





THE ANNUAL REPORT

ON ACTIVITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIO CONVENTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA





Author: Ratko Ristić, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Forestry

Graphic design: MaxNova Creative, Belgrade

Belgrade, 2019.

This Publication was developed within the project "Capacity Development for Improved Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)" financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in cooperation with the institutions of the Republic of Serbia. The information, positions and opinions expressed in this publications are of the author and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the United Nations, including the UNDP, not member states, nor the GEF.



ABS Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing

AEWA The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds

BFPE Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence

BD TF Biodiversity Task Force

CBD UN Convention on Biological Diversity

CHM Clearing-house mechanism

CITES The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

CMS Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

COP The Conference of the Parties

EU The European Union

ESAV Ecosystem Services Assessment and Valuation

EUROBATS Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats

GEF Global Environment Facility

GHG Greenhouse gases

GIZ German International Development Agency

GSPC Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, working groups

GMOs Genetically modified organisms

ILO International Labour Organization

INC Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
INDC Intended nationally determined contribution
IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IUCN ECARO International Union of Nature Protection Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia

LMOs Land Degradation Neutrality
LMOs Living modified organisms

MRV Monitoring, reporting, verification

NAP National Programme

NBSAPs National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

CSO Civil Society Organisation

ORF/BD Open Regional Fund for SE Europe
PACD Plan of Action to Combat Desertification

RS The Republic of Serbia

RC Rio Conventions

RCC Regional Cooperation Council

RWG Env Regional Environmental Working Groups

SCTM Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

UNCCD United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNCED United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

UNCOD United Nations Conference on Desertification
UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WMO World Meteorological Organization

1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1. The history of the Rio Conventions	5
2. THE FRAMEWORK UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE	9
2.1. Fulfilling the commitments under the UNFCCC – implemented activities during 2018 in the Republic of Serbia	11
3. THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION	14
3.1. Fulfilling the commitments under the UNCCD – implemented activities during 2018 in the Republic of Serbia	16
4. THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON BIOLOGIC DIVERSITY	18
4.1. Fulfilling the commitments under the UN CBD – implemented activities during 2018 in the Republic of Serbia	19
5. OVERVIEW OF OTHER ACTIVITIES AIMED AT CREATING CONDITIONS FOR MORE EFFICIENT FULFILMENT OF OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE RIO CONVENTIONS DURING 2018 IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA	23
5.1. Cross-cutting complementary activities for the fulfilment of obligations under the Rio Conventions in Serbia	23
5.1.1 Activities with the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia	23
5.1.2 Involvement of students and youth	24
5.1.3 Research to support environmental policy making	24
6. CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS	25
REFERENCES	26

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of compiling the "Annual Report on Activities for the Implementation of the Rio Convention in the Republic of Serbia" (hereinafter: the Report) is to determine the type and scope of activities in line with the principles underlying the Rio Conventions (hereinafter: RC), which are interlinked and complementary under the framework document looking at the state of the environment in Serbia, the harmonization with international activities based on undertaken commitments, the general perception of the society of this issue and identifying priorities and direction of actions.

The Report covers three **RC** documents: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, hereinafter: **UNFCCC**; the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, hereinafter: **UNCCD**; the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, hereinafter: **CBD**. The Report was developed in cooperation with contact persons for the said Rio Conventions: Dragana Radulović, (the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change), Ana Repac (the United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification), and Jelena Dučić (the United Nation Convention on Biodiversity).



KEY EVENTS TIMELINE

The World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environmental Programme establish the IPCC – the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

The United Nations General Assembly established the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to work on the Framework Convention on Climate Change



James Hansen addresses the US Senate - first official debate on climate change



At the end of 1990 the IPCC published its first report officially linking the concepts of "global threat", "climate change" and "anthropogenic activities" into a cause-effect system which irreversibly changed the form and mechanism of individual processes on planet Earth, especially its atmosphere







Numerous commitments under the Rio Conventions and other environmental multilateral agreements are harmonised with the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, adopted by heads of states and governments in 2015, and the accompanying Sustainable Development Goals - **SDGs**. The implementation of provisions of the Rio Conventions contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Republic of Serbia, particularly SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land) and 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

The European Union is implementing its commitments towards environmental multilateral agreements through its directives. EU directives underline the principles and goals integrated in the national legislation, and thus create the legal framework necessary for the achievement of requirements from other international commitments.

1.1. THE HISTORY OF THE RIO CONVENTIONS

The American professor James Hansen was invited in June 1988 to address the US Senate and explain the phenomena of changes in the average annual air temperatures. Hansen unequivocally pointed to the phenomenon of global heating and stated that this process is the result of accumulation of greenhouse gases. which is not a random natural process but a direct consequence of anthropogenic activities. His address is considered to be the first official debate on climate change and already in November 1998 the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) established the IPCC - the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Until today, all scientific positions and assessments adopted by the IPCC are the technical and legislative basis for international cooperation, technical communication and exchange of data, as well as nego-



After harmonizing the different positions, the text of the Convention was adopted at the UN headquarters in New York



At the Third Conference of the Parties held in Kyoto (Japan), the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, as an appendix to the international agreement on climate change. The purpose of formulating the Kyoto Protocol was to reiterate the need to apply closer and more radical measures in order to achieve as soon as possible significant reductions in emissions of CO2 and other GHGs

into effect of the Kyoto protocol it had to be ratified by at least 55 states and the ratifying states to make up at least 55% of polluters

tiations. Additionally, the IPCC provides a comprehensive insight into guidelines and mechanisms for management of extreme weather risks. At the end of 1990 the IPCC published its first report officially linking the concepts of "global threat", "climate change" and "anthropogenic activities" into a cause-effect system which irreversibly changed the form and mechanism of individual processes on planet Earth. Especially its atmosphere. Soon afterwards, the United Nations General Assembly established the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to work on the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The INC has held five sessions, during which more than 150 states discussed commitments, goals and timelines for implementation of activities to reduce of emissions of Green House Gasses (GHG).

After harmonizing the different positions, the text of the Convention was adopted at the UN headquarters in New York in May 1992. The important event for this Convention (and for all the relevant and complementary conventions, on biodiversity and fighting desertification) was the Earth Summit held at the highest scientific and administrative level in Rio de Janeiro, from 3-14 June 1992. During this Summit the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was opened for acceptance and signature by states as a sign of joint efforts to reduce GHG emissions and establish mechanisms for adaptation to climate change. During the first Conference of the Parties (COP1 in Berlin, Germany), the then German Minister of the Environment, Angela Merkel, who chaired the Conference, stated that obligations defined by the Convention were inadequate for the achievement of stated objectives, indicating the need to determine more complex and legally binding measures specifically related to

developed countries. As a result of these discussions, at the Third Conference of the Parties (COP3) held in Kyoto (Japan), 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, as an appendix to the international agreement on climate change. The purpose of formulating the Kyoto Protocol was to reiterate the need to apply closer and more radical measures in order to achieve as soon as possible significant reductions in emissions of CO2 and other GHGs.

