

**PROJECT DOCUMENT**  
**11TH TRANCHE OF THE DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT**

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

<b>Project Code and Title :</b>	1819AE. Evidence-based environmental governance and sustainable environmental policies in support of the 2030 Agenda in South-East Europe
<b>Start date:</b>	January 2018
<b>End date:</b>	December 2021
<b>Budget:</b>	USD 470,000
<b>UMOJA cost centre(s):</b>	13807
<b>UMOJA functional area(s):</b>	20AC0001
<b>Target countries:</b>	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
<b>Executing Entity/Entities:</b>	UNECE
<b>Co-operating Entities within the UN Secretariat and System:</b>	UNEP, UNDP, and the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in beneficiary countries

**Brief description:**

Strengthening environmental governance and development of sustainable environmental policies plays an important role in the achievement of many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Countries of the South-East Europe are now undertaking the SDG nationalization process. However the national capacities in evidence-based environmental governance in these countries require further strengthening to ensure effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Although some progress has been achieved with the integration of environmental requirements into sector-specific policies, much more needs to be done to enhance the environmental dimension of sectoral policies and ensure implementation and enforcement of environment-related provisions in sectoral policies and legislation.

The project supports five countries of the South-East Europe in formulating actions on the basis of their Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) in order to achieve relevant SDGs. The project assists national stakeholders, in particular the ministries responsible for environmental issues, to contribute to the revision of sector-specific and cross-sectoral strategies aligning them with the SDGs. This is achieved by building the national capacities to assess priority needs in environmental governance and facilitating the national action to integrate evidence-based environmental policies into sector-specific and cross-sectoral strategies aimed at the achievement of SDGs. The key outcome of the project are national action plans/policy packages for implementing recommendations coming from EPRs in line with the SDGs that are developed through a participatory and inclusive process and benefit from an exchange of experience, knowledge and best practice at subregional level.

The project is expected to enhance national capacities of beneficiary countries to assess the most critical aspects and priority needs in their environmental governance and policies and to increase national capacities to develop and integrate evidence-based coherent environmental policies into sector-specific and cross-sectoral strategies aimed at contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

### **2.1. Context**

Strengthening environmental governance and development of sustainable environmental policies plays an important role in the achievement of many SDGs and implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels. SDG nationalization process coupled with the EU accession pose a major challenge for a number of the South-East Europe countries. In order to implement the 2030 Agenda, member States will need to improve their management of the social, economic and environmental performance and to redesign their policy according to the SDGs. The lack of comprehensive and evidence-based policy, concrete and realistic plan of actions prevents countries from progressing towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

At the 67th Commission Session of UNECE (2017), member States adopted a decision formally establishing the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD). The RFSD will focus on practical value added, taking into account the work of existing regional bodies and mechanisms, including peer review mechanisms. One of such mechanisms is the Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs). An EPR is an assessment of the progress a country has made in reconciling its environmental and economic targets and in meeting its international environmental commitments. The EPR Programme assists countries to improve their environmental management and performance; promotes environmental sustainability; promotes information exchange among countries on policies and experiences; helps integrating environmental policies into economic sectors; promotes greater accountability to the public and strengthens cooperation with the international community. Most countries of South-East Europe, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia are now undertaking their third EPRs .

### **2.2. Mandates, comparative advantage and link to the Programme Budget**

The project contributes to achieving the expected accomplishment "Improved environmental performance of interested countries" of Subprogramme 1, "Environment", of the UNECE Strategic Framework for 2018-2019 of Programme 17 "Economic development in Europe" (A/71/6 - Prog.17) and the expected accomplishment "Institutional capacities and policy and/or legal frameworks enhanced to achieve internationally agreed environmental goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development/the Sustainable Development Goals" of Subprogramme 4 "Environmental Governance" of the UNEP Strategic Framework for 2018-2019 of Programme 11 "Environment" (A/71/6 - Prog.11). In 2018-2019 the UNECE EPR Programme was explicitly asked to support member States in the implementation of the EPR recommendations and monitor the impact of the recommendations on national policies.

The EPR Programme has been mandated to assist the UNECE member States in supporting the achievement and monitoring of SDGs in the pan-European region by the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Batumi, 2016). Specifically, the Programme will assist in the nationalization of relevant SDGs in the countries under review, will assess the progress a country under review is making in achieving relevant SDGs and provide recommendations to overcome the challenges; and will identify systemic problems related to the achievement of relevant SDGs.

The comparative advantage of UNECE for undertaking the proposed project is offering the well-established EPR mechanism that can be expanded it into the comprehensive tool to support the national governments in the achievement of the SDGs. The added value of the project lies in assisting the target countries to implement the recommendations coming from EPRs, compared to business as usual scenario when no help was provided for implementation of EPR recommendations. Moreover, as the UNECE hosts the RFSD, the proposed project will provide an input to the RFSD, therefore contributing to the regional exchange of knowledge and experience on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

UNEP is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the

United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. UNEP has successfully implemented projects and initiatives in all the countries in the SEE for past two decades. Since 2009, UNEP has built a strong local presence in the Western Balkans, opening project offices in Sarajevo, Belgrade and Skopje through the Vienna Programme Office. UNEP in the region is assisting implementation of several projects on protection of biodiversity, sustainable land management and adaptation to climate change. Further more, UNEP has assisted the SEE countries in development of National Capacity Self Assessment for implementation of three Rio Conventions (NCSAs), establishment and improvement of national environmental monitoring systems, development of state of the environment reports and major strategic documents for nature protection (in compliance with UNCBD and UNCCD). UNEP (Vienna) would therefore ensure necessary local presence, synergies and linkages with other initiatives nationally and regionally, and also project's long term sustainability. The UNEP Regional Office for Europe has regularly provided expertise and support to the EPR Programme.

