

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE BALKANS

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Struga, Macedonia

15–17 May 2000

Produced by Friends of the Earth Europe



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"Sustainable Development in the Balkans"
Conference Proceedings

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For more copies of this report, please contact the FoEE or DEM offices.

November 2000.

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INTRODUCTION

Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE), DEM (Friends of the Earth Macedonia), the Regional Environment Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and the Heinrich Boell Foundation co-organized the "Sustainable Development in the Balkans" conference in mid-June 2000 with additional financial support from the European Commission and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

The goal of the conference was to bring together over 100 experts in sustainable development and representatives of civil society from the Balkan region with their counterparts from Europe's environmental movement to discuss the state of the Balkan environment, to visualise what a sustainable Balkan region might look like, and to look for concrete steps that might be taken to realise this vision.

A balanced mix of experiences, perspectives, and nationalities made for an educating and lively debate for all those participating. In addition to the co-organisers and supporters of the conference, FoEE wish to extend its gratitude to the participants and all those who have contributed to the work that was first initiated by the conference itself. The South East Europe Environmental NGO Network established at the conference and practical projects also initiated, such as the network's e-mail list server, continue to play an essential role in the work towards a sustainable development in the Balkan region.

PROGRAM

Wednesday, June 14

Arrival of participants, dinner and informal welcome

Friday, June 15

- 9:00 - 9:30 OPENING AND WELCOME
Pandora Nikuseva, President of Dvizhenje na Ekologistite na Makedonija (Friends of the Earth Macedonia)
Ruth Kleefisch, Heinrich Boell Foundation, Germany
John Penny, First Counsellor, Delegation of the European Commission, Skopje
- 9:30 - 10:30 KEY NOTE SPEECHES
Toni Popovski, Minister of Environment, Macedonia
Boris Trajkovski, H.E. The President of Macedonia
Discussion
- 10:30 - 11:00 *Coffee break*
- 11:00 - 12:15 INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION
Radoje Lausevic, Serbian Ecological Society, FR of Yugoslavia
Darko Znaor, ETC NL, Croatia
Mustafa Omanovic, Ecological Movement BIH - Zenica, Bosnia Herzegovina
- 12:15 - 13:00 THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE (REReP)
Alexander Juras, Deputy Executive Director, Regional Environmental Center For Central and Eastern Europe, Hungary (Secretariat of the REReP Task Force)
Robert Atkinson, Head of the NGO Support and Capacity Building Programs, Regional Environmental Center For Central and Eastern Europe, Hungary
Discussion
- 13:00 - 14:30 *Lunch*
- 14:30 - 16:00 THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE (CONTINUED)
Short reactions and considerations from NGOs
Discussion
- 16:00 - 16:30 *Coffee break*
- 16:30 - 19:30 NGO FAIR
- 19:30 - 20:30 *Dinner*
- Evening* *Cultural program*

| Saturday, June 16

- 9:00 - 9:45 LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE
Martin Rocholl, Friends of the Earth Europe: "Fair shares of environmental space":
FoEE's 'Sustainable Europe' study and concepts how to reach a sustainable society.
Anis Saleh, Friends of the Earth Middle East: Working on the environment in areas of
conflict - the experience of FoE Middle East
- 9:45 - 10:45 IDEAS FOR A SUSTAINABLE BALKAN REGION
Josif Tanevski, DEM (Friends of the Earth Macedonia)
Vladimir Lay, Green Action Zagreb, Croatia
Elaine Gilligan, Friends of the Earth England Wales and Northern Ireland: How do
western style grass root NGOs work?
- 10:45 - 11:15 INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOPS
Explanation of method and aims
- 11:1 - 11:45 *Coffee break*
- 11:45 - 13:00 WORKSHOP SESSION A
The 5 workshops will run in parallel through all 3 sessions.
WS 1: Water
WS 2: Biodiversity
WS 3: Energy
WS 4: Agriculture
WS 5: Financial Aspects (aid programs, stability pact, loans)
(Several participants have been asked to give short impulse speeches during the
workshops.)
- 13:00 - 14:30 *Lunch*
- 14:30 - 16:30 WORKSHOP SESSION B
- 16:30 - 17:00 *Coffee break*
- 17:00 - 19:00 WORKSHOP SESSION C
- 19:30 - 20:30 *Dinner*
- Evening TIME FOR SPONTANEOUS WORKSHOPS

| Saturday, June 17

- 9:00 - 9:30 PRESENTATION OF WORKSHOP RESULTS BY REPORTERS
- 9:30 - 11:00 ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: INFLUENCING THE STABILITY PACT AND THE REReP
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
With selected participants of the conference
Proposal for an NGO statement
Discussion
- 11:00 - 11:30 *Coffee break*
- 11:30 - 12:30 PLENARY DISCUSSION
- 12:30 - 13:00 CLOSING
Liana Stupples, Chair of Friends of the Earth Europe

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

OPENING AND WELCOME

WELCOME SPEECH – DVIZHENJE NA EKOLOGISTITE NA MAKEDONIJA

Ms. Pandora Nikuseva, President of Dvizhenje na Ekologistite na Makedonija (Friends of the Earth Macedonia)

For DEM it is an honour to host the present conference “Sustainable Development in the Balkans” to discuss the environmental, political and other fields that comprise the challenges and problems which face the Balkan region.

DEM is an old organisation, which celebrated its 10th anniversary on May 19th. We managed in conditions of transition, during a period when NGOs were in the margins, to survive and work with the governmental institutions.

Today, the situation in Macedonia is different with a National Environmental Action Plan in operation and Local Environmental Action Plans started, there is now also a Ministry of the Environment in its early stages of development. DEM looks forward with hope to a fruitful co-operation with this new Ministry, each playing their role in the work that must be done.

The Balkans region is threatened by serious political and ecological problems - for example, obsolete technologies and industry in the region that is inefficient and pollutes. Together we must

try to analyse these problems and point out the tasks ahead of us. We must help the governments to work on the Stability Pact and implement sustainable development policies. We were the first organisation to start on this task.

The River Vardar, lakes of Dojran and Prespa - these are international problems not just national concerns. This conference will bring together people who can help both financially and in terms of capacity building. We need to discuss how to implement the development that is necessary to the region and I hope that we will manage to live in a more healthy and environmentally friendly situation.

Many of us are not guilty for the present state of our region - but it is our duty to do the best we can for future generations.

WELCOME SPEECH – HEINRICH BOELL FOUNDATION

Ms. Ruth Kleefisch, Heinrich Boell Foundation, Germany

First of all in the name of the Heinrich Boell Foundation, I would like to welcome all the participants to this conference. There are representatives from different initiatives and organisations, institutions, governments and international organisations whose work is concerned with sustainable development and working on securing ecological perspectives for the future. I also welcome all the guests and would like to use this opportunity also to thank the people who worked to make the conference happen, especially our hosts DEM from Macedonia and the office staff of Friends of the Earth Europe. The time schedule is tight, but I

would like to share with you some ideas which guided the Heinrich Boell Foundation in supporting and promoting this conference.

For the past ten years, sustainable development and ecology have been the main themes for the work of the Heinrich Boell Foundation in South-Eastern Europe, co-operating mainly with NGOs in the region. The Heinrich Boell Foundation has the aim of strengthening civil society by supporting political education, thus promoting democratic involvement, socio-political activism and cross-cultural understanding.

OPENING AND WELCOME

With this objective in view, the Heinrich Boell Foundation seeks to support actors in the civil society ecological field in the region and their co-operation. The aim is to establish a political interest base, putting the ecological themes - often neglected - more in the political and societal debate, rooting them and bringing forward changes in the ecological field.

Sustainable development cannot be put in practice by a small number of experts alone, it needs the involvement and democratic discussions of broadest part of the population. It has to start with the necessities of the people in the region, therefore democratic structures, raising public awareness and real participation in decision-making processes are essential.

The Heinrich Boell Foundation is committed to an idea of political ecology, which means going further than party politics. It involves the empowerment of civil society so that it takes part in the political processes of defining criteria, aims and strategies and actions how sustainable development can be put into practice more.

As ecological problems don't stop at borders, so the work on sustainable development cannot be carried out inside borders in an isolated way.

Regional and international co-operation is required. The principle of crossing borders in the widest sense should be one of the leading ideas.

A lot of attention now focused on the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, which also underlines the need for interaction between regions and countries. The stability pact process needs civil society initiatives, that bring forward democratic education processes and participation on all levels of state and society.

The Stability Pact process is also one of the main challenges of Europe as a whole. The future of Europe is also decided in South Eastern Europe. It can be developed only with an Inter-European dialogue and interaction guided by the vision of living together in an European house.

This conference gives to all of us the opportunity of working together on policies, discussing of strategies and developing actions for a sustainable development in the region. We wish for a productive and constructive dialogue, learning from each other, sharing experiences and ideas. This conference is one initiative of regional and international co-operation where others should follow.

WELCOME SPEECH – THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Mr. John Penny, First Counsellor, Delegation of the European Commission, Macedonia

President Trajkovski, Minister Popovski, Ladies and Gentlemen: The European Commission is pleased to be supporting this Regional Environmental Programme, which is at the heart of environmental activities under the umbrella of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

Conflicts, poor institutional infrastructure, decaying industrial systems and a legacy of years of unchecked pollution have left the environment of Southeast Europe in a state of serious neglect. The Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme offers a real opportunity to build the conditions in which sustainable environmental protection can develop. It is not good enough to simply finance environmental infrastructure

projects without an institutional framework and functioning civil society to support it.

This programme offers to the international community a number of unique features.

1. Environment is regional by nature and offers the possibility to reach political agreement more easily than some other areas. Thus it sits easily within the Stability Pact.
2. The countries of the region have played a major role in its formulation and acceptance and here I would like to pay particular tribute to Minister Popovski for his drive and enthusiasm for pushing this programme along. The support of the Macedonian Government is absolutely

OPENING AND WELCOME

clear and evidenced today by the presence here of President Trajkovski. With this support the programme is already off to a good start.

- The Commission is delighted to see that on this occasion many other donors have come forward to assist, proof that not only is environment being given its due importance in the reconstruction but that the programme itself is soundly based.
- The Commission is demonstrating its belief in this programme by pledging five million euros to projects in the fields of institution building and removal of environmental hazards.
- The Commission is pleased to see that the role of the NGO community is recognized through the civil society aspect of the programme. Already the NGOs have made their positive contributions in the formulation of this programme. We would call upon NGOs to play a full part in its successful implementation.
- It is clear that inside the EU the pressure for environmental improvement comes from the public demanding that their politicians and local officials act upon their concerns. This demand grows as a result of being given the information to make informed judgments through the work of a free press and an active democracy.
- The reconstruction is a two way process, the donors can provide assistance but the countries of the region must take their own responsibilities. Ultimately the programme will stand or fall on their actions. By signing up to this programme at ministerial level the beneficiaries have made a positive start but it must not stop there. Within the countries declarations must be matched by deeds.
- Any future finance will be dependent on the success of this first phase. That success will depend upon the Balkan countries proving they are prepared to begin taking the hard decisions that are necessary when environmental choices need to be made. We will be watching closely to see how protection measures are actually implemented in the region. We call upon the NGOs to assist us in this task.
- The new contractual relationship between the Balkan countries and the European Union will be the proposed Stabilisation and Association Agreements. The prominent profile given to environment in these agreements should leave nobody in any doubt of the importance the European Union attaches to the issue. If the Balkan countries hope to be drawn into the European fold then they will need to demonstrate commitment to protecting the environment. This programme is a significant step in the right direction.

Thank you

KEY NOTE SPEECHES

KEY NOTE SPEECH 1

Mr. Toni Popovski, Minister of Environment, Macedonia



The problems that characterise the Balkans have been faced by more than one generation in the region. This conference offers the possibility of a serious discussion towards working for solutions. The concept of sustainable development represents the mainstream in the new millennium.

The Macedonian government has ratified the Aarhus convention and so the Republic of Macedonia will try to work transparently in the creation of instruments that will aid the aim of sustainable development.

NGOs are to actively participate in programs that we co-ordinate. I'm glad to say that for the 18 months of my work in the Ministry there have been no serious crises and it is wonderful opportunity to participate in the program of this conference with such a bright future ahead of us.

The actual work being done by the government of Macedonia is its legitimization. More delicate spheres such as those of human rights still need to be worked on as the level of civil society is very under-developed throughout the region. The Macedonian government thanks the Friends of the Earth for organizing this event. I would like to take this opportunity to share my experience in this field.

We now have the chance for a cross-border cooperation. All of us must make the effort to put sustainable development at the top of our

governments' agendas - as has been shown possible by Sweden in the Malmar Convention - there is the impetus in the new millennium to make this an ecologically-minded millennium.

The Stability Pact is a flexible structure within which we can work for the reconstruction of the region's ecology. Also, with reference to agreements made under the United Nations, six countries made important commitments on both the national and regional levels.