For the coming into effect of the Kyoto protocol it had to be ratified by at least 55 states and the ratifying states to make up at least 55% of polluters. The Protocol came into effect in February 2005, when it was ratified by Russia, whereby the ratification reached 61% of polluters. The US and some smaller countries refused to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

The very fact that the Protocol came into effect eight years after the time of its promotion (1997-2005), as well as that it has not been signed by the USA, a country being the biggest polluter and emitter of GHGs after China, speaks of different interests and significant differences in the positions of signatory states. This led to the idea to form a general, legally binding climate agreement which would achieve even greater goals than those set out in the Kyoto Protocol.

The 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) was held in Paris in 2015 resulting in the adoption of the Climate Change Agreement. The Paris Agreement was initially signed by all countries of the world, with the US subsequently withdrawing its signature. The Agreement set out as one of its key goals the position of keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial levels, with the idea that with the changed

circumstances fighting climate change could become a matter of prestige among countries and a reflection of national pride, whereby states would be encouraged on their own initiative to undertake increasingly more comprehensive and efficient mitigation and adaptation measures to the effects of climate change.

The United Nations Conference on Desertification (UNCOD), held in 1977, adopted the Plan Action to Combat Desertification (PACD). However, despite many efforts, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) stated in 1991 that the problem of soil degradation has intensified in the arid and semi-arid areas. As a result of this understanding, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, determined that the answers to the issues of modalities to stop the desertification processes remain unknown. The 1992 Conference supported a different approach to the problem of desertification, integrating activities at different organisational levels, while emphasising the necessity to promote local action, in order to achieve sustainable goals. Additionally, the Conference initiated a process in the UN General Assembly which resulted in establishing the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), tasked to develop by June 1994 the Convention to Combat Desertification. In December 1992, the UN General Assembly agreed and adopted the Resolution 47/188, making this intention official. After a complex process, over five sessions, the Convention to Combat Desertification was adopted in Paris, on 17 June 1994, and came into effect on 26 December 1996, about twenty days after being ratified by 50 states worldwide. By August 2018, 196 states and the whole European Union system confirmed their commitment to the principles of the Convention to Combat Desertification. The Conference of the Parties, as the highest body of the Convention, was held for the first time in Rome in October 1997. The Convention is particularly focused on arid areas, with strong intensity of spoil degradation and expansion of deserts, with some of the most vulnerable eco-systems and utterly endangered local communities, often decimated by hunger, disease and war conflicts. The ten year strategic plan and the procedural framework for improved implementation of the Convention for the period 2008-2018 formulated a clear vision on building global partnerships in order to prevent desertification and soil degradation. The most recent Conference of the Parties (COP13) was held in September 2017 in Ordos (China), where states agreed the new global course promoting minimization of degradation of soil areas. The new strategic plan of the Convention is the most comprehensive global expression of commitment to a modern approach materialised in the concept of LDN - Land Degradation Neutrality.

Existential endangerment of numerous living species and whole eco-systems has never been more expressed than at present and the eradication of species and degradation of habitats, caused by anthropogenic activities, is progressing at astonishing speed. As a response to these processes, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1988 called together the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity, to formulate the requirements for the development of a convention which will address the problem of reducing global biodiversity. In May 1989 the Ad Hoc Working Group of Technical and Legal Experts was established and tasked to draft a proposal of an international legal instrument for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.



recent
Conference
of the Parties
was held in
September
2017, where
states agreed
the new
global course
promoting
minimization of
degradation of
soil areas

By 1991 the said informal group became the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), and its work resulted in adopting the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity, at the conference held in 1992 in Nairobi (Kenya). At the Earth Summit held at the highest scientific and administrative level in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Convention was adopted and by 1993 signed by 168 state parties. After the thirtieth ratification, in 1993, the Convention came into effect. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognizes three obligations at national level: the state party undertakes to protect and sustainably use biodiversity and, in line with its abilities, assist other countries signatories in the process of protection and renewal of biological diversity. The Convention does not refer to individual species and eco-systems or habitats, which are subjects regulated by other international agreements (ex., the Ramsar Convention), but it is based on a broad eco-system approach. As a result of more accurate profiling and implementation, in 2000 in Quebec (Canada) the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was adopted. Another significant agreement is the Nagova Protocol, which is an addition to the adequate implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the domain of access to genetic resources and their fair and balanced distribution (Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, hereinafter: ABS). The purpose of this Protocol is the implementation of one of the three goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity, specifically the fair and balanced sharing of benefits of using genetic resources, contributing to preservation and sustainable use of bio-diversity.



THREE GOALS OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY



- BIODEVERSITY PROTECTION
- 2 SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY
- FAIR AND BALANCED SHARING
 OF BENEFITS OF USING GENETIC
 RESOURCES





THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

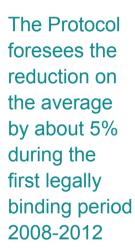
The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (hereinafter: UNFCCC) was adopted at the UN Conference on Development and Environment (1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). The Republic of Serbia is a state party to the UNFCCC as of 10 June 2001, and of the Kyoto Protocol (hereinafter: Protocol) as of 17 January 2008, with the status of a developing country. By ratifying the UNFCCC and the Protocol, the Republic of Serbia committed itself to determining and implementing measures and actions, at national level, which will contribute to achieving the goals of the **UNFCCC**. At the same time, the Republic of Serbia (hereinafter: RS), as a candidate for membership in the European Union, also committed itself to certain obligations in the domain of addressing climate change issues.

The key objective of activities under the **UNFCCC** is to stop the increase and stabilise the concentrations of greenhouse gasses (hereinafter: GHG). The methodology for the achievement of this goal is articulated in the Protocol, with emphasis on quantified commitments to reduce GHG for 38 industrially developed countries. It foresees the reduction on the average by about 5% during the first legally binding period 2008-2012 relative to the reference year 1990. The developing countries, including the RS, were not under commitment to implement measures of quantified reduction of GHG emissions during the first period of legally binding commitments.