The comparative advantage of both UNECE and UNEP is that these organisations host a number of multilateral environmental agreements (conventions on public participation, environmental assessment, water, air, biodiversity, waste, chemicals, etc.), which play a crucial role for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Many EPR recommendations are directly related to the implementation of commitments stemming out from such agreements. The proposed project would therefore be an integral part of an overall efforts directed towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by beneficiary countries and the two organisations, including those applied in the framework of the multilateral environmental agreements.

The project activities will be integrated, as appropriate, into the UNDAFs of beneficiary countries in order to improve coordination amongst agencies and strengthen coherence of various interventions on environment and climate change.

### **2.3. Country demand and target countries**

Target countries are five countries in South-East Europe, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

In addition to the requests of member States for support, the key criterion for selecting the target countries has been the potential for providing tangible assistance in strengthening national capacities for evidence-based environmental governance and sustainable development policies in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. These countries have recently been (Montenegro, Serbia) or are currently being (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina) reviewed by the EPR Programme, or will soon be reviewed (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) by the EPR Programme. As evidenced by these reviews, the national capacities in evidence-based environmental governance require strengthening to achieve effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, the stretched national resources in the five countries are currently strongly focused on EU integration. Additional efforts are therefore needed to emphasize and prioritize the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including by aligning it, as much as possible, with the EU accession process.

Two countries undertaking their EPRs in 2017 – Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina – have explicitly asked for UNECE support for the integration of SDGs into their EPRs to be able to benefit from advice of the EPR Programme in implementation of the relevant SDGs.

The second criterion for selecting the target countries has been the opportunity to strengthen the impact at the country level by applying the regional approach. As the five countries have similar conditions and priorities, they often face similar challenges in improving their environmental policies and legislation. For these reasons, they can benefit from peer learning, identification of common issues and solutions, and exchange of best practices, offered through the proposed project. The regional approach also enables strengthening the input of South-East Europe countries to RFSD.

Subject to available interest, an additional country (Croatia) will be involved in subregional activities under the project on a self-financed basis.

All beneficiary have clearly stated their interest in the proposed project and requested support proposed by the project.

#### **2.4. Link to the SDGs**

The project will contribute to the following goals and targets:

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages: Target 3.9.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all: Target 4.7.

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all: Targets 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.b.

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable: Targets 11.2, 11.4, 11.6 and 11.b.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns: Targets 12.1, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6 and 12.8.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts: Targets 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3.

Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss: Targets 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8, 15.9, 15.a, 15.b and 15.c.

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development: Target 17.14.

### **3. ANALYSIS**

#### **3.1. Situation analysis**

The main issue that the project seeks to address is the lack of capacity and understanding in the beneficiary countries to enable the integration of environmental issues in sustainable development policies as part of the integrated and comprehensive approach to implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Although the situation differs between countries, sectoral development in agriculture, energy, tourism, industry and mining has traditionally excluded the consideration of environmental issues, in particular from the point of view of preventive action. Sectoral ministries do not have staff specifically responsible for environmental issues. No training on environmental issues is organised for staff in the sectoral ministries as part of regular training and in-service training programmes.

The underlying issue contributing to the problem is the relatively weak position of Ministries responsible for environmental issues within the national Governments. The position of the Ministries responsible for environmental issues has been weak historically as the environmental concerns have not been a priority. Although green economy and sustainable development are recognized nowadays as priorities in the targeted countries, there is little knowledge and capacity to enable practical implementation. All targeted countries have achieved some progress with the integration of environmental issues in existing sector-specific policies and legislation. However such integration exists predominantly at the level of policy documents and laws and is weaker at the level of secondary legislation. Moreover, the mechanisms for such integration (e.g. strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment) still do not function smoothly as these are new instruments for the countries which still need to be properly understood and implemented by all parties. The actual implementation of environmental requirements of the sector-specific legislation represents a challenge when it comes to large-scale investments since the environmental requirements are often viewed as obstacles for economic development projects important for a country.

All targeted countries are currently undertaking the process of nationalization of the SDGs and revise their national policy documents to integrate SDGs. It is important that Governments and in particular the Ministries responsible for environmental issues are assisted in this process to ensure the formulation of ambitious though realistic targets in environment-related domains and their integration into sector-specific policies. It is also important that this process aligned with the EU integration process, to ensure efficient use of the limited national capacities and resources.

By aligning EPR recommendations to SDGs and assisting countries in the implementation of those recommendations the project will significantly contribute to the integration of environmental issues in sustainable development policies as part of the integrated approach to implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Specific attention will be paid to vulnerable groups, as relevant to specific EPR recommendations. The vulnerable groups will be identified and targeted on a country-specific basis depending on the EPR recommendations. The most relevant example for countries in South-East Europe is connected with tariff policies for environment-related utility services (waste, water and sewerage, electricity). While EPR recommendations address the need to raise tariffs for utilities to cost-reflective levels and phase out cross-subsidization of household tariffs by enterprises, they always point out at the affordability issues and recommend targeted schemes for social assistance to vulnerable groups that are using utility services. The vulnerable groups will be targeted through interviews, consultations and participation in the meetings organized by the project.

