Nenad Rikalo & *Jerphaas Donner*

MILIEU**KONTAKT**
INTERNATIONAL
SERVING SOCIETY TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

GREEN AGENDA ON THE WESTERN BALKANS

The history,

the process and the achievements

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Introduction

In February 2007 the program Green Agenda in The Western Balkans began with the intention to develop Green Agenda processes in at least 12 communities in 6 countries. Nobody knew if this process would work in a region so much affected by recent conflicts. The big question was: Are local citizens in the region capable of cooperation outside their own circle and can they look at the future based on values developed in the past?

Now, 4 years later, a Green Agenda document has been adopted in 16 communities, and 7 more have gone through the process of development of Green Agenda documents. Local citizens have worked together to define values and develop pilot projects within a strategy based on these values. In each country local project managers, platforms, trainers and local working groups have been, and still are, committed to support the development of a true participative democracy of which Green Agenda is one of the most advanced, bottom up, approaches.

The national platforms are approached and actively search for new communities in which to begin the Green Agenda process. Although the Green Agenda project ended in 2010, the process continues in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and activities proceed in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo.

To support future development, national manuals have been published in local languages. This manual is written as an overall description of the methodology. It is a follow up to the manual, Green Agenda in Croatia, which appeared in 2005. We hope that with the lessons learned in the past four years we can move the methodology some steps further. In this manual, besides lessons learned, a section on risk assessment in Green Agenda is included, a new element in the methodology.

We hope that this manual inspires and supports new Green Agenda processes in different countries and maybe even on different continents. In the last section of the manual we mention all the people involved in the process in the six participating countries, because after all the success of the methodology is only possible if you have motivated, social minded, active and, in the right sense of the word, powerful personalities involved. Green Agenda is what they made of it, and it is a lot. It consists not only of the practical projects in their communities, but also their values, like the river that runs through the village, their cultural heritage, energy saving measures, tourist information and nature development. It is also the idea that working together on positive things can produce results. Many of the partiucipants will never forget this experience and this gives them hope for a better future.

Nenad Rikalo and Jerphaas Donner

I.
Society, Environment and Economy

Everyone who has been active in community development knows how hard it can be to get citizens involved, let alone be active in the development of a sustainable policy for their community. There is always the paradox of initiating and supporting a process of which you want citizens to feel ownership. Since 1998 Milieukontakt has worked on the development of a methodology that supports citizens' groups that have ownership of the process and its results. This methodology is called Green Agenda. Green Agenda is a participatory method for developing and implementing local sustainable development strategies and plans with active involvement of the different sectors in the local community where the process is conducted.

Two international events can be considered as the starting point of Green Agenda. The first was the UN meeting in Rio de Janeiro 3 June to 14 June 1992. The concept of sustainable development including social, economic and environmental aspects as three pillars of development was adopted in the Agenda 21 and became the main framework for development. The second event was the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, usually known as the Aarhus Convention, signed on June 25, 1998. The Arhus Convention meeting took place in the framework of 'Environment for Europe'.

In the Arhus Convention countries agreed that citizens have the right to be informed on, and participate in decision making, on the environment and to have access to justice if they think decisions are not according to national or international law.

Sustainable development

The basic notion in the development of the concept of sustainability is the idea that the destiny of the environment depends on economy, society and the attitude of its citizens. Economy and society determine the condition of our planet. Values determine social norms and social practice which for a large part determine the way we deal with the environment.

Throughout the world and even within societies there is a wide range of attitudes on the relationship between man and nature. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant was an anthropocentrist who claimed that "man has no moral duty towards anyone but to other people"; moderate anthropocentrism insists on the concern about the environment only because of human interests. There are also different forms of eco-centrism, such as animal ethics, bioethics or geo-ethics. Despite geographic, religious or other differences, all societies are at or between the two extremes: should nature, with all its resources, be put in service of mankind (anthropocentrism) or should men not disturb nature's processes and live according to them (eco-centrism)?

Civilization is built on the triangular relationship between nature (environment), economy and society and the balance among them. The relations that exist among these three elements determine the quality of life. The ideal sustainable society balances the three elements in such a way that they are complementary and even strengthen each other.

The following scheme is taken from the book *Introduction to Global Ecology*, by Vjekoslav Glavac (Zagreb, 2001, page 147).
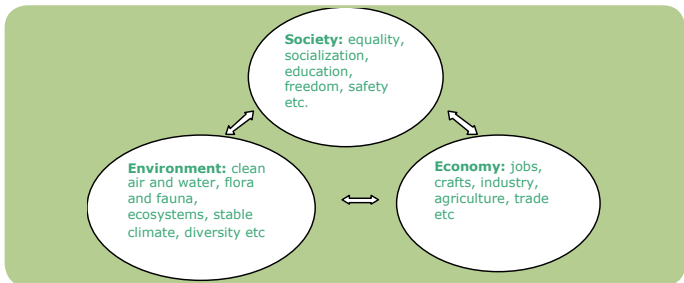
Nature, obviously, ensures the survival of mankind by providing essential energy and resources to households and industry. Without energy, production and transport of materials and functioning of the economy is impossible. On the other hand, economic activities pollute the environment in the form of waste, changing the landscape and pollution of air, soil and water. If you put too much emphasis on the environment, it will be hard to survive economically and social structures will be under pressure. Social standards on welfare and culture can only be maintained if a society has enough funds to pay for it.

The three elements are present in every society. The Green Agenda process is in fact the development of the relationships among the three elements of sustainability aimed towards improved quality of life. Green Agenda copes not only with natural values but also with social and economic values. These values show the importance citizens give to the relationships among society, economy and environment.

The values also relate to another 'triangle' identified by Ivan Cifric (author of *Social Ecology*): "I think we will not be mistaken if we highlight three important points in the creation of ecological awareness: the past, the present and the future."

Past generations created the existing system with notions and ways of thinking that determined the form of the human relationship with nature as a relation of domination, exhaustion and control. In other words, development is built on traditions and customs and should relate to them through our values.

Present generations affect restoration, development or preservation of values. Building on tradition and custom they adapt according to innovative knowledge and new opportunities, with responsibility for the future.

Future generations will profit from the Green Agenda process. Green Agenda may preserve values that might have become lost without it, because once an ecosystem or historic value is lost, it is hard to retrieve and may be forgotten by new generations which might not even miss what they have never seen.

The Green Agenda methodology takes the relationship of society, environment and economy, past, present and future, into account and strives for full participation of citizens in the determination of their future and quality of life. The method is special, compared to other processes with similar aims, in at least 3 main aspects:

1. The process starts out by identifying local values rather than problems;
2. participation in the process is not limited to experts or certain stakeholder groups but is wide and open to all;
3. thanks to the process, its results are genuinely owned by the citizens.

Identifying values instead of problems

Many strategies for sustainable development start with a problem analysis. Since problems have negative associations, such processes start in a negative atmosphere. In this atmosphere, differences instead of similarities are highlighted. Participants focus on the 'No area' instead of the 'Yes Area'. Through focusing on the 'No area', differences will grow and similarities disappear to the background.

This is a very common process. Often people listen to another person thinking: "What is wrong with his arguments", instead of, "What can I learn from this?" or, "What is good about his story?". Discussing problems, one can argue that your problem is not a real problem, or participants can blame each other for causing the problems.

In Green Agenda the process begins with local stakeholders identifying the values of their community. Values are a positive concept, and surprisingly people tend to define a lot of values in a similar way. In the initial phase local citizens are asked to define things in their community they are or were proud of, values that should be recovered, preserved and improved. For example: water resources (lakes, rivers, drinking water…), cultural heritage (monuments, museums, local food, music…) etc. Some of the values may be neglected or damaged and the aim of the Green Agenda steps is to identify them and find adequate measures for their recovery and preservation. Through discussing values, participants enter into the 'Yes area' and have a positive starting point. The 'Yes area' will grow.
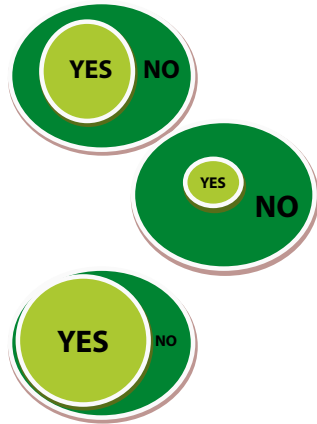
Wide participation and capacity building

The Green Agenda process is open to every citizen interested in participating in the process. It does not involve only experts on environment and planning; every citizen, committed to his/her community can contribute to its improvement and should be allowed to do so.

A Green Agenda process implies dialogue, planning and implementation of activities. It is important to support and help participants to develop their capacities in the fields of communication and negotiation and to increase their knowledge about sustainable development. Capacity building of local citizens is therefore an integral part of the Green Agenda concept. It provides local citizens with the tools to effectively take part in the process and in the implementation of actions. In the capacity building program, participatory methodologies are used to make maximum use of the experience and knowledge of participants.

Local ownership

After participatory prioritization of three or four of the most important values, participants join working groups focused on these values. Each working group analyzes one of the values. They report on the current situation of the value, define a strategy for its development or preservation and present ideas for implementation of projects to support the value. All these steps are taken by the local citizens participating in the working groups. It is their program on their values and their priorities, needs and wishes. Through the participatory methodology, maximum ownership is achieved and citizens are highly motivated to achieve the desired results. After all, the main success factor in Green Agenda is the human factor. The process facilitates a structure in which citizens can work on the restoration, development and preservation of shared values, but this can only be successful if citizens actively participate and invest time in the process. Secondly, it is most important that the process is backed up, acknowledged and confirmed by the local council of the community.

Green Agenda: process <u>and</u> document

Green Agenda has two goals: On the one hand, it is a participatory process through which common agreement, communication and cooperation of various local actors can be achieved; on the other hand, the outcome of the process is equally important: an action plan to improve the quality of life by means of sustainable development.

The method consists of 17 steps divided into 5 phases, as shown on a schematic drawing below.

