

Regional Western Balkans Coordination Meeting

Revolve to Evolve Go Circular



8 February 2024, Pristina

Organized by the Regional Cooperation Council

With the in-kind support of the EU4Green Project and WB6 Chamber Investment Forum

At the EU-Western Balkans Summit held on 10 November 2020 in Sofia, the Western Balkans (WB) leaders endorsed the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans (GAWB), and subsequently the GAWB Action Plan, at the Brdo pri Kranju Summit in October 2021. The GAWB represents a transformative framework for growth and sustainable development for the WB, leaping from a traditional economic model to a sustainable economy, in line with the European Green Deal's key elements and ambition to become climate-neutral continent by 2050.

The Regional Western Balkans Coordination Meeting aims to convene WB stakeholders, including environmental and financial sectors, to explore and identify needs and priorities for the region in the implementation of the GAWB AP, present funding gaps, capitalize on the available support, explore possibilities of aligning funding sources with identified requirements, and contributing to the expansion of green financing. The February 2024 meeting will focus on the Circular Economy (CE) pillar of the GAWB.

Scaling up the CE from front-runners to the mainstream economic players will make a decisive contribution to achieving climate neutrality by 2050 and decoupling economic growth from resource use, while ensuring the long-term competitiveness of the WB and leaving no one behind.

For businesses and industrial sector, working together on creating the framework for sustainable products will provide new opportunities in the WB, EU and beyond. This progressive, yet irreversible transition to a sustainable economic system is an indispensable part of the EU Green Deal, the GAWB AP, the CRM's Regional Industrial Area, as well as the EU Industrial Strategy.

Therefore, the Western Balkans Coordination Meeting will put additional emphasis on addressing challenges and opportunities of implementing CE principles while enhancing coordination among donors, businesses, industrial sector and WB economies in fostering sustainable development.

The WB Coordination Meeting will deliver **three** main outputs:

- 1. Enhanced and Harmonized Donor Support Framework:** The WB Coordination Meeting will encourage coordination and alignment of financial support from donor community on the GAWB AP CE Pillar to accelerate the progress towards greening the economies in the Western Balkans;
- 2. Improved Regional Knowledge Sharing on CE Transition:** The WB Coordination Meeting will provide a regional platform for exchanging of experiences, best practices, lessons, insights and technical expertise necessary for stakeholders to align efforts, learn from each other, and improve the impact of their sustainability related policies and programmes directed on the implementation of the GAWB AP CE Pillar and CRM Regional Industrial Area/CE value chains.
- 3. Strengthened and Formalized Regional Cooperation:** The WB Coordination Meeting aims to facilitate and formalize dialogue and collaboration among Western Balkans and relevant stakeholders on advancing the CE agenda through **establishing a Regional Green and Circular Economy Stakeholders Platform**

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Programme

09.30 – 09:45 Welcoming remarks

Ms. Majlinda **BREGU**, Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council

Ms. Valentina **SUPERTI**, Director for Western Balkans, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations

Mr. Lulzim **RAFUNA**, President of WB6 CIF Management Board

09.45 – 10:45 High level Panel Discussion: Financial Horizon: Advancing the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and the Path Forward in the GAWB Action Plan Implementation

Mr. Liburn **ALIU**, Minister of the Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure, Pristina

Ms. Kaja **SHUKOVA**, Minister of the Environment and Physical Planning, Skopje

Ms. Almira **XHEMBULLA**, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Environment, Tirana

Mr. Nenad **VITOMIROVIC**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region Development, Podgorica

10.45 – 11:15 Coffee break

11.15 – 12:15 Unlocking Investment Potential: Exploring IFIs' Financing Programs, Technical Assistance and Learning Opportunities/ Q&A Session

Moderator: Ms. Olga **ZHMINKO**, Senior Expert Green Finance, Green Finance Team, EU4Green

Mr. Johannes **WIDMANN**, Senior Operations Officer, World Bank

Mr. Visar **PERANI**, International Finance Corporation, Pristina

Ms. Ganimete **HURUGLICA**, Deputy Director, KfW, Pristina

Ms. Mélanie **MALINVAUD**, Project Officer, AFD, Western Balkans Regional Office

Ms. Milena **MARTINELLI POPOVIC**, Principal, Green Economy and Climate Action, EBRD

Intervention: Mr. Alessandro **BIANCARDI**, Deputy Head of Cooperation, EU Office, Pristina

12.15 – 13:30

Exploring Stakeholder Platforms, Business Partnerships, and EU Practice in the Green and Circular Economy: A Discussion on the Industry Transition of the Western Balkans to Circular Economy/Q&A Session

Moderator: Ms. Kristina **KUZESKA-WB6** CIF Energy Association Manager, Economic Chamber, Skopje

Mr. Radman **SELMIC** - Advisor to the President, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Belgrade

Ms. Milena **RMUS** - Secretary of Coordinating Board for Energy Efficiency and Environment Protection, Chamber of Economy, Podgorica

Ms. Milana **RIKANOVIC**, UN Women, Head of Office, Belgrade

Ms. Ladeja **GODINA KOŠIR**, Circular Change, European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform

Mr. Filip **CUBELA**, Head of Sustainable Development Department, Aluminij Industries

Mr. Adriatik **BYTYQI**, Director, TIKI home

Interventions:

Ms. Enka **RUSHANI**, CEO, AIBA, delegated by WB6 CIF

Mr. Antonio **NOVO**, European Cluster Collaboration Platform

Ms. Sarianne **TIKKANEN**, Directorate-General for the Environment

13.30 – 14:30

LUNCH

14:30 – 15:30

Ways forward to improving regional cooperation mechanisms on the CE in the Western Balkans/Q&A Session

Moderator: Ms. Ivana **MARKOVIC BOSKOVIC**, Senior Expert on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, RCC

Mr. Kelmend **ZAJAZI**, Executive Director, NALAS

Ms. Vera **STROBACHOVA-BUDWAY**, Senior Economic Officer, Head of the Economic Governance Unit, OSCE

Ms. Jovana **PAVLOVIC-DJUKIC**, Team Lead on Green Economy and Sustainability, OECD

Ms. Iskra **STOJANOVA**, Western Balkan Projects Coordinator, UNEP

Ms. Emilija **JOVANOVA STOILKOVA**, Regional Manager for the Western Balkans, Helvetas, RECONOMY Programme, funded by SIDA

Mr. Marian **MRAZ**, Regional Economist, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

Mr. Oliver **AVRAMOSKI**, Regional Director, ECARO, IUCN

15:30- 16:00

Closing remarks/Main Takeaways

Regional Cooperation Council

Mr. Alessandro **BIANCARDI**, Deputy Head of Cooperation, EU Office, Pristina

16:00

Cocktail