### 3.2. Country level situation analysis

Table 1 – Country analysis

Country	Status of affairs	Realistic outcomes
Albania	<p>Albania progresses with the adoption of new modern environmental legislation as part of EU accession process. A developed strategic planning system with clear rules and methodologies is in place. Progress has been made with the integration of environmental considerations into sector-specific policies but much more needs to be done, including through improved use of strategic environmental assessment (SEA).</p> <p>The Government has progressed with aligning its national agenda, as set out in the second National Strategy for Development and Integration (2016), with the 2030 Agenda and is working on developing a national action plan on SDGs.</p> <p>The system of institutions with environment-related responsibilities has seen many changes in the past years. Much more needs to be achieved to ensure the coherent</p>	<p>The Third EPR of Albania includes a set of recommendations to the country on legal and policy frameworks, greening the economy, environmental monitoring and information, education for sustainable development, international cooperation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, air protection, water management, waste management, biodiversity, forestry and protected areas, transport, energy and industry.</p> <p>Since the Third EPR of Albania is carried out during 2017, it is already being aligned, as much as possible, to the SDGs.</p> <p>Realistic outcomes would include developing a national</p>

	<p>functioning of the system at both national and local levels, with efficient vertical and horizontal coordination. The SEA instrument is new for the country and the key challenge is to ensure its proper application by sectoral authorities.</p> <p>Subject to outcomes of the review on the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPR and the needs assessment, the major gaps to be addressed could include proper use of SEA or improved vertical and horizontal coordination.</p>	<p>action plan on implementation of EPR recommendations in line with relevant SDGs or developing 1-3 policy packages (e.g. a programme to address past industrial pollution hotspots) to implement selected EPR recommendations. A national action plan would serve as a concrete roadmap for implementation of EPR recommendations, therefore increasing the likelihood of effective implementation. Policy packages would provide a clear policy framework to address an environmental issue at stake.</p> <p>Outcomes will be defined in more detail as part of a work plan to be developed during the first national workshop (A1.3.).</p>
<p>Bosnia and Herzegovina</p>	<p>Efforts are applied at all levels (state, entity/Brcko District, cantonal, municipal) to improve the legal and policy framework on environmental protection. However, due to the complex political and institutional set-up, the progress with the introduction of legal and policy measures takes considerably higher efforts and necessitates more time than in other countries.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have a national sustainable development strategy or any other comprehensive development strategy adopted at the state level. Also, Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have strong and effective mechanisms to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development, neither in terms of inter-sectoral cooperation for sustainable development nor in terms of cooperation between the levels of governance. The National Steering Committee for Environment and Sustainable Development was discontinued in 2005.</p>	<p>The Third EPR of Bosnia and Herzegovina includes a set of recommendations to the country on legal and policy frameworks, regulatory and compliance assurance mechanisms, greening the economy, environmental monitoring and information, education for sustainable development, international cooperation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, air protection, water management, protection of the Adriatic Sea, waste management, biodiversity and protected areas, and forestry.</p> <p>Since the Third EPR of Bosnia and Herzegovina is carried out during 2017, it is already being aligned, as much as possible, to the SDGs.</p> <p>Realistic outcomes would include developing either a national action plan on</p>

	<p>In late March 2017, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, appointed the Directorate for Economic Planning under the Council of Ministers to coordinate the process of implementation and monitoring of SDGs. As of April 2017, SDGs are not mentioned in any of the planning documents at state and entity level.</p>	<p>implementation of EPR recommendations in line with relevant SDGs or developing 1-3 policy packages (e.g. a plan to promote non-motorized mobility in cities) to implement selected EPR recommendations. A national action plan would serve as a concrete roadmap for implementation of EPR recommendations, therefore increasing the likelihood of effective implementation. Policy packages would provide a clear policy framework to address an environmental issue at stake.</p> <p>Outcomes will be defined in more detail as part of a work plan to be developed during the first national workshop (A1.3.).</p>
<p>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</p>	<p>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is progressing with the adoption of new modern environmental legislation and developing its strategic planning system as part of EU accession process. For the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Government envisages to implement the integration of SDGs into the national planning system in several stages, starting with the prioritization of the SDGs and localization of the targets and selection of local indicators as a basis for upgrading the existing National Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020 and to develop the SDGs Implementation Plan 2016-2030. Subject to the outcomes of the EPR, the gaps that the project will address, may include the need to strengthen national capacity for integration of environmental issues into sectoral policies and the need for support in these efforts during the development/revision of the national policy documents on sustainable development and SDGs.</p>	<p>In 2017 the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia requested ECE to carry out the Third EPR. The Third EPR will be conducted in 2018-2019 and will be aligned to the SDGs. The project will be implemented in parallel to the EPR preparation process. There may be no need to develop a review of the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPRs vis-à-vis SDGs and targets (A1.1).</p> <p>Realistic outcomes would include developing a national action plan on implementation of EPR recommendations in line with relevant SDGs or developing 1-3 policy packages to implement selected EPR recommendations. A national action plan would serve as a concrete roadmap for implementation of EPR recommendations, therefore</p>

		<p>increasing the likelihood of effective implementation. Policy packages would provide a clear policy framework to address an environmental issue at stake.</p> <p>Outcomes will be defined in more detail as part of a work plan to be developed during the first national workshop (A1.3.).</p>
<p>Montenegro</p>	<p>Montenegro makes notable efforts to harmonize its legislation with EU law. It has adopted a number of strategic documents to define the strategic vision in specific sectors of environmental protection and sustainable development. However, implementation of some strategic documents faces difficulties because of poor financing. SEA procedures are actively applied to plans and programmes at both national and local levels. At the local level, the capacity to implement SEA is rather low.</p> <p>The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism is the main governmental authority responsible for policymaking on the environment and sustainable development. The National Council for Sustainable Development was established in 2002 as a cross-sectoral advisory body on issues of sustainable development.</p> <p>In 2016 Montenegro adopted the National Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030 which is explicitly aligned with the SDGs. It includes the implementation plan. NSSD 2030 envisages the reform of the National Council for Sustainable Development into the Council of State, with the additional strengthened participation of civil society, business and scientific sectors. The country is in the process of harmonization of sector-specific strategies with the 2030 NSSD.</p> <p>Subject to outcomes of the review on the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPR</p>	<p>The Third EPR of Montenegro includes a set of recommendations to the country on legal and policy frameworks, regulatory and compliance assurance mechanisms, economic instruments, environmental monitoring and information, education for sustainable development, international cooperation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, water management and waste management.</p> <p>Since the Third EPR of Montenegro was carried out in 2014, it was not aligned to the SDGs.</p> <p>Realistic outcomes would include developing a national action plan on implementation of (not implemented) EPR recommendations in line with the relevant SDGs or developing 1-3 policy packages to implement selected EPR recommendations. A national action plan would serve as a concrete roadmap for implementation of EPR recommendations, therefore increasing the likelihood of effective implementation. Policy packages would provide a clear policy framework to address an environmental issue at stake.</p>

