I personally like a lot. Through our network coordination role, we contributed to further positioning the role of Croatian Red Cross in climate change and established new meaningful partnerships.

And how do you assess the conference?

I think the conference again highlighted the importance of regional cooperation that we need to continue after the project ends. Another positive thing is that the event was well covered by the media, which contributed to reporting on climate change in general and more visibility of the network and its members.



Ms. Sanja Svrkota, Green Home

What is Green Home?

Green Home was founded as non-governmental, non-profit and non political organization by students of biology in 2000. The aim of the organization is environmental preservation and protection, biodiversity conservation and implementation of the sustainable development principles.

How did your NGO get involved in the Montenegrin network for Climate Change Adaptation?

This network is a good platform for sharing of data, experience and common challenges with neighboring countries about climate change adaptation. Our organization has had an active role on national and regional events, meetings and conferences from the very beginning of the project.

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Where do you see the future of the Montenegrin network after the project end?

We believe that our network will continue with activities and communications on national and regional level. During the project it got obvious that we should get active also in climate change mitigation on regional level. Now it is time to find financial support for the realization of our ideas.

What are your impressions of the conference?

Congratulations to our colleagues from the Croatian network on a very good organization of the conference. In my opinion, we had quite a constructive discussion about the challenges in the climate change field, as well as cooperation between different institutions and organizations on the national level. Now we are waiting for the results of our working group and the "competition" for the best activity which will be realized in next two months.



Theme logo of the Zagreb conference

"The Climate has changed ... Have you?"



Last year's cold wave showed once again how vulnerable some sectors of the population and the public systems are to extreme weather events. But there are things that can be done to prepare for these events.

While in the summer the national

networks already started with concrete activities to raise awareness (see articles below), now the slogan **"The Climate has changed... Have you?"** will convey the message on the regional level in the upcoming period. As a starter, a TV spot was produced for the upcoming cold times which focused on two elements of CCA: awareness about extreme weather events during the seasons and finally concentrating on the concrete need to prepare for the possible upcoming cold wave.

The spot was presented for the first time to the public during our conference in Zagreb on 10 October, just a couple of days before the World Day of Disaster Risk Reduction. In order to view it in the "real campaign environment", the

spot was shown on big screens on the main square, where it was not only seen by the participants but by all people.

The spot will be aired in the upcoming period in the countries in the local languages, but you can already watch and share the English version on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/seeforumoncca.

CSO NETWORKS IN SEE:

Awareness raising campaigns 2012

During the summer and autumn of 2012, all four national networks involved in the SEE Forum on CCA organized activities to raise awareness about the consequences of climate change and the necessity of adaptation. Some of them focused on the educational component, combined street performance with environmental issues while others participated in marking the World Car Free Day. Read the articles below to learn more about these initiatives.

Awareness-Raising in Macedonia

Since September 2012, the Macedonian network “Climate Reaction” has been organizing various activities aimed at raising awareness on possible ways of climate change adaptation among the general public and school children.

The first event of this series was initiated by the Macedonian network member Zona Kavadarci, an NGO active in the field of health and social care. In the beginning of September they organized a theatre play in the primary school Toshe Velkov-Pepeto entitled “Talking to planet Earth”, trying to provide an understanding of the serious consequences of climate change and guiding pupils through the climate change adaptation concept.

In the end of September, CSO Molika facilitated a debate with the subject “Climate challenge vs. Macedonian response”, where network members discussed the current situation and climate change in the region of Bitola. Participants were interested in the local fires, how they reflect on the loss of forests and thus the reduction of clean air around Bitola. At the end of the debate, members of the physics club from primary school Dame Gruev shared their knowledge on the HAARP systems and their effects on human health and climate. The general conclusion of the event was that only joint and coordinated activities between civil society and local government can better educate the population about the risks of climate change and ways to adapt to it.



Climate Challenge vs. Macedonian Response

Finally, the ecological association Treska from Makedonski Brod conducted an art workshop in the secondary school St. Naum Ohridski, followed by the exhibition of works produced by the students. The name of the exhibition was “Where does the waste go?” with more than 15 paintings and a small school play on the human behaviour towards the environment, which was an added value of this event.

All these events were well attended by the general public, pupils and their parents as well as school authorities. Other CSOs from the Macedonian network, like Ursus Speleos, DEM and Grashnica joined

Macedonian Red Cross in these activities and welcomed the representatives of local government such as Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Protection and Rescue Directorate. All of these events received significant attention and coverage from the local media.



Raising awareness about climate change adaptation in Macedonia

also participates in the network activities, which are supported by the Secretariat for the Environmental Protection of Belgrade.

As a part of the campaign, the Serbian CSO network also produced a video warning about the dangers of heat waves and explaining the ways to prepare and adapt to them. **CRTL + Click on the photo to watch the video.**



Adapt! – Awareness Raising Campaign in Serbia

What climate change is, how to adapt to it and what the possible consequences are for the life on Earth, are the main topics of the campaign “Adapt!” and the event which took place on September 5th at Republic Square in Belgrade, Serbia. This event was organized by the Climate Forum, the CSO network from Serbia.