PHASE 1:
Preparation and organization of the process

PHASE 2:
Initiation of the process

PHASE 3:
Detailed analysis of key issues

PHASE 4:
Synthesis and planning

PHASE 5:
Monitoring and implementation
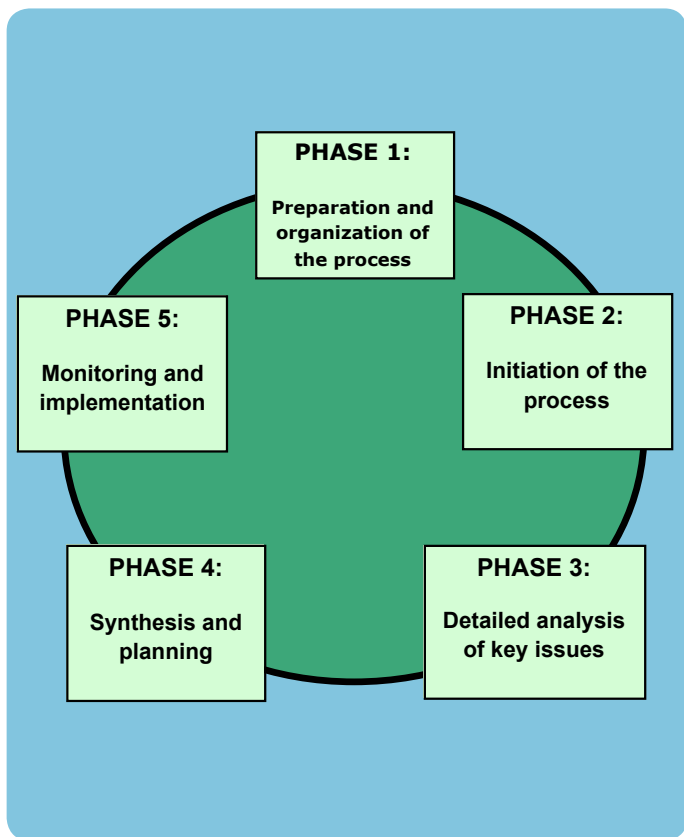
The coordinator and initiator of the process is a local civil society organization (CSO). The main work is carried out by the working groups involving all the different sectors in a local community. The working groups involve local stakeholders' representatives (local authorities, companies, CSOs and individuals). Because it involves many participants, the process takes time. Depending on the size of the community, number and size of working groups and motivation of the participants, results may be achieved within 10 to 18 months. It is a cyclical process: the ending of one process does not necessarily mean the ending of Green Agenda. It can also mean the beginning of the new cycle based on the previous experience and results. In that case, the new Phase one is the evaluation of the previous cycle. New citizens and participants can be invited for the 'start up meeting' of a new cycle and existing working groups can elaborate on their values or new working groups can be established. In this way Green Agenda can keep including citizens in the definition and implementation of a policy on sustainable development in their community. It is important to note that a Green Agenda document is an agreement among the citizens and only bound to their limits in time and budget. It is not a contract with an external party, with a deadline and financial obligations.

Both the initiating and coordinating civil society organization and the working groups are supported by trainers and experts. They provide expert knowledge on issues, coaching of the working groups and training on communication, project development and result based programming. This capacity building component of our Green Agenda projects is pivotal in ensuring local ownership and in empowering local people towards being able to take responsibility for their own (sustainable) development, thus improving the quality of their lives and those of their descendants.

On the national level, communities assemble with each other, national stakeholders and experts in a National Platform Council. The Council meets to share experiences, provide new ideas and motivate each other and new communities to step in.

On the international level, communities communicate through the website www.greenagenda.net, international meetings and exchange visits.

II.
The Green Agenda Network

Romania 1998-2003

At the end of the 20th century Milieukontakt supported Romanian civil society organizations working in urban areas that developed a project called "Green Agenda". In this project, financially supported by the Matra program of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, civil society organizations actively involved citizens in prioritizing environmental issues in their cities. It was not common in Romania at that time for civil society organizations to adopt a cooperative and constructive strategy, taking the initiative to involve citizens and start a dialogue with authorities. After working for three years in urban areas, the focus of the organizations shifted to rural areas. Green Agenda became a methodology for civil society organizations working on community development from the perspective of sustainability. In the cooperative program between Focus Eco Centre and Milieukontakt International, Green Agenda was applied for the first time in eight communities in four micro regions.

In this phase Green Agenda was already developed with working groups from communities working through several steps of identifying areas of interest and analysis of the current situation. Inspired by the Local Agenda 21, 12 steps were identified in the development of a vision for the community resulting in a local action plan. The strength and innovativeness of the program was perfectly described by working group member Sorin Abrudan from Huedin: "People in the micro-region have begun to understand that they do not have to wait for solutions from outside their community or from local authorities. They can get personally involved in finding solutions for their problems." This was a genuine breakthrough in Romania that had been for so many years under the government of centralist dictator Caucescu.

While working on the development of the program, Milieukontakt got in touch with Jan Joost Kessler from Aid Environment. He had developed the Strategic Environmental Analysis (SEAN) methodology working through a set of detailed steps towards a green plan for the community. This strategy was incorporated in the Green Agenda approach and practiced in the participating Romanian micro regions. The combination of Green Agenda, Agenda 21 and SEAN developed into a methodology for community development, initiated by civil society with an emphasis on sustainable development and citizens' participation.

During the Annual meeting of the Milieukontakt International Network in 2000, Zoltan Hajdu from Focus Eco Centre presented the concept of Green Agenda developed in Romania. Since then Green Agenda has been an item on the agendas of many more international meetings. The concept inspired partner organizations from Russia that developed the program Local Agenda 21 in Russia in 2001. Croatia followed in 2002.

Croatia 2002-2005

Again with support from the Matra program of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a Green Agenda program was launched in 2002 in Croatia. Milieukontakt cooperated closely with Croatian partners Green Istria in Istria and Zeo Nobilis in Medjimurje in 8 local Communities. One of the outputs of this program was the "Manual Green Agenda in Croatia, theory and practice". This manual, written by Suzanne Bakker, Ivana laginja and Ana Željezić, described for the first time the Green Agenda process in 14 steps based on Strategic Environmental Analysis, Local Agenda 21 and experience with Green Agenda in Croatia and other countries. This manual positioned Green Agenda as an independent, stand-alone program next to Local Agenda 21, Strategic Environmental Analysis (SEAN) and Local Environmental Action Plans (LEAPS). Green Agenda is unique in that it is always initiated and coordinated by civil society organizatons and has values, not problems, as the main starting point. From 2004 to 2006, 4 municipalities in Moldova and from 2005 to 2007, 4 communities in Kyrgyzstan initiated Green Agenda processes, bringing the total number of communities to 24 in 4 countries.

Western Balkans 2007-2010

In 2007, with the support of the Regional Programme on Environment for the Western Balkans of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Milieukontakt began the most ambitious Green Agenda program ever: "Joining forces for a sustainable future in the Western Balkans". The program proposed at least 12 Green Agenda processes and documents adopted by the community councils in 6 countries, 2 per country. When the project was finished at least 16 Green Agenda documents were adopted in Albania (3), Kosovo (2), Macedonia (3), Montenegro (3), and Serbia (5) and 7 more developed, Bosnia Herzegovina (3) Macedonia (3), Kosovo (1).

This program did not only involved civil society organizations and communities. The whole program was supported by a capacity building program with local trainers who themselves were trained by international trainers from the Milieukontakt International Trainers team.

In the last year of the program another new element was added: participatory video making. Participants from Green Agenda communities were trained to make short films on their Green Agenda activities to show the outside world the values they were able to preserve and develop. This project, supported by PSO from the Netherlands, managed by Kocka from Macedonia and implemented by Insight Share from the United Kingdom, resulted in 18 short films, providing an excellent picture of the results achieved in the Western Balkans in the period 2007-2010.

At the end of this program lessons learned were documented in country manuals and this regional manual. The process itself was developed further, participatory video was added and the function of national platforms and capacity building was elaborated. The content of these innovations can be found in chapters 3 and 4.

The future of Green Agenda

With the granting of the program "European Partnership for Local Green Agendas" by the European Union in the framework of IPA, recognition of the process came from the European Commission. This project, running in Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro started in 2009 and will last until the end of 2011. On

23 and 24 July 2010 in the Hotel Sirius-Strumica, the first joint workshop on the Green Agenda process in Macedonia as part of Project "Green Agenda as a tool to preserve natural values" got started, funded by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Republic of Macedonia. In Serbia new Green Agenda initiatives were begun outside the program of the Western Balkans. These are the first signs of Green Agenda initiatives starting outside the range of the Milieukontakt International office in Amsterdam. And this is the way it should go: Civil society organizations starting up Green Agenda activities in communities and connecting to the network as of December 2010, 44 communities in 10 countries.

Concrete results

Describing the process, one could almost forget that Green Agenda has an enormous spin off on community activities. The following list gives an impression of what actually happens in communities that finally have adopted a Green Agenda and start implementing activities. The following activities were actually implemented:

- Campaigns on waste separation;
- Determination of collection points suitable for waste separation;
- Bicycle route through the locality;
- Botanical garden;
- Street lights and maps of the local cultural heritage locations;
- Exhibition on local architecture;
- Children's contests on Green Agenda themes;
- Building playgrounds for children;
- Park restoration;
- Installation of a water pump - improvement of drinking water supplies;
- Ecological fashion parade - clothes made of waste;
- Water and soil testing, with participation of local people;
- Rehabilitation of dried natural lake;
- Afforestation actions;
- Restoration of river banks.

Accomplishments

In addition to these concrete results, there were other accomplishments. Residents of 44 communities have created their own strategy for sustainable development of their communities. They initiated, raised funds and implemented pilot activities, thanks to their own commitment and responsibility. In many cases citizens founded an NGO as a result of joining efforts within the Green Agenda process.

Civil society in 10 countries has improved relations with and within communities during the work on Green Agenda. They have gained better insight into the values, needs and wishes of the local community. Coordinating local CSOs gained support as a result of great media interest. The media interest for the Green Agenda process presented a broader image of the importance of the environment and nature.

Donors see that Green Agenda is an excellent tool for community development. And not only international donors appreciate the concept; more and more local, provincial and national donors have financially supported the activities and strategic plans.

The project Green Agenda in Croatia was evaluated by a student of the Free University of Amsterdam (VU Amsterdam). This evaluation was done in 2005, just after the end of Milieukontakt's support for the local processes and activities. The main conclusions were:

- Local people were genuinely involved in the design of the many activities;

- there was a clear connection between the awareness raising activities realized and the success of later pilot projects, for instance in the area of waste separation;

local people designed both long-term and short-term projects. The long-term projects seem more viable in those communities in which the local authorities have a clear commitment and involvement from the beginning. Short-term activities fall within the capabilities of the local NGO and the local Working Groups and are easily realized also without active support of the local authorities; clear results on the themes take more time to become visible, but the working groups established, materials produced, the education and training provided and the fact that first steps have been taken have created a huge local commitment to seeing the plans through.