A mutual agreement on the treatment of waste, integral to the region's water resources, is particularly important in the Balkan region. That these water resources have no borders underlines the importance of co-operation on the regional level. Albania, Greece and Macedonia have signed an agreement to make tri-lateral nature preservation park. The corridors are also a powerful example of our co-operation. E10 and E8 are a bloodstream for the economy of Macedonia, bringing much needed help in the Eastern region. We need to get started on such projects immediately and wait for the help of others.

This conference will provide the forum for various opportunities to be presented to the participants. Alexandar Juras from REC and representatives from the REReP will inform you about new opportunities for NGOs in the region. I will also attend further days at the conference and intend to be at your disposal. Thank you for your attention.

KEY NOTE SPEECHES

| KEY NOTE SPEECH 2 |

H.E. Boris Trajkovski, President of Macedonia

I would like to start by expressing my commitment to the aims that have been outlined by my colleague Toni Popovski, First Minister for the Environment. I am convincing you that I will be glad to be a member of such organisation as DEM is. I can promise that you will enjoy my full support in the work that you are to do during this Conference and after. It is an honor for me to welcome this eminent gathering of ecologists, NGOs and other experts. Your activities must seek the support of all sectors of society and government. You are the ones who know the facts of the problems that face us now and will face us in the future.

If you achieve your primary goal of promoting co-operation between NGOs then this will be a great achievement for this conference. Development isn't a goal in itself, it must be sustainable development.

Specific issues, which stand out as key include the issues surrounding renewable and non renewable resources and the promotion of clean technologies in industry.

All the Balkan countries expect a lot from the Stability Pact as it offers us a major opportunity our own input. Especially in the areas that you will be addressing in this conference, NGOs can provide a good example for all participants in this

process. However, the significance of the role of government and the challenges we face cannot be ignored.

As far as I have had a chance to understand your objectives, the issue of wider civil society co-operation is the key. I am impressed and welcome your commitment to transparency as essential to the work with regards to the Stability Pact.

From the previous speeches it is clear that regional co-operation is also particularly important. I would like to recall a passage from the bible - the 8th Song. The Song expresses admiration for the deeds of God - it states "what a miracle that God created the earth" and underlines that God has also given the duty to Man to protect the earth and that no-one has the right to destroy the earth. The President of DEM has said that they would like the Ministry of Environment to grow. I would like to stress that you should do what is best for us - make our country more sustainable. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my support to this meeting - it could result in more projects and it must be hoped that the appropriate organisations will provide the support for these.



INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR IN SERBIA

Dr. Radoje Lausevic, Serbian Ecological Society, FR of Yugoslavia

I will try to present to this conference the consequences of NATO bombing of Yugoslavia last year. The conflict reflects the nature of modern warfare as witnessed in other areas - the strategic aims and problematic ethical implications. For the environment in the region, there are clear consequences of aiming at industrial complexes as targets for example.

The territory of Yugoslavia mainly belongs to the Danube water basin: it includes the Republic of Serbia with the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohia and the Republic of Montenegro. There are over 12 million inhabitants in relatively small area of about 102 square kilometers, which makes only 0,07 % of the entire world's land, and 21% of the European continent. However, that territory harbors a great biodiversity too which needs to be protected. Five percent of the territory of Serbia is regulated for nature protection with 5 national parks, while about 8 % of Montenegro is protected, with 4 natural national parks.

A general conclusion is that Yugoslavian nature was relatively well preserved and less threatened than in Western, Central and Eastern European countries. The said assessment is best confirmed by the "Evaluation on Europe's Environment" prepared in the course of 1997 and 1998 by the European Agency for Environment.

Unfortunately, the NATO bombing severely altered the Yugoslav environment. There were more than 35,000 assaults, using more than 10,000 cruise missiles, over more than 79,000 tons of explosives were dropped, including 35,000 cluster bombs and about 10 tones of depleted uranium ammunitions (banned internationally). According to official estimations (Yugoslav Daily Survey, 8 June 1999), several thousand civilians were killed and more than 6,000 sustained serious

injuries, while a large number of them will remain crippled for life. Several thousand industrial facilities have been destroyed or damaged with the consequence of paralyzing the production of consumer goods, while 500,000 workers were left jobless, and 2 million citizens without any source of income and possibility to ensure minimum living conditions.

During the war 121 industrial facilities were destroyed. All refineries, 20 fuel storages and more than 30 large infrastructure facilities were destroyed, especially those for transporting electricity. The shortage in electricity increased sulphur dioxide emissions, especially in large Bor mining center (Eastern Serbia). It is just an example of indirect environmental consequences such as these that are really important.

Targeted plants illustrate the impact. The slide I show illustrates the damage by a satellite image. The waste water channel which connects Pancevo petrochemical complex (near Belgrade) with the Danube river and carries large amounts of toxic substances released from destroyed petrochemical factories represents the hottest 'hot spot'. From destroyed plants about 2,100 tones of toxic ethylene dichloride (EDC) were released (almost 50% directly into the canal). More than 60,000 tones of oil were burned, as well as about 440 tones of highly toxic vinyl chloride monomer (VCM). Long term consequences were caused by spill of about 8 tones of mercury from a damaged electrolysis plant. Remote sensing assessment and in situ assessment done by UNEP BTF confirmed Pancevo as the important hot spot.

Novi Sad (the capital of Vojvodina province) is the second hot spot with 60,000 tones of burned and spilled oil in the oil refinery. Concentration of oil products (especially light ones) in ground water is rapidly increased highly above permitted

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION

levels. This presents a clear danger to drinking water and potentially, the whole of Novi Sad area will be left without drinking water.

Several large transformer stations were destroyed all around the Serbia, which cause significant spillage of so called "transformer oil". By chemical composition it is highly toxic polychlorinated biphenyles (PCB's) - better known as pyralenes. Over 1,400 tones PCBs have been found near the Kragujevac city (central Serbia). Further threats exist from ammonia and chloride spillages.

Consequences of NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in connection with depleted uranium (DU) represent long term danger to human health in the whole region, especially in areas of Kosovo and Metohia. It is estimated that about 10 tones of depleted uranium were dropped, while some unofficial estimations suggest much larger quantity. Regarding other health risks, main threats is caused by spreading of toxic substances in four "hot spots" in Yugoslavia. The list comprises VCM, phosgene, PCBs, ethylene dichloride, chlorine, different products of fuel combustion, soot, oil and oil products, ammonia, heavy metals, among them mercury, lead and cadmium, etc. These highly toxic and carcinogenic pollutants represent both acute and chronic danger to the human health.

Protected areas (national parks, nature parks etc.) in Yugoslavia also suffered from direct bombing. The NP "Fruska gora" suffered the most severe destruction of all protected nature areas. It was bombed as much as 21 times. Approximately 100 ha of the forest was destroyed, and it is estimated that there are around 1.000 craters caused by shell explosions. Habitats of many rare and endangers species were destroyed by that means, which possibly endangered biodiversity.

UNEP declare that the war over Kosovo has "not been an environmental disaster" affecting the Balkan region as a whole. Nevertheless, pollution detected in many hot spots is serious and poses a threat to the environment as well as to the human health. Unfortunately these hot spots have not received the attention that they deserve.

There is need for wide international action with the aim to repair destroyed industrial facilities and to remediate of affected areas, namely: Novi Sad Refinery, Industrial complex Pancevo, Industrial complex Kragujevac, and large transformer stations. The urgent need is for reparation of waste water canal in industrial zone Pancevo, reparation of waste water treatment plants in Novi Sad, Pancevo, Kragujevac and Bor, protection of water supply system Novi Sad, while special attention should be paid for localization and remediation of areas affected by depleted uranium. Establishment of monitoring (physical, chemical and biological) for detecting long term consequences represents is also required.

We must not keep our eyes closed - we could soon be faced with sudden environmental disasters if action is not taken soon.

Addendum

Recent political changes and democratization of Yugoslavia (October 2000) offer great opportunity for wide international action in the field of emergency assistance for combating war damage and reestablishing of cooperative mechanisms and structures to support transboundary projects for environmental protection in the region. NGO community should play important role in the whole process of stabilization of Balkan region through establishment of close co-operation and networking.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

Mr. Darko Znaor, ETC NL (Consultant in Development Programs), Croatia

Introduction

This paper is an attempt to outline the basic features of organic agriculture sector in South-East Europe (the Balkans). It discusses in brief the impact of agriculture on nature and the environment, farming reality and agricultural policies in South-East Europe, as well as the benefits of organic agriculture and its present and future development in the region. Agriculture is a key factor in the Balkans, of primary importance in every sphere - economic, social and political.

Agriculture, nature protection and the environment

Agricultural activities affect both quantity and quality of nature and the environment. Agriculture has substantial impact on soil, water, air, as well as on species, habitats and landscape diversity. Numerous studies point to agriculture as the single biggest factor responsible for soil and water pollution (nutrients, pesticides, heavy metals and pathogens), as well as for the destruction of biodiversity. However, contrary to other sectors, particularly industry and transport, agriculture is at the same time both source of environmental degradations and a victim of environmental problems! On the other hand, agriculture is an important factor in preserving natural resources and biodiversity. Farmland is for instance the most important habitat type for threatened European birds, and the main element determining the quality of landscape. Last but not the least, agricultural practices raise a number of ethical questions such as those related to the use of genetically manipulated organisms, animal welfare and (declining) food quality.

Farming reality in South-East Europe

Low input and small-scale labour intensive farming is the most predominant type of farming in the region. In most cases it is part-time work (often combined with a job in industry or services). The investments are restricted to some very basic costs (e.g. seeds) and the production is not market-oriented but rather subsistence

oriented. The average farm size is rather small. More than 60% of the farms in former Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Romania are smaller than five hectares. The machinery used is outdated and inappropriate for modern agricultural operations (e.g. tractors in Romania are older than eighteen years on average).

Agricultural policies

The current agricultural policies in most of the countries are still "at the crossroad". This is characterised by a diversity of visions on further development, and differing concepts on implementation. The turbulent political climate, frequent political changes and replacement of the key policy figures make it difficult to set up and implement any mid/long-term policy. The "forced" experience with low-input agriculture was not brought about as designed policy for agricultural development but is the consequence of a socio-political evolution from state economy to market economy. Agricultural policies in the region lack the environmental component and aim at restoring pre '90 inputs. The policy support to ecological agriculture is declarative, rather than a result of a serious political will and commitment.

Low-input vs. organic agriculture

It has often been said that the bulk of the agricultural production in the Balkans is "ecological", since little or no pesticide and fertiliser is being used. However, this is only true at first glance. The reduction of agri-chemical inputs (or refraining from using them altogether) unless complemented by better management is not necessarily "ecological" (organic). Low-input farming often doesn't pay sufficient attention to the environmental degradations caused by agricultural practices and can lead to soil erosion, declining biodiversity, building up of pests and diseases, etc. Finally, this type of agriculture is often not economically feasible and lacks appropriate inspection and certification system that qualifies the products for the organic label recognised at the export markets.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION

Organic agriculture scene in South-East Europe

Although a number of farms claim to be “ecological”, there are very few certified organic farms in the region. Not more than some twenty farms are certified by internationally recognised certification organisations. However, some local organic NGOs claim to run their own certification system with many more farms participating in the scheme. Marketing and processing of organic agriculture produce is in an early stage of development, too. The same counts for the extension and information system. In 1999 the value of certified organic market in the Balkans is estimated at some \$ 1 million. About a half of this is exported to the EU (mostly herbs, wild fruits and juices). The rest is sold directly on farms or in shops specialised for “healthy food”. The later is increasingly popular in the region. However, dietary supplements and imported (processed) organic food prevail over domestic organic commodities in these shops. Alternative markets channels such as kindergartens, hospitals, schools, “garages-sale”, vegetarian restaurants play an important role, too. Organic products do attract a premium price, often up to 100%. However, the supply and demand mechanism is the key rule in determining the price. Variable quality, low quantity, limited choice, irregular supply and the lack of certification system are the main obstacles for introducing organic produce to the supermarkets. Health, fashion and ideological reasons, rather than the environment are the driving forces for the organic consumers. There is hardly any research or higher education on organic agriculture. With the exception of Yugoslavia (and partly Bulgaria) none of the countries in the region has regulation (law) on organic agriculture. Other policy mechanisms for supporting organic agriculture do not exist.

Environmental NGOs and organic agriculture in South-East Europe

Organic agriculture NGOs are flourishing all over the region. With very few exceptions, they are based on voluntary staff. Links are forged with universities, and some offer training,

inspection and certification. The concept of organic agriculture increasingly becomes interesting for “old” environmental NGOs, too. This is not only due to the link between agriculture and environment/nature protection that becomes more apparent, but also due to the fact that organic agriculture is the only form of agriculture drastically refusing the use of GMOs. The increasing donors’ interest makes the subject even more attractive... So far NGOs have been the main push and pull factor in developing organic agriculture in the region.

