

# IPBES capacity building workshop, October 26th-30th, 2022

**Skopje, North Macedonia**

## **Workshop Report**



**IPBES capacity building workshop, October 26th-30th, 2022**

<b>Wednesday, October 26th 2022</b>		
All day	Arrival in Skopje and to Hotel Best Western	
19:00	<b>Dinner at Hotel Best Western for those present</b>	
<b>Thursday, October 27th 2022</b>		
08:00 - 10:00	<b>Breakfast</b>	
10:00 – 10:30	Welcome and round of introduction	Kaja Shukova (Sate Secretary in the Ministry for Environment, North Macedonia) Isuf Fetai (IPBES National Focal Point, North Macedonia) Axel Paulsch (ibn), all
10:30 – 10:45	Introduction to the project	Axel Paulsch
10:45 – 11:30	Introduction to the current work programme and the agenda of IPBES 10	Simone Schiele (IPBES Secretariat),
11:30 – 12:00	<b>Coffee break</b>	
12:00 – 13:00	Discussion on IPBES 10 items: Bureau elections Terms of References for Task Forces Assessment on Invasive Alien Species New requests for assessment (link to CBD)	Moderation: Axel Paulsch and Simone Schiele
13:00 – 14:30	<b>Lunch break</b>	
14:30 – 18:00	Ongoing discussion on IPBES 10 items	Moderation: Axel Paulsch and Simone Schiele
In between	<b>Coffee break</b>	
19:00	<b>Dinner at the hotel</b>	
<b>Friday, October 28th 2022</b>		
08:00 - 09.30	<b>Breakfast</b>	
09:30 – 15:00	Excursion Matka Canyon	All participants
In between	<b>Lunch</b>	
15:30 – 18:00	Natures Future Framework	Mikhail Shakhnazarov (ibn)
In between	<b>Coffee break</b>	
19:00	<b>Dinner at the hotel</b>	
<b>Saturday, October 29th 2022</b>		
08:00 - 09.30	<b>Breakfast</b>	
09:30 – 10:00	IPBES stakeholder engagement	Mikhail Shakhnazarov (ibn)
All day	Experiences from countries (IPBES processes, implementation of results, integration into national policies etc.)	Presentations by Participants, including Belma Kalamujic-Stroil on National Assessment in Bosnia and Herzegovina Ivan Medenica on Biodiversity Data in Serbia Katerina Atanasovska on Nature Conservation Programme in North Macedonia Natalija Melovska on Ecosystem Services in North Macedonia

		Marija Trencheva on Capacity Building in North Macedonia Adla Kahric on Protected Areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina Dragana Snjegota on Wolves, Jackals and Wildcats in Bosnia and Herzegovina Mihaela Antofie on the relevance of European Region of Gastronomy on local development Enver Isufi on nature conservation aspects in Albania
In between	<b>Coffee breaks and Lunch</b>	
19:00	<b>Dinner at the hotel</b>	
<b>Sunday, October 30<sup>th</sup> 2022</b>		
08:00 – 10:00	<b>Breakfast</b> Departure of all participants	

**Hotel Best Western, Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia,**



Federal Agency for  
Nature Conservation



Institut für Biodiversität – Netzwerk e.V.  
Institute for Biodiversity  
Science and Business Experts Network



Federal Ministry  
for the Environment, Nature Conservation,  
Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection

## List of participants

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## ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL ECOLOGICAL NETWORK AND NATURA 2000 NETWORK IN SERBIA