The program on the Western Balkans was evaluated by Katea Melnichenco from Moldova (Mid Term), Antoanetta Arsova from Bulgaria and Mobilisation from The Netherlands. Main conclusions from these evaluations were:

III.
The Process

Green Agenda methodology
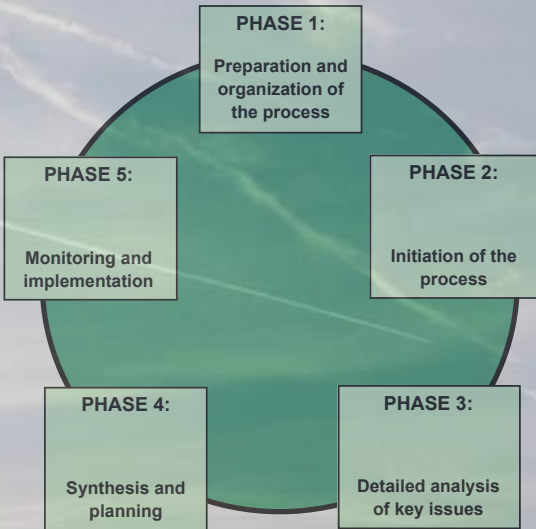
Green Agenda methodology consists of 5 phases and 17 steps. Each phase and all steps are presented in this chapter of the manual. The following table represents a brief overview of the methodology, phases, steps and activities.

PHASE 1: **Preparation and organization of the process** Steps: 1–2 Month: 1	**Step 1**	**Stakeholder analysis** • Registration, clustering and analysis of interrelations among all the relevant stakeholders (NGOs, local self-government, institutions, business sector, individuals) and others that can affect the project results. • Preparation of working and promotional material. • Informing the local community that the project exists. • Creating visual presentation and web design.
	Step 2	**Document analysis** • Collecting all the relevant documents and regulations (legal and bylaw acts, local documents, work programs of relevant institutions, NGOs and other stakeholders). • Analysis of the relevant documents at local, regional and national levels.
PHASE 2: **Initiation of the process** Steps: 3–4 Month: 2	**Step 3**	**The first meeting of stakeholders** • Meeting with stakeholders. • Identification of the values of the local community. • Mapping of the values using the cluster method. • Establishing the working groups, based on identified values.
	Step 4	**Establishing the working groups** • Making an inventory, setting priorities and assessment. • First group meeting - values analysis, final document analysis. • Invitation to the local community to join the process (media, flyers, personal contact).

	Step 5	**Trends** • Analysis of the trends in last 5 to 10 years. • Inventory of pressure indicators and positive exceptions. • Second group meeting – Trends.
	Step 6	**Impacts of trends** • Clustering. • Assessment of social and economic impacts. • Influence on sensitive stakeholders. • Third group meeting – Impacts of trends.
PHASE 3: **Work carried out by working groups** Detailed analysis of key issues (problems, solutions, alternatives) by sectors, social groups or areas. Steps: 5–11 Months: 3–7	**Step 7**	**Making a vision and setting minimum standards** • Formulation of risks for the key functions. • Setting measurable minimum standards in order to avoid risks or undesirable changes. • Defining the vision and sustainability goals. • Fourth group meeting - Vision and standards.
	Step 8	**Defining the main problems** • Defining and describing the problems. • Indicating the "winners" and the "losers" from trends. • Fifth group meeting – Problems.
	Step 9	**Analyzing causes of problems** • Identification and grouping of problem causing factors. • Identification of opportunities that can help solve the problem. • Analysis of interrelations between different factors. • Policy issues and other factors, insight into mechanisms. • Sixth group meeting – Causes of problems.
	Step 10	**Defining potentials and opportunities** • Making an inventory of potentials; setting priorities. • Connecting potentials and problems. • Seventh group meeting - Potentials and opportunities.
	Step 11	**Defining priority potentials** • Assessment of feasibility of solutions. • Defining priorities. • Eight group meeting – Priorities.

	Step 12	**Defining a strategic plan** • Designing the vision and the best way of action. • Ninth group meeting – Strategy.
PHASE 4: **Synthesis and planning,** defining vision and strategic orientation. Steps: 12–16 Months: 8–10	**Step 13**	**Action plan** • Aims, indicators, responsibilities, information flow, required resources, data analysis, evaluation and public presentation. • Tenth meeting - Action plan.
	Step 14	**Writing the document** • Introduction, description of the community, description of the steps, vision, action plan, monitoring and evaluation plan. • Eleventh meeting – Corrections.
	Step 15	**Public presentation and debate** • Sending the document to the stakeholders to introduce changes and comments; public debate. • Twelfth meeting - Adoption of the stakeholders' comments.
	Step 16	**Adoption of the document** • Adoption of Green Agenda by the local council. • Printing the document (in the form of a book or a CD).
PHASE 5: **Monitoring and evaluation** Step: 17 Months: 10 and later	**Step 17**	**Evaluation and pilot projects** • Press conference, results. • Evaluation and pilot projects (forums, working groups).

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PHASE 1

PREPARATION AND ORGANIZATION

OF THE PROCESS

Initiation of the Green Agenda process represents a starting point
for the process development. The success of the process highly
depends on the first phase during which it is very important to
"set things right" and to include all the relevant organizations,
institutions and individuals, as well as the local community.

Ensure broad participation

The first step, Stakeholder Analysis, should be done carefully and in great detail because the results of the whole process depend on it. During this step, it is necessary to identify all the relevant institutions, organizations and individuals that, due to their jurisdiction, activities, interests or professions, can affect the process, make it better or find their interests in it, regardless of its success. You should come up with as many interested parties as possible (e.g. more than two hundred possible interested parties were identified in Greenarea).

Practice shows that the most sustainable processes of strategic planning are those that involve all community sectors. Always bear in mind that Green Agenda

is an open, democratic process of integrating citizens, local authorities and the business sector by following "bottom-up" and "people to people" principles, whose aim is dialogue and agreement on important environmental issues in order to bridge the differences between current situation and the desirable future (vision of the community). It is a participatory way of dealing with local issues, solutions, opportunities and threats to the environment.

- Public sector is right-driven - provides information, stability and legitimacy.
- Private sector is profit-driven - it is inventive, fast and single-minded.
- Civil sector is value-driven - it is responsive, imaginative and inclusive.

1 – Identification and prioritization of the stakeholders

When it comes to identifying stakeholders, we suggest that you make a list of stakeholders and briefly describe the reasons why a certain stakeholder should be included in the process. Try not to be redundant; focus only on the most important facts. After identifying the stakeholders, you should prioritize them. For example, the local self-government can have far more influence on the process than a citizens' association.

2 – Clustering and contacting stakeholders

At this point, you should cluster and contact the stakeholders. Make a table similar to the one below and try to anticipate possible problems that can occur with stakeholders during the process. Focus on the most important facts.

3 – Analysis of stakeholders' interests

Group the stakeholders by sectors (public, business, civil) and make tables for each sector. Try to identify the nature of each stakeholder's interest regarding the Green Agenda process. Stakeholders who can be directly affected by the process or who have their own special interests in it should be invited to state their position clearly.

4 – Power map

Creating a power map is an important step and it should be done very carefully. It is necessary to define each stakeholder's position in relation to the Green Agenda process to identify potential allies, proponents, uninterested parties and opponents. Make a draft and try to identify potential allies and opponents within the community. Start by putting the stakeholders in natural positions with respect to their interests or competencies. For
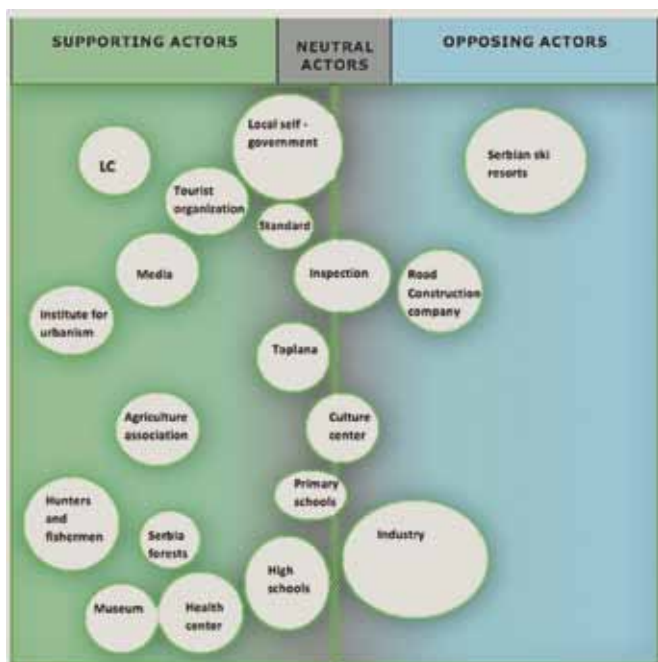
example, an ecological inspection, a public utility company or a guardian of a protected area are expected to be good allies, whereas polluters can be opponents (but remember that things are not always what they seem to be at first glance).

Many future activities depend on the accuracy of the power map; its creation requires a lot of thinking and energy. The power map should show all the potential threats to the process, the people who require special attention or should be influenced. Feel free to use your own knowledge of the community and interrelations, be subjective and try to find the right place for each stakeholder. Of course, mistakes are possible and you should not be afraid of that. It can happen that only after the initiation of the process will you be able to discover some hidden and unforeseen interrelations between the stakeholders. Sometimes, a stakeholder whom you have considered an ally can become an opponent, due to his connections with another stakeholder. It can also happen the other way around. For example, it is logical for the local self-government to be on citizens' side and to oppose to a polluter; therefore it is natural to consider it an ally. However, it is possible that the polluter in question employs a lot of people and pays taxes to the local self-government (or there are some business/parental relations between the two); in this case, the local self-government will take the polluter's side and be neutral or even opposed to the Green Agenda process. It can also happen that after seeing the benefits of Green Agenda, an opponent becomes an ally, (e.g. it can help with pollution problems, fulfillment of certain standards and improvement of communication with local community).

There is an interesting example from one community in the Western Balkans: Vrsac. In 2007, several non-governmental organizations launched a campaign against the illegal deforestation of the Vrsac Mountains. However, the forest management continued cutting trees even after the ecological inspection had banned it, which provoked public disapproval and protests. It was expected that all the ecological associations would come together, but one of them, a mountaineering society, did not take part in the protest, explaining that the forest management financed some of their activities. This is a clear example of how an ally can become an opponent due to its own interests and personal relations with other important actors. All these hidden relationships should be taken into consideration when making the power map.