Future development

Organic agriculture sector in the Balkans is far less developed than in other countries with economies in transition, notably the Baltic, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary. Organic agriculture is an attractive concept for the post-war reconstruction of agriculture and rural areas. It goes hand-in-hand with eco-tourism, environmental and nature protection, and thus contributes to a more positive image of the region. However, the structural development of organic sector requires a concerted action of the stakeholders. It is now the task of the GOs to take over the initiatives started by the NGOs. Land reform, introduction of appropriate regulatory and economic instruments, support to research and education are among the most essential issues to be tackled. However, since the conversion “between ears” precedes that on farms, more political goodwill will have to be shown in order to move the Balkan mentality in the direction of organic farming. The EU accession pressure, striving to build a more positive image of the region, increased interest by consumers, media and foreign markets and capital- indicate the perfect timing for designing the policy-led conversion to organic agriculture. The existing Phare calculations pointing at substantial macro-economic and environmental benefits of large-scale conversion to organic agriculture in the region is another encouraging signal for more work on the issue, as organic agriculture has potential to develop into one of the most important pillars for sustainable development of the region.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION

RECONSTRUCTION OF INDUSTRY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND ECOLOGY

Dr. Mustafa Omanovic, Ecological Movement BIH - Zenica, Sarajevo University*, Bosnia Herzegovina

Introduction

A prerequisite for the entry of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Europe Union is to accept the principles of international environmental standards, i.e. series ISO 9000 as well as ISO 14000, pertinent to environment Management and protection. Therefore, Agenda 21, i.e. sustainable development should be the basis of reconstruction and development in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, before the war from 1992-1995, was one of the most polluted regions in Europe. The core of its economy being metallurgy and chemistry is comparable with many other countries in the world as these industries are both very large direct pollutants, but there is also a significant contribution of indirect pollution. Namely, these two industrial sectors are very large energy consumers per product unit, where energy based on coal participates more than 50%. The third unfavourable factor is a very low raw materials quality, used for metals production. Ores and coals possess a low percentage of undesirable components and relatively high percentage of unfavourable residuals: sulphur, lead, cadmium. Because of this, an evaluation of natural and economic resources must be carried out before the reconstruction process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This work represents environment protection within the framework of sustainable development conditions, according to the stipulations made by Agenda 21.

The basic character of the chemical industry of Tuzla region, in particular the metallurgical industry in the region of Zenica, constitute the main cause of the enormous pollution of all three eco-systems, i.e. of air, water and soil. There has been a high energy consumption per product unit in basic industry. Fifty percent of this energy coming from coals - with very low thermal value, but very high values of sulphur ranging from 2.5 to 7.5%. In fact, the natural resources of Bosnia and Herzegovina have never been environmentally and economically evaluated to date.

In reconstruction projects, the consideration of ecology must play a central role. First of all, the dire status of Bosnia and Herzegovina even before this war as one of the most polluted regions in the world, not only in the former-Yugoslavia, demands that reparation and real work is carried out now. According to some estimates from 1989, Bosnia and Herzegovina has participated in its surface with 20%, in citizens number with 18%, in gross national income with 12%, but in air pollution with 36%, enormous water pollution and soil devastation.

1. Present state estimation

Environment protection is inadequately treated in the Dayton agreement. It should have become (but it is not) within the framework of state competence, but at present these questions are in the competence of other entities - the Federation and Republika Srpska. Unfortunately, part of the obligation of the Federation is transferred to Cantons and Municipalities.

Transition to market economy and legitimacy valuable in the world require essential changes in relations towards production. It is certain that reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be spread equitably to the regions such as those of the Tuzla and Zenica regions. The structure of their economy is characterized by unfavourable elements - large quantities of raw materials and reproduction materials of low quality level along with high energy consumption per product unit and enormous pollution of all ecological systems.

Within the framework of macro-economic aspects of economic strategy, regarding reconstruction and transition in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the economic-ecological valuation of economy restructuring projects is not being highly enough valued. For example, within the price of an energy unit that is produced in power stations from coals of low thermal value and high sulphur concentration, the cost of environmental protection and regeneration should be incorporated.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION

All these questions are extremely important for the content of projects, as well as for investment objects and their functioning. In addition, with regards to the restructuring of companies and infrastructure in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the following ecological elements connected with technical-technological aspects are very important:

- Production and natural resources valuation and revaluation;
- Economy and space valuation, based on infrastructure and economic objects locations;
- Raw and reproduction materials resources which satisfy particular design requirements based on ecological requirements;
- Technology influence on all eco-systems;
- Design for recycling, repeated use and production based on secondary raw materials;
- Use and product life extension;
- Design within which will be considered and ecologically explained selection problems and waste materials deposition, as well as relevant questions regarding locations and such depots arrangement

These elements should be particularly respected when are the matters in question like metallurgical and chemical industry.

2. Summary of ecological requirements for projects

In conclusion, the ecological elements that must be key to every project considered can be summarized before giving a "green light" for project acceptance and realisation:

- type, official title and products quantity;
- projects surface in which the basic activity is being carried out;
- actual workers number, workers number according to project and total workers number respectively;
- type, quantity, titles and origin of raw and reproduction materials for mentioned production and their eventual protection by means of chemical, biological methods and procedures (to give the separate specification);
- the plant's technical estimation;
- technological process (estimation taking into consideration the ecological parameters);
- data about harmful materials concentration

within working environment and workers' protection;

- micro-climatic conditions, noise and vibrations within production shops;
- pollutants specification and their emission in air and water (types and quantity);
- type and energy quantity per product unit with energy share produced within own shop;
- type and water quantity used per product unit;
- type and quantity of waste waters per product unit and methods of neutralization and detoxication (if it is needed);
- type and quantity of waste liquid materials, way of storage and further treatment (oils, lubricants);
- type, quantity and packaging origin per product unit;
- types and quantities of solid waste materials;
- type and quantity of waste materials able to be used in recycling process;
- type and quantity of solid waste material (particularly dangerous) and methods and procedures of storage;

All the above-mentioned elements of ecological considerations must be carefully analyzed with consideration of the project's location related to housing. Possible consequences in the case of accidents and ecological disasters must also be addressed for every investment project.

3. Final considerations

Based on this estimation of State environment protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the requirements laid out by the international community for the reconstruction process, particularly in the domain of standard specifications ISO 14000 which plans all aspects of environment protection management, it is possible to make the most important conclusions as follows:

- It is necessary to pass corresponding lawful regulations that will be compatible and consistent in both entities and at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the task of the Council of Ministers;
- Companies in preparation of quality system management arrangement, based on standard specifications ISO 9000, need to take into account ISO 14000 which is compatible to series ISO 9000 standard specifications;

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION IN THE BALKAN REGION

- Education of all statures and levels. Education programs in environment protection from kindergartens up to the university education, in order to upgrade the level of social consciousness and change philosophy of relations toward environment as a whole;
- To carry out valuation and revaluation of natural and economic resources based on principles of sustainable development, particularly where the evaluation of interactional relation of economic development and spacious values from an urban development point of view is concerned;
- Reconstruction and development projects need to elaborate environment protection based on international standardization.

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THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE (REReP)

Mr. Alexander Juras, Deputy Executive Director, The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe, Hungary (Secretariat of the REReP Task Force)

With regards to the Stability Pact, Macedonia has taken a political lead in this and I regret that the President was unable to stay for the duration of these discussions. I would like to start with explaining that the Regional Environmental Center (REC), its achievements and its relation to Stability Pact.

We understand ourselves as a Central and East European organisation, and not as a Western organisation. We seek to provide for the demands of the Balkan countries in a neutral and objective manner. We are a not-for-profit organisation, but we are not an NGO and we do not seek to represent NGOs. Since the 1990s in all Balkan countries, we have worked endorsed by governments. We were the first organisation to publish an environmental assessment of the war and its effects in Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia and Romania. In fact in a matter of three weeks after cessation of hostilities.

The REReP task force - we have already worked as facilitator for governments and corporations, we work as an independent neutral body. Through we definitely seek to be an advocator of NGO involvement in the reconstruction process to promote public participation. The REReP Secretariat (based at REC) has the task to prepare the Task Force meetings, including documents, logistics, and information work. The REC was selected by the SEE governments to serve this function.

The Stability Pact is not an organisation and does not have a fixed budget, or even one building where it is based! It is a group of Western and Eastern governments and organisations that agree to work as a co-ordinated body of donors for the Balkan countries. At this time Yugoslavia has refused to participate, but we try to open up doors to them. Three working tables in the Stability Pact are summarized as follows: (1) Human rights & democratization; (2) Security and (3) Environment.

When the Stability Pact was started the government in Macedonia took an important

role. In June and October 1999, the first program was distributed as a hypothetical model for reactions - there was in fact little reaction. In October in Bari, the European Commission introduced the special section devoted to the environment. Research was carried out into the feasibility of getting the different Balkan governments to co-operate. There was a positive response to this.

March 2000 was the next milestone as progress was made very quickly. The short timeframe was also the reason for slight NGO involvement. In Skopje, SEE Environment ministers met and endorsed a program (the REReP). A few days later in Brussels the REReP was recognised under the Balkan Stability Pact. Through April and May lots of efforts were spent to speed the process up and keep the momentum of the initiative, many governments have pressed to have their money pledged well spent and to demonstrate quick results. Now - this Struga conference comes at a crucial juncture in the reconstruction process, and we seek to broaden the NGO involvement.

NGO involvement was there, but this meeting will hopefully consolidate and build on this start. What can we do to strengthen NGO involvement in the REReP? There will soon be a REReP Task Force meeting in July in Croatia, where hopefully we will have become more organized and there will be more input from NGOs. Although the Task Force secretariat acts on the demands and directives of the Task Force member. So always in close co-operation with the SEE countries. We also work to facilitate the dialogue of all stakeholders, and to try to ensure that NGOs are not forgotten.

It is a major step for the region to have this kind of co-operation. We think existing structures and systems should be used. But they have to be strengthened. Newly set up implementation offices with highly paid western consultants should be avoided. This would only have the negative result of local authorities losing on their own capacity building, being marginalized from

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the necessary knowledge, and when the funding dries up they are left alone when the consultants leave.

The REReP should have donor co-operation and co-ordination. This was previously a problem. The importance for stability to be achieved in the framework of an environmentally sustainable approach cannot be over-stressed. In Bosnia the first real co-operation between the two entities was in the field of environment, which shows the possibilities to develop regional co-operation through the environment, even after conflict. The Task Force chair is shared between the EU Commission and one Balkan state. At the moment it is Macedonia.

The five priority areas in REReP are as follows:
(1) Institution building, including infrastructure

and environmental impact assessments are necessary parts of the REReP. (2) Civil Society strengthening - It is a small sensation that civil society has become a priority; this is uncommon in similar contexts. (3) Emergency assistance preventing cross-border disasters is of key importance; in particular with regards to Yugoslavia and is represented in the REReP documents. (4) The REReP also seeks to promote the reinforcement of existing environment programs like the Danube Environmental program. (5) The last area is support to national, local, and emergency programs with targeted issues relating to human health for example.

I now hand over to my colleague Robert Atkinson who will address the civil society aspects of the REReP and the NGO component.

Mr. Robert Atkinson, Head of NGO Support and Capacity Building Programs, The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe, Hungary

I would like to present two main areas with regards to the reconstruction efforts in the Balkan region; those of the civil society component of the new REReP and the room for input by NGOs.

The main priorities in civil society may be outlined as follows:

Firstly, assistance to NGOs is crucial, including support to cross-border activities; enabling democratization and for people to work together must be emphasized. Though these priorities should bear in mind the regional aspect, as the Stability Pact emphasizes regional projects.

Encouraging the promotion of civil society as an idea in itself is a starting point in the region. The projects identified so far are quite fluid. They are changing and adapting with time. SEE Governments themselves as the members of the REReP Task Force are deciding the priorities of the REReP. Within priority area 2.5 (Development and Strengthening of NGOs) you will find a short explanation on support to NGOs. The projects in this priority area needs working on, as it stands the projects are a basis for discussion with the NGO community, donors and the governments in the region.

The projects devised are looking to support already existing organizations and not to reinvent new mechanisms. It is clear that support to NGOs to work on the long-term viability of their continued existence is needed. Additionally capacity building needs a lot of emphasis. The current planned project under 2.5 of the REReP is about three million Euros over in the next two to three years and eight million Euros in total for five years. The German government is so far the only government to show real interest in this priority area, but hopefully this situation will improve. An number of governments have committed funds which fit into this area, notably the Netherlands, the United States and Denmark, by supporting compatible projects.

There needs to be a discussion on how NGOs could actually participate in the REReP Task Force and its meetings. Additionally NGO must address donor governments and your own governments who are making many of the decisions under REReP - and find a strategy for how to set about lobbying. Addressing the Stability Pact directly and its other spheres like infrastructure investments for example are equally important and to not only concentrate on

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the environmental portion (which is one percent of the Stability Pact total). Its design and implementation both require the attention of NGOs. A watchdog role for NGOs is a key area for work. To enable this, you need to receive information in order to judge and monitor what is happening during the reconstruction process orchestrated by the Stability Pact.