The negotiating process on obligations of state parties under the UNFCCC and the Protocol, for the period after 2012, continued at the Conference in Cancun (Mexico), in December 2010, when the "Cancun Agreement" was reached with a series of decisions regarding the measures of adaptation, mitigation, and technology transfer, capacity building and financing. The negotiating process continued at the Conference in Doha (Qatar, 2012), adopting 39 decisions under the formal title the "Doha Climate Gateway", adopted on 8 December 2012 and including, among other things, the Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol (hereinafter: the Doha Amendment), confirming the second period of legally binding commitments under the **Protocol**.

The confirmation of the **Doha Amendment** by state parties of the UNFCCC and the Protocol ensured the continuity of negotiations which led to the adoption of a new legally binding document, the so-called "Paris Agreement" (hereinafter: the Agreement), at the Conference in Paris (France), in 2015. The confirmation of the second legally binding period of commitments under the Kyoto Protocol ensured continuity in activities on developing and implementing climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, at national, regional and global level. The Doha Amendment includes also new commitments to reduce emissions of GHG for Annex I countries. Thus, it is determined that the reduction of GHG emissions in the period 2013-2020 shall be at least 18% relative to the emission levels of 1990.

2.



The **RS** ratified the **Doha amendment** in 2017, under its commitments under the **UNFCCC** and the **Protocol**.

The negotiating process continued at the "United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris" (hereinafter: the Conference), held between 30 November and 11 December 2015 in Paris (France), under the auspices of the **UNFCCC.** The key goal of the Conference was to achieve agreement on and adopt the new legally binding commitments of state parties under the UNFCCC, for the period after 2020. The emphasis is on preventing the increase of mean global annual air temperatures to 1.5°C according to the alarming projections of the global scientific community. Additionally, the adoption of the new legally binding commitments was necessary due to the going out of effect of the **Protocol**, as of 31 December 2012.

The Conference adopted the "Paris Agreement" (hereinafter: the Agreement), and a set of accompanying decisions. The Agreement was adopted by 195 state parties to the UNFCCC, and its coming into effect required the signing and ratification by state parties. It was prescribed that the signing and ratification is to begin as of 22 April 2016 and take one year, with the Agreement coming into effect when ratified by at least 55 states which at the same time produce at least 55% of total global emissions, along with submitting the instruments of ratification to the UN. The Agreement came into effect within a very short period on 4 November 2016, and it defined the obligations of state parties to the UNFCCC for the period after 2020. The commitments are based on the so-called "intended determined contributions" (hereinafter: INDC), which the state parties submitted to the UNFCCC. The INDC represent the goals of reducing emissions of GHG which states intend to achieve in the coming period, where the states themselves defined the time frames for the reduction of emissions, and the reference year relative to which the reduction is stated.

The RS in June 2015 submitted its objective of reducing emissions of GHG by 2030 (relative to 1990), which is 9.8% and it was among the first 10 countries in the world and the first country of the region (based on the Decision by the Government of the Republic of Serbia, number: 353-6341/2015, of 11 June 2015). The stated goal is based on existing sectoral documents (strategies of the energy sector, transport, agriculture, waste management) adopted previously by the Government, without a negative impact on future development of these sectors or on the planned economic development of Serbia. The President of the RS, Tomislav Nikolić, according to the UN Protocol, signed the Agreement on 22 April 2016 (decision number: 037-4102/2016), which was ratified the same year. RS shall review the objectives and long-term strategy for reduced GHG emissions through the "Strategy and Action plan Combatting Climate Change" (hereinafter: the Strategy).

The Bonn Conference (Germany), held in 2017, closed with the adoption of 31 decisions which, among other things, ensure:

- Guidelines for finalisation of activities necessary for the establishment of effective mechanism, timely beginning and efficient implementation of the Agreement;
- The start of the Talanoa dialogue, pointing to the need for incentives for implementation of activities and increasing ambitions in the period before 2020 un-

The RS in June 2015 submitted its objective of reducing emissions of GHG by 2030 (relative to 1990), which is 9.8% der the auspices of the "Fiji Momentum for Implementation";

- Defining the role of the Adaptation Fund in implementing the **Agreement**;
- Operationalising the platform for vulnerable local communities;
- Adoption of the Action plan for gender equality issues;
- Defining the action under decisions of the "Warsaw International Mechanism", for loss and damage caused by climate change, and ensuring the necessary funding in the long-term.

The decisions also defined the guidelines for future work of the Green Climate Fund (hereinafter: GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (hereinafter: GEF). The decisions of the Bonn Conference promote the ratification of the Doha Amendments. the review of the National Determined Contributions (hereinafter: NDCs) which represent an integral part of the Agreement, and implementation of long-term actions to reduce GHG emissions. On the basis of negotiations so far under the auspices of the UNFCCC and the Agreement, it is expected that the Conference of the Parties held between 3 December – 14 December 2018 in Katowice (Poland) will adopt the so-called "Instructions for Implementation of the Paris Agreement", with clearly defined deadlines and obligations of the parties in the field of monitoring the implementation of nationally determined contributions to reducing GHG emissions. Additionally, the goal of the Katowice Conference is to define the objectives and framework for long-term action to reduce GHG emissions (by mid and end of 21st century), in order to ensure sustainability of the Agreement and continuity of efforts against climate change.

2.1. FULFILLING THE COMMITMENTS UNDER THE UNFCCC – IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES DURING 2018 IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

The Ministry of Environmental Protection (hereinafter: The Ministry) is the national coordinator for implementation of the **UNFCCC**, the accompanying protocols and agreements. The Ministry is implementing activities aimed at fulfilment of obligations under the UNFCCC, in cooperation with other relevant line ministries, agencies, directorates, offices and other stakeholders (local government, civil society organisations, scientific and technical public), in line with the cross-cutting effects resulting from climate change. Over the recent years, the Ministry has invested special efforts to improve cooperation and involve more efficiently local governments and other stakeholders in the process of climate change related policy development and implementation, particularly adaptation and mitigation measures.

The first report by the Republic of Serbia under the UNFCCC, specifically "The First National Communication", was submitted in 2010, while the second report was adopted by the Government and submitted in 2017, and the drafting of the third one has also commenced. The First biannual updated report of the Republic of Serbia was submitted in 2016, and work has commenced on the drafting of the Second biannual updated report. All the said documents were developed using the funding of the Global Environment Facility – GEF.