**Ivan Medenica**, Institute for nature conservation of Serbia

During the IPBES workshop in Skopje, the national on-going projects for the establishment of the national ecological network and the Natura 2000 network in Serbia were presented. The main idea of the projects is forming a team of experts that will work on mobilization of all already existing data (literature and field data) and collecting new field data on potentially endangered species and habitat types of national and international importance. Projects were done in phases and have been financed by the Serbian Ministry for environmental protection. Thus, the first project started in 2015 with the mobilization of literature data for potentially endangered species which resulted in about 500.000 georeferenced data. Furthermore, projects were carried out in parallel and by the end of 2021, a total of 606.000 georeferenced data were collected for species and 75.000 georeferenced data were collected for habitat types. Beside the establishment of ecological networks, the publishing of red books of fish, butterflies, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, aquatic invertebrates are also products realized by the implementation of these national projects. By the end of 2023, Serbia aims to have a national ecological network with SDFs for both sites and species of national importance, established Emerald network and final proposal for future Natura 2000. Next to ecological networks, we strongly believe that Serbia at the end of 2023 will also have IUCN red-list categories for all potentially endangered species of flora and fauna including all internationally important species.



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Links for further information: <https://daphne.sk/Natura2000Serbia/>



## NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

**Belma Kalamujić Stroil**, University of Sarajevo-Institute for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology

During the meeting, the process and current results of the national ecosystem assessment (NEA) for Bosnia and Herzegovina were presented. The assessment is done through the project titled “Supporting decision making and building capacity to support IPBES through national ecosystem assessments”, financed by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety through the grant of the WCMC (World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, UK). The project duration is January 1, 2019 – March 31, 2023. The aim of the presentation was to provide guidance to national project teams in other countries through the experience of preparing the Assessment. The Assessment follows the IPBES methodology and all major steps were explained. The project webpage was introduced, along with the Mandalay database, used as a reference database. The content and progress track of the six chapters were explained. Special focus during the presentation was given to the challenges faced over the project’s lifetime, as well as to the individual and national benefits resulted from the assessment process. A brief overview of the side research on the missing information regarding local and traditional knowledge in support of the preparation of the Assessment, funded by UNESCO, was given. Currently, NEA for Bosnia and Herzegovina is in for of a second order draft and is open for commenting by policy makers and general public.

  
Website: [www.procjenaprirode.ba](http://www.procjenaprirode.ba)



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Links for further information (like project website etc): <https://www.procjenaprirode.ba/>

## **Introduction of project activities - Sustainability in protected areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Adla Kahric**, Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Bosnia and Herzegovina

This presentation provided the information of the current on-going projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and additionally, further information about engagement and visibility of Bosnia and Herzegovina in IPBES activities.

Flora and fauna of Bosnia and Herzegovina belong to one of the most diverse in all Europe. In order to protect and conserve our nature, or implement any further activities related to biodiversity activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is very important to understand the structure and organization of country. The protection of nature is regulated on entities level, including the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic Srpska, and the level of the District Brčko of BiH.

The Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism supports different project related to environmental protection. Currently, some of those on-going projects are:

1. Sustainability in protected areas (SPA) in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Donor: The Global Environmental Facility GER (UNCBF, UNFCC)
2. Protected areas and sustainable development; Donor: Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)
3. Supporting Decision Making and Capacity Building to Support IPBES through a National Ecosystem Assessment; Donor: The International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (IKI); World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), Cambridge, UK

These target projects are currently on-going activities which are related to sustainable management of protected areas, in order to reduce negative human impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The most important activities from these on-going projects are: Strengthen the resilience of protected areas on climate changes, improving the financial sustainability of protected areas, improving sustainable tourism development, developing management plans for protected areas, demonstrating innovative restoration approaches, promoting natural values, products and services, knowledge dissemination and other similar activities. The National Ecosystem Assessment project was presented in detail by another participant from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Beside these activities, this presentation covered the visibility and engagement of Bosnia and Herzegovina in IPBES activities, which include information of BiH membership in IPBES, ECA network, MEP, Scoping expert, Bureau, Fellowship and National ecosystem assessment.