5 – Defining a strategy

After creating the power map, you should develop approach strategies for each stakeholder. Stakeholders are real persons, with their own ways of thinking, knowledge, prejudices, problems and interests. It is necessary to approach each one of them properly, especially those denominated as "troublesome". The aim of the strategy is simple: "Convert as many opponents as possible into neutral actors and as many neutral actors as possible into allies".

STEP 2: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Aims:

To analyze the existing legislation and official plans regarding the environment and sustainable development. A detailed analysis should be done both at national and local levels.

Methods, techniques and tools:

1.   Make an inventory of existing laws and national strategies.
2.   Make an inventory of local plans and policies: environmental plans, economic development plans, infrastructure plans and spatial plans.
3.   Make an inventory of existing planning methods. Make sure you know the formal planning procedures and requirements with which you must comply.
4.   Make an inventory of existing annual plans and prog. of local public companies.
5.   Make an inventory of existing annual plans and programs of local NGOs.

Documents are different forms of regulations that provide information about the functioning of certain segments of a community: decisions of the local or autonomous province parliament, laws, regulations and other acts that define programs or policies. For a successful realization of this step, it is important to make an inventory of existing documents relevant to the protection of the environment: international conventions, national laws and regulations, provincial and local decisions, public services and even local NGOs (hunters, fishermen, etc.), annual plans, etc. Even during this phase you can notice potential problems and trends within the community (if, for example, such documents do not exist or are not applied).

PHASE 2

INITIATION OF THE PROCESS

The Green Agenda process begins with identification of
community values. They should be defined during the second
phase, at the first big meeting of stakeholders (when working
groups are established).

THE FIRST MEETING OF STAKEHOLDERS

Aims:

To give a public presentation of the Green Agenda methodology to a large audience (stakeholders); To define and cluster the main values of the local community.

Methods, techniques and tools:

The first meeting of stakeholders should include a large number of people coming from three different sectors (public, business and civil): institutions, public companies, private companies, citizens' associations, interested individuals. The more participants and different sectors there are, the greater the chance of identifying all the values of a community. This will also reduce the risk of omitting any community value. Including different stakeholders will also prevent domination by a certain group or sector which may favor one group of values (biologists can, for example, insist on natural values and neglect the cultural ones). You should invite all the people previously identified as stakeholders and choose the right form of invitation for each one of them: a letter, an e-mail or direct contact. The number of participants depends on many factors: the size of the community, level of civil sector development, economic development and support of the local self-government. In our opinion, the best is to have 30 to 50 stakeholders (representing all three sectors) present at the first meeting.

Plan for the first meeting of stakeholders:
- Present the Green Agenda methodology.
- Make an inventory of community values (on cards).
- Cluster community values (by topics).

Once the preparatory phase is finished, it is important to root the process, providing community support and making the process alive and sustainable. A closed and limited process, unrecognized by potential actors and without community support, has no perspective and it is a matter of time before it will disappear spontaneously, without producing any results. That is the reason why Green Agenda has to be an open process involving a large number of participants. Everyone who wants to help in the process is gladly accepted. Important Green Agenda principles are "bottom-up" and "people to people", meaning that each member of the community who wants to help, regardless of his/her education, competence, ability, origin, social or economic status, can contribute to the process. The contribution of such a person can be more significant than that of some world expert or a very influential person who does not want to participate. Therefore, it is important to include a large number of people coming from different sectors and to motivate them to participate. Besides the presentation, the first meeting of stakeholders is a good opportunity to root the process and to motivate certain groups or sectors to join.

RESULT - LIST OF VALUES

The list of values is one of the most important outcomes of the first meeting with the stakeholders.

In order to make the list, simply hand out pieces of paper to the participants (three for each participant) and explain to them that they should write down three community values (a natural, cultural, or some other value) that they consider most important. Try to cluster the values. After doing that, you are a step away from forming the working groups. Here is an example from the first meeting with stakeholders in Greenarea:

COMMUNITY VALUES IN GREENAREA
October 27th 2008

NATURAL VALUES

Nature
- Clean air
- Greenarea park
- Greenery
- Vineyards
- Lake
- Greenarea stream
- Regulated protection of natural resources

Greenarea mountains
- Flora
- Fauna
- Climate
- Ecosystems
- Endemic species
- Authentic forests

HUMAN VALUES

People
- Youth
- Education
- 21 nations
- Urban culture
- Multiculturalism
- Solidarity
- Tolerance

CULTURAL VALUES

Culture
- Cultural heritage
- Tradition
- Museum
- Park
- Library
- Churches

ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUPS

Aims:

To form the working groups according to the recognized community values.

Methods, techniques and tools:

- Grouping the values and forming the working groups.
- The stakeholders decide which group they would like to join.
- The first group meetings are organized.
- Choosing the working group coordinator.
- Making an inventory of other potential participants.
- Scheduling the next working group meeting.

At this stage, you should organize the participants into working groups according to the map of values. In our experience, it is best to have 2 to 4 working groups. After naming the groups, the participants choose which one they will join. A working group should have 5 to 9 members coming from all three sectors and representing all the stakeholders. It can happen that the working groups cannot be formed with only members present at the meeting, so we recommend that you identify other people who might be included. The next step is to choose a group coordinator. The coordinators can be chosen at the meeting of stakeholders or at the first group meeting. The role of the coordinator is to prepare, organize and lead the meetings of his/her group and to write reports that will be used later for document writing. Therefore, the best choice is a systematic, hard-working and responsible person, possibly an expert, to be group coordinator..

The work carried out by the working groups is the key factor in the Green Agenda process. We can freely say that the success of the entire process highly depends on the results achieved by the working groups. The pillar of Green Agenda is "participation"; therefore you should not forget to include the marginalized groups which do not always have the possibility to present their attitudes on social issues. The Green Agenda working group is a chance for these sensitive groups to take part in the creation of the future of their community and to be heard by the majority.

Group, Working group, team

A group consists of at least three individuals who have regular contact and work together to achieve a common goal. People like joining groups because they help them fulfill their needs more easily. The most common examples of groups are family, friends, clubs, organizations and working groups.

The difference between working groups and regular groups of people is their activity. Working groups, unlike regular groups of people, work together to achieve a certain goal. They function according to their rules and have a group leader or a coordinator. Working groups can be given a certain period of time in

which to solve a problem or to achieve a goal. It can also happen that a group transforms into another type of an organization.

Here we should also explain the concepts of team and teamwork. Teams have higher levels of organization than working groups, with new categories:

- Interrelations between the members.
- Balanced activities in order to gain efficiency in achieving the goals.
- High productivity of satisfied people (where participation and teamwork bring pleasure, not stress).
- Synergy (two or more agents working together to produce a result not obtainable by any of the agents independently), where 1 + 1 does not equal 2, but 2 and a certain amount of positive energy which has positive influence on interrelations and goal accomplishment.

When speaking about groups, working groups and teams, we should always have in mind that we are actually speaking about a process, respecting the following rules:

PROCESS		
Input variables	➡	**Output variables**
Personal	**Group structure**	**Impact on individual**
attitudes, values, knowledge, skills, motivation, personality	roles, norm, homogeneity	pleasure or stress
Situational	**Group processes**	**Impact on group**
group size, type of task work conditions, rules	managing, group cohesion communication, conflict resolution	efficiency, loyalty interpersonal relationships

Principles and characteristics

of a successful team:

• Team members know why the team exists: they have shared goals (they know why they are there and what they are expected to achieve together).

• Team members share specific guidelines and procedures (with shared standards and values, team members know how things will be decided and can act accordingly; for example, if they cannot attend a meeting, they can inform other members about their opinion; team members know how and when to influence the decision making).

• Team members communicate frequently and freely (about the work: everyone can contribute to a discussion, team members are equally respected, and there are no obstacles to expressing opinions or visions).

• Team members provide and receive help from each other (they notice each other's needs, and are ready to help, while at the same time it will not be considered a weakness to accept this. Team members are aware that each has his/her own strong and weak points and that all of these are needed within the team).

• Team members have learned to resolve conflicts (conflicts are not neglected, but dealt with openly; team members are aware that conflicts are part of the group formation process).

• Team members have learned to recognize the processes; they know that individuals can have different team roles, equally important for different process stages. They know that conflicts are natural and cannot be buried; team members are aware of the different stages in team forming and are able to see their own contribution.

• Team members continuously build their knowledge and skills; they provide and receive information and are willing to learn from others.

The most important elements of a team

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

External cooperation

Culture

Goals and planning
(what is done and why)

Outcome:
Shared commitment to the team goals

Processes and procedures
(what is carried out)

Outcome:
Efficient work teams

LEADERSHIP

Roles and responsibility
(who does what)

Outcome:
Responsibility

Interrelations
(how we work together)

Outcome:
Highly productive work environment

Functional groups

Other financiers

Impacts on the external environment and impacts of the external environment

In order to build a good team, each team member needs to have or to learn certain skills, such as:

• Effective meeting techniques (not just working with an agenda but taking part in a discussion, being open to new perspectives, able to brainstorm when needed and take decisions when needed, etc);

• Presentation skills (how to present your point of view within the group and represent the group outside);

• Listening skills (active listening);

• Interviewing techniques.

• Commonly recognized stages in team development are:

• Forming: focus on goals and tasks. Getting acquainted and understanding each other's roles (understand different personalities and their roles).

• Storming: conflicts emerge and it is necessary to set priorities, responsibilities and leadership within the team. The key is to manage conflict and not suppress it. If it is suppressed, team members withdraw and avoid responsibilities. In this stage the teambuilding is intensively ongoing.

• Standardization: things return to normal. There is a sharing of information, mutual acceptance, compromise and respect. Rules by which the team will operate are defined. There is a tendency to be overly positive about what is done and can be achieved.

• Performing: effective and efficient achievements. This is the stage when the work is actually being done. The roles of individual team members are accepted and acknowledged.

• Adjourning: the job ends, disengagement phase comes. Don't just leave but close, celebrate successes.

How to build a productive team

- **Have clear mission/goal**
- **Set achievable goals**
- **Determine the right size and variety of a team**
- **Have agreed structure that meets the task**
- **Name responsible persons to make necessary decisions**
- **Offer different group and individual awards**
- **Provide long duration and stability of the membership**

PLANNING THE WORKING GROUP MEETINGS:

Planning is present during the entire Green Agenda process and we will have the opportunity to use several types of planning:

- Strategic planning
- Action planning
- Work planning

At the end of every group meeting, you should make an activities work plan for the next meeting. This plan should include:

- Time of the next meeting
- Place of the next meeting
- New members to invite - in case your group needs more members
- Experts to invite - in case you need some
- Contentious issues - in case there are any; who should resolve them

ACTIVITY	TIME FRAME	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	NEEDED RESOURCES

Data/results collection (results achieved by the working groups, necessary for the creation of the strategy)

Aims:

To build a system for collecting material and results of the working groups.