	<p>and the needs assessment, the major gaps to be addressed could include the need to strengthen national capacity for integration of environmental issues into sectoral policies.</p>	<p>Outcomes will be defined in more detail as part of a work plan to be developed during the first national workshop (A1.3.).</p>
<p>Serbia</p>	<p>Serbia has been making progress in improving its legislation on the environment as part of EU accession process. Although there has been progressing in the formal integration of environmental considerations into sectoral strategic and planning documents, actual integration of environmental considerations in the implementation of sectoral strategic and planning documents are not yet a reality. Practical experience has been accumulated in implementation of the SEA; however sectoral plans and programmes, especially at the provincial and local levels, sometimes evade SEA.</p> <p>The institutional framework for environment and sustainable development has been constantly changing. Constant transformations shaking the environmental sector have impacted on the continuity of efforts to improve environmental policy and legislation, to integrate environmental considerations into sectoral policies, and to pursue sustainable development.</p> <p>The Government established in December 2015 the Interministerial working group for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to carry out the nationalization, implementation and monitoring of SDGs. At the first meeting of the group in April 2016, ministries presented their initial plans for implementation of SDGs, linking their realization with the implementation of legislative and strategic documents in respective sectors.</p> <p>Subject to outcomes of the review on the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPR and the needs assessment, the major gaps to be addressed could include the</p>	<p>The Third EPR of Serbia includes a set of recommendations to the country on legal and policy frameworks, regulatory and compliance assurance mechanisms, economic instruments, environmental monitoring and information, education for sustainable development, international cooperation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, water management and waste management.</p> <p>Since the Third EPR of Serbia was carried out in 2014, it was not aligned to the SDGs.</p> <p>Realistic outcomes would include developing a national action plan on implementation of (not implemented) EPR recommendations in line with the relevant SDGs or developing 1-3 policy packages to implement selected EPR recommendations. A national action plan would serve as a concrete roadmap for implementation of EPR recommendations, therefore increasing the likelihood of effective implementation. Policy packages would provide a clear policy framework to address an environmental issue at stake.</p> <p>Outcomes will be defined in more detail as part of a work plan to be developed during the first national workshop (A1.3.).</p>

	need for stronger national coordination and capacity for integration of environmental issues into sectoral policies.	
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### 3.3. Stakeholder analysis and capacity assessment

Table 2 – Stakeholder Analysis

Non-UN Stakeholders	Type and level of involvement in the project	Capacity assets	Capacity Gaps	Desired future outcomes	Incentives
<i>Ministries responsible for environmental issues<sup>1</sup></i>	Ministries responsible for environmental issues are in need of assistance with implementation of SDGs at the stage of the nationalization of SDGs and integration of SDGs into sector-specific policies.	The strengths are the commitment of Ministries responsible for environmental issues to the SDGs due to their long-term involvement in sustainable development policies; relatively good awareness of SDGs; the existence of international cooperation departments in all ministries responsible for environmental issues which are well aware of sustainable development issues in international cooperation.	Ministries responsible for environmental issues lack capacity on the integration of environmentally relevant SDGs into sector-specific policies. They are not influential enough vis-à-vis the sectoral ministries to ensure integration of environmental considerations into sector-specific policies.	Ministries responsible for environmental issues are better equipped to ensure integration of environmentally relevant SDGs into national (in particular, sector-specific) policies.	The incentive is the improvement of the environmental situation in the country which is the direct responsibility of ministries responsible for environmental issues.
<i>Sectoral ministries responsible for</i>	Sectoral ministries are in charge of revising	Sectoral ministries, especially for	As sectoral ministries have traditionally	Increased capacity of sectoral	The incentive for sectoral ministries is the

<sup>1</sup> Albania: Ministry of Environment; Bosnia and Herzegovina: Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Spatial Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology of Republika Srpska, and Sub-department of Spatial Planning, Urban Development and Environmental Protection of the Government of Brcko District; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning; Montenegro: Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism; Serbia: Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection.

<i>agriculture, energy, industry, mining, transport, etc. (to be identified more specifically depending on policy packages chosen)</i>	national sector-specific policies to align them to SDGs. The project will help them to take into account environment-related SDGs.	economically important sectors have a strong involvement in national policy making.	been less involved in sustainable development issues, their awareness of SDGs in general and environment-related SDGs in particular are weak. Most of sectoral ministries do not have staff directly responsible for environmental and sustainable development issues.	ministries to ensure the integration of environmental requirements and environment-related SDGs into revised national policies in relevant sectors.	opportunity to receive assistance/advice for integration of environmental requirements into revised national policies in relevant sectors. Their buy-in will be ensured through constant consultations.
<i>Inspection authorities responsible for environmental enforcement</i>	The inspection authorities will provide input towards integration of environmental requirements in sectoral policies and legislation.	The inspection authorities have the knowledge about gaps in the implementation and enforcement of environmental requirements in the sectoral legislation.	The inspection authorities are not strongly involved in the development of policy documents, mostly due to insufficient mandate for participation in the development of sectoral legislation and the lack of coordination. Their capacity and experience with participation in the development of sectoral legislation ranges between the countries.	Better design and enforcement of environmental requirements in sector-specific policies and legislation.	The incentive for inspection authorities is to improve coordination in order to have an opportunity to provide a stronger input to policy making. Their input is crucial for the improvement of environmental enforcement, since the inspection authorities are best aware of practical difficulties with implementation and enforcement.
<i>NGOs, private sector, academia (to be identified more)</i>	NGOs, private sector, academia will provide input towards integration of	NGOs and the private sector have better knowledge of the problems with	NGOs, private sector, academia commonly have more limited	Strengthened input into national policies and improved integration of	NGOs, private sector, academia would appreciate providing an input to policy