What are the priority areas? Allowing NGOs to give a proper input - the programme towards this end will hopefully be announced in the coming months. However it is hard to decide whom to invite to these meetings? A diverse and disparate NGO community makes such a decision difficult

to form. This conference could provide a forum for a decision on the representation of NGOs in these fora.

To recap, the main questions we see are as follows:

- What projects would NGOs like to see in REReP?
- How to design the involvement of NGOs in this work? Who will participate?
- What would be the input of NGOs into REReP Task Force meetings? Such as a statement from this meeting could be put to the next Task Force meeting.

| Short reactions and considerations from NGOs |

Summary

Many participants expressed a high level of dissatisfaction with access to information when attempting to work with the REC. Increased involvement of NGOs from the region and making more data available are the essential first steps to improve the situation. Participants stated that the best way to build NGO capacity in the region was to support their work directly, and expressed the concern that REC takes on work that should go to local NGOs.

One participant stated that since 1990, the REC has been more active than any other international donor organisation in the Balkan region. The participant asked the REC representatives which were the things that the REC could have done better. The REC representative replied that NGO involvement at an earlier stage could have improved relations. He went to to explain that external forces decided this - there was simply not sufficient time or funding to facilitate this. There were also communications problems, with a low amount of feedback from NGOs to information that was put out.

Another participant asked what the task force is composed of, also whether the REC was a non-profit organisation, and what its political affiliations are. The REC representatives replied that the task force has the backing of governments in the region, donor governments, and international organisations. It is open in principle, but this is not always possible in practise. It is difficult to define what it is that the REC represents, put simply - environmental interests. They try to act as facilitators serving an enabling function.

One participant stated that for many of the NGOs in the region the REC appears to be somewhat like the Vatican. He asked the REC representatives whether the REC was accountable only to God, or also to the constituents of the region. The REC representatives replied that with respect to funding, funds are directed based on the requirements of a project. Donors are in the majority (90%) Western governments. REC is accountable to those governments but also accountable to the constituents of wherever the project takes place. REC works with grants and

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programme development. All grants are decided by expert committees, and calls for tender are announced.

Another participant complained that there is a lack of transparency and accountability with regards to the REC. Local REC offices do not offer sufficient information to NGOs and other interested citizens' groups.

One participant tells a story as an analogy to the situation with regards to REC as perceived by many NGO participants at the conference. It is the story of a woman who feels that she would like to get married. Then, all of a sudden, a stranger arrives without notice says that a marriage has been arranged for the following day, the church organised and her dress has been ordered. The process is at such a speed that the bride becomes understandably suspicious!

| NGO FAIR |

All NGOs presented themselves in front of bill-boards, displaying their activities, campaigns and projects. This session provided participants with a valuable opportunity for informal networking and information sharing.

"LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE"

"FAIR SHARES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SPACE": FoEE'S 'SUSTAINABLE EUROPE' STUDY AND CONCEPTS HOW TO REACH A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

Dr. Martin Rocholl, Political Coordinator, Friends of the Earth Europe:

Sustainability: what does it mean?

Sustainability is a largely overused word. These days everything seems to be sustainable. There is 'sustainable' growth, 'sustainable' cars, even 'sustainable' tetra-pack. The EU calls its traffic policy sustainable, even though it still expects a considerable increase of car and truck traffic in the next decade. If this continues sooner or later someone will invent the term 'sustainable pollution'.

We at Friends of the Earth use the term sustainability in a much stricter way. In a project involving national groups of FoEE in 30 European countries and the Wuppertal Institute, we defined our vision how a Sustainable Europe shall look like. Yes, you have heard right - I am talking about a vision. I know, since I am an environmentalist, you might expect from me to hear something about sacrifice: that all of us shall drive less, consume less, pollute less. But I will not do that. Because our vision is not about sacrifices, it is about innovation, intelligent management, efficient resource use and most of all about a better life for everybody on Earth. This vision goes far beyond just environmental matters. It includes a democratic system which allows participation of its citizens and defines a modern,

eco-efficient economy which provides jobs and is socially just. And finally it promotes a lifestyle which breaks away from the seductive, media-generated thought pattern that more consumption automatically leads to fuller and happier lives.

The over-use of the world sustainability, makes us think we are doing fine. But we are not. The European Environmental Agency in its 1999 report has looked at 15 key environmental issues. It finds positive trends only in one - ozone depletion - while in the majority of the key environmental issues, there are negative trends. Among those issues with negative trends are highly relevant ones such as climate change, soil degradation, waste and biodiversity. This is happening in spite of the fact that there has been considerable progress with environmental protection. But this progress still is mainly a form of environmental protection based on - often expensive - end-of-pipe technology. We have not really tackled the core of the problem: the enormous overuse of non-renewable resources by our societies, which is causing most of the environmental problems world-wide. If we avoid tackling it, we will not solve the environmental problem.

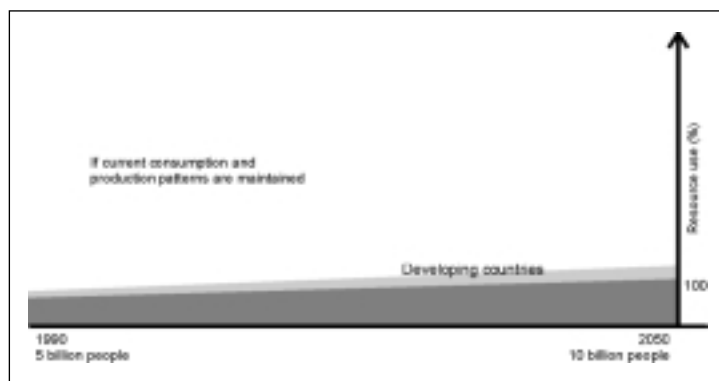
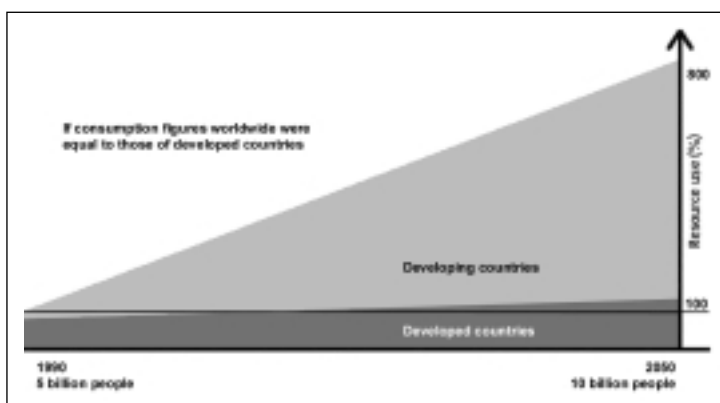
“LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE”

Our Earth can not sustain 10 billion wasteful western-style consumers.

Still, this is what we are heading for in the next 50 years. If everybody in the world would like to life like we do - and that is what people in the developing countries want - we would have 8 times the resource use and 8 times the environmental problems world wide than what we have today.

The business as usual scenario, in which we would deny the majority of the people in the world a life in dignity, is no option as well.

Everybody understands that both options do not work. But it is us in the industrialised world who are still putting a wrong and wasteful development model into the world, which is not sustainable at all.



The environmental space concept

The vision of Friends of the Earth for a sustainable Europe is based on two principles:

1. On the simple fact that the Earth can only sustain a certain amount of pollution and use of resources. If we want to avoid a climate disaster, we can only put so and so much CO₂ into the air. If we want to keep up the forests, we can only fell a certain amount of timber. If we want future generations to have the same chances as we do, we have to reduce the use of non-renewable resources to the absolute minimum.

2. The second principle is the equity principle: Every person in the world should have the same right to use resources of the Earth.

This sounds morally very nice and everybody would probably agree. Still, putting this into practice, is an enormous challenge for us in the industrial world.

From these two principles one can calculate how much resource use is actually available for every person in the world. This, we call **environmental space**. In practice, environmental space is the

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total amount of energy, non-renewable resources, agricultural land and forests that we can use without causing irreversible damage to the Earth. We at Friends of the Earth together with the Wuppertal Institute have studied in detail, what this would mean for us in Europe.

I can not give you the details of this scientific approach, but would at least like to mention the three main principles:

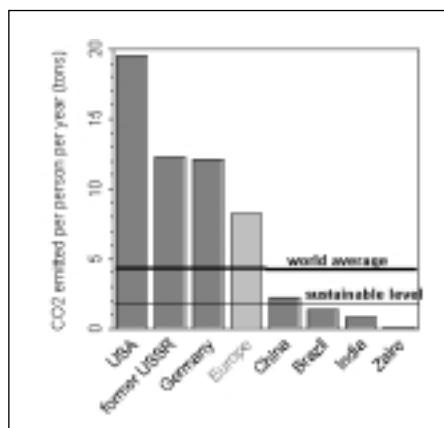
- 1) Renewable resources can only be used to the extent that they can be replaced by nature

- 2) Non-renewable resources must be used increasingly in closed circles to minimise waste and the damaging impact of their extraction.
- 3) The amount of pollution must not be more than the biosphere can cope with.

(For more information on Sustainable Europe and the general concepts, see: <http://www.foeeurope.org/sustainability/>)

Two examples for the use of environmental space in Europe

CO₂ emissions



The average person in the world is currently producing approximately 4 tons of CO₂ per year. Climatologists tell us that we should reduce the over-all emissions of CO₂ by at least 50% to stabilise the world's climate. Taking the population growth into consideration, the sustainable level is about 1.7 tons CO₂ per person per year. Looking at current CO₂ emissions of industrialised countries, we realise how far away we are from this aim: An average person in the USA produces almost 20 tons of

CO₂ per year, an average European 8.

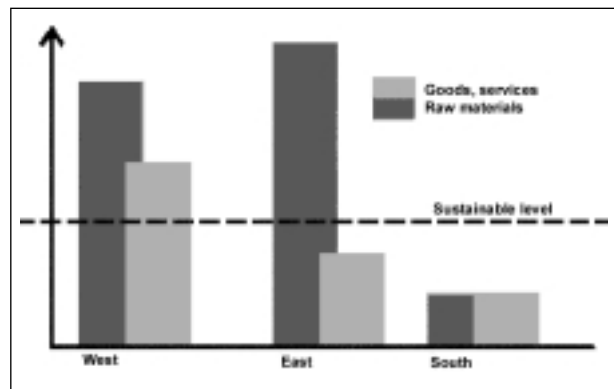
At the same time, developing countries still have some room to increase their CO₂ emissions. This is an important message, because previously our demands to save the world's climate were often misunderstood in the developing world as a trick to hinder these countries in their development. With the environmental space model, this is not the case. Both industrialised countries and 'developing' countries must develop in order to reach the sustainable level (see below).

“LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE”

For the use of non-renewable resources, the same calculations can be done.

Europeans, for example, use about 5 times more Aluminium than people in the South ('developing' countries). Interestingly, people in Central- and Eastern Europe receive much in

less goods and services with equal or even higher use of resources than in the West European countries. This means that potential efficiency gains are especially high in Central- and Eastern Europe¹.

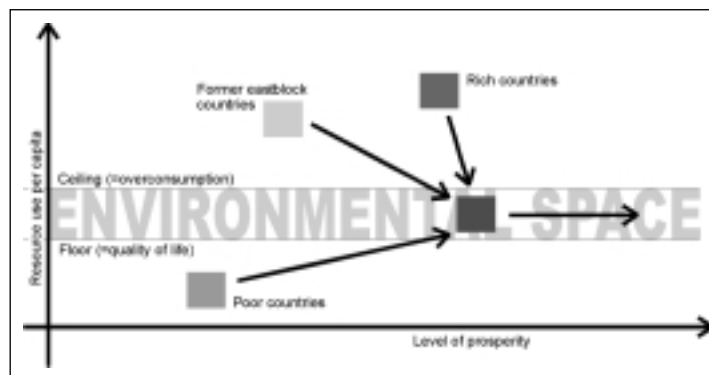


Towards a Sustainable Europe

Generally speaking, this means that the use of non-renewable resources in industrialised countries has to be cut by approximately 80 to 90 percent in the next decades.