The event contained a quiz on climate change, and the most successful participants were rewarded by the organizers. After the quiz, there was a performance by the art group “Cirkusfera”.

Environmental Improvement Centre announced that similar events will be organized across Serbia in cooperation with Goethe Institute from Belgrade within the national campaign “Adapt!”. Environmental Improvement Centre is the national coordinator of the Serbian network within the SEE Forum for Climate Change Adaptation. World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Montenegro: Bicycle Tour from Podgorica to Trgaja

The World Car Free Day, 22 September 2012, was marked in Montenegro with the initiative “By bike from Podgorica to Trgaja”. This action was accomplished through the partnership among the Montenegro Red Cross, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, organisation Biciklo.me, NGO Ozon, NGO Green Home, UDG and other partners. The goal of marking this date in Montenegro is to raise awareness about the importance of cycling for environmental protection and reducing the emissions of greenhouse effect gasses, the positive effects of cycling for health, the importance of continued organization of such events and the need for improving the conditions and safety of cyclists in traffic.

The response of citizens to this action was excellent, since more than 300 cyclists of all ages participated in the event in Podgorica. Before the very start of the tour, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism

awarded prizes, and Montenegro Red Cross distributed bicycle helmets and informational material. The Red Cross supported this action by providing a first aid team for the participants of the tour. A two-hour break was made in Trgaja, when members of the first aid team from the municipal organization of Red Cross of Podgorica demonstrated first aid methods in a simulation of a traffic accident.



World Car Free Day in Montenegro

The action got a lot of attention from the citizens of Podgorica, which proves the success of the event itself. This marks the first step towards strengthening public awareness about the detrimental effects of greenhouse gases for the environment and the deeper consequences of these emissions, which are reflected in negative impacts of climate change in Montenegro.

NEWS

Regional Civil Society Conference: for Europe of the Western Balkans and Turkey

From 26 to 28 September 2012, more than a hundred representatives of civil society organizations, support agencies, government and EU institutions gathered in Zadar, Croatia to assess the state of civil society and its development in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This event was jointly organized by European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, TACSO, the People to People Programme of the European Commission and Directorate General for Enlargement. There were three main topics for the conference: benchmarking the progress across the region, sustainability of civil society and the outlook for EU policies in the region. The general conclusion of the conference was that the region has advanced significantly when it comes to providing the environment for civil society development and that ECAS should endorse numerous ongoing regional processes in that direction. Visit the official [ECAS website](http://www.ecas.eu) for more information.



Regional CSO conference in Zadar

Droughts and Fires in SEE

The summer 2012 was a very hot period in the SEE region – dry periods without any rain lasted for dozens of days, with temperatures reaching record high levels.



Red Cross volunteer involved in a disaster management action

The heat wave started in June with temperatures sometimes reaching even 40°C in the following three months. These weather conditions lead to droughts, creating unfavorable conditions for agriculture. In July and August, lots of areas in SEE experienced forest fires. Parts of Croatian and Montenegrin coasts were on fire, as well as the continental part of Montenegro. Western and eastern parts of Serbia got caught up in flames, and here, as well as in Macedonia, certain national parks were in danger. Red Cross volunteers helped the firefighters and the vulnerable population in the affected areas by distributing meals and helping with evacuations and temporary shelters when necessary.

Related to that, you can find information how disasters affected the region in the past in our [regional Climate Vulnerability Assessment synthesis report](#).

Regional and International Cooperation Strengthened

Since the beginning of the project “SEE Forum on CCA”, the Forum and its members managed to gain regional and international reputation in the field of CCA. The advocacy strategy and actions based on scientific grounds (see also the report on the release of the national CVAs in this newsletter) attracted the interest of various other organizations in this field. As an example, the **Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)** has strengthened its already existing cooperation with the Forum – we were very pleased to welcome Mr. Miroslav Kukobat, Head of Unit and Senior expert on Energy and Infrastructure, again to both of our regional conferences. Moreover, the SEE Forum will provide the RCC with recommendations for their work from the perspective of CSOs in the region. Information exchange with the **European Environment Agency** and the [CIRCLE 2](#) network continues. For this see also our review of the CLIMATE-ADAPT website below.

PUBLICATIONS

Special

National Climate Vulnerability Assessments released

Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

How is climate change affecting your country? In all four project countries in-depth assessments of areas affected by climate change has been done. You already had the opportunity to read the joint recommendations in the regional synthesis report, but now also the reports specialized on each country are available.

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These reports are one of the central documents for our work in the region. The recommendations deriving from these assessments form the base on which we advocate



concrete actions in the field of CCA.

You can download them from our website
www.seeclimateforum.org in [this location](#).

Report on Visibility and Public Perception of CSO 2012

This recently published report gives insight into the most relevant changes in visibility and the public perception of NGOs in Croatia, in comparison to findings from previous research conducted in 2006 and 2007. Released by the Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences, the report in general gives a positive image of the development of NGO perception in Croatia. The report was published in Croatian with an English summary, to be found on the [TACSO website](#).