<i>specifically depending on policy packages chosen)</i>	environmental requirements in sector-specific policies and legislation.	implementation of environmental requirements on the ground and can provide a reality check. NGOs, the private sector and academia often possess valuable human capacity.	possibilities to influence policy making compared to national authorities. Their awareness on SDGs varies among countries but in general tends to be low.	environmental requirements in sector-specific policies and legislation.	making on SDGs. They would be interested to provide such input since policy making on SDGs ultimately has an impact on every citizen and legal entity.
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**4. PROJECT STRATEGY: OBJECTIVE, EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS, INDICATORS, MAIN ACTIVITIES**

**4.1. Project Strategy**

In order to achieve the objective of strengthening national capacities of selected countries of South-East Europe for evidence-based environmental governance and sustainable environmental policies in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the project will focus on two main areas:

- Enhancing national capacities *to assess* the most critical aspects and priority needs (leading to EA1);
- Enhancing national capacities *to integrate environmental requirements into sector-specific policies* aimed at the achievement of SDGs (leading to EA2).

Activities under the EA1 will include the preparation of reviews of the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPRs vis-à-vis SDGs and targets and need assessments (one per target country) to determine and address gaps identified in the reviews between current conditions and desired achievements of relevant SDGs. Activities under EA2 will build upon the outcomes achieved in the first stage, and will include the development of national action plans/policy packages for implementing recommendations coming from EPRs in line with relevant SDGs.

Furthermore, the objective of strengthening national capacities for evidence-based environmental governance and sustainable environmental policies in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be achieved through enhanced regional exchange. The regional exchange will take place during the subregional policy seminar (A2.3) to exchange experience on implementation of national action plans/policy packages and the concluding subregional event (A2.4) to present an overview of the environmental challenges in the South-East Europe region, share best practices and discuss follow-up of the national action plans/policy packages.

The project will rely on the strong involvement of national stakeholders achieved through their participation in:

- Drafting of the review of implementation (A1.1), needs assessment (A1.2), and national action plans/policy packages (A2.1);
- National workshops organized to review the results of the reviews and needs assessments (A1.3) and to review national action plans/policy packages (A2.2);
- Subregional policy seminar to exchange experiences on implementation of the national action plans/policy packages (A2.3).

In all project activities, the selection of stakeholders for participation would need to be tailored to ensure that vulnerable groups affected by policies discussed are involved and no one is left behind. For example,

in a country working on a policy package addressing waste management such vulnerable groups could include the informal sector involved in separate waste collection. In another country, working on a policy package addressing water and health such vulnerable groups could include women NGOs or consumer associations.

The project will promote equality between genders through selection of project consultants and meeting participants.

#### 4.2. Logical Framework

Table 3 – Logical Framework

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
<p><b>Objective</b> To strengthen national capacities of selected countries of South-East Europe for evidence-based environmental governance and sustainable environmental policies in support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda</p>		
<p><b>EA1</b> Enhanced national capacities of the selected countries of South-East Europe to assess the most critical aspects and priority needs in their environmental governance and policies.</p>	<p><b>IA 1.1</b> Five target countries identified policy gaps between current conditions and desired achievement of relevant SDGs</p>	<p>Sources of information to inform the indicator will be the needs assessments presented and discussed at the national workshops.</p>
<p><b>Main activity A1.1 Develop five (one per target country) reviews of the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPRs vis-à-vis SDGs and targets;</b> The reviews of the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPRs vis-à-vis SDGs and targets will allow identifying the current state of affairs with the implementation of EPR recommendations and positioning these efforts vis-à-vis SDGs and their targets. Activity A1.1 will be undertaken in full scale for Montenegro and Serbia where Third EPRs were produced in 2014. Lighter versions will be prepared for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina since their Third EPRs are being prepared in 2017 and therefore most likely only very few EPR recommendations, if any, will be implemented by the start of the project in 2018. In addition, the Third EPRs of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina will include the links between EPR recommendations and SDGs. As for the EPR of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the review will be included as part of the EPR (will be implemented in 2018-2019).</p>		
<p><b>Main activity A1.2 Undertake need assessments (one per target country) to determine and address gaps identified in the reviews between current conditions and desired achievements of relevant SDGs;</b> Activity A1.2 will be implemented in conjunction with (in parallel with or immediately after) Activity A1.1, so that to ensure that the needs assessment builds on and logically follows from the review of implementation. The methodology for the needs assessment will include a desk study, complemented by interviews with national stakeholders and soliciting comments to the draft document. The substantive analyses of the needs assessment will conclude with the proposals for the development of a national action plan and ideas for potential policy packages to be developed later in the project.</p>		

**Main activity A1.3 Organise five (one per target country) workshops to present and validate the results of the reviews and needs assessments;**

The one-day workshops will bring together the national stakeholders to comment upon and validate the results of the reviews and needs assessments. The workshops will conclude with a selection of national action plan/policy packages to be further worked on. The workshops will be used to develop country-specific project work plans with country-specific activities and outcomes. The selection of stakeholders to participate in the workshop will depend on the content of country's EPR and issues raised therein. Every effort will be made to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are engaged and that no one is left behind. The workshops may be held as two-day events if needed. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, two one-day workshops may be organized (one in each entity).