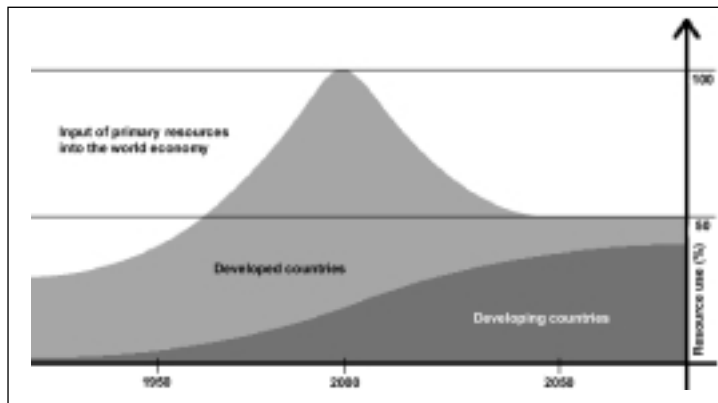
If we want to keep up the current quality of life, this means that the efficiency with which we are using our resources will have to increase enormously. We will have to reach the same well being with only 10%-20% of the input in energy and resources. This is the aim and the challenge that is waiting for us when we are seriously

talking about sustainability and when this includes the right of every person in the world to equally share the resources of this planet. To get there, a little bit of environmental protection here and there will not do the job. We are talking about an efficiency revolution that will have to change all areas of our economy. And we have to realise that everybody - including the so-called 'developed' or industrialised world - has to develop to become a sustainable society and live within the environmental space.



¹ In several countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the per capita use of raw materials (and the availability of goods and services) has dropped since these data were collected, due to a break down of parts of the economy.

“LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE”



Can it be done?

Can we actually achieve this? We at FoE think yes: Europe has the technical, political and structural options available as well as the intellectual, material, and human wealth to reach this goal. Let me give you a few examples:

Housing:

As part of a citizens project for a sustainable city quarter, in Freiburg, Germany², a “zero-energy house” has been built. This house needs no heating system and produces no waste water. How is this done?

Firstly, the house is extremely well insulated and has large windows towards the sun. Because of the good insulation, the trapped heat from the sun and the access heat from electric household appliances or the kitchen-stove (as well as the body heat of the inhabitants) is enough to keep the house warm. The main loss of energy actually comes from opening the windows for fresh air. Therefore the house has an air-conditioning system, in which the used warm air flows out via a heat exchanger and warms up the cold air coming in from outside. This system also produces a much better quality of the air inside the house because we usually forget to open our windows often enough.

Secondly, the house has a special water treatment system. Toilets are vacuum-toilet systems - like in an aeroplane. The big advantage of this system is that it uses much less water for flushing. This allows collecting the sewage in a big tank where bacteria break down the sewage and produce methane gas. This gas can be used for cooking while the remaining sludge in the tank can be

used as high quality fertiliser. The system therefore fully closes the carbon³ and nutrient (phosphates and nitrates contained in the food) cycle and avoids the pollution of rivers. So far the system has been working well. Only in the beginning the inhabitants were complaining that the gas which they were using in their kitchen smelt of garlic. Somehow the bacteria were not able to break down the garlic. This problem was finally solved with a small, inexpensive filter.

Water from the bath-room and kitchen is treated in a small weed-bed system in the garden. Rain water from the roof is directly but back onto the ground, thus helping to keep up the level of ground water.

This house is not more expensive than other houses. The additional costs are recovered because no heating system needs to be installed and because energy costs are very low. The alternative waste-water treatment could also be cheaper in the long run, because the city does not need to build large pipes and expensive waste water treatments plants anymore.

A higher resource efficiency can also be achieved with much more simple methods. The international “Clean Energy Brigades”, a project of FoE Czech Republic, have shown many times that energy use can be reduced by 20% and more, using simple methods such as repairing windows (making sure that they close properly) etc.

Efficient resource use:

A company in Germany was able to reduce its use of chemicals by 80%, simply by making the production process more clever. For putting 1 kg

² Forum Vauban, e.V., Merzhauser Str. 170/37, D-79100 Freiburg, Germany, www.forum-vauban.de

³ Carbon contained in the human sewage is turned into CH₄ (methane). The energy contained in the CH₄ can later be used by burning the gas CH₄, resulting in CO₂ and water. This way the remaining energy in the sewage is used, while in a normal sewage treatment plant, the bacteria simply break down the sewage into CO₂ without the use of the contained energy.

“LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE”

of colour on a surface, they had used 10 kg of colour before - 9 kg were wasted and discharged into the environment. After changing the

production process they needed only 2.5 kg of colour to reach the same effect. Pure intelligence replaced 80% of the resource use.

The political framework for a Sustainable Europe

For reaching our ambitious aim, we will also have to go beyond purely technical solutions.

To give a few examples:

- 1) We have to help more local production and consumption cycles, to overcome the often insane transport of goods around Europe. It is not necessary that people in Scotland drink water, which is transported by truck in plastic bottles from France. Such nonsense only happens because the truck does not have to pay for the damage it does to the environment and people on the way.
- 2) City and regional planning has to be done in a way that living with less car-driving is a possible option again. If the conditions are right, people are very willing to choose for a live with less cars. In the Vauban city quarter in Freiburg, more than 100 families have decided to live without a car. The atmosphere in this city quarter is incredible, since young children are able to play in the streets again, people sit outside their houses in the summer, all of which is creating an atmosphere of community which often is lost in modern cities. The city supports car-free families by giving them back some of the money which normally has to be used to build parking spaces (about 10000 Euro per family).
- 3) Products must be designed from the beginning in a way that complete recycling or reuse is possible.

The problem is not that the technical or organisational options do not exist. The problem is that we do not use them yet.

The reasons for this are manifold:

- 1) People have not yet understood which incredible chances this efficiency revolution brings.
- 2) Most people still think, it is expensive to protect the environment. But this does not

have to be the case when we tackle the problem at the source. A more efficient use of the resources might well be cheaper and save money at the end. The environmental protection resulting from it is then for free.

- 3) Another reason why we have not started the efficiency revolution is that pollution of the environment is still very cheap. Nobody has to pay for the damage they cause to the environment. Energy and resources are still wasted because they are much too cheap.
- 4) Finally, and that is the most significant area for improvement, politics are not setting the frame for a real efficiency revolution.

We need more than a few voluntary agreements here and there, a little bit of eco-efficiency or a small program for renewable energies. The challenge is much bigger and we definitely need to be more ambitious. We need the willingness to give this society the political framework necessary for a real change. To be honest, I can not see this happening yet - not on the national nor on the European level.

One of the political instruments that we at Friends of the Earth are pushing for since long is an Ecological Tax Reform.

This reform would lower taxes on labour and raise higher taxes on energy.

Increasingly, scientists, trade unions and even industry are agreeing with us, that this would kick start an eco-efficiency revolution, push innovation, create jobs and save billions we are currently paying for environmental damage and energy imports.

Some progress for an Ecological Tax Reform has been made in Netherlands, Denmark and Germany - still not enough so to really make a shift towards a sustainable society. On the European level, we are still waiting for the results of a 7 year long discussion on energy taxes.

(For a common statement of the European Trade Unions and FoEE on Energy taxes in Europe, see: http://www.foeeurope.org/press/energy_taxes_in_the_eu.htm)

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Let me look a bit more on European politics:

In spite of some progress here and there, the EU is still far away from being sustainable. While we have achieved progress in technical environmental protection (using classical end of pipe technologies), we still miss sustainable policy strategies in many areas.

1) In the Regional Policy we still see many projects, which are far away from sustainability, many of them even destructive to the environment. Regional development often is still driven by the wrong assumption that as long as you build roads and other infrastructure, economic development and jobs will follow. This assumption not only proves wrong economically in many cases, it also does not at all consider the environmental damage caused which in the long run will make the project also economically a disaster.

For the Balkan region, it will be a key question, how the funds of the Balkan Stability pact will be used. Our experience shows us that only with early NGO involvement, a sustainable use of EU funds can be insured.

2) In spite of some positive reform plans, Europe's agricultural policy is still far away from reducing the pressure on resources and the environment. The extension of the EU's common agricultural policy (CAP) to the East is of big concern to FoEE. With this policy still pushing for an industrialisation of agriculture, we could see some very negative effects in the accession countries in the future. The current CAP extended to Poland would, for example, swiftly create 1 million

unemployed Polish farmers and destroy an incredible biodiversity that has already disappeared in Western Europe. In many countries in central and Eastern Europe farmers have been producing without pesticides and fertilisers, simply because they could not afford the chemicals. We now should support them to become organic farmers, helping them to find markets in Europe, instead of introducing a policy, which favours industrialised agriculture.⁴ Both, the regional and the agricultural policy will be key elements in the process of EU enlargement. With the incredible amounts of money from the Structural Funds, one can for example push the start of the solar age or one can - as we might fear - use this money to upgrade old soviet style atomic power plants to so called European security standards. One can start the biggest high-way building program or use the money to renovate still existing structures of public transport.

3) Our frustrations with the European energy policy, I have already mentioned. Without higher taxes on energy Europe wide, we will continue to miss enormous chances for the environment, jobs and innovation. Energy taxes are still one of the most cost-effective way to reach environmental aims.

4) Finally, Europe's traffic policy will not receive the label "sustainable" from us, as long as it does not find ways to stop the ever growing car, truck and air traffic. It is not enough to find a little more ecofriendly ways of traffic, we much rather must find integrated policies that help to reduce traffic.

Efficiency is not enough

Let me add though, that the efficiency revolution alone will not be enough.

The eco-efficiency revolution is an enormous challenge, which we must pick up immediately. It can easily be done within current political and economic systems, if we are willing to make the necessary political adjustments. Still, this might not be enough in the middle and long term. If eco-efficiency will be eaten up by ever increasing demands on consumption in our part of the world, we will not have won anything. The western world has to overcome its addiction to consumption, which - as argued by many - has

grown in some cases to be a form of psychological sickness, driven by the daily bombardment of advertisement.

Also, we will not reach a Sustainable Europe without creating a society with social justice and democracy, where people find jobs, can participate in political processes and where human rights are respected. Public participation will be a key issue in the Balkan region in the coming years, as it is in other parts of Europe. FoEE hopes to play a role, by facilitating the work of NGOs in this region.

⁴ A background brochure on "Agriculture, Environment and Rural Sustainability in Europe" can be ordered from Friends of the Earth Europe, Rue Blanche 29, B-1060 Brussels.

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FoEE's vision

The vision of friends of the Earth which I have presented here will profit us in many ways:

- Life quality will be raised, because our environment will be in a much better state.
- Eco-efficiency is job intensive. We can therefore help solving the unemployment problem.
- Finally, we give people in poorer parts of the world a chance to live a decent life. And we give them an example, how to avoid our mistakes so that they use their environmental

space in the most profitable way from the very beginning.

We can choose between the two ways to go forward, symbolised in these graphs:

Currently the world just survives with an incredible over-consumption of just a few people. If everybody would live like this, the ecosystem Earth would collapse. If we learn to live within our environmental space, the Earth would be able to provide everybody with a decent life.



What Europeans consume is already beyond Earth's capacities.



If all people would waste that much resources, Earth would collapse.



All people have the same rights to use natural resources – within the Environmental Space!

I wish us a successful conference and hope that you will continue to work - on all possible levels - to reach the vision of a truly Sustainable Europe. I would like to ask you to be impatient, demanding and pushy. A little bit of sustainability just not enough.

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WORKING ON THE ENVIRONMENT IN AREAS OF CONFLICT – THE EXPERIENCE OF FoE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Anis Saleh, Palestinian Director, Friends of the Earth Middle East

Ladies and Gentleman, let me first introduce myself; I work with Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME). Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME), is a unique umbrella organization representing leading Middle East environmental non-governmental organizations. FoEME's primary objective is the promotion of cooperative efforts to protect shared environmental heritage. In so doing, we hope to help achieve both sustainable regional development and the creation of necessary conditions for lasting peace in our region.

Today I would like to present the experience of working on environmental issues in a region where there is a conflict. The question is to identify relationships between working in environmental issues in the Middle East and in the Balkan countries.

Living with the political conflict for decades in the Middle East has led to serious environmental damage along with all the more recognized social consequences. Different examples may be observed:

- 1) Lake Al-Hula has been dried for the benefit of using its water for irrigation and its land for cultivation.
- 2) The Dead Sea level has been dropped 25 meters in 20 years.
- 3) A large proportion of the coastal aquifer has been polluted.
- 4) Life of Al-Exander 'Yarkon' River has been killed; all the fish have died and swimming is prohibited.
- 5) A massive road network has been constructed dividing the two eco-basins into 50 eco-basins.

There are many other examples of the destruction to the region caused by the conflict.

Living with the above level of environmental destruction, together with the social problems

brought about by the conflict for more than 50 years, raised the need for a joint effort to work against more destructive environmental damage. Working together for the benefit of the environment was also experienced as practical, less expensive, and a positive social motivation for increased sympathy between individuals from sides that were otherwise at war. Therefore, the concepts embodied by FoEME were accepted as worthwhile project-work by environmental activists representing the three differing political entities.

We can make a fair comparison between the Middle East and the Balkans with regards to environmental matters in respect of the shared water bodies common to both regions. Three countries (Macedonia, Greece and Albania) border Lake Prespa and three Middle East political entities (Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority) border the Dead Sea. Both the Balkan countries and the Middle East Political entities have lived through decades of war and violence. In both cases, both the Dead Sea and Lake Presta suffered badly from the lack of co-operation between countries.

