



Meeting Report

Virtual meeting with RCs and UNCTs in South-Eastern Europe subregion

28th May 2020 (15:00-16:15, Geneva time) – MS Teams

Five RCs were present: Brian Williams – RC Albania, Ulrika Richardson – RC Kosovo¹, Fiona McCluney – RC Montenegro, Rossana Dudziak – RC North Macedonia, and Francoise Jacob – RC Serbia

Representatives of UNCTs, UNDCO, and 16 IBC members participated: FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNDP, UNDRR, UNECE, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFCCC, UNOPS, UN Habitat, UN Women, WFP, WHO and WMO

Observer: UNDSS

The meeting was co-chaired by UNEP, UNESCO and UNECE.

Opening and welcoming statements were delivered by: Marco Keiner, Director, Environment Division, UNECE; Ana Luiza Massot Thompson-Flores, Director, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe; Bruno Pozzi, Director, UNEP Europe Office; the RCs present in the meeting took the floor to introduce themselves and express their expectations for the IBC.

The co-chairs presented the IBC on Environment and Climate Change, the results of a survey of the needs of RCs and the IBC workplan and possible actions for 2020 under the three pillars (see IBC terms of reference and background paper).

Expectations and reactions from RCs and other participants were the following:

- RCs highlighted environment and climate change as key areas of intervention, notably in South-Eastern Europe, and welcomed assistance from the IBC in convening subregional actions and projects and promoting collaboration between countries of the region.

¹References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).



- The themes of water management, air pollution, biodiversity, climate change (including heat waves and other climate induced disasters) were brought up as key subregional issues.
- Other important issues were also raised such as green economy/growth, circular economy, urban mobility and support for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- RCs welcomed the role the IBC could play in integrating environmental and climate change issues in the national post-COVID-19 recovery strategies and supporting “building back better”. They asked that the IBC provide guidelines and tools in this regard.
- They asked that the IBC focus also on gender elements of environment and climate change and promote a people-centred approach and the principle of leaving no one behind.
- RCs emphasized that young people have shown great passion towards the environmental and climate change issues and should be engaged in these areas. More materials and activities to engage youth could therefore be developed.
- RCs highlighted that the IBC needed to collaborate with key resident agencies working on environment and climate change at the national level and brought up the importance of ensuring efficient communications and information sharing between resident agencies and non-resident agencies.
- RCs mentioned that it was important for the IBC not to duplicate past efforts and build instead on existing projects and tools on the ground at the national level (such as the Drin project) if it were to promote subregional activities and projects.
- RCs noted the need for greater clarity about which entity was responsible for leading on a topic nationally that would naturally lie with a particular agency that happens to be non-resident.
- RCs called for greater linkages and collaboration with other IBCs, particularly the IBC on gender and the IBC on youth. The co-chairs of IBC on Environment and Climate Change mentioned that the IBC would convene a second meeting of its membership and invite the chairs of IBCs on gender and youth to participate.

Annex 1: Meeting agenda

Annex 2: Meeting presentation