The Ministry has initiated the process of revising the NDCs within drafting the Strategy, in line with the obligations arising from the Agreement. One of the objectives of drafting the Strategy is to iden-

The Ministry of Environmental Protection is the national coordinator for implementation of the UNFCCC, the accompanying protocols and agreements

tify the potential for reducing the **GHG** emissions for the period until 2020, 2025, 2030, 2050, and the level of emissions in 2070. The **Strategy** shall identify also priority measures of adaptation to climate change in sectors most vulnerable to climate change (water management, agriculture, and forestry).

Monitoring the achievement of obligations from the **Agreement** shall be ensured by implementation of the "Law on Climate Change" (hereinafter: the Law), which is in the last stage of being finalised. The Law was drafted in the course of implementing the project: Mechanism Monitoring Regulation (hereinafter: MMR), funded by the EU.

CONSULTATIONS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANISATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE
RIO CONVENTIONS – UN CBD AND UNFCCC

The consultative meeting between the Ministry of Environmental protection and civil society organisations (CSOs) just before the Conferences of the Parties - COP, regarding the **Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD** COP14) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP24) was organized in November 2018, with the participation of 50 representatives from 28 non-government organisations. The consultative meeting after the said Conferences will be held in December 2018. The first consultations with representatives of civil society, before and after the COP, dedicated to one of the RIO Conventions (UNFCCC COP23) were organised in 2017 and since then it has become standard practice. These consultations are organized in order accelerate the flow of information among stakeholders, raise awareness of NGO's about the multilateral agreements in the field of environmental protection and thus ensure a local perspective and technical expertise for Government delegations and platforms.

The said Law regulates the obligation of monitoring and reporting on GHG emissions, and other information relevant to monitoring the process of climate change, such as projections of GHG emissions, relevant policies and measures, strategies for reduction of GHG emissions, adaptation plans to changed climate conditions, and the like. The Law shall also cover the requirements of the EU Acquis (the EU Regulation on the Monitoring Mechanism; the EU Directive on the Emissions Trading System, EU ETS), which refer to monitoring, reporting and verification of emissions from the sectors of energy and industry. With the drafting and adoption of the Law, the National System for Monitoring, Reporting and Verification will be established (hereinafter: MRV) in the field of climate change. The establishment of the MRV system is one of the key requirements of the international community, but also it is in the national interest, as it provides insight into the current situation regarding GHG emissions and other relevant parameters, thus creating the possibility for improvement of sector planning processes and providing support to the economic activities of the country.

In order to ensure timely preparation and efficient implementation of the **Agreement**, the Ministry in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program (hereinafter: **UNDP**) started the implementation of the Project: "Climate Smart Local Development". The Project is financed by **GEF**, and for the first time funds have also been appropriated from the national budget. The purpose of the Project is to provide support to local government in planning and implementing sustainable solutions and innovative measures to reduce emissions of **GHG**, as part of national activities by the **RS** in implementing the **Agreement** and accession to the European Union. In the course of 2018 the following activities were conducted:

- Public call within the Open Data Challenge, related to improvements in collection, management and providing data relevant to climate change, in order to improve the quality of the national GHG inventory;
- Public call within the Innovation Challenge, under which 38 project preliminary ideas were selected, to which technical, mentoring and expert support is to

be provided do transform the ideas into fully-fledged projects/designs, ready for implementation. By the end of 2018, at least 5 projects will be selected for co-financing, to support their implementation within the implementation of mitigation measures;

CLIMATE CHANGE AND GENDER EQUALITY

"Training Manual – Gender and Climate Change" was published in 2018 in order to improve the understanding of the gender aspects of climate change. It is intended for the technical and general public and it is organised and designed as a programme – training for representatives of institutions and public administration, and can therefore be used as source of information for preparation of practical training courses, but also as guidelines for maintreaming gender in programmes and projects. The Manual was developed in cooperation with the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and UNDP.

All stakeholders (local governments, public enterprises and privately owned companies, scientific-research institutions, NGO's, individuals) could propose innovative solutions to mitigate the effects of climate change and thus contribute to implementing specific activities linked to climate change at local level.

During 2018 activities have been implemented by UNDP, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental protection, through the GEF funded Project, which are related to climate change issues. The results of the project include, among other things, information relevant to the preparation of the Second Biennial Updated Report and the Third National Communication under the **UNFCCC.** The following has been done through the project implementation:

- Comprehensive report on observed and expected climate changes, as the basis for preparation of the Chapter "Vulnerability assessment and adaptation measures" of the Third National Communication;
- Panel discussion with civil society organisations, organised during the Climate Diplomacy Week in September 2018, in order to engage all stakeholders (experts, the academic community, the NGO sector), from the very beginning of developing the reports under the UNFCCC;
- In cooperation between UNDP and UNEP, through the Global programme of support to reporting under **UNFCCC**, a two-day regional workshop was organised, during which joint work was organised for experts from the ministries and different institutions from the Balkans and Lebanon, working on issues of climate change and the related gender equality issues;
- Activities are underway for preparation of the reports on GHG, for the purposes of the Second Biennial Updated Report.

ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE AT LOCAL LEVEL

During 2018 the "Manual for Planning of Adaptation to Climate Change in Local COmmunities in Serbia" was developed in cooperation between the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) and UNDP. The purpose of the Manual is provide information to representatives of local governments on how to prepare and respond to challenges of adaptation to climate change in their communities.

Finally, it is possible to conclude that the **RS** ratified the Paris **Agreement and the Doha Amendment** to the Kyoto **Protocol**, whereby it has fulfilled all its obligations in terms of ratification of international treaties under the **UNFCCC.**

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERBIFICATION

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (hereinafter: UNCCD), in countries with widespread desertification and land degradation, in conditions of long and extremely dry periods, is the first international legal instrument regulating the issues of combatting these phenomena at the global level, in the context of environmental protection and achieving the concepts of sustainable development. The purpose of activities under the auspices of the **UNCCD** is to build future global partnership to reduce the spatial coverage and intensity of desertification and land degradation as well as consequences of draughts in vulnerable areas, in order to contribute to reducing poverty, and achieving the concepts of

environmental protection and sustainable development.