Environmentalists representing their political entities within Middle East recognized the need to work jointly to protect environmental elements in the Middle East; the Dead Sea being one of the major sites of environmental interest. Our work on the Dead Sea has had several successes. We have carried out research project aim promoting an environmental awareness program for preserving the Dead Sea basin from depletion. Another project aimed to protect the Jordan River by monitoring any major investment within the basin boundary of the River. Eventually, FoEME manage to halt the building of the Jordanian Industrial Zone, which is recognized as a non-environmental friendly investment.

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Other examples of success co-operation are valid as well:

- The Mediterranean Free Trade Zone is monitor and research project investigates implications of the plans for the Mediterranean Free Trade Zone for the region's sustainability on an on-going basis.
- The Regional Community Water Forum aims to foster a regional debate on the cross-boundary use of water and the sustainability of managing shared water resources.
- Major Investments in the Middle East - a of monitor the major investments in the region to determine whether they are environmentally friendly or not.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the challenges are manifold; to match the different and often conflicting interests:

- Palestinians are interested in development and provide their basic needs.
- Jordanians are also interested in development and building fruitful political relation with the Israeli system
- The Israelis desire normalization and bridging with other Arab Countries.

Overall, the interests of the three political entities are heterogeneous and there is a huge challenge in bringing them together. The challenge is to

find a comprehensive and matching formula capable of representing all these interests with the final aim of protecting the environment.

Our experience working with FoEME has never been easy - we have experienced discrimination from our own people. Some ignorant comments will arise, for example the Jordanian director might face accusations of being a collaborator with Israel by those who only see working with Israeli as normalization process and do not see it benefit environment positively. Personally, I do believe in the basin management approach, I believe in working with a national/political “enemy” for the benefit of the environment using such an approach. Therefore, I recommend working with neighbours in spite of the historical conflict.

I recommend Balkan environmentalists to work together for the benefit of the environment. Keep in mind that it only can be achieved in a sustainable way if the hidden agendas are dropped and the different interests were managed fairly. Knowing that FoEME cannot be the model, however we are targeting such approach.

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IDEAS FOR A SUSTAINABLE BALKAN REGION

Mr. Josif Tanevski, DEM (Friends of the Earth Macedonia)

I prepared this presentation with the view of giving both a personal statement on the theme of the Balkan region and sustainable development, and to make a general introduction to the situation in the Balkans with reference to some relevant social political and economic indicators.

The war is, of course, key. In Croatia and Bosnia the situation in this respect is particularly acute, but all countries were affected. When we look at the statistics for GDP in 1989 (Table 1), the economies of all Balkan countries are suffering. There is trend of 30% down in all Balkan countries, some are worse like Yugoslavia, but Macedonia is also hit very hard. Bulgaria and Slovenia maintain 1989 levels but particularly Moldavia and Macdeonia are down. In particular unemployment (Table 2) is very high with Macedonia at 38% in that year. Transition indicators in South Eastern Europe (Table 3) are also indicated by the following visual projection - a higher number in this illustrative diagram is a better rate. Security markets show that the reputation in the region is poor. The last table (Table 4) is the most important for NGOs. The indicators of political, civil and economical liberty are hardest to follow. Macedonia is very low on this rating in terms of political rights, the rule of law, corruption and so on.

Table 1: Macroeconomic performance in south-east Europe

	GDP per capita, \$	GDP per capita in 1998 (100=1989 level)	GDP % growth, 1998
Hungary	4 462	95	5.0
Slovenia	9 101	103	3.9
Croatia	4 267	79	4.8
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 087		
Macedonia	1 663	59	4.1
FR Yugoslavia			
Albania	708	87	7.9
Bulgaria	1 227	66	3.1
Romania	1 549	78	-2.8
Moldova	504	35	1.3

Source: EBRD Transition Report, 1998

In order to outline the Stability Pact, I will pick out the most salient points. It is clear that the Stability Pact must be a common action of governments and civil society represented in various for a such as NGOs. The key aim must be to lead towards democratisation, economic growth, the improvement of infrastructure, halting emigration, increased communication and the promotion of a better mutual understanding in the region.

Why do these developments need to be 'sustainable' ? Sustainability is particularly important in terms of energy and agriculture - Ministries often only think in terms of economics but the importance of the environment cannot be underestimated. More environmental standards are needed.

I also need to underline the social aspects of the equation. The importance of family and tradition in building the 'new bridges' between 'old enemies' cannot be underplayed. We need faster democratisation, less corruption, more transparency, and increased NGO participation in the process. The obstacles include bad economic parameters, weak internal economic co-operation, poor traffic infrastructure, war damage, ethnic intolerance, and a low level of civil society. NGO structure in Balkan is still weak and vulnerable. Officials are not receptive to NGO criticism, and generally do not

Table 2: Unemployment in the south-east European transition economies, 1996 - 1998

	1996	1997	1998
Unemployment (per cent of labour force)			
Albania	12.5	14.3	17.6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	..	30*	-1.8
Bulgaria	12.5	15.7	12.2
Croatia	15.9	17.8	18.6
Romania	6.6	8.3	18.3
Republic of Macedonia*	39.0	42*	34.5
Yugoslavia*	26.1	25.8	27.2

Source: UNICEE secretariat estimates, based on national statistics.
* The data for employment cover only the social sector in agriculture; unemployment rates therefore are biased upwards.

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encourage such forms of engagement in politics by the citizens. So NGOs must be strongly supported by Stability Pact to be corrective factor in the activities for environmental reconstruction of the Balkans. FoEE provides a good model for the integration and better co-ordination of NGOs.

Table 3: Transition indicators in south-east Europe

	% privatised	Large-scale privatised	Small-scale privatised	Competition policy	Banking reform	Services markets
Hungary	80	4	4+	3	4	3+
Slovenia	55	3+	4+	2	3	3
Croatia	55	4	4+	3	4	3+
Bosnia and Herzegovina	35	2	2	1	2	1
Macedonia	55	3	4	1	3	2-
FR Yugoslavia	40					
Albania	75	2	4	2	3	2-
Bulgaria	50	3	3	2	3-	2
Romania	60	3-	3+	2	2+	2
Moldova	45	3	3+	2	2+	2

Source: EBRD Transition Report 1998, and for FR Yugoslavia Freedom House

Higher numbers indicate a better rating

The question of what we can do arises. A mutual strategy of the EU and NGOs to promote instruments for democratisation is necessary, also through establishing equal partnerships between NGOs from the EU and Balkan countries to work on the Regional environmental Reconstruction Program for CEE. The Stability Pact and reconstruction process should not damage Balkan Environment because it is unique in Europe. Many species are still existing in the Balkans that have been decimated in Western Europe. We should make the reconstruction sensitive to such ecological factors and not repeat the mistakes of Western Europe. In conclusion, I show a cartoon by a Macedonian artist illustrating that polluters will suffer (the picture shows a man stamping on a flower and the flower eating him up). This humorous image is intended to incite the participants of this conference to make an active start beyond discussions and start work on the challenges that we face.

Table 4: Indicators of political, civil and economical liberty

	Political rights	Civil liberties	State	Political process	Civil society	Inst. media	Rule of Law	Corruption
Bulgaria	2	3	Free	2.75	2.75	3.5	2.75	C
Romania	2	2	Free	3.25	3.75	4	4.25	C
Croatia	4	4	Partially Free	4.25	3.5	4.75	4.75	C
FR Yugoslavia	6	6	Not Free	5	5	4.5	5	D
Macedonia	4	3	Partially Free	3.5	3.75	4.5	4.5	C
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5	5	Partially Free	6	6	4	6.5	C
Albania	4	4	Partially Free	4.5	4.25	6.25	5.25	D
Moldova	3	4	Partially Free	2.5	2.75	4.75	4.5	C

HO: The higher the number, the worse the rating

Taken from "Nations in Transit 1998", ed. Kianitvicky, Mofl and Graybow, Freedom House 1998

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IDEAS FOR A SUSTAINABLE BALKAN REGION

Mr. Vladimir Lay, Green-Action, Croatia

Coming from a background of five nations, I believe that I am able to guarantee a sympathy for all sides in the debate over the past and future of the Balkan region. I would like to pick up my contribution from the speech by Dr Martin Rocholl. Clearly, not every locality has the same issues and problems. We need to concentrate on time-frames, there is also the need to think about a long-term time-frame. The philosophy that everyone can do something expressed by the examples which Martin gave us, this energizes people. And certainly if one thinks only in the terms of achieving the economic wealth of the West - it is obvious that, if we look at the wider questions, the model of the rich countries does not always bring improvements. We must not reduce our concept of sustainability to the environment. It is political, social and economic, socio-cultural, and environmental sustainability that will go towards the stability of the Balkan region.

Political - in the first instance, this is as simple as making an end to the war. Beyond this it must include a final end to totalitarian social forces. Sustainable societies must include tolerance for differences, mechanisms for the protection of minorities and so on.

Economic sustainability must include the protection of highly valuable natural resources. We must not only think to sell them as property

or product without consideration of environmental issues. We must explore what we can offer in tourism, healthy organic food, and other advantages that we have in the region which can be used to promote both economic and environmental goals. To produce and manage products of higher quality. To organize Balkan internal market relations and to help to each other with exchange.

In Croatia we held a round-table in which the following infamous statement was made: “better globalisation than Milosevic!”. That was when faced with the specific political problems of that time. We now face the threats that globalisation and engagement in trade and investment systems which have proved so destructive elsewhere in the world. Environmental sustainability must remain the goal for our engagement in these global forces. We have some of the framework for the work we must do already outlined in the Agenda 21. To manage to address the environmental problems indicated in Agenda 21 will be a start. These key questions in the Balkans, such as the preservation of the regional biodiversity and its environmentally-sound usage, the preservation of the water resources, sustainable management of land resources, and the changes which the agriculture in the region faces, must be the focus for our work to ensure a sustainable development in the Balkan region.

IDEAS FOR A SUSTAINABLE BALKAN REGION: HOW DO WESTERN STYLE GRASS-ROOTS NGOS WORK?

Ms. Elaine Gilligan, Friends of the Earth England Wales and Northern Ireland

In my presentation I will outline as an example for NGOs elsewhere, the role of Friends of the Earth as a UK grassroots based Non-Governmental Organisation. Put simply, Friends of the Earth works to improve the conditions for life - wild life and humanity. The well-being of humanity depends on working and living within the limits of environmental systems, and sharing

available natural resources equitably. This must be done locally, nationally and globally. So we campaign to prevent the destruction and degradation of nature, and to ensure that environmental priorities are at the heart of decision-making. We aim to persuade people, government and business that it is in humanity's best interests to protect wild places, conserve

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natural resources and eliminate pollution. Our core message is: ‘Looking after the environment and our planet makes life better for people in ways they want and need’. Our slogan is: “working for the Planet, and working for People”.

If we want to change society, we must change belief systems and values; it is not enough to change policies alone. Our work must stimulate people to move away from values that indirectly cause the ruin of nature and to base views, decisions and behaviour on values that respect and enhance life on Earth.

Our role:

Friends of the Earth is independent, not aligned to any political party and works in the wider public interest. We have three main campaigning roles:

- **Information and Ideas:** we generate ideas, and communicate accessible and reliable data and arguments, to key audiences and to the wider public. Examples of how we do this include publishing information in an accessible form on our web site and producing reports and public information materials.
- **Citizen Action:** we organise and mobilise people to become more influential, environmentally active and aware citizens. Friends of the Earth in England, Wales and Northern Ireland has 100,000 supporters and a network of over 200 voluntary local groups. In addition we work with other organisations where we have a common agenda, as well as with many other local community groups.
- **Political Campaigning:** we pressure and persuade key political and business decision-makers to adopt and act on chosen environmental and sustainability priorities. Friends of the Earth has been extremely successful in getting green Acts of Parliament. Two recent successes include a Bill to end fuel poverty and a Bill to increase protection for UK wildlife sites. Increasingly we are focusing on targeting the corporate sector.

How we choose what to work on:

Historically and currently, improved environmental policy in Government has been driven by three powerful political and social forces. They are:

- *public health concerns*
- *other citizen concerns and demands*
- *the European Union and other international requirements*

These forces have been primarily responsible for stirring politicians, the media, and other communities to get Government and industry to act to cut pollution, protect habitats and conserve resources - traditional environmental objectives. But there are three new drivers, which are beginning to affect decision-making in Government and the world at large - and will increasingly do so.

- *the need for our society to develop within environmental system limits and to ensure equal shares for all people in the Earth's natural resources*
- *the economic and social benefits of environmentally sound policy and investment*
- *the potential for alliances with green companies and the promotion of environmentally positive technologies*

The emerging sustainability agenda

These forces reflect the emergent sustainability agenda. Sustainability is now an accepted goal for policy in the UK, as in many other countries. The agenda has moved onto questions of “how do we achieve it” and “how do we measure progress towards achieving it”. But underlying these questions is a continued and intense debate about what sustainability means which has resulted in different interpretations in practice.