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Links for further information (like project website etc):

<https://www.fmoit.gov.ba/>

<https://www.undp.org/bosnia-herzegovina/press-releases/beginning-new-undp-project-support-sustainability-protected-areas-bih>

## Monitoring of wolves, jackals and wildcats in Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Dragana Šnjegota**, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, University of Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina

This presentation showed the activities carried out within the projects funded by Rufford Foundation, UK, for wolves, jackals and wild cats throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main activities were: i) monitoring of the species in the field using phototraps and the transect method in specific sites, and ii) genetic analyses using different molecular markers (e.g. Šnjegota, 2018, Šnjegota et al., 2017, 2021). All activities were designed with the aim of understanding the status of the species populations, including the degree of genetic variability, genetic structure, etc. Since none of the monitored species is legally protected, the results of the projects should provide the information that would be helpful in preparing the management plan for these species.



Figure 1. Wolf captured with phototrap at the site Kupreška rijeka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina (<https://www.rufford.org/search/?q=dragana>)

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**dragana.snjegota@pmf.unibl.org** Links for further information (like project website etc):

[www.wolvesinbosnia.weebly.com](http://www.wolvesinbosnia.weebly.com)

Šnjegota, D., Stronen, A. V., Boljte, B., Ćirović, D., Djan, M., Huber, D., ... & Skrbinišek, T. (2021). Population genetic structure of wolves in the northwestern Dinaric-Balkan region. *Ecology and evolution*, 11(24), 18492-18504.

Šnjegota, D., Stefanović, M., Veličković, N., Ćirović, D., & Djan, M. (2018). Genetic characterization of grey wolves (*Canis lupus* L. 1758) from Bosnia and Herzegovina: implications for conservation. *Conservation Genetics*, 19(3), 755-760.

Šnjegota, D. (2019). *Genetička struktura i filogeografski položaj vuka (Canis lupus L. 1758) Bosne i Hercegovine* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Novi Sad (Serbia)).



## **NATURE CONSERVATION PROGRAMME IN N. MACEDONIA**

**Katerina Atanasovska**, environment specialist in the department for environment consultancy within the private company Farmahem, Skopje

The Nature Conservation programme in N. Macedonia (NCP) is a project of the Swiss Agency for development and cooperation, coordinated by the private company Farmahem and Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation as a back-stopper. The main partners of NCP and implementers of its activities are state intuitions, public enterprises, municipalities, the Macedonian ecological society and faculties. NCP works on three different levels: national, regional (Bregalnica region) and local level by applying landscape, holistic, multi-level, participatory, bottom-up, multi stakeholder, systemic, Companion Modeling and other approaches. It is a very diverse programme that covers a lot of topics such as: mapping and assessing ecosystems and their services on national and local level, integrated forest management, establishing protected areas, identification of Natura 2000 sites, restoration of riparian ecosystems, promotion of eco and agritourism in and around protected areas, promotion of sustainable rice and honey production, increasing public awareness, sustainable use of natural resources and energy efficiency projects etc.

NCP was presented as a good example for promoting and implementing a science-practice-policy interface, which is the logic behind the programme's concept and how it is designed. Namely, NCP consists of three phases:

- phase 1 (2012-2016) with main focus on creating solid documentation base (strategies, studies, analysis) and identification of priorities for nature conservation and socio-economic development of Bregalnica region (target region of NCP);
- phase 2 (2017-2020): Partners and key stakeholders have been supported in development and implementation of the priorities identified in phase 1 and
- exit phase (2021-2024), which focuses to bring partners, targeted stakeholders and processes together, so sustainability of the results as well as the motivation and momentum to continue beyond the scope of the project can be assured. For this purpose, NCP is strengthening the ownership by the partners and targeted stakeholders and work on capitalizing its results and knowledge.

For more information about NCP results please visit

<http://www.bregalnica-ncp.mk/?lang=en>

<https://www.facebook.com/SoGrizaDoBeriket>

<https://www.instagram.com/sogrizadoberiket/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPNv1WJjuF8ar5hgDMsM1og/videos>

<https://farmahem.com.mk/>

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## **Mapping and assessment of ecosystem condition – MAES implementation in North Macedonia**

**Natalija Melovska**, Program manager, Department for Plants and Ecosystems in NGO Macedonian Ecological Society, Skopje

In 2017, North Macedonia developed a national agenda for assessment of ecosystems' condition. It announced the start of implementation of the targets set in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan in regards to ecosystem services assessments. The national team, composed of 25 experts from different disciplines, worked on the assessment and followed the guidelines provided by MAES approach. In the first phase of the assessment process, the national team worked on accomplishment of the first two steps of the MAES operational framework: i) map the ecosystem types and ii) assess the condition of ecosystems.