Guidelines:

The work of working groups should be followed by a clear and efficient way of collecting data and results. In order to do this, you will need specific formats that working groups will fill in so that they can verify the results obtained. During the group work (and after every group meeting), the most important thing is to fill in the following two formats:

- Report from the working group meeting
- Data collecting and result monitoring form

Methods and tools

The suggested formats are intended to facilitate clustering and systematization of the results: the work carried out by the group coordinators. It is important to save all the data obtained and make it available during the strategy formulation and when writing the Green Agenda document.

Report from the working group meeting

All the results achieved during the meetings of the working groups should be written down (in a report) because they will be used during the strategy formulation and the writing of the Green Agenda document. There are many different forms of reports, but we suggest that the form that will satisfy the Green agenda needs should include the following elements:

- name of the working group
- meeting title
- participants
- place
- agenda (briefly)
- results/conclusions
- plan for the next meeting

A format for materials collecting

and results monitoring

A format serves to keep records on the process so that valuable information does not get lost. It helps the process coordinators and other organizations involved in the process. The format consists of eight columns and nine rows. It would be best to organize nine meetings, but it is up to working groups to define their own dynamic. The columns should contain the following items:

- Name of the activity/step (already completed with the activities/steps that should be carried out by working groups)
- Time and place of the meeting
- Number of working group members present at the meeting
- Expected results (partially completed to facilitate and direct the work)
- Results achieved
- Verification forms (to show the results):

    1. Report from the meeting
    2. Other documents from the meeting (formats, tables)
    3. Flip chart paper, written or drawn A4 paper, card, audio record, pictures

- Difficulties and problems (problematic annotations, different positions of the participants that cannot be resolved)
- Person responsible (for writing the report, collecting materials, storing materials and data)

PHASE 3

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF KEY ISSUES

Phase 3 requires a large number of people involved in the working groups. At this stage it is important to take everyone's opinion into account. An ordinary person can perceive problems; however, experts' opinions should provide rational and scientific explanations of different situations and circumstances.

Introduction to Phase 3 -

Detailed analysis of key issues

The aim of this phase is to collect further information, process and analyze it, in order to get a clear picture of the current situation and trends related to the agreed upon priority values. This analysis is the basis for the solutions to be defined. It is important to emphasize that each step represents the basis for the next one, so the errors that might occur at the beginning will be present until the end of the process. Therefore it is important that the phase is carefully prepared and carried out.

Activities: informal and formal meetings and (mini-) workshops with stakeholders and key actors, studies (field and desk) per theme, sector, target group or geographical area, analysis and synthesis of all information and results, information sessions and/or communication to inform key actors and policy makers.

Activities:

1. Make an overview of all relevant existing information and data sources.

2. Contact stakeholders for their information and data sources. Screen the Internet.

3. Make a short summary of available information and data sources, focused on the key themes and sub-themes that have been decided upon (after the first meeting). Make a file with all background papers, available to everyone.

4. Indicate absence of information (on specific issues), gaps of knowledge, conflicting information and unreliable data sources.

These activities will mostly be carried out in the working groups formed at the first meeting, but the organization initiating the process will need to invest time and energy in facilitating this work and in bringing in the right experts when needed.

Introductory analyses should be conducted at the second working group meeting. Here we shall focus on:

ANALYSIS OF THE VALUES:

At the first meeting of stakeholders, the community values were defined and clustered. The participants were organized into working groups according to the values identified. It is often necessary to do an additional revision of the values (reformulate, add or exclude some of them). This should be done at the first working group meeting. This refinement will help in selecting the right and the most important values to continue to work on in the future. Because it also helps make them more specific, the result will make it easier to focus the work on clear issues.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS:

The next task for the working groups is to continue and complete the document analysis (begun in Step 2). Here you should be careful not to miss anything but at the same time try not to be too detailed about it. Documents are different forms of regulations that provide information on the functioning of certain segments of a community. For a successful realization of this step, it is important to make an inventory of existing documents: international conventions, national laws and regulations, provincial and local decisions, public services and even local NGOs (for example, hunters and fishermen), annual plans, etc. Even during this phase you will notice potential problems and trends within the community (if, for example, such documents do not exist or are not applied). You can use the results of step 2 as a starting point.

Example of the document analysis in Greenarea: Working groups have found that Greenarea municipality has a relatively well developed level of strategic planning; Strategy on Local Development and Local Environmental Action Plan (LEAP) have been adopted, but there are certain problems concerning the document application, especially the LEAP (the actors responsible for carrying out the activities did not include them in their medium-term and annual plans).

Local regulation on environmental protection is very good. There are many municipal decisions regulating different areas, but at the same time there are many problems concerning their application (e.g. decisions on maintaining parks and gardens, keeping domestic animals or protecting natural resources).

The existence of the Environmental Protection Fund, a local institution that creates programs and carries out the activities in the area of environmental protection, is positively evaluated.

The Cultural Values working group has concluded that although there are several cultural institutions in Greenarea, this sector is not sufficiently regulated. Therefore it is necessary to draft a Cultural Development Plan for Greenarea municipality that will regulate the use of cultural resources, strengthen the local community and prevent political discontinuance that might occur.

STEP 5: TRENDS ANALYSIS

Aims:

To define the main trends and the interrelations between trends in relation to the priority environmental values.

Methods, techniques and tools:

After conducting a detailed analysis of the values and creating a map of values, you should assess the trends and indicate how they have changed in the last couple of years. You should make a table for each value to indicate the important changes.

Experiences/lessons learned:

Try to be as objective as you can when indicating trends; use measurable indicators and data. Avoid using subjective and unverified assessments because this will put you in an awkward position (e.g. you are claiming something to be true and all of a sudden an actor might appear claiming something different). Being objective and using verified data will contribute to the importance of the entire process.

Guidelines:

1. For each value (identified in Step 3), indicate the trends during at least the past 5-10 years. We recommend using the year 1970 as a starting point (during the seventies, important economic and technological investments were made and important demographic movements occurred in SFRY). How have qualities or quantities of the values changed?

2. List the indicators and observations that are at the basis of these assessments. Pay particular attention to per capita pressure indicators and demographic trends. The pressure on natural resources and other environmental functions will largely depend upon demographic changes, consumption patterns and the level of technology.

3. For each trend, describe the time span involved, the location and the size of the area affected, and the intensity and severity of change.

4. Describe positive exceptions on 'average' trends (where, when, how). These exceptions might be valuable starting points for innovations (opportunities). **Avoid that the general view of environmental degradation predominates!**

5. Make cause-effect chains between environmental functions to get better insight into the dynamics between different environmental functions and processes. These can best be made per sector (e.g. agriculture) or per theme (e.g. forest exploitation).

After making a list of trends, you should make a diagram of changes that have occurred during recent years. We will use 1970 as a starting point, but you are free to change this and to select another period.
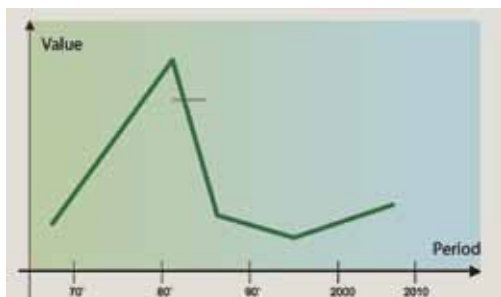
(Make a diagram for each trend in particular)

VALUE	TREND	INDICATOR	EXCEPTIONS (+/-)
Air, water, soil	Until 2003, the ambient air quality was not measured. In the period 1 July 2003-31 December 2005 and since 1 January 2008, the measurements of basic pollutant substances have been conducted at two measuring points. The concentration of air pollutants remains the same, with certain seasonal variations. There are days with excess pollution. Measurements of biological pollution have not been conducted since 2008.	Official measurements; monthly and annual reports of Bio-ecological Center of Greenarea and Health Protection Center of Greenarea.	
Air, water, soil	Marsh soil areas are decreasing. Controlled land surface is increasing.	1000 samples of agricultural land have been analyzed per year since the 90s; of non-agricultural land, 48 samples in 2007 and 85 samples in 2008.	
Greenarea Park	Number of trees is decreasing; quality of trees decreasing; average age of trees increasing.	200 trees have been cut since the year 2001.	
Parks and gardens	Parks and green areas are decreasing. Number of trees is decreasing.	Rows of trees in the streets of 22nd,25th,32nd and orthodox churchyard have been cut.	New trees are planted in the churchyard.
Vineyards	All the values (area, yield, varieties…) are stagnating.		
Natural resources	Decisions on protection adopted in 1973 and 1982; revisions (harmonization with the new law) in 2005 and 2006. Increase in the surface of the existing resources; new areas to be protected; stringent grades of protection.	Decision on protection of Greenarea mountains (1982, 2005). Decision on protection of the forest in Hill (1973, 2006). Decision on protection of the Town Park in Greenarea (1973).	A new decision (revision) on protection of the Town Park in Greenarea has not yet been made.

IMPACTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

Aims:

To assess the expected social and economic impacts of environmental trends on human society, in order to justify why it is important to do something about it.

Methods, techniques and tools:

Here, we need to anticipate what will happen to a cultural or a natural value if nothing is done to prevent or reduce the change (= change the trend?). First you have to specify whether the trend has negative or positive impacts on the value. You should also assess the social and economic impacts of current trends on different stakeholder groups. What will happen if the trend persists?

Experiences/lessons learned:

Always look at the situation from a broader perspective and try to anticipate all the possible outcomes, not only the obvious ones.

Guidelines:

1. Cluster associated trends to make a short list of main (environmental) trends. This can be done by using insights from cause-effect chains. It can also be done by selecting one major (environmental) trend per value (forest, water, soils, minerals, etc.).

2. Assess the social and economic impacts of these environmental trends on human society, using the general values listed in column 1 of the matrix from

the step 5. These general values can be replaced by more specific values for the locality. Indicate the results in a trend-impact matrix (for example, increase of cattle stock will economically affect local cattle breeders). In the matrix, indicate positive and/or negative impacts, and possibly specify as follows:

- Which stakeholder group(s) is/are concerned;
- The severity of the impacts (positive or negative, reversible or irreversible);
- The associated risks;
- Any geographical specifications.