Physical Risks from Climate Change

This research report is a guide for companies and investors on how to manage climate change impacts, as there already is a wide range of physical effect with serious implications for the private sector. While weather has always been variable with possible extremes, research shows that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and intense, and that the impacts of climate change are expected to grow more severe in the future. Businesses are already experiencing impacts from weather-related phenomena that climate change is expected to make more common. Download this document [here](#).



Climate Change Adaptation: Where does Global Health fit in the Agenda?

Climate change undoubtedly affects human health, in ways which are gradual and involve a range of basic social conditions and sectors such as water and sanitation, agriculture and urban planning. The inevitability of climate change and its effects, predominantly in developing contexts, where the impacts of climate change will be experienced most strongly and the response mechanisms are weakest, calls for attention. The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of climate change adaptation and its bearing for global health, and to emphasise the chances to improve health and decrease inequalities through the new and additional funding that is available for climate change adaptation activities. Read the study [here](#).

The European Climate Adaptation Platform: “CLIMATE-ADAPT”

The European Union set up this website in order to promote greater coordination and information sharing. What is especially interesting for all types of users, from researchers to common interest persons, is the easy-to-use navigation which reflects different approaches to CCA: Information about adaptation goes more and more into detail, sector policies are described (which also cover fields identified as regional priority areas by the SEE Forum) and country and region specific information can be requested – also already linked to the SEE Forum.



Besides the good structure, the website contains a broad range of documents, event announcement, tools, links to regional initiatives, etc.

It is highly recommended to review and bookmark this site as an important and valuable resource on CCA in Europe.

Address: <http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

USAID Development Innovation Ventures 2012-2013: Call for Applications

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has announced a new funding opportunity under the new Annual Program Statement (APS) called “Development Innovation Ventures” (DIV) FY2012 and FY2013. Through the DIV, [USAID](#) is seeking innovative solutions which are linked to solving a development challenge. These innovations should lead to transformative improvements that could ultimately scale across multiple developing countries and, ideally, multiple sectors in these countries. Proposals from different types of organizations such as NGOs, nonprofits, foundations, civic groups, international agencies, universities, colleges and others are accepted. The deadlines to submit proposals are December 1, 2012 and March 1, 2013. For more information, visit this [link](#).

Climate Finance Options

The Climate Finance Options Platform addresses needs for information on the plethora of funds available in the area of climate. Based on the UNFCCC framework, the service helps to catalyze finances and investments for more efficient climate action. Here you can find funds for both adaptation and mitigation projects that reduce impacts of climate change. There are also a lot of other useful tools, so to find out more, click [here](#).

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

4th Western Balkans Civil Society Forum Zagreb, 26 -27 November 2012

Following the last meeting in Brussels in 2010, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) with its Western Balkans Contact Group will hold a conference in Zagreb, from 26 to 27 November 2012. In this conference, the discussion and presentations will focus on topics along the approaches of the EESC: to contribute to future accession to the EU, to foster civil and social dialogue, to increase the exchange of experiences and best practices. Especially for this project, we want to underline the approach "strengthen civil society networks".

European Climate Change Adaptation Conference Hamburg, 18-20 March 2013

The European Climate Change Adaptation Conference 2013 is an initiative of a number of major European research projects and will place a greater emphasis on understanding and assessing adaptation in action under the theme integrating climate into action. European research supported strongly through the various EU Framework Programmes has played a leadership role in furthering the understanding of climate impacts, vulnerability and adaptation and will contribute significantly to the IPCC's 5th Assessment Report. Policymakers at the European, national and local levels have been acting on climate adaptation over the past decade, and with greater urgency in the past few years. European businesses, NGOs and citizens have become engaged in action on adaptation, seeking to integrate climate change into strategies and decisions.

International linkages through trade, global policy regimes, development assistance and humanitarian aid also influence European vulnerability and adaptive action.

Further information can be obtained on the [ECCA website](http://ECCAwebsite).

Green Fest Belgrade, 14 -16 November 2012



14-16. November 2012.

The International Green Culture Festival "GREEN FEST" is being held with this name for the first time and it presents the continuation of the successful organization of The International Environmental Film Festival "Green Screen Fest" in 2010 and 2011.

GREEN FEST is an inclusive event, dedicated to ecological and environmental issues, which, with the use of educational and artistic programs, activities and products, aims to enhance the culture of living in accordance with "green" values.

All information under: <http://2012.green-fest.org>.

Regional Project Team Meeting Belgrade, 26 – 28 November 2012

Since the IPA funded project will officially end with this year, the project team will meet once again. While a review of all activities and events within this project will be a major part of it, the main focus will of course lie on the future of the “SEE Forum on CCA”. The steps ahead will be based on the work that has been done so far in the national networks and on the regional level by all partners. The following points especially build the base for the future direction: the Climate Vulnerability Assessments reports on the national level and the regional synthesis report contain the scientific grounds from which concrete recommendations have been identified. These are again the base of the advocacy strategies that are developed for each country. Also, following our decisions made in the Sutomore conference and deepened in Zagreb, further implementation of activities from the joint action plan will be looked upon.



Impression from recent team meeting in Trogir

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The next issue comes up in
late November 2012!