The **UNCCD** has so far been ratified by 196 countries, of which more than 140 countries are affected by the process of desertification/land degradation. In order to facilitate the implementation of the **UNCCD** at national, subregional, and regional level, five Annexes have been adopted: the Annex 1 refers to Africa; Annex 2 to Asia; Annex 3 to Latin America and the Caribbean; Annex 4 to the Northern Mediterranean; Annex 5 to all countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The Republic of Serbia is member of Annex 5 **UNCCD**, and has ratified the **UNCCD** by adopting the *Law Ratifying the United Na*-



tions Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification (5 November 2007, "The Official Gazette" of the Republic of Serbia, No. 102/07). The competent authority for the implementation of the **UNCCD** in the **RS** is the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

The process of desertification is an extreme, often final form of land degradation, demonstrated in complete loss of its biological and production potential. There are different forms of desertification globally, thus land resources are one of the limiting factors of development in the 21st century. Desertification and land degradation processes are closely linked to consequences of climate change and inadequate anthropogenic activities, primarily in the sectors of agriculture, forestry, and water management.

Land degradation is, apart from the effects of climate change, most often initiated by inadequate agrotechnical measures applied, excessive felling of trees or complete loss of forests, uncontrolled pasturing, aggressive urbanisation, exploitation of mineral resourc-

LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY

In the negotiations process so far two key instruments have been adopted for the implementation of the UNCCD, which at the same time represent two key commitments of state parties. Namely, during the COP13 a new strategic framework was adopted for the period 2018-2030. Before that, during the COP12, held in 2015 (Ankara, Turkey), state parties to the Convention were invited to, in line with their capacities, to formulate national targets and deadlines for the achievement of Land Degradation Neutrality (hereinafter: LDN). Under the new strategic framework for the **UNCCD** the parties have committed themselves to integrate in their strategic and development programmes the national goals for LDN, and methods for achieving these goals.

es and different forms of pollution. Land degradation processes are manifested along a broad scale of manifestations, from reduced fertility, reduced crop yields, and to reduced productivity of eco-systems, loss of habitats and biological diversity.

The territory of the Republic of Serbia is located in the region of high risk with respect to current and projected trends of climate change, with the following phenomena: strong increase of mean annual air temperatures (for the period 1985-2014 an increase has been determined of 1.2°C while for the period 2075-2100 the increase is expected to be 3.2-4.5°C), with increasingly warm and long dry periods; reduced average annual precipitation, 10-20%, with increasingly less snow fall and more frequent pluviometric episodes in spring-summer periods.

According to the document titled "Intended nationally determined contributions to reducing greenhouse gasses emissions", adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia which it submitted to the **UNFCCC** Secretariat in June 2015, in the period 2000-2015 **RS** faced a number of extreme climate-meteorological episodes, which caused loss of human lives and enormous material damages, of which two stand out: the draught during the summer of 2012 (yields of some field crops were reduced by as much as 50%) and massive flash floods in May 2014 (50 fatalities and EUR 1.7 billion in direct material damages). The total amount of material damages caused by extreme climate-meteorological episodes since 2000 until the present exceed EUR 5 billion.

Land degradation, coupled with climate factors has a strong impact on the sectors of agriculture, forestry, and water management, which points to the relevance of active engagement of the Republic of Serbia in the work of **UNCCD**. The outcome of activities under the auspices of the **UNCCD** is the achievement of long term dedication of parties to the concept of sustainable land management, through implementation of commitments undertaken, through strategic documents and reports, and through implementation of appropriate measures. The **UNCCD** is based in the belief that solutions for the problems of desertification,

land degradation and draughts should be articulated at the level of vulnerable local communities, with the support of and in partnership with other relevant actors, national and international.

Decisions relevant for implementation of the **UNCCD**, in each party, but also at the global level, are made through negotiations at Conferences of the Parties (hereinafter: **COP**), held every two years. The first **COP** was held in October 1997, and the most recent on, 13th in September 2017 (Ordos, China).

3.1. FULFILMENT OF COMMITMENTS UNDER THE UNCCD – ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED DURING 2018 IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Implementation of the **UNCCD** and its strategic framework for the period 2018-2030 is a complex task which can be achieved through a multisector approach. A detailed analysis of all components involved in this process helps in understanding the cause-effect links, which is the first step towards shaping the relevant solutions, with technical and social components.

In line with the requirements of the **UNCCD** states parties have the following obligations to:

- Prepare regular periodical (biennial) reports on implementation of the UNCCD at the national level;
- Defining, drafting and adopting the National LDN Goals, and regularly report on their implementation;
- Develop and adopt the National Programme (hereinafter: NAP) for implementation of the UNCCD, developed in accordance with the new strategic framework for UNCCD, which is also to include a detailed plan and deadlines for implementation of National LDN Goals.

National programme for implementation of the **UNC-CD** is the key document identifying factors relevant to the processes of desertification, land degradation and draughts, as well as practical measures for their control, suppression and mitigation of consequences. The

NAP defines in detail the roles of state administrations (the Government, the ministries), local communities and land users, as well as the availability of necessary resources for implementation thereof. Additionally, the **NAP** determines the indicators to monitor the achievement of goals, including indicators for **LDN**.

In accordance with its obligations under the **UNCCD**, Serbia developed the draft **NAP**, to which results of applying the LDN concept will be added, with clearly defined national objectives and deadlines for their achievement, in line with the new strategic framework for the **UNCCD** for the period 2018-2030. The process of developing the **NAP** engages representatives of all relevant Government institutions, scientific-research institutions and the economic operators, and other stakeholders. After it is finalised, the **NAP** will be presented to all interested parties and after the consultations and adjustments, it will be submitted to the Government of **RS** for adoption and submission to the **UNCCD**. It is expected that the process of developing the **NAP** will be finalised by the end of 2020.

The Republic of Serbia has started the process of determining the national LDN goals, in accordance with the decisions of the COP12, as a special body of the UNCCD, the global mechanism, which established the programme of setting the LDN goals in state parties. The LDN process is a voluntary process until the moment when the goals are adopted by the government, when such goals become legally binding. In order to carry out the LDN process in the RS, a national expert has been engaged who will provide technical assistance in finalising the process of determining the national LDN goals.

The achievement of the **LDN** goals, and of the **UNCCD**, is possible provided that they are integrated in the national development and sector policies, strategies and plans, particularly those which are relevant to land use and the purpose of land use. The process of defining the national **LDN** goals is expected to be finalised in early 2019.

State parties have committed themselves by ratifying the **UNCCD** to also participate in the process of report-

ing by submitting national reports to the Convention secretariat. The Reports are submitted on the basis of the identified set of progress indicators and reporting indicators, at the reporting cycle intervals, and are submitted to the secretariat through the electronic portal (PRAIS portal), which is a system for assessment of success and overview of implementation of the **UN-CCD**. There have so far been six reporting cycles, and the most recent report by the Republic of Serbia was submitted to the Convention in 2018.