3. Specifically assess impacts of environmental trends on sensitive stakeholders (the poor, women, youth, unemployed, refugees, internally displaced persons).

Proposed format

Impacts of environmental trends - analysis from Greenarea

Main environmental trends	Social impacts of environmental trends	Economic impacts of environmental trends	Impacts of environmental trends on your community
In the period 1 July 2003-31 December 2005 and since 1 January 2008, the measurements of basic pollutant substances are being conducted at two measuring points.	**Positive.** Health protection.	**Positive**. Working–age of population is increasing; less treatment costs.	**Positive**
Number of villages with water supply system is increasing; the existing water supply system is expanding; increase in overall quality.	**Positive.** Risk of infection reduced.	**Positive**. Economic development (new farms, companies).	**Positive**
Some of the wild sewage systems in the villages are in stagnation.	**Positive.** Pollution and risks of infection reduced; more pleasant place for relaxation and rest.	**Positive**. Economic potential; fewer cleansers, tourism development.	**Positive**
Measuring of water quality in watercourses is not conducted.	**Negative**. Security and health.	**Negative**. Uncontrolled water cannot be used.	**Negative**

Main environmental trends	Social impacts of environmental trends	Economic impacts of environmental trends	Impacts of environmental trends on your community
Municipality makes visible efforts to improve the values (air, soil, water).	**Positive**. Security and health.	**Positive**. Working-age people; a good opportunity for tourism and economic development.	**Positive**
Plan for using groundwater for spa tourism purposes.	**Positive**. Health and relaxation; meeting new people, exploring different cultures and traditions through tourism.	**Positive**. Tourism development.	**Positive**
Fish stocks are decreasing.	**Negative**. Health (can indicate pollution).	**Negative**. Fishing.	**Negative**
Marsh soil areas are decreasing.	**Negative**. Impacts ecologic balance and people.	**Negative**. Possible disappearance of an important ecosystem.	**Negative**
Controlled land surface is increasing.	**Positive**. Informing the public on land quality.	**Positive**. Healthier food, rational use of fertilizers.	**Positive**
Number of trees is decreasing; quality of trees decreasing; average age of trees increasing.	**Negative**. Less relaxation area; fewer areas for health improvement.	**Negative**. Tourism, fewer working people.	**Negative**
Surface of parks and green areas is decreasing; number of trees is decreasing.	**Negative**. Fewer relaxation areas, more dust, less air purification, fewer birds, more noise, less shade.	**Negative**. Reduced productivity, reduced tourism income (older visitors remember Vrsac as a town of parks and greenery).	**Negative**
Vineyards: all the values (area, yield, varieties…) are stagnating.	**Negative**. More socially dependent citizens, unemployment, distortion of tradition.	**Negative**. Downsizing, decreased wine tourism.	**Negative**

Main environmental trends	Social impacts of environmental trends	Economic impacts of environmental trends	Impacts of environmental trends on your community
Increase in the surface of the existing resources; new areas become protected; more stringent grades of protection.	**Positive**. Health, walks, ecosystem preservation.	**Positive**. Increasing tourist offers, preservation of the variety of plant and animal life (biodiversity).	**Positive**
Tree quality in slight decrease; no new planting of oak and beech trees; successive change in plant communities in certain areas.	**Negative**. Health, ecosystem preservation.	**Negative**. Reduced economic value of trees, exploitation, and potential danger for the entire ecosystem.	**Negative**
The population of rabbits and does is stable.	**Positive**. Ecosystem preservation.	**Positive**. Biodiversity. Possible tourism development (photo safari).	**Positive**
The population of Ural Owl is stable.	**Positive**. Ecosystem preservation, healthy rodent population.	**Positive**. Biodiversity. Possible tourism development (photo safari and bird watching).	**Positive**
The population of Short-toed Eagles is stable.	**Positive**. Ecosystem preservation, healthy reptile population.	**Positive**. Biodiversity. Possible tourism development (photo safari and bird watching).	**Positive**
Eastern Imperial Eagle can occasionally be seen since the feeding place for birds of prey was set up.	**Positive**. Ecosystem preservation, healthy animal population.	**Positive**. Biodiversity. Possible tourism development (photo safari and bird watching).	**Positive**
Since 2004, the Alpine Accentor can be seen during the winter.	**Positive**. Ecosystem preservation.	**Positive**. Biodiversity. Possible tourism development (photo safari and bird watching).	**Positive**
The population of reptiles and amphibians (including rare species) is stable.	**Positive**. Ecosystem preservation.	**Positive**. Biodiversity. Photo safari; education.	**Positive**

STANDARDS AND VISION

Aims:

To define a vision for the community, shared by a large number of its members, and to set minimum standards as boundaries to respect in order to prevent risks that can have negative impact on local values.

Methods, techniques and tools:

This step requires a definition of risks, minimum standards, vision for a desirable future and elements of sustainability.

You should define a vision for a desirable future of your community that includes the values that should be preserved and improved. Minimum standards shall serve as boundaries; elements of sustainability are about avoiding and minimizing unacceptable risks, undesirable changes and negative impacts, and about realizing a desirable future.

Start by formulating risks to the environmental values (and trends and impacts) already identified, by asking yourself: What is threatening this value? What is the limit of threat you can accept? Next, define minimum standards to avoid risks or undesirable change. Third, define a vision for desirable qualities of key values. Fourth, define sustainability goals and then targets associated with minimum standards (not to surpass) and the vision (to strive for).

Guidelines:

1.   For the key environmental functions or values you have identified in Step 3, you now formulate risks: What is threatening this value? How quickly is the threat approaching? What is the limit of threat you can accept? The assessment of risks and the definition of what is acceptable or not depends on the stakeholders' perception. It is not something that is written in stone or a law book. You don't necessarily need to have a scientist involved in the project for this assessment. The assessment of risks is also a tool to motivate people to take action, and having a scientist inform the population of a high risk does not have the same motivating impact as a society's own assessment of a high risk.

2.   Where possible, define minimum standards required to avoid unacceptable risks or undesirable/irreversible changes. Quantify these standards as much as possible. Draw conclusions on priority values: What is their condition with regard to the minimum standards; are they in better condition than your minimum requirements or not?

3.   Define a vision for desirable qualities of key values. A good vision should meet criteria, as indicated below.

4.   Based on the first three guidelines, above, define sustainability goals, and then targets associated with minimum standards (not to surpass) and the vision (to strive for).

Example of minimum standards - Greenarea

Value	Threats	Minimum standards
Soil	- Improper use of pesticides and fertilizers in agriculture. - There is no place for pesticide packaging and other dangerous substances disposal. - Waste water leakage. - Draining caused by climate changes and wind (in areas with small numbers of trees and bushes).	Continuance of ambient air quality measurement; analysis of measurements conducted; recommended measures; construction of a sewer system and water purification in every populated place; use of pesticides and fertilizers should be controlled and reduced to rational levels; reconstruction of the water tower.
Water	- Pesticides and fertilizers from agriculture. - Lack of sewer system in villages. - Waste water leakage from wild sewers into surface and ground water (wells).	
Air	- The number of cars is increasing. - No real bypass in the center (traffic overload).	
Greenarea Town Park and town parks and gardens	Changes in the park surroundings. Not enough water in the park (Jovan's stream disappeared). Trees are getting older, pests, lawns in bad shape. Park is losing its values (for which was denominated a nature resource). Five years ago, 200 trees were cut down and not one has been planted since, 80 % of trees are rotten.	To adopt the decision on protection (postponed since 2003); to put the water tower into operation; to use rainwater for watering the park; to preserve green areas; to elevate the level by building embankments.
Vineyards	Vineyard areas decreasing in EU. Uncontrolled stubble burning.	Real process of privatization; support small enterprises.
Natural resources	Burning of areas surrounding the natural resources; fires inside the protected areas. Increased need for tourists and people visiting during weekends. Lack of water (no steady water has flowed in recent years).	Respecting the decision on protection and implementing protectors' programs; controlled activities; introduction of fees for using the areas; education of visitors and other people working in the natural resources areas (inhabited by animals and plants); insuring survival of the species (with human intervention) while the habitat recovers.
Plants and animals	Habitat alterations change the conditions for growth, shelter, reproduction, access to food and water (imperial eagle, vulture, grouse, lesser spotted eagle…). Disturbance, illegal hunting.	

Proposed methods and tools:

Defining a vision is a key element of the group work. A Vision statement will be defined using:

- Survey
- Focus/working group
- One-day meeting of all the working groups

SURVEY:

The working group forms a planning team to conduct a survey. The survey is usually done in the form of a questionnaire. Possible questions for vision definition:

- Imagine that you are walking the streets of your town twenty years from now. What can you see?
- What community values you would not like to see changed within 20 years?
- What should be changed?
- What are your ideas about changes for the better in your community?

FOCUS GROUPS - WORKING GROUP MEETING:

The meeting should be used for carrying out qualitative research on topics that will contribute to vision defining.

STEP 1: A spontaneous sharing of ideas and solutions and an open discussion (*brainstorming*) - Each of the participants has 5 minutes to explain his/her answers to a question on vision. Invite the participants to imagine the scenarios of the near and distant future or to write a letter to a child who will live in 2050. They can also create simple and positive images of the future. Ask for 2 or 3 minutes of silence in order to imagine the future. The participants can create a visual or artistic image of the future. Questions to stimulate the creation of the mental future vision:

How is the land used? Where do people live? How clean are air, water and soil? Describe the biological variety of your community. How many recreational areas are there? How many parks and open areas? On what natural resources do your employers depend? Can regenerative mechanisms compensate local resources consumption?

STEP 2: *Clustering* – By clustering you can identify common topics that should become part of the vision. Each participant proposes his/her ideas which a facilitator writes on the board (it is useful to use A5 cards for writing down ideas). The facilitator then clusters similar ideas. For example, if a large number of elements (infrastructure, area famous for a National Park (NP), flora and fauna, appears around NP cluster, etc.), then the group will recognize the NP as a common topic that should become a part of the vision. At the end of this stage, you will have a list of elements of the vision.

VISION

A vision is a very important part of every strategic document. It represents an introduction, a description of a desirable future which directs a strategic plan ("where we want to get"). The remaining parts of the strategy include specific data on how the community should move towards a vision fulfillment. Even though a vision is a part of a strategic document, it differs from it in its character.

Why do we need to create a vision of the future? Because only by imagining the desired state can we think of how to get there. For example, when building a house, you need to know how you would like your house to look before you start buying the materials. You need a project. In this case, a local community is like a house. What the project is for the house, the strategy of sustainable development is for the community.