The ecosystem types were classified in three levels. The first two levels are in consent with MAES classification and 8 main ecosystem types have been identified, whereas the third level of classification is a combination of EUNIS and CORINE which resulted in the identification of 22 (sub)types. Mapping was done by using the available CORINE land cover data as well as published and unpublished scientific data. Major work was done with additional analyses of satellite imagery which resulted in a detailed map of the country's ecosystems.

The assessment of ecosystems' condition was done for 15 natural and semi-natural ecosystem types. The anthropogenic and agricultural types of ecosystems were excluded from this assessment. In total, a set of 24 indicators and 52 parameters were identified (referring to ecosystem structure and function as well as anthropogenic pressures) and scored from 1 to 5 on specific scales. National and project data bases, as well as GIS tools, were the main sources of data for the indicators and parameters. The majority of them were quantified, although some were evaluated based on their qualitative properties.

This assessment was the first attempt for national implementation of MAES. It is followed by an assessment on ecosystem services on national and local scale, accompanied by local scale implementation perspectives.

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### **A small genetic bank in a rural zone in Albania for the protection of local agricultural biodiversity.**

**Enver Isufi**, Institute for Organic Agriculture, Albania, in cooperation with Rozeta Mihali (COSPE association ), Shkodra district; Engjell Shuku, COSPE association; Ruzhdi Kapedani, director of agriculture middle school, "Ndre Mjeda" Bushati Village, Shkoder district

The agricultural secondary school "Ndre Mjeda" in the village of Bushat, district of Shkoder, and COSPE association took the initiative to establish the rural genetic bank. The purpose of this bank is to preserve the genetic resources of rural areas. The school has set up a laboratory with the necessary equipment's to preserve the seeds of local cultivars. School students, specialists and farmers from the regions of Shkoder, Malesi e Mde and Puae are involved in the activity of identifying, collecting and multiplying the seeds and seedlings. The school also has a plot of land where it partially grows seeds of local cultivars. The gene bank cooperates with the Albanian National Genetic Bank, as well as with experts from Italy.

So far, seeds from local cultivars have been collected from beans, tomatoes, wheat, corn, vines, figs, etc.

Some of the local cultivars are planted in large areas. The products from the local cultivars are sold at agritourism restaurants. The objective of the rural genetic bank is to produce large quantities of seeds from these cultivars, with the aim that they gain value in the market, because in this way they are not lost. Research work to preserve their genetic values, and their purification from genetic mixtures, will be the permanent work of this genetic bank, now three years old.

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## **Vjosa river in Albania, the last wild river in Europe, was saved from its death.**

**Enver Isufi**, Institute for Organic Agriculture, Albania.

Albania is very rich in water resources and has more than 10 large rivers with a length of 87 to 285 km. 95% of Albania's electricity comes from hydropower plants. In the last three decades, Albania's rivers have been threatened by the business of small hydropower plants. From 2003 to 2018, the Albanian government has approved many projects for the construction of small hydropower plants, without analyzing their impact on biodiversity and the environment. Albanian civil society organized protests to prevent the construction of hydropower plants on the Vjosa River. This river is considered the last wild river in Europe. The river Vjosa originates from Pindi mountain, which is located in the territory of Greece. This river is 272 km long. In the territory of Greece, the river flows for 80 km and 272 km in Albanian territory. The river delta flows into the Adriatic Sea, near the Narta lagoon. In the valley of Vjosa, there are about 1100 different species of plants and animals. From these, 140 species are protected according to Albanian law. 40 of these species are species that are conserved on an international scale.

In the ecosystem of the Vjosa valley we can find:

84% of mammal species known in Albania.