<p><b>EA 2</b> Increased national capacities of the selected countries of South-East Europe to develop and integrate evidence-based coherent environmental policies into sector-specific and cross-sectoral strategies aimed at contributing to the achievement of relevant SDGs and 2030 Agenda.</p>	<p><b>IA 2.1</b> Five target countries developed and endorsed priority national action plans/policy packages based on the EPRs.</p>	<p>Sources of information to inform the indicator will be the drafts of national action plans/policy packages.</p>
	<p><b>IA 2.2</b> Five target countries presented reports on the implementation of SDG-related recommendations resulting from the EPRs.</p>	<p>Sources of information to inform the indicator will be the reports presented by five countries at the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy in 2020-2021, with presentations posted on the Committee's website and reflected in the Committee's report(s).</p>
	<p><b>IA 2.3</b> 80 per cent of recommendations from EPRs either implemented or incorporated into national action plans/policy packages based on the national priority needs</p>	<p>Information will be gathered through interviews conducted in the countries by consultants and staff. It will be verified by national stakeholders during the validation workshops. Drafts of national action plans/policy packages will include references to EPR recommendations. For Montenegro and Serbia, this indicator can be calculated after completion of A1.1 and A1.2 and recalculated after completion of A2.2 and A2.3. For Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia this indicator can be calculated after completion of A2.2 and A2.3.</p>

**Main activity A 2.1 Develop national action plans/policy packages for implementing recommendations coming from EPRs in line with relevant SDGs in the five beneficiary countries in consultation with inter-ministerial coordination groups;**

Activity A2.1 results in producing the most tangible outcomes – the national action plan or 1-3 policy packages (concrete legal/policy documents) for implementing recommendations coming from EPRs in line with relevant SDGs.

This activity requires significant involvement of national stakeholders. It is also key for national ownership of the project and for sustainability of its results.

Where available, existing inter-ministerial coordination groups (e.g. interministerial group on waste or a national water council) will be used to provide guidance on the national action plan/policy packages. If not available, coordination groups may be established for the purposes of the project.

**Main activity A 2.2 Organize five national validation workshops to review the respective national action plans/policy packages with inter-ministerial coordination groups and relevant stakeholders and discuss their implementation;**

The two-day workshops will bring together the national stakeholders to comment upon the national action plan/policy packages. If a country will be working on several policy packages with different topics, one-day workshops will be organized per policy package.

The selection of stakeholders to participate in the workshop will depend on the content of national action plan/policy packages. Every effort will be made to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are engaged and that no one is left behind.

For Bosnia and Herzegovina, two workshops may be organized (one in each entity).

**Main activity A 2.3 Organise subregional policy seminar to exchange experience on implementation of national action plans/policy packages;**

The subregional policy seminar (2-3 days) will allow countries to benefit from each other by exchanging experience, knowledge and best practice on the content and implementation of the national action plans/policy packages and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

This activity will contribute to finalization of the national action plans/policy packages.

It will also be used to promote the project results throughout the region.

**A 2.4 Organise concluding subregional event to present an overview of the environmental challenges in the South-East Europe region, share best practices and discuss follow-up of the national action plans/policy packages aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels.**

The concluding subregional event (1-2 days) will allow countries to discuss follow-up of the national action plans/policy packages aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the context of environmental challenges in the South-East Europe region. This activity may be organized back-to-back with a larger international event, e.g. the RFSD, or the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy, or the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference.

### 4.3. Risks and mitigation actions

Table 4 – Risks and mitigation actions

Risks	Mitigating Actions
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<b>R1. Political instability</b>	<b>M1.</b> Constant contact with the countries will be maintained to be aware of scheduled elections, changes of Government, etc. Efforts will be made to advance implementation ahead of schedule in order to allow time contingency in case of unplanned elections. Close contact with UN Country Teams will be maintained to be aware of the national situation and potential difficulties.
<b>R2. Special political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>M2.</b> Additional efforts will be invested in soliciting support to the project and buy-in at the level of entities (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska) and Brcko District.
<b>R3. Lower priority given to the project compared to EU accession efforts</b>	<b>M3.</b> Project activities will be linked as much as possible to ongoing EU accession process activities to avoid overlap and maximize the buy-in of national stakeholders. Close contact with EU Delegations in the target countries will be maintained.

#### 4.4. Sustainability

The national ownership is built in the project design:

- The reviews of the implementation of the recommendations coming from the EPRs vis-à-vis SDGs and targets will be presented to and validated by national stakeholders in each country during national workshops;
- National action plans/policy packages for implementing recommendations coming from EPRs in line with relevant SDGs will be developed in consultation with national stakeholders;
- National action plans/policy packages will be validated by national stakeholders in each country during national workshops.

These measures will ensure that the national action plans/policy packages are best tailored to needs of the country and take into account the interests of various national stakeholders. The national ownership will result in sustainability of project outcomes, i.e. implementation of national action plans/policy packages.

After completion, the project has the potential to be scaled up by developing additional policy packages in the targeted countries. Further, the project has a potential to be replicated in other regions (e.g. Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia) but it would need to be adapted to an expectedly different stage of implementation of the 2030 Agenda by that time, as the nationalization of the SDGs by the countries would likely be finalized.

After the completion of the project the Subprogramme will continue providing support to the beneficiary countries within existing UNECE inter-governmental and capacity building mechanisms.

## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The UNECE project manager will be responsible for regular monitoring of the project implementation. The progress of the project will be reported each year by annual progress reports, and the material and information related to the project will be shared on the web site. In addition, a questionnaire will be developed by the project manager to evaluate the impact, effectiveness and long-term sustainability of the project activities. The questionnaire will be circulated regularly, after each workshop in the beneficiary countries among participants in the

workshops. The evaluation of the project will be conducted by an external evaluator during the last six months of the project (2021). The evaluator will have access to project progress reports, workshop reports, as well as evaluation forms, which include a basic set of workshop evaluation questions in UNECE and, are completed by all participants in the workshops. The evaluator will also conduct interviews with key project stakeholders from target countries and partner organizations, conduct desk research and prepare the evaluation report. The evaluation will be completed in line with the UNECE Evaluation Policy.

## **6. MANAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIP AND COORDINATION AGREEMENTS**

The project will be implemented by UNECE, in cooperation the UNEP, UNDP, and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in beneficiary countries.

Regional and national UNEP staff will provide substantive contribution to the project, depending on the topics of the policy packages that the beneficiary countries would wish to work on.

Regional UNEP staff will participate in the subregional policy seminar to exchange experience on implementation of national action plans/policy packages in support of Activity A2.3 and in the concluding subregional event to present an overview of the environmental challenges in the South-East Europe region, share best practices and discuss follow-up of the national action plans/policy packages aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels in support of Activity A2.4.

National UNEP staff (where available) will participate in the workshops to present and validate the results of the reviews and needs assessments in support of Activity A1.3 and in national validation workshops to review the respective national action plans/policy packages with inter-ministerial coordination groups and relevant stakeholders and discuss their implementation in support of the Activity A2.2.

UNDP staff responsible for SDGs and environmental issues will be invited to relevant country-specific activities contribute to the project. UNDP country offices in beneficiary countries will provide logistical support for all country-based activities.

Other UN agencies in beneficiary countries may be involved depending on the topics of the policy packages that the beneficiary countries would wish to work on.

The project activities will be integrated, as relevant, into the UNDAFs of beneficiary countries in order to improve coordination amongst agencies and strengthen coherence of various interventions on environment and climate change.

Resident Coordinators (or their representatives) and staff responsible for UNDAFs will be briefed on project developments every time when UNECE staff travels to a beneficiary country in connection with the project.

**ANNEX 1: RESULT-BASED WORK PLAN AND BUDGET DETAILS**

**Table A1. – Results based work plan and budget**

EA	Activity #	Timeframe by activity		Budget class and Code		Amount (USD)
		Year (Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4)	Quarter (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)	<i>(Please use the budget classes listed in the table above.)</i>		
EA1	A1.1	Y1	Q1, Q2	Consultants and Experts (International consultancy)	<b>010</b>	\$12,500
				Consultants and Experts (International travel)	<b>010</b>	\$10,000
				Travel of Staff	<b>160</b>	\$25,000
	A1.2	Y1	Q3, Q4	Consultants and Experts (International consultancy)	<b>010</b>	\$12,500
	A1.3	Y2	Q1, Q2	Consultants and Experts (International travel)	<b>010</b>	\$10,000
				Travel of Staff	<b>160</b>	\$25,000
				Contractual Services	<b>120</b>	\$10,000
				General Operating Expenses	<b>125</b>	\$14,150
				Grants and Contributions (Workshops/ Study Tours)	<b>145</b>	\$30,000
	EA 2	A2.1	Y2	Q3, Q4	Consultants and Experts (International consultancy)	<b>010</b>
Consultants and Experts (national consultancy)					<b>010</b>	\$60,000
	A2.2	Y3	Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4	Travel of Staff	<b>160</b>	\$25,000
				Contractual Services	<b>120</b>	\$10,000
				General Operating Expenses	<b>125</b>	\$14,150
				Grants and Contributions (Workshops/ Study Tours)	<b>145</b>	\$45,000
	A2.3	Y4	Q1, Q2	Consultants and Experts (International travel)	<b>010</b>	\$10,000
				Travel of Staff	<b>160</b>	\$5,000
				Travel of Staff (collaborating entity)	<b>160</b>	\$5,000
				Contractual Services	<b>120</b>	\$2,000
				General Operating Expenses	<b>125</b>	\$2,830
				Grants and Contributions (Workshops/ Study Tours)	<b>145</b>	\$40,000
	A2.4	Y4	Q2	Consultants and Experts (International travel)	<b>010</b>	\$2,000
				Travel of Staff	<b>160</b>	\$5,000
				Travel of Staff (collaborating entity)	<b>160</b>	\$5,000
				Contractual Services	<b>120</b>	\$2,000
				General Operating Expenses	<b>125</b>	\$2,870
				Grants and Contributions (Workshops/ Study Tours)	<b>145</b>	\$50,000
External Evaluation				Consultants	<b>010</b>	\$ 10,000

## ANNEX 2: DETAILED JUSTIFICATION BY CODE

### 1. **Consultants and Experts (010): \$ 152,000 (Total)**

(Provide separate breakdown by national/regional consultants and international consultants)

#### (a) *International consultants (\$60,000)*

Five International consultants for the task(s) of drafting reviews on the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPRs vis-à-vis sustainable development goals and targets in support of Activity A1.1 (0.5 month), undertaking assessments to determine and address gaps identified in the reviews between current conditions and desired achievements of relevant SDGs in support of Activity A1.2 (0.5 month) and supporting the development of five national action plans/policy packages for implementing recommendations coming from EPRs in line with relevant SDGs in the beneficiary countries in consultation with inter-ministerial coordination groups in support of Activity A2.1 (1 month):

5 consultants x (2 months) x (\$5,000 per month) = \$50,000.