At the heart of Friends of the Earth's interpretation of sustainability is the integration of the conventionally separate domains of economic, environmental and social policy. For example in the UK the official interpretation of sustainability is weak, if indeed it can be described as “sustainability” at all. For example

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social issues such as poverty are largely ignored in the UK's strategy for sustainable development. We face obstacles such as

- our infatuation with economic growth
- lack of meaningful indicators to measure progress
- the vested interests of the corporate sector
- the breakdown of democracy

Waking up civil society

Whereas the challenge in the Balkans is to rebuild civil society, our challenge in the UK is to wake people up. In a UK survey fewer than two thirds of those surveyed believed that the UK was "democratic" and more than a quarter said that it is "not very" or "not at all democratic". Eight out of ten believe that "most politicians will promise to do anything to get votes". Worse, two thirds believe that politicians are in politics for what they can get out of it. That people are losing faith in the system is demonstrated by falling rates of participation, particularly by young people.

People are not depoliticised, they are disillusioned with formal politics.

We can not leave sustainable development to the politicians and decision makers. Sustainable development is not something handed to us from above, but is something we all take part in - participation by all for all is key. This is why citizen action is key to Friends of the Earth's future direction in the UK. Through organising and mobilising people from all walks of life we aim to ensure that the politicians we vote for are held to account and that companies feel our power, be it as consumers, shareholders or investors.

As the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Program states - an active and sustainable society civil society should be at the heart of any reconstruction efforts in SEE. Balkan NGOs have got an enormous challenge ahead of them, but I have no doubt of your commitment to work for a sustainable future for the Balkan regions.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

| WATER WORKSHOP |

Workshop facilitator: Radoje Lausevic, FR Yugoslavia

Workshop Reporter: Flutura Rakipi, Albania

This workshop considered environmental problems in the region concerning Water issues. The Working group session started with a short presentation of each participant, as well as a brief introduction by the Hungarian representative about the Tisza cyanide and heavy metal spill. During the discussion the participants addressed the main problems (and challenges for the NGO community at the same time) as follows:

- The lack of public awareness
- The lack of enforcement
- Weak transboundary and/or regional NGO co-operation
- The lack of 'Watershed approach' in the region
- Dominance of the open technologies in the region
- Competing use of water
- Lack of proper urban planning
- Regulation of rivers
- Clear cuttings in watershed
- Demographic explosion
- Lack of waste water treatment plants

In the discussion several topics were underlined which should be achieved with the aim of sustainable use of water sources in the region. We especially focused on the possible NGO role, as follows:

- to raise public awareness
- to create national NGO frameworks in the countries which still do not have such NGO organisation
- to establish NGO Water Network - WaNet for SEE
- to improve advocacy on water issues

Other important fields in which NGOs could be consulted and co-operate with other stakeholders were also discussed. These include the following areas of work:

- to build up waste water treatment plants
- to introduce the best available technology
- to improve the efficiency of water use
- to improve the legal framework, including water taxation
- to secure funding for maintaining and improving water supply systems in the region
- elimination and monitoring of potential sources of pollution
- project planning for large scale reforestation in the region
- project planning for the introduction of ecological water supply
- to assure the quality and quantity of water needed in the region

Some of the topics mentioned above could be achieved through the realisation of several proposed project ideas, with the actors listed in brackets:

1. Establishment of REReP NGO Task Force, consisting in one representative from each country covered by REReP, including the FR Yugoslavia. REReP NGO Task Force will act as a co-ordinating NGO body for the REReP issues and should participate in each TF meeting, commencing with the forth-coming meeting in Croatia (interim representatives were decided in

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the final plenary session of the Sustainable development in the Balkans conference and are listed in the NGO statement).

2. Establishment of REReP Watch, an informal NGO body, which should be established at the Struga conference (discussed during the final plenary session of the Sustainable development in the Balkans conference to be published in the minutes A.S.A.P).
3. Exchange NGO programs (local NGOs)
4. Public awareness campaigns (REReP NGO Task Force, Danube Environmental Forum, Tisza Club, FoE, WWF Green Danube Program, Bird Life, Local NGOs).
5. Regional NGO meeting (REReP NGO Task Force)
6. Living Rivers International Day of Action on March 22nd (REReP NGO Task Force)
7. Small scale wetland restoration programs (REReP NGO Task Force, Danube Environmental Forum)
8. Continuation of Tisza project (Tisza Club, REReP NGO Task Force, Danube Environmental Forum)

BIODIVERSITY WORKSHOP

Facilitator: Branko Micevski, Bird Study and Protection Society (BirdLife), Macedonia

The biodiversity workshop first considered the present situation in the Balkan region, discussions resulted with the following key points for consideration:

- Diversity of habitats/landscapes
- High genetic diversity (gene pool)
- Important species distribution centre for Europe
- High number of endemic species
- One of the last refuges of Large Carnivores in Europe with relatively stable and viable populations
- Many of the globally threatened bird species from Europe inhabit this area
- Natural ecological networks (bio-corridors, Bio-centres etc) are still existing in quite good conditions
- High percentage of the area covered by natural forests

The group then identified the following potential/recent threats:

1. Wars
2. Habitat fragmentation by
 - planned road reconstruction
 - bad planning
 - infrastructure development
 - property speculations
3. Habitat degradation through
 - increased number of motor-vehicles
 - industrial pollution (no filter and old technologies)
 - uncontrolled logging
 - deforestation (mainly illegal)
 - uncontrolled usage of waters
 - overgrazing
4. Overuse of natural resources
5. Poaching (uncontrolled hunting) including poisoning
6. Unsustainable fishing practices
7. Use of pesticides
8. Lack of proper legislation and not enough enforcement of existing laws

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

9. Process of re-privatization of arable and forest land when biodiversity conservation is not taken into consideration
10. Lack of institutional capacities for protection and management of protected areas

Weaknesses common for the whole region:

1. Insufficient programs and strategies or lack of their implementation (if existent)
2. Low level of Balkan co-operation
3. Lack of bio-monitoring programs
4. Lack of funds for environment
5. Lack of public awareness, education (published materials, red data books etc)
6. Insufficient professional capacities of institutions responsible for biodiversity
7. Low prioritization of environment within state structures
8. Technical capacities of NGOs are weak

Possible opportunities:

1. Area is relatively unspoiled
2. Possibility of learning from other countries and co-operating with NGOs from outside the area

Participants of the workshop for biodiversity, having in mind other projects already included into the REReP, came up with the following suggestions/plans:

1. Project for NGO co-operation (working on nature protection) and creating of Balkan NGO environmental network.
2. Implementation of different projects from the Balkan Green Belt Concept
3. Promotion of organic agriculture in the transboundary Prespa Park (MK, AL, Gr)
4. Preparation and/or implementation of national action plans for protection of different groups of plants and animal species (Invertebrates, Fishes, Birds, Large carnivores etc) with strong involvement of "Biodiversity" NGOs
5. Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the Balkan countries (inventarisaton, evaluation, and books published - separately and common publications)
6. Concept of 11 step economical and ecological development of the transboundary Prespa Park in co-operation with EURONATUR
7. Identification of NATURA 2000/or Emerald sites in the Balkans
8. Strengthening of the capacities of nature protection agencies including protected areas administration (especially where NGOs are managing protected sites)
9. Preparation & completion of EIA for transport corridors in the Balkans
10. Exchange of volunteers for nature conservation "hands on" experience among the Balkan countries and international exchange
11. Capacity building of NGOs for controlling (monitoring) illegal activities ensure enforcement of environmental laws
12. Project for strengthening the capacity of NGOs working on biodiversity
13. Sustainable use of medical plants
14. Sustainable ecological tourism for protected areas in the Balkans (to establish criteria/ training of local people and enterprises)
15. Implementation of the international criteria(s) in the Balkan transboundary parks (Balkan NGOs and EuroPark federation)

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

ENERGY WORKSHOP

Workshop facilitator: Zoran Stojkovski, Institute for Sustainable Communities, Macedonia

Workshop Reporter: Polina Kireva, Za Zemiata, Bulgaria

The main goals of the workshop were:

- to identify the main problems, obstacles and challenges in the field of Energy in the region and to discuss possible solutions;
- to produce a concept paper for regional co-operation project proposals

There were several presentations:

- Fuel poverty and environmental justice (Lang Banks, FoE Scotland)
- Success story of the International Clean Energy Brigades Project (Irina Amzova, Za Zemiata, Bulgaria)
- Hydro-power potential of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mustafa Omanovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Activities in Energy Conservation Field (Gabriel Poenaru, Socer, Romania)
- Energy efficiency in transportation (Arne Lund, FoE Denmark)

During the workshop participants proposed the following ideas for project concepts:

1. Research of the energy use in the region
2. Energy use information exchange
3. Implementation of International Clean Energy Brigades Project
4. Heating system regulation
5. Assessment of energy resources of the region (new, renewable, conservation)
6. Life cycle energy use analysis built into new projects
7. Public education campaigns on energy efficiency and savings
8. Lobbying for legal framework - efficiency regulations, tax advantages for efficient buildings and Energy Service Companies
9. Regulations - Transparency of privatized companies
10. Implementation of Malme and Aarhus Convention
11. Attract more international NGOs to the region - expand FoE network to other Balkan countries
12. Establishing regional information network of environmental NGOs

Acknowledging the need for urgent implementation of energy efficiency programs the group focused on the development of the following most important ideas:

1. Public education campaigns on energy efficiency and savings
2. Implementation of the Clean Energy Brigades Project
3. Energy use information exchange/Assessment of energy resources in the region
4. Lobbying for legal framework - efficiency regulations, tax advantages for efficient buildings and Energy Service Companies.

Short summaries of the discussions held in small working groups on the above issues are given below:

1. Public education campaigns on energy efficiency and savings

To begin with work should be focused on continued public awareness campaigns. There should be an introduction of education programs within schools' programs on the benefits of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy resources, as well as the inclusion of students in interactive learning and practical projects. Governments should organize broad campaigns through the media for the education of the citizens on energy efficiency. The NGOs need to organize the facilitation of the

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

process of community self-education in which all the stakeholders participate for preparation and implementation of local action plans.

2. Implementation of the Clean Energy Brigades Project

A Balkan Clean Energy Brigades Project should be developed and proposed to be funded by the REReP. The process of creation of such a project should start with finding partners in all of the Balkan countries. A research of the existing institutional and legal framework and the privatization process in these countries should be done and a common strategy should be worked out. Then we should start with training of the newly joined partners on how to conduct the Clean Energy Brigades in their countries.

3. Energy use information exchange/Assessment of energy resources of the region

The idea of the project is to create a Balkan alternative energy information network. The network will include Balkan NGOs and individuals and non-Balkan NGOs may be observers. The network will choose a means of communication, probably an Internet Bulletin Board, with subgroups such as Industry, Decision Makers, Fundraisers, and Media. The role of the network will be collecting/distributing information, alternative energy sources, green jobs, collecting external global information etc.

Expectations and demands to the Balkan Stability Pact and the REReP

In conclusion the group completely agreed that the expectations and demands to the Stability Pact and the REReP in the field of energy follows the Bankja NGO Declaration, which is cited below:

There is a clear need to rehabilitate existing energy production and transmission capacity. There is also an opportunity for creating a more decentralized energy production. For example, small-scale renewables can be introduced especially in areas not connected to the grid. The international financial institutions should increase their involvement in the district heating rehabilitation and use combined heat and power plants.

As the energy intensity in the region is several times higher than in the OECD countries, the highest priorities must be given to energy efficiency and energy savings measures. Energy efficiency improvement in the industry can be stimulated by the development of the Energy Service Companies. We also recommend setting up special funds for extensive programs on public building and house insulation and other energy efficiency improvements, as well as introduction of legal framework for taxes reduction and providing of subsidies for energy efficient small businesses.

The EU and other donors should establish a decommissioning fund to enhance closure of nuclear power plants in the region. This fund is especially needed to ensure the early closure of Kozloduy units 1-4. The international financial institutions and the donor governments should not support construction of any new nuclear facilities or life extension of existing plants.

We are concerned about the environmental impacts of the newly proposed oil pipelines in the region. We believe that international financial institutions should not finance construction of the new pipelines or oil terminals but rather rehabilitate and maintain existing facilities.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

| AGRICULTURE WORKSHOP |

Facilitator: Vladimir Lay, Green-Action, Croatia

The agriculture workshop resulted in an NGO statement from the participants concerning agriculture and sustainable rural development to the task force on implementation of regional environmental reconstruction programme in South-East Europe. The text of this statement is presented below:

The representatives of the 16 NGOs present at the conference workshop on agriculture express great concern with the fact that none of the proposed environmental projects with the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme address AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT. A considered approach to agriculture is one of the main pillars of sustainable development. The condition of the region's soil, water and biodiversity are implicated. Agriculture in the Balkan region plays both a key economic and environmental role.