THE DRAUGHT INITIATIVE

The Republic of Serbia was identified in 2018 as one of the state parties to the UNCCD who needs this kind of support, especially having in mind the increasingly strong negative effects and damages caused by draughts. By joining the Draught Initiative, the Republic of Serbia would commit itself to also adopt the National plan for defence against draughts and to promote relevant activities for defence and mitigation of negative effects.

At the same time, in accordance with the Decision of UNCCD made at the COP13 (Ordos, China), held in September 2017, the implementation of the Draught Initiative will begin in the period 2018-2019. The Initiative is a result of several years of negotiations under the auspices of the **UNCCD**, and it is aimed at supporting state parties for which it has been identified that they are under threat of draught according to the international standardised indicators, to mitigate the effects and damages caused by draughts. The process of developing the National Plan for defence against draughts (hereinafter: Plan) is very relevant because it will, among other things, be used to shape the process and the operational steps necessary to minimise the negative effects of draughts, such as the early reporting system, impact assessment, establishing a national structure for timely response to draughts, and identifying measures and actions to mitigate the negative effects of draughts.

The draft **Plan** has been finalised, and in the drafting process consultations were held with representatives of key national institutions, which are stated in the institutional structure of the **Plan**. The Plan is expected to be finalised and adopted by the Government in the forthcoming period.

FULFILMENT OF COMMITMENTS UNDER THE UNCCD

- PREPARE REGULAR PERIODICAL (BIENNIAL) REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCCD AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL
- DEFINING, DRAFTING AND ADOPTING THE NATIONAL LDN GOALS, AND REGULARLY REPORT ON THEIR IMPLEMENTATION
- DEVELOP AND ADOPT THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCCD, DEVELOPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR UNCCD



The Republic of Serbia, on the basis of the Succession Agreement became the successor party to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of 1992

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The Republic of Serbia is signatory to numerous international agreements related to nature protection, the key among them being the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (hereinafter: CBD), with the accompanying protocols: "Protocol on Biosafety - the Cartagena Protocol"; "The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization". The Republic of Serbia is also party to other multilateral agreements on biodiversity, such as: "The Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage", "The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat" (the Ramsar Convention), "The Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna" (CMS, the Bonn Convention and the accompanying acts), "The Agreement o Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)", and the "Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (EUROBATS)", "The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)", "Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention), and "The European Landscape Convention".

The Republic of Serbia, on the basis of the Succession Agreement became the successor party to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of 1992, and the Law on ratification of the CBD was adopted in CBD respecting the sovereign right of

every state party to dispose of its resources and biodiversity, but the states are expected to provide support for three major goals of the **CBD**: 1) protection of biological diversity; 2) sustainable use of biodiversity components; 3) fair share of benefits of using genetic resources.

Within the Convention, two protocols were adopted:

- 1. The Protocol on Biosafety (Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety), regulating the conditions for protection of biological diversity against potential risks caused by living modified organisms (LMOs), or genetically modified organisms (GMOs), which can result from the application of modern biotechnologies. This Protocol as adopted on 29 January 2000 and came into effect as of 11 September 2003. By adopting the Law Ratifying the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, with annexes ("The Official Gazette SCG-International Agreements", No. 16/2005) the Republic of Serbia became state party to the Cartagena Protocol.
- 2. The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization ABS, was adopted on 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan. The Republic of Serbia signed this Protocol in September 2011 and the Law Ratifying the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization was adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia in 25

September 2018. The Protocol represents a significant improvement of the third objective of the Convention by ensuring a more solid basis for greater legal certainty and transparency of both providers and users of genetic resources.

Decisions relevant to the implementation of the **UNCBD** both at global and at national and regional level are made by negotiations at the sessions of the Conference of the Parties which take place every two years. The Fourteenth session was held in November 2018 (Sharm El Sheik, Egypt) under the slogan "Investing in Biodiversity for People and the Planet".

The Ministry of Environmental Protection is the relevant authority for monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in the Republic of Serbia. In accordance with the provisions of the CBD all reports have been filed on the implementation of the Convention in the Republic of Serbia. The most recent such report which was submitted was the Fifth Report on the Implementation of the Convention in 2014 with the support of the GEF/UNDP project "National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD Strategic Plan for the Period 2011-2020 in the Republic of Serbia".

At the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012 Serbia established its CHM - web portal (*Clearing-house mechanism*) for information on biodiversity hosted by the European Environmental Agency, and available at http://www.biodiverzitet-chm.rs.

4.1. FULFILLING OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE UN CBD – ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED DURING 2018 IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

National strategic on biodiversity with relevant action plans are the key instrument for implementation of the **CBD** at national level (according to Article 6), and the state parties are obliged, in line with their particular conditions and capabilities to : 1) develop (or adapt for this purpose their existing) national strategies, plans or programmes for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, so that they include the mea-

sures set out in the **CBD**; 2) integrate the principles of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into relevant sector or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies, as possible and appropriate. States parties to the **CBD** at the tenth meeting (2010 in Nagoya, Japan), adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011-2020, to promote comprehensive action in preserving the biodiversity during the coming decade among all countries and all stakeholders. The Strategic Plan consists of a common vision, mission, and 20 objectives, jointly termed the "Aichi Targets".

The Government of the RS adopted its first Strategy of Biological Diversity with and Action Plan for the period 2011 – 2018 in 2011 ("The Official Gazette of RS", No. 13/2011). This Strategy sets out 11 strategic areas and 28 specific objectives in preserving biodiversity, and more than 140 different activities which were necessary for the achievement of the set goals. This Strategy, however, did not include indicators for monitoring the achievement of the gaols and implementation of the action plan, or indicators for the monitoring of the overall Strategy. In order to fulfil its obligations under the CBD, in the course of 2014 a process was initiated to review the "Strategy of Biological Diversity" of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011 - 2018. The process of Strategy development started within the project "National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD Strategic Plan for the Period 2011-2020 in the Republic of Serbia", funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), in cooperation with the **UNDP** as the implementing agency.

According to the Law on Nature Protection ("The Official Gazette RS", No. 36/2009, 88/2010, 91/2010-corrections, and 14/2016), "The Strategy of Nature Protection" was introduced as a mechanism for implementation of ratified international treaties on nature protection, setting out the long-term goals and measures of preservation of biological and geological diversity and the manner of their implementation. The Strategy is developed on the basis of the "State of the Nature Report" submitted by the relevant Institute for Conservation of Nature of Serbia, in cooperation with the Provincial Institute for Conservation of Nature. The Strategy sets out the long-term planning

framework and policies of integrated nature protection, including the preservation of biodiversity, landscapes and geological heritage. It is defined that this strategy particularly includes the principles and general goals, the assessment of the situation, specific objectives and implementing activities, and possible sources of funding. Thus, the proposed "Strategy of Nature Protection of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2019 - 2025" includes chapters on preservation of biodiversity (the reviewed Strategy of Biological Diversity), landscapes and geological heritage, and this Strategy is in the process of collection the relevant opinions since September 2018.