80% of the species of aquatic organisms known in Albania

86% of the reptile species registered in Albania

80% of bird species known in Albania.

For this reason, the Albanian civil society was also joined by European associations, institutions and public personalities. This 10-year battle forced the Albanian government to give up the construction of small hydropower's and to take the decision to declare the river Vjosa as protected. Many national and international scientific institutes are engaged for more studies about fauna and flora of Vjosa river.

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## The relevance of European Region of Gastronomy on local development

**Maria-Mihaela Antofie** PhD., Prof. "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Romania.

The scope of this presentation was to emphasize certain capacity building opportunities to support biodiversity conservation at the local level by directly interacting with the subject of gastronomy. The International Institute for Culture Gastronomy Art and Tourism (ICGAT) located in Barcelona, Spain, came up with the concept of *European Region of Gastronomy* during 2014. They embraced the sustainable development principles from the EU policy and get support from European fora to promote this concept by engaging business such as the HoReCa network (Hotels, Restaurants and Cantina). The scope was to award Regions complying with a check list of indicators. For 2019, Sibiu was awarded with this title as a county and the process started in 2015. I was nominated by the University to work together with the county representatives in business/ economy /authorities and tourism to develop the bid. The entire work was on voluntary basis and was relevant for an innovative capacity building organizing between the major stakeholders supporting this title. In my own capacity I started put pressure for the relevance of touching subjects such as food security, biodiversity conservation, traditional and local knowledge and a gene bank. The process was run by a consortium, it was complex and a strong barrier of language was observed among locals, business, administration and scientists. There have been lots of joint meetings to understand and substantiate every single sentence that was supposed to become the very first blueprint (i.e. between June 2015 and May 2016). In the end a blueprint was signed by all consortium members to take action, implement and monitor for mainstreaming county finances on this subject. The first bid was produced and tabled to the ICGAT and in September 2016 Sibiu was nominated that it will be evaluated to be awarded with this title in 2019. For the next 5 years I was in charge to voluntarily write, participate in contests and implement projects dedicated to surveying agricultural resources (domesticated and wild, including hunting), developing books, brochures, creating awareness through intensive workshops, conferences and info-days for students and more about the need to protect nature and gastronomy based on local raw materials. In 5 annually based projects, about 55.000 Euros have been spent only on publications and promoting the concept on voluntary basis for more than 50 professors and over 300 students during this time period. Moreover, Sibiu County is covered with 51% of protected areas and more than 25% of the rural areas are inside protected areas. The most interesting case study was to develop trips for tourists to taste meals directly into the households. Touristic circuits have been created to increase the staying over 2 nights/tourist. It was the goal of the business sector. Another good point was the organization of the **first network of restaurants** putting in their menu the origin of ingredients and connecting them with stories for the nature, biodiversity and other cultural heritage values they can access. Hotels developed a network also with the **Sibian breakfast** that includes only ingredients from Sibiu' county. It can be said that the very first trial for **circular economy** was possible to be set. The **agri-food market** with Sibian small producers was continuing to enlarge and continue to function today each Saturday. There you can buy different agriculture products including homemade cookies. All these actions are relevant for villages with an elder population and based on these new businesses it can be said that some young family may have the chance to continue their living in their villages. The organic agriculture is the best represented in this area compared to other counties at the national level according with the last report from the Ministry of Agriculture.

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**Links for further information** (like project website etc):

<https://experiences.mytransylvania.ro/>

<http://www.sibiu-turism.ro/Culture-and-Heritage-Gastronomy.aspx>

<https://www.romanianfriend.com/tours/indulge-in-the-Sibiu-Local-Food-Scene>

<https://www.europeanbestdestinations.com/destinations/sibiu/>

<https://www.dw.com/en/visiting-europes-gastronomic-capital-in-romania/a-48518357>

Bid [https://www.slovenia.info/uploads/gastronska\\_regija/regije/2.sibiu-compressed.pdf](https://www.slovenia.info/uploads/gastronska_regija/regije/2.sibiu-compressed.pdf)

<https://igcat.org/>