Within this forum, NGOs from Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia and Yugoslavia express the opinion that all Stability Pact programs including REReP should include arguments and concrete projects aiming to develop organic types of agriculture and sustainable rural development contributing to:

- production of healthy food locally
- improvement of the rural economy in the region
- decrease in the pollution of air, water and soil
- protection of bio-diversity

With this purpose in mind, we propose the following activities/projects:

- to develop and strengthen national and local NGOs dealing with agriculture and rural development;
- to stimulate inter-regional networking in South East Europe;
- to train/educate farmers and advisory offices;
- to improve marketing mechanisms related to production, processing, certification, and trade;
- to introduce Curricula of organic agriculture and healthy food practices in official secondary and university education processes;
- to raise public awareness using the media;
- to lobby for preservation of non-renewable resources, with emphasis on the issues relating to environmentally-sound treatment of soils in agriculture;
- to support small and medium sized enterprises in agriculture;
- to articulate and realize new evaluatory practices with the purpose of monitoring development in rural areas;
- to record and revive indigenous knowledge on sustainable food production and preservation of species;
- to demand accountability of producers (particularly in view of activities in the field of GMOs and biotechnology)
- to stimulate multi-functionality of rural areas.

We agreed that organic types of agriculture demonstrate great environmental benefits and should be given priority in funding.

NGOs gathered at the 'Sustainable development in the Balkans' conference bring the above goals and possible projects/activities to the attention of the Task Force meeting with the purpose of raising the level of political and economic cooperation, and promoting sustainable forms of development in South/East Europe.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

FINANCIAL FLOWS WORKSHOP

Workshop Facilitator: Huub Scheele, Both Ends
Workshop Reporter: Howard Mollett, FoEE

Due to the nature of the theme discussed, which is relatively new to the NGOs in the region in comparison with topics covered in the other workshops, the Financial Flows workshop consisted mostly in information and experience sharing.

World Bank presentation

The session started with a presentation by local office representatives of the World Bank of a recent report "The Road to Stability and Prosperity in S.E.Europe/A Regional Strategy Paper", which they promised to send to interested parties. The WB. representatives also took questions relating to relations with NGOs and general transparency/ accountability issues. Whilst the World Bank representatives repeatedly stressed the need for the region's NGOs to network in order to be heard, NGO participants expressed current dissatisfactions with institutions such as the WB.; lack of access to information, inconsistent and unsatisfactory approach to liaison with civil society groups/NGOs.

Training Session

The training session concentrated on the international financial institutions (IFIs) active in the region; the World Bank, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Key issues identified were the fact that as public institutions these entities must exercise accountability & transparency, although they often fail to do so, and that the question of the IFIs' mandate is often unclear - a confusion between the role of commercial bank and that of development agency.

Case Study/Presentation of NGO active as monitor of International Financial Institutions - CEE

Bankwatch

Representatives from CEE Bankwatch made a short presentation on their activities in the field of monitoring, criticizing and attempting to engage in a dialogue with IFIs. They offered advice to parties interested in following work on the topic of financial flows in the Balkan region.

General Discussion

The discussion broadened in the final session to a discussion of concrete examples, with NGO participants from the region sharing experiences. Specific topics discussed included the question of how to preserve an independent point of view whilst participating in a dialogue/co-operation with IFIs and governments. During discussion of the Stability Pact, the comparison was made between a large pie and a very small slice - the part of the Stability Pact devoted to environmental concerns being a very "small token slice of a large pie". It was agreed that environmental concerns need to be incorporated throughout the Stability Pact, particularly in the projects concerned with infrastructure and agriculture. The question of the legal status of NGOs, which is not addressed in the REReP as it stands, was also stressed as an important issue for the Task Force discussions. The status of NGOs was agreed to be particularly important in terms of tax deductibility, particularly as non-profit organisations, and other mechanisms to make their work more economically viable.

Conclusions

The workshop participants agreed that the formation of an NGO network in the Balkan region was essential for the monitoring of financial flows as discussed and for a strengthened voice for civil society in critical dialogue with IFIs and government. A number of participants expressed an interest in receiving further information on the topic from the resources presented in the CEE Bankwatch lecture, including the following internet resources; www.seerecon.org and www.bankwatch.org, and to further the networking achieved during the workshop.

In conclusion, the workshop participants agreed to express their support for the demands of NGOs in the Balkan region as described in the Bankja NGO Declaration (Bulgaria, October 1999).

FINAL PLENARY DISCUSSION: INFLUENCING THE STABILITY PACT AND THE REReP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chair: Srdjan Dvornik, Heinrich Boell Foundation, Croatia

Summary:

The Plenary Discussion arrived at concrete proposals and action points with regards to the formation of a Balkan region NGO network to act as a Stability Pact watch-dog and NGO representative to the REReP and to REC. Participants vocalised concerns that the network prioritize transparent and democratic processes and that all interested groups, including those not present at the conference, are invited to join. Green-Action Croatia and DEM, Friends of the Earth Macedonia, were elected temporary co-ordinating groups to prepare the work of the network's input into the next REReP taskforce meeting. Friends of the Earth Europe agreed to create an e-mail list server and facilitate the work of this interim secretariat, with tasks divided between Green-Action and DEM. Participants underlined the importance of support to Yugoslav NGOs and civil society independent of their Government. The issue of participation of NGOs in Environmental Impact Assessments for all Stability Pact projects and the inclusion of criteria for priority of support for NGO projects within the Pact were also stressed. Interim representatives to the taskforce; Polina Kirova from Bulgaria, Saska Petrova from Macedonia, Daneijella Stojanvia from Macedonia, Sonja Karoglan from Croatia, and Lavdsh Ferruni from Albania. The participants agreed a common NGO statement to be delivered to the REReP Implementation Task Force and the Stability Pact (Annex I).

Comments from the Chair Srdjan Dvornik:

This plenary session must address the question of how to form an NGO network for the Balkan region, and more immediately, how to choose eight representatives to the REC taskforce. We must decide whether this meeting is sufficiently representative of NGOs in the region. What remains of civil society in Serbia should not be kept captive by its government and so Serbian NGOs should take part in the discussion and in the REReP processes.

Comments from the floor:

One participant stressed that with regards to the development of civil society, the Balkans states are not yet at a mature stage and so a realistic approach must guide NGO action. He suggested that the Balkan NGOs use the model of co-operation evident in the network of Friends of the Earth International to strengthen the work of the independent national NGOs.

Another participant referred to the example of Pretoria, where they have an NGO forum. Consensus is difficult with approximately 1300 NGOs and citizens' groups in the region. As expressed during this conference, sustainability is not just a question of ecology, so many different types of groups must be involved. The Pretoria NGO forum has formulated some regulations and other codes of behaviour for NGO co-operation and for dealing with Government.

A Serbian participant stated that in particular Yugoslavia presents the problem of NGOs operating in undemocratic political circumstances that influence or obstruct and restrict their activities.

A representative from FoEE stated that for any NGO network formed, participants should avoid national focal points and centralized structures. For these elements only strengthen those national focal points and bring power struggles. Work in an NGO network should bring little benefits for individuals and as much as possible for the network as a whole. Put simply, if you can bring something to the network, if you work - then you do this. It is first key to create a platform where people can do something. Create a structure as flat as possible. It is another issue that we still need technical focal points.

Whilst one participant reminded the assembly that one option is for NGOs to work independently of the REC and the REReP funded initiatives, another stated that NGOs

FINAL PLENARY DISCUSSION: INFLUENCING THE STABILITY PACT AND THE REReP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

should not only be 'watching' the Stability Pact, but also actively engage with its institutions so as to influence them. Thus, NGOs having a representation to the Taskforce is necessary.

Participants stressed that a lack of transparency and a weakened procedure was been created by the haste with which the conference was forced to react and act to the REC's proposals. The REC has left us such little time to prepare for this new engagement in the Taskforce.

The Chair concluded the plenary session by summarizing that with regards to the question of

whether the organisations gathered at the conference were willing and ready to make a regional network, the answer was clearly 'yes'. The network should remain open to others and other environmental NGOs from the region must be invited to join the network. The network must make the commitment to spread the information in an equal and transparent manner. A decision about a name for the network or a founding statement would be key starting points. Green-Action Croatia and DEM were selected to work as the secretariat to work on the logistics.

CLOSING REMARKS

Liana Stupples, Chair of Friends of the Earth Europe

I came as an outsider to this conference and I have learnt many things. The Balkan region is confronted by such a diversity of environmental, social and political problems. The biodiversity which is to be found in your countries is something we have already lost in Western Europe and so there is so much to safeguard.

You are now faced with the task of building up civil society. The issue of our independence as NGOs has also been key in our discussions, that we can make independent points of view and act upon these convictions. We have many things to learn from each other. The participants in this conference have achieved so much in little time, concrete proposals for projects and the start of a new NGO network. This is a very powerful basis to build on and a good sign of self-respect and confidence. The actions of the network must now become as loud as the words.

Now we are faced with the follow-up, it is this challenge that counts.

CONCLUSION

The “Sustainable Development in the Balkan Region” conference was organised with the objective of providing a forum for the region’s NGOs to present the concept of sustainable development in the Balkan region, to discuss the strengthening of civil society and to promote co-operation and networking of actors in the political, social and ecological fields.

The conference established two new initiatives: the South East Europe Environmental NGO Network (SEEENN) as a platform for closer cooperation between Balkan environmental NGOs, with its e-mail list server as a communication tool. The conference participants agreed that DEM (FoE Macedonia) and Green-Action Croatia would work together as the secretariat of the new SEEENN network (with some support from the Heinrich Boell office in Croatia). The list server for the “environmental civil society SEE regional network” first suggested during the conference is now open to all environmental NGOs from the SEE (Balkan) region.. At the time of writing, the SEEENN network has subscribed more than 90 environmental NGOs, mostly from the SEE (Balkan) region. Participating NGOs come from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FR of Yugoslavia, Greece, Hungary, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Slovenia and the membership grows with new applications accepted every month. European environmental NGOs from outside the region can also participate but are requested to limit their contributions, as this list-server is intended primarily to facilitate exchange between SEE (Balkan) environmental NGOs. The name of the list-server is: SEEENN@foeeurope.org The list-server has provided a forum for the sharing of a wide range of information relating to conferences taking place in the Balkan Region, funds available for the SEE region, specific environmental issues and capacity building of SEE NGOs.

As is clear from the conference proceedings and the work of SEEENN which has followed, the “Sustainable Development in the Balkan Region” conference made a much-needed and highly productive contribution to the discourse and political action taken on the reconstruction of the Balkan region and the protection of its environment. The aims of facilitating the exchange between ecological initiatives and encouraging joint political initiatives were achieved with a lively and fertile debate providing a basis for new areas of co-operation between the participating NGOs.

ANNEX I: NGO STATEMENT

TO THE TASK FORCE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE AND STABILITY PACT AS A WHOLE

We, the environmental NGOs, gathered here in Struga, Macedonia, on the occasion of the First Conference on Sustainable Development in the Balkans, express the following positions:

1. We consider the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme (REReP) a useful initiative and support the inclusion of environment protection and sustainable development into the objectives of the Stability Pact. We are ready to take active part in this process, in cooperation with Ministries of Environment, with coordination of REC as the secretariat of the REReP. In order for the process to provide fair opportunity of productive cooperation, we hold that it should:

- ensure more transparency in defining strategies, selecting priorities, and setting criteria of support to projects;
- provide room for active participation of NGOs from the Region as implementing agencies, active members of consulting and decision-making bodies etc., and not only as recipients of grants, education, and other kinds of assistance;
- involve ongoing projects and use NGOs for implementation wherever possible, particularly priority Number Two of REReP under the title "Environmental Civil Society Building".

2. Hereby, we are establishing ourselves as an environmental civil society SEE regional network to ensure constant active participation of the NGOs of the Region in further development and implementation of REReP, as well as of the Stability Pact as a whole. We invite all the environmental NGOs from the region to join the network.

3. Our network appoints the NGO representatives to the REReP Task Force to take part in deliberations and decisions of the REReP Task Force. As an interim solution, we appoint the following as additional representatives to the task force: Lavdosh Ferruni from Albania, PolinaKirova from Bulgaria, Sonja Karoglan from Croatia, and Daniela Stojanova and Saska Petrova from Macedonia. A mechanism to appoint all 8 environmental NGO representatives will be worked out later by the network.

4. To ensure that the Stability Pact is used for sustainable development and to ensure active participation of NGOs in all of the Stability Pact, we will act as the REReP and Stability Pact watchdog. We welcome the participation of NGOs outside the region in this aspect.

5. We propose the following amendments to the text of REReP:

- inclusion of sustainable rural development and agriculture, with an emphasis on organic types of agriculture;
- support to Yugoslav NGOs and civil society, who should not be held hostage by their government;
- Environmental Impact Assessments for all Stability Pact projects with the participation of NGOs;
- inclusion of criteria of priority for NGO projects to be supported:
 - a. democratic public involvement
 - b. creating concrete tools and mechanisms of sustainable development.

We hope and expect further development of the REReP and other similar initiatives in order to promote sustainable development for South-Eastern Europe.

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