The Strategy development process included public insight into the proposed document, and harmonisation with collected comments. The document also provides guidelines for implementation of the "Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011-2020", including the following:

- Parties to the CBD adopt their "Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans", or update the existing ones, in line with the "Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020";
- Parties to the **CBD** use the "Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020" and the Aichi targets as a flexible framework and integrate these into national targets and revisions of the existing Strategies. National targets are developed taking into account national priorities and capacities, but also contribution to collective efforts to reach the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- Parties to the CBD adopt the updated National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (hereinafter; NBSAPs), as policy instruments and in order to inte-

grate the principles of preservation of biodiversity into national development, financial management and planning processes;

■ Monitoring and reviewing implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and national targets, by using the set indicators. In the process of review of the "Strategy of Biological Diversity of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2011-2018", which is an integral part of the "Strategy of Nature Protection", an analysis was conducted of harmonisation between national targets and the Aichi and EU targets for biodiversity preservation.

The said document also provides an analysis of the implementation of the "Strategy of Biological Diversity of the Republic of Serbia 2011-2018", relative to the identified objectives. The document is expected to be adopted in the forthcoming period.

In 2018 the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Law Ratifying the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (published on 27 September 2018, in the "Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia - International Agreements", No. 12/2018.). By adopting this Law, the Republic of Serbia became the 113th party to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, which will come into effect in the Republic of Serbia as of 28 January 2019. The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia also adopted the Law Ratifying the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats ("Official Gazette RS - International Agreements", No. 13/18) and the

The proposed
"Strategy
of Nature
Protection of
the Republic of
Serbia for the
period 2019 2025" includes
chapters on
preservation
of biodiversity,
landscapes
and geological
heritage

Law Ratifying the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats "Official Gazette RS – International Agreements", No 13/18). The Red Book of Serbian Fauna IV: Prthoptera, published by the Serbian Institute for Conservation of Nature and the Department for Environment and Biology of the Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Novi Sad, was published in 2018. The Red Books are a science-based basis for undertaking of measures, at all levels of competences and responsibility in preserving biodiversity and these publications can be seen as a response to the increasingly drastic violations of nature and loss of species. The Red Book of Serbian Birds is currently being prepared and will be published by the end of the year¹.

ECOSYSTEM VALUATION

Within this project a case study has been conducted "Presenting Ecosystem Assessment and Valuation (ESAV) in the region of Bosut forests – integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services into use and management of natural resources", conducted by the Provincial Institute for Conservation of Nature (Novi Sad), as one of the project partners, in cooperation with the German Organisation for International Cooperation (GIZ).

A good example of action in the broader context of implementation of the **CBD** at national and regional level during 2018 is the implementation of the regional project of the Open Regional Fund for SE Europe - Biodiversity Project (GIZ ORF/BD), aimed at strengthening capacities of institutions in charge of biodiversity to implement the EU Strategy of Biodiversity through regional cooperation. The List has been developed of selected endemic lend plants and taxons for animals in South-East Europe (List of Endemic Taxons in SEE), as well as regional and national guide-

lines for information management and reporting on biodiversity. Additionally, ten priority recommendations have been identified regarding the future use of ecosystem service assessment and valuation (ESAV) in South-East Europe with the focus on strengthening capacities (skills and knowledge) and communication (building dialogue and understanding) and solutions (change of conditions and practices in the field). Inn 2018 the ORF BD published the "Overview of gender equality within key strategies and reports in the field of biodiversity in South-East Europe".

It is relevant to mention the establishment of the Biodiversity Task Force (BD TF), with participants from the Ministry of Environmental Protection, as a technical and advisory body for the Regional Environmental Working Groups (RWG Env), under the auspices of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). The Biodiversity Task Force is tasked with coordinating regional activities, implementing the Strategy SEE 2020, and providing a framework for efficient implementation of policies for the preservation of biodiversity in the process of accession to the European Union. The Secretariat of the regional working group is the Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature for Eastern Europe, North and Central Asia (IUCN ECARO). The Regional Working Group presented its activities and work plans at the 14th session of CBD parties held in Egypt in November 2018.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection signed an agreement with UNEP as the implementing agency for preparation of the sixth national report on implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Republic of Serbia, through implementation of the project "Support to the Sixth National Report under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)". The Project is funded through the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the implementing agency in Serbia is the Environmental Protection Agency. The sixth report on implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity shall enable reporting on implementation of the strategic framework of the Republic of Serbia in the field of biodiversity, reporting on progress in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity for the period 2011 – 2020 and the relevant Aichi

http://www.zzps.rs/novo/index.php?jezik=sr&strana=vest&n=585

targets and ensuring reliable data for the preparation of the fifth Global Overview of Biological Diversity (GBO5).

In addition to participation at the 14th Conference of the Parties on Biodiversity, the participants of the Republic of Serbia in 2018 participated at important meetings for the implementation of the Convention,

such as the twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice for the Convention on Biological Diversity (SBSTTA 22) and the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation of the CBD (SBI 2) which were held in Montreal, as well as the meeting of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, working groups (GSPC) held in the South African Republic.



GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "STRATEGIC PLANFOR BIODIVERSITY FOR THE PERIOD 2011-2020"

Parties to the CBD adopt their "Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans", or update the existing ones, in line with the "Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020"



Parties to the CBD use the "
Strategic Plan for Biodiversity
2011-2020" and the Aichi targets
as a flexible framework and
integrate these into national
targets and revisions of the
existing Strategies.

Parties to the CBD adopt the updated National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (hereinafter; NBSAPs), as policy instruments and in order to integrate the principles of preservation of biodiversity into national development, financial management and planning processes.

Monitoring and reviewing implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and national targets, by using the set indicators



OVERVIEW OF OTHER ACTIVITIES AIMED AT CREATING CONDITIONS FOR MORE EFFICIENT FULFILMENT OF OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE RIO CONVENTIONS DURING 2018 IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

5.