The community needs a project that will promote harmonized development of land, investments, public sector and other important community aspects. When building a house, the owner informs the architect of his dream and then the architect makes projects. Each nice looking house starts with a nice looking dream. The same thing happens with the community. Before formulating a strategy on development, citizens have to agree on a mental image of their community's desirable future. They have to imagine how they will feel when walking the streets; what their life will be like, where their children will work, where they will build houses, etc. This mental image is the vision.

What is a vision of the community?

A VISION IS A MENTAL IMAGE OF HOW THE CITIZENS SEE THEIR COMMUNITY IN THE LONG-TERM FUTURE (approximately 20 YEARS).

A vision is not only an attitude of an individual or a group within a community. It has to be an opinion shared by all the stakeholders, reflecting opinions of each territorial unit, age category or interested group.

Of course, you cannot expect that every citizen will participate in the creation of every part of the vision. That cannot be done, and surely they would not like to

do it! However, everyone has to feel that the process of vision creation is fair and that the vision is legitimate and acceptable. The vision is a positive prognosis on how we want the world to function in the future in order to affirm our values and hopes. By making a vision statement and by including it into the formal Green Agenda document, you are creating an image of a destination in order to project the path that leads to it. The language of the vision formulation has to be clear and simple so that everyone can understand and accept it. The vision has to represent shared values, to protect and strengthen the things citizens believe in and care about, and to show the changes for the better within the community.

Proposed example - A vision creation by conducting a survey in Greenarea

VISION SURVEY

A survey was conducted in order to determine how the citizens see their community today and in the future, what is most important for them and what they expect from the future. For this purpose, working groups decided to do an open survey: The citizens answered open ended questions freely, not multiple choice questions. This method is difficult to analyze because answers can be very different. The list contained 8 questions. The first three questions were about gender, age and qualifications. In questions 4 through 6, the citizens had to choose one cultural, one natural and one human value they considered to be most important. In question number 7, they had to rank the values: The most important one got 3 points, the second 2 points, and the last 1 point. The last question/task was to describe briefly (2 - 3 sentences) their community in 30 years, explaining which values are to be saved and improved.

During the analysis we noticed a significant diversity of answers, but also much similarity, so we grouped the answers. More than 600 people took the survey, from both urban and rural areas. The respondents were divided in 18 groups. The main division was men/ women, followed by age division (3 groups: 15 to 30 years old, 30 to 50, and over 50 years old) and education level (primary school, high school, university). All the groups mentioned were included.

The last task was to describe the community in 30 years (which values should be preserved and improved). The responses to the question, "How I see

my community in 30 years?", were grouped. Cultural, ecological and development aspects (both positive and negative) were also taken into account in the analysis of the responses.

		Men								
		Elementary school			High school diploma			College/university degree		
		15-30	30-50	50+	15-30	30-50	50+	15-30	30-50	50+
Lack of vision		/	4	5	3	1	3	1	4	2
Unrealistic vision		2	/	/	3	4	2	1	2	2
Cultural and ecological vision	Optimistic	4	1	4	10	12	5	6	8	11
	Pessimistic	2	/	/	3	3	3	/	1	2
Development	Optimistic	2	1	4	6	6	4	4	4	5
	Pessimistic	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	/

		Women								
		Elementary school			High school diploma			College/university degree		
		15-30	30-50	50+	15-30	30-50	50+	15-30	30-50	50+
Lack of vision		7	5	4	2	8	1	2	4	3
Unrealistic vision		/	1	/	/	/	/	/	1	/
Cultural and ecological vision	Optimistic	6	8	5	10	13	9	3	6	4
	Pessimistic	/	/	/	4	4	6	4	3	3
Development	Optimistic	6	4	3	6	10	5	6	4	4
	Pessimistic	/	/	/	/	2	/	/	/	/

STEP 8: PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Aims:

To identify the main environmental problems and to use them for defining solution strategies.

Methods, techniques and tools:

Describe each environmental problem using the following criteria: location, responsible actors, urgency, basic trends, current impacts, and expected risks for society.

Experiences/lessons learned:

Try to include new people in the working groups. The more people there are, the more potential problems can be identified.

Guidelines:

This step deals with problem identification (for each value) that will be used for the definition of the solution strategy. It also assesses the risks for society (if the problem would not be solved successfully). You should define the main problems where trends lead to unacceptable risks, surpass bottom-line standards or are expected to do so in future (if a trend persists). For each problem, indicate the stakeholders benefiting from trends and those suffering from trends and for whom the problem is most urgent. For each problem, you might also indicate risks for society should the problem would not be solved. Describe each environmental problem using the following criteria: location, responsible actors, urgency, basic trends, current impacts and expected risks for society.

Example:

Please see below the proposed format with an example from the Green Agenda Project: Town Park, parks and gardens in Vrsac, plants and animals:

Value	Defining the problem
TOWN PARK; PARKS AND GARDENS	Town Park is declining; there are less and less green areas in the town. Problems: Urban: increased demand for road construction and parking spaces. Recommendation: a balance between urban and ecological needs of the town. Institutional: local self-government and protector of the Town Park have to implement plans for protection. Strategic: insufficient planning documents (a project on reconstruction and protection).
Criteria	**Importance for identified problem**
Location	Urban part of Greenarea.
Stakeholders affected	Inhabitants of Greenarea.
Responsible actors	Greenarea PC, local self-government, citizens.
Urgency	Parks and gardens lose their values every day, very urgent.
Underlying trends	Park reconstruction (recommendation: genetic database: seedlings, seeds etc.). Lack of plans for park and gardens; no management. When reconstructing a street, trees are cut; rarely there is new planting.
Current impacts and expected risks for society	Health. Change in micro climate, polluted air, noise.

STEP 9: ANALYZING CAUSES OF PROBLEMS

Aims:

To identify factors and policies causing the identified problems and to identify the main responsible actors (social, economic and institutional), environmental factors and opportunities for positive change

Methods, techniques and tools:

Indicate factors (social, economic, institutional and environmental) causing the problems at local, national and international levels, and for identified factors, indicate the associated actors.

Experiences/lessons learned:

This step is very simple and it is logically connected to step 8. If there is time, confidence and a willing working group, it is possible to do both steps during a longer meeting; but we do not recommend this if you are not secure in step 8. Be sure not to keep the analysis of causes at an abstract level, where it is probably not possible to intervene. For instance, if you identify "lack of budget" as a cause, you can go deeper to underlying causes that might be lack of priority, lack of a good plan, lack of awareness, lack of pressure, all of which are issues that you can address in the Green Agenda process!

Guidelines:

1. For each problem identified, indicate factors causing the problem. These may be found at local, national and international levels and within different dimensions. For identified factors, indicate the associated actors, i.e. social groups, organizations or institutions largely responsible for the existence of

the identified factor. Use the matrix below from Vrsac to organize findings; you do not necessarily have to fill in each cell. Be as specific as possible.

2. Identify opportunities that will help solve the problem.

3. Discuss the interrelations between factors in different cells, and on that basis define priority-crosscutting issues.

4. Summarize by grouping the findings:

- Per problem: underlying policy issues and other factors, actors and opportunities. This will give you a set of interrelated issues per problem and a deeper insight into the cause of the problem and why it exists.

- For all problems: Cross-cutting policy issues and other factors, actors and potentials/opportunities. This will provide you with insight into mechanisms, etc., that affect more than only one problem. It will show you which mechanisms you can address that will help you deal with more than one problem.

- Uncertainties and gaps of knowledge; possible hypotheses on causes and interrelations among factors that need to be tested. This will provide you with insight into what you do not know, and whether or not you need to find out before you move forward.

PROPOSED FORM

Problem identified	Pesticides and overuse of fertilizers			
Levels	Social factors + actors	Economic factors + actors	Institutional factors + actors	Environmental factors
Local level	Lack of education and responsibility of local agriculturalists.	Agriculturalists think that the yields will be higher but actually they are endangering the quality of soil.	Lack of regulation on pesticide and fertilizer sales.	Endangered soil, ground and surface water. Health risks.
National level	Lack of education (in schools).		Lack of regulation.	Endangered quality of soil, fertility and life.
International level				Pollution of watercourses in and out of Serbia with pesticides and fertilizers.

DEFINING POTENTIALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Aims:

To define main potentials and opportunities. Potentials are defined as natural or human resources that may be used more effectively in a sustainable development process. Opportunities are concrete activities that can be carried out thanks to the existence of potentials. For example, abundant watercourses or a large number of highly educated people can be potentials, whereas opportunities can be the development of nautical tourism or new technology.

Methods, techniques and tools:

1. Make a long list of the potentials of the community. Include the private sector and other stakeholders. Think differently, not about the problem but about economic and other development potentials. Be creative. See the table below for examples.

2. Make a list of all the opportunities.

3. Make a new list by setting priorities for both potentials and opportunities. Possible criteria: chances of realization, contribution to development of the community, earlier experiences, etc.

Experiences/lessons learned:

This is one of the most interesting and most creative steps; members of working groups gladly participate and enjoy it.

Proposed format - example from Greenarea

Values	Potentials	Opportunities
Natural resources	**Interesting (specific) terrain configuration for a flatlands region (a mountain)** • Wide forests • High quality of air (microclimate) • Great variety of plants and animals • Areas of great regional and international importance (Deliblato sands) • Favorable wind flows • Well-marked trails • Springs • important cultural, religious and archeological objects • - Info center, restaurants, accommodation facilities, road network (partially) • Legal regulation of natural resources protection	**Important tourist destination (mountaineering, climbing, free climbing, sports, recreation, spa, health, cycling, bird watching, education, paragliding, vine, photo safari, hunting)** • Education, various manifestations, camps • Sustainable economic exploitation (woods, medicinal plants, minerals, water - water factory etc.) • Tower of Vrsac, info center, eco center • Water and roads to be brought to Mount Home (through vineyards) • New tourist and cycling paths • Rural tourism development in the villages of Vrsac Mountains • Private accommodation facilities (near Mount Home) • Cross-border cooperation

STEP 11: PRIORITIES

Aims:

To determine which potentials, opportunities and policy options are most desirable and promising, by checking these against sustainability and other criteria. Where possible, win-win-win options are defined, i.e. options with positive impacts on both environment and development that have a positive effect in the eyes of different stakeholders, and actions that can generate visible results in the short term. To define the priority potentials and opportunities.