One international consultant in support of the evaluation of the project: (2) x (\$5,000 per work month) = \$10,000.

#### (b) *National / Regional consultants (\$60,000)*

Ten national consultants for task(s) of developing five national action plans/policy packages for implementing recommendations coming from EPRs in line with relevant SDGs in the beneficiary countries in consultation with inter-ministerial coordination groups in support of activities A2.1: 10 national consultants x (2 work months) x (\$3,000 per month) = \$60,000.

#### (c) *Consultant travel (\$32,000)*

Targeted countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia

One mission per target country (5 missions) for the purpose of drafting reviews on the implementation of the recommendations coming from EPRs vis-à-vis sustainable development goals and targets in support of Activity A1.1

(\$2,000 average mission cost) x (5 missions) = \$10,000.

One per target country (5 missions) for the purpose of participating in five workshops to present and validate the results of the reviews and needs assessments in support of Activity A1.3

(\$2,000 average mission cost) x (5 missions) = \$10,000.

Five missions (5 consultants) for the purpose of participating in the subregional policy seminar to exchange experience on implementation of national action plans/policy packages in support of activities A2.3 (no. of missions)

(\$2,000 average mission cost) x (5 missions) = \$10,000.

One mission for the international consultant in support of the evaluation of the project to participate in the concluding subregional event "on presenting an overview of the environmental challenges in the South-East Europe region, sharing best practices and discussing follow-up of the national action plans/policy packages aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels" (Activity 2.4): (\$2,000 average mission cost) x (1 mission) = \$2,000.

### 2. **Travel of Staff (160): \$95,000 (Total)**

#### (a) *UN Staff from the implementing entity (\$85,000)*

Targeted countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia

Five missions by UN staff for the purpose of supporting the drafting reviews on the

implementation of the recommendations coming from EPRs vis-à-vis sustainable development goals and targets in support of Activity A1.1

(2 UN Staff) x (\$2,500 average mission cost) x (5 missions) = \$25,000.

Five missions by 2 UN staff for the purpose of participating to five workshops to present and validate the results of the reviews and needs assessments in support of Activity A1.3

(2 UN Staff) x (\$2,500 average mission cost) x (5 missions) = \$25,000.

Five missions by 2 UN staff for the purpose of organize and participating to five national validation workshops to review the respective national action plans/policy packages with inter-ministerial coordination groups and relevant stakeholders and discuss their implementation in support of Activity A2.2

(2 UN Staff) x (\$2,500 average mission cost) x (5 missions) = \$25,000.

One mission by one UN staff for the purpose of organizing and participating to subregional policy seminar to exchange experience on implementation of national action plans/policy packages in support of Activity A2.3

(2 UN Staff) x (\$2,500 average mission cost) x (1 mission) = \$5,000.

One mission by 2 UN staff for the purpose of organizing and participating to concluding subregional event to present an overview of the environmental challenges in the South-East Europe region, share best practices and discuss follow-up of the national action plans/policy packages aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels in support of Activity A2.4

(2 UN Staff) x (\$2,500 average mission cost) x (1 mission) = \$5,000.

*(b) Staff from other UN entities collaborating in project (\$10,000)*

One mission by two UN staff for the purpose of organizing and participating to subregional policy seminar to exchange experience on implementation of national action plans/policy packages in support of Activity A2.3

(2 UN Staff) x (\$2,500 average mission cost) x (1 missions) = \$5,000.

One mission by two UN staff for the purpose of organizing and participating to concluding subregional event to present an overview of the environmental challenges in the South-East Europe region, share best practices and discuss follow-up of the national action plans/policy packages aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels in support of Activity A2.4

(2 UN Staff) x (\$2,500 average mission cost) x (1 missions) = \$5,000.

**3. Contractual services (120): \$24,000 (Total)**

A provision of contractual services required for local services for 5 workshops at the national level in support of Activity A1.3, 5 workshops at the national level in support of Activity A2.2, 1 subregional policy seminar in support of Activity A2.3 and 1 concluding regional event in support of Activity A2.4 (venue rentals, interpretation costs and other local conference related expenditures): 12 workshops x (\$2,000 average per workshop) = \$24,000

**4. General operating expenses (125): \$34,000 (Total)**

*(a) General operating expenses, such as printing*

A provision of *General operating expenses, such as printing*, for 5 workshops at the national level in support of Activity A1.3, 5 workshops at the national level in support of Activity A2.2, 1 subregional policy seminar in support of Activity A2.3 and 1 concluding regional event in support of Activity A2.4: 11 workshops x (\$330 average per workshop) + (1 concluding regional event) x (\$370)= \$4,000.

A provision of contractual services required for local services for 5 workshops at the national level in support of Activity A1.3, 5 workshops at the national level in support of Activity A2.2, 1 subregional policy seminar in support of Activity A2.3 and 1 concluding regional event in support of Activity A2.4 (venue etc): 12 workshops x (\$2,500 average per workshop) = \$30,000

**5. Grants and Contributions (145): \$165,000 (Total)**

(a) *Workshops & seminars*

Targeted countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia

Five capacity-building workshops in support of Activity 1.3 (1 day)  
(\$300 average per participant) x 20 participants x 5 workshops = \$30,000

Five capacity-building workshops in support of Activity 2.2 (2 days)  
(\$450 average per participant) x 20 participants x 5 workshops = \$45,000

One subregional policy seminar in support of Activity 2.3 (2-3 days)  
(\$1,600 average per participant) x 25 participants x 1 subregional policy seminar = \$40,000

One concluding regional event in support of Activity 2.4 (1-2 days)  
(\$2,000 average per participant) x 25 participants x 1 concluding regional event = \$50,000