5.1. CROSS-CUTTING

COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

FOR THE FULFILMENT OF

OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE RIO

CONVENTIONS IN SERBIA

In the course of 2018 a series of activities were implemented aimed at improving the implementation of environmental international agreements and achieving synergies among such agreements in Serbia, by strengthening the consultation processes and integrating the provisions of such agreements in national and local policies and programmes. Most activities were implemented through the GEF project "Strengthening Capacities for Improved Implementation of Environmental International Agreements", implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental protection and other bodies and institutions of the Republic of Serbia.

5.1.1 Activities with the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

A series of activities has been conducted related to capacity building, obligations, harmonisation and issues related to the Conventions, with MPs from different political parties and members of the Green MP Group (53% women) in the National Assembly. The activities organised during 2018, in cooperation with the NGO Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE), were implemented in order to strengthen capacities of MPs to deal with the regulatory framework relevant to global environmental topics and in order to enhance communication between the executive and legislative branches of power. The activities included the following events: meeting on the topic of fulfilment of environmental obligations at local level, with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM); the panel on gender equality and climate change in cooperation with the Women's Parliamentary Group; participation in the training course of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on green jobs.



In the course of 2018 a series of activities were implemented aimed at improving the implementation of environmental international agreements

5.1.2 Involvement of students and youth

Students of the Legal Clinic for Environmental Law of the Law faculty of the University of Belgrade in the course of 2018 provided legal advice to the Ministry of Environmental protection in the process of drafting legislation in line with the international legal framework, including the Rio Conventions and other multilateral environmental treaties. The events also included the case law of the European Court of Justice, the Committee on Harmonisation of the Arhus Convention, the national case law and comparative legal acts.

Guidelines for development of successful projects for youth organisations and youth offices in local governments, including the issue of the youth and global environmental issues during 2018 put special emphasis on mainstreaming gender equality and issues relevant to yulnerable social groups.

5.1.3 Research to support environmental policy making

In order to enhance the existing research capacity in Serbia and support research related to the Rio Conventions and the global environmental topics, representatives of research institutions engaged in environmental research participated in 2018 in a series of training courses on developing project proposals under international calls for proposals to fund research projects, such as the EU Programme for financing of research and innovation Horizon 2020.



CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

The area of South-East Europe, including the Republic of Serbia, is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world in terms of the current climate change, and particularly in terms of the expected trends by the middle and end of the 21st century and their impacts on ecosystem stability and prospects for local community development. The increase of mean annual air temperatures, the unusually prolonged dry periods, frequent intense rainfall episodes producing flash floods, less days with snow, significant reduction of flows in the hydrological network during low water periods – these are just some of the manifestations of climate change. The said phenomena have a strong and evident impact on the state of the environment and economic activity in Serbia, through forest drying processes, increasingly frequent forest fires and diseases, the drastic reduction of agricultural production, biodiversity loss, land degradation, the general vulnerability of lives and property due to disastrous flooding. There is also an increasing public health risk due to the increasingly extreme manifestations of the "heat island" effect, air and water pollution in urban areas on a broad scale from smaller settlements to major cities.

It is the vital interest of the Republic of Serbia to participate in activities aimed at a realistic perception of issues related to climate change, land degradation and preservation of biodiversity, as the basis for designing policies for prevention, adaptation and mitigation of negative effects. The said problems are global issues and therefore global activism and cooperation are needed among all countries, which has been

articulated by organisations such as the United Nations and complex activities are needed, articulated through the three Rio Conventions: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Republic of Serbia is state party to the three Rio Conventions, which was ratified by relevant laws and confirmed by fulfilment of accurately defined obligations, including reporting to Convention bodies. "The Annual Report on Activities for Implementation of the Rio Conventions in the Republic of Serbia" is a comprehensive overview including a history of implementation of said Conventions in Serbia, with emphasis on the current year 2018. The Republic of Serbia is conscientiously fulfilling its obligations, in line with its interests, its socio-economic status, legislative and technical-technological capacities. The present Report provides a comparative overview of activities in the RS relevant to the Rio Conventions, and identifying the level of fulfilment of the set goals, which are essentially complementary with the UN Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land) and 17 (Partnership for the Goals). Additionally, the goals of the Rio Conventions and the UN Sustainable Development Agenda are to a greater or lesser degree integrated in different EU directives which for Serbia as a candidate country are guidelines for successful completion of that process.

6.



The area of
South-East
Europe,
including the
Republic of
Serbia, is one
of the most
vulnerable
regions in the
world in terms
of the current
climate change

- Ministarstvo zaštite životne sredine Republike Srbije (2017): Drugi izveštaj Republike Srbije prema Okvirnoj konvenciji Ujedinjenih nacija o promeni klime, Beograd.
- Ministarstvo poljoprivrede i zaštite životne sredine Republike Srbije (2016): Prvi dvogodišnji ažurirani izveštaj Republike Srbije prema Okvirnoj konvenciji Ujedinjenih nacija o promeni klime, Beograd.
- Ministarstvo životne sredine i prostornog planiranja Republike Srbije (2010): Prvi izveštaj Republike Srbije prema Okvirnoj konvenciji Ujedinjenih nacija o promeni klime, Beograd.
- Misija OEBS-a u Republici Srbiji (2017): Strategija komunikacije za oblast klimatskih promena, Beograd.
- Ministarstvo poljoprivrede i zaštite životne sredine Republike Srbije (2015): Prvi nacionalni Plan adaptacije na izmenjene klimatske uslove za Republiku Srbiju.
- Ministarstvo životne sredine i prostornog planiranja (2011): Strategija biološke raznovrsnosti Republike Srbije za period od 2011. do 2018. godine, Beograd.
- UNFCCC (1997): Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change adopted at COP3 in Kyoto, Japan.

- UN General Assembly: United Nations
 Framework Convention on Climate Change,
 resolution/adopted by the General
 Assembly, 20 January 1994, A/RES/48/189,
 available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f2770.html [accessed 19
 December 2018].
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2017): UNHCR Engagement in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 7 December 2017, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/5a292d5a4.html [accessed 19 December 2018].
- IUCN (2015): Land Degradation Neutrality: implications and opportunities for conservation, Technical Brief Second Edition 27/08/2015. Nairobi: IUCN. 19p
- WMO (2013): Climate Change and Desertification.
- UNEP (2004): Decisions adopted by the conference of the parties to the convention on biological diversity at its sixth meeting, Report on the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/20/Part 2) Strategic Plan Decision VI/26"
- Open regionasl Fund for SE Europe -Biodiversity Project (GIZ ORF/BD) https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/40686.html