Methods, techniques and tools:

1. Look at the potentials listed and opportunities (see previous step) and check how these can be connected to problems or underlying causes of problems to form win-win-win options. The aim is to make use of existing potentials and opportunities to identify promising strategy options and actions.

2. For the win-win-win strategy options that have been short-listed, and for other solution strategies, plans or actions, assess whether they meet your criteria of sustainability, technically realistic, cost-effective and based on societal development needs.

3. On the basis of outcomes, set priorities.

Experiences/lessons learned:

All working groups describe this step as the most difficult one. They recognize that the essential meaning of Step 11 cannot be understood at first glance and that it needs to be studied carefully. Pay special attention when studying the examples and prepare the working groups for the realization of this step.

Example from Greenarea

Most desirable and promising potentials	Option 1/Activity 1	Option 2/Activity 2	Option 3/Activity 3
Air, water, soil			
On sustainability goals	Preservation of relatively clean air and soil.	Preservation of water quality and reduction of pollution.	Reduction of soil pollution.
On technical feasibility	Regular monitoring, relocation of some objects away from the center, alternative ways of heating.	Feasible; sewers and some kind of water purifier in every village, geothermal and mineral water.	Education of agriculturists; using experts.
On cost-effectiveness	Healthy environment, better conditions for tourism development.	Investments, tourist activities.	Organic production, healthy food.
On linkage to societal development needs	Preservation and improvement of the values is strategically important.	Preservation and improvement of the values is strategically important.	Preservation and improvement of the values is strategically important.
Parks and gardens; Town Park			
On sustainability goals	Priority: Maintenance of the existing parks and green areas; planting new green areas.	"Lungs" of the town; healthy ambience, tourist offer.	Education, healthy relationship with our environment.
On technical feasibility	With regular maintenance, by leaving enough space and possibility for watering, it is very sustainable.	Existence of all the conditions; higher involvement of local self-government, communal services, inspection and tourist organizations,	Higher involvement of local self-government, NGOs and schools,
On cost-effectiveness	Contributes to the tourist offer; sustainable,		
On linkage to societal development needs	Raising awareness and better informing on the importance of environmental protection,	Increased interest of the community in cultural uniqueness, interest in preserving the environment,	Higher awareness and responsibility of community members, contribution to health and development of esthetic needs,
Vineyards			
On sustainability goals	Very sustainable if managed properly, tourism development.	Manifestations, seminars, competitions, education.	Construction of a vine center in Greenarea, very sustainable.
On technical feasibility	Existing technical and technological opportunities, higher involvement of private sector.	More efficient involvement of tourist organization.	Greater involvement of private sector and local self-government, foreign investors.
On cost-effectiveness	Economic, tourist and expert potentials, contributes to tourist offer, very sustainable.	Grapes products, development of rural tourism, cross-border cooperation.	Tourist potential, contributes to the tourist offer; new jobs.
On linkage to societal development needs	Cultural traditions.	Preservation of healthy environment.	

❑ Step 12: Strategy

❑ Step 13: Action plan

❑ Step 14: Writing the document

❑ Step 15: Revision/Public meetings

❑ Step 16: Adjustments and adoption of the document

MILIEUKONTAKT INTERNATIONAL

SERVING SOCIETY TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

PHASE 4

SYNTHESIS AND PLANNING

Synthesizing the materials delivered by the working groups
is an important part of the Green Agenda process. All the
information, pictures, charts and other materials now have to be
combined to form a coherent whole. The aim of this phase is to
produce a document that will be adopted by the local council
representatives.

STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANNING

Steps 12 and 13 combine the work of working groups and synthesize all the materials delivered by their members. In steps 8, 10 and 11, the working groups have defined the elements of the strategy and action plan. Now a special team (up to 5 members who are representatives from the working groups) has to formulate a strategy and fill out the action plan form, shown in the chapter on step 14.

Planning is a long and demanding process that leads to conscious modification of the environment, and whose outcome is a determined, desired and controlled change of the present state. Within the Green Agenda process, planning is always interactive and requires participation of different social actors: citizens, civil associations, economy, local self-government and institutions. It also requires continuous dealing with identified problems and competence of the people who are handling those problems.

The strategy bridges the gap between current conditions and the desirable state, using specific actions. Defining a strategy is not an easy task. In order to make a long-term and large-scale strategy, you will need an overview of both the whole and the segments. A good vision is one of the elements of the strategic plan. Vision and strategy provide direction and the framework for concrete actions to be identified, as a part of "learning-by-doing" approach, with new insights and monitoring results as inputs to operational planning.

Develop an action plan that allows for concrete actions in the local community based on the strategic objectives identified and agreed upon within the community. An action plan should provide a clear understanding of what you need to do in order to achieve your Green Agenda goals. An action plan is composed of a set of activities and actions to be implemented within a given timeframe for the implementation of the local Green Agenda.

All identified strategic objectives have to be accomplished by concrete actions. Upon completion of the strategic objectives, you should prepare an action plan, a schedule of events and responsibilities that details the actions to be taken to accomplish

the objectives laid out in the previous step. The characteristics of an action plan are shown in chart 10.1 below. Each local Green Agenda should have a detailed list of actions that can be initiated soon, and that can generate concrete, visible and attractive results.

An action plan must show which activities are to be implemented, by whom, what formal and/or informal structure will be responsible for implementation and monitoring, when, and what resources the plan will require. To develop an action plan you must identify when and how cooperation among stakeholders could be useful or needed. Such a plan provides a tool to help you communicate your intentions to others in the community and elsewhere. Developing an action plan will help participants focus possibly limited resources on the actions that will benefit your work, mostly for day-to-day implementation. The plan must be simple, realistic,

clearly written and easy to understand and based on the current situation. Enough time must be devoted to the plan so that it can be understood and realistically implemented by all involved actors. The plan should take into consideration the views and expectations of vulnerable community groups. Your action plan should have a monitoring system that enables you to check whether interventions and actions are effective, to anticipate possible challenges, and to benefit from local opportunities.

The output of steps 12 and 13 is a well-developed action plan that will lead to the achievement of the defined strategic objectives of the Green Agenda, in line with the local government and local community vision for local sustainable development.

The Green Agenda document is, in a way, a complete analysis of the local environment, existing advantages and disadvantages, trends, causes of problems, threats and opportunities, proposed solutions and operational plans. The first draft of the Green Agenda document is a result of several months of work carried out by the working groups. In our case, some working groups completed their tasks in four months, others in ten. There are many reasons why this happened and the most important are: size of working groups, community capacities and motivation of the working groups' members. Where conditions allowed, working groups gathered every two weeks. Where this was not possible, the meetings were held once a month.

There are no formal requirements as to the format and content of the Green Agenda document. Each community has its own characteristics and will make its own Green Agenda. For this reason we have adopted a flexible approach that arises from the participatory method and experiences during the process of planning. Every document is authentic, different, and depends on the local community experience. Finally, it is important that the document contain important data, such as who initiated the process, background of the idea, aims defined at the beginning of the process, outcomes, etc. Be sure to mention the donors who helped the realization of the process.

STEP 14: WRITING THE DOCUMENT

Writing the document is a demanding job that requires involvement of a large number of people and as many ideas as possible. Bearing in mind local commitment, time and energy, it is recommendable that the initiating organization takes this task upon itself. This means that the working groups deliver information regarding content, drafts, perhaps pictures, whereas the initiating organization brings all this together in a document. Each organization needs to form a team to write the document. At the beginning, it is desirable that each team plans individual responsibilities and makes a table of activities and responsibilities with the names of the persons responsible for writing the document.

Chapter	Person responsible for writing
Preface	
Introduction Green Agenda Process of creation of Green Agenda General information about the town Participants in the Green Agenda process	
Description of the community values Map of values Description of values	
Analysis of the current environmental situation Document analysis Trends analysis Analysis of the impacts of environmental trends Description of minimum standards Description of problems and causes of problems Description of potentials and opportunities	
Strategy Vision, elements of vision, vision statement Strategic goals	
Action plan	
Monitoring and evaluation plan	

CONTENTS OF THE DOCUMENT

The Green Agenda methodology does not have a rigid, formal approach to the document contents. Therefore, this chapter may be considered as a suggestion (guidelines) and not as a set of obligatory rules. There are no rigid rules governing document style, contents or layout; each community can be as creative as it wants to be. Before writing your document, if it is possible, read the documents prepared by other communities. Surely, there will be differences because every community has its own characteristics and values. Still, there are some similarities among the different communities' documents so we recommend the following format:

- **Introduction**
  - Green Agenda - general information (about Green Agenda, its approach, etc.)
  - Process of creation of Green Agenda in your community (who initiated it, when, how, important events)
  - General information on the community (town, municipality)
  - Participants in the process (names of all the participants that worked on it or contributed to it)
- **Description of community values**
  - Map of values (list the values identified and analyzed by the working groups)
  - Description of the values (short description, most important information, years, size, production, etc.)
- **Analysis of the current state of the environment/cultural heritage**
  - Document analysis
  - Trends analysis
  - Analysis of trends' impacts
  - Description of minimum standards
  - Description of problems and causes of problems
  - Description of potentials and opportunities
- **Strategy**
  - Vision, elements of vision, vision statement
  - Strategic goals
- **Action plan**
- **Monitoring and evaluation plan**

This overview is further elaborated in the following pages.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Introduction is to present the Green Agenda process in general and to provide information on the work carried out in your community. It is desirable that the Introduction consists of three or four parts:

- General information about the Green Agenda process.
- Information on the town/municipality where the Green Agenda is being implemented.
- Description of the participatory process during preparation and document. adoption (forms of public participation, results, lessons learned, recommendations, etc.).
- List of all the participants in the process (it is important to express gratitude to all the people who participated because in this way you show seriousness; be sure to mention all the donors who helped realize the process and pilot projects!!!).

In the introductory part you can also describe how the working groups were formed, how they functioned, what their motives were and the results that were achieved. Also include some positive experiences.

"It is important to create a quality document that will reflect the needs and opinions of the community"

DESCRIPTION OF THE VALUES

Green Agenda focuses on the community values. It is very important to pay special attention to this part of the document in order to present the values adequately. At the meeting of stakeholders, the most important values of the community were identified and prioritized. Each working group was formed according to the values identified and each group has revised them. Some values were reformulated, others were added or removed, which helped in selecting the most important ones and provided some focus for the further analytical steps. First you need to create a map of values; then describe each value in detail. Do not forget to emphasize the fact that Green Agenda focuses on the values, not problems, of the community.

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE

OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The results delivered by the working groups are the basis of our strategic document. You need to collect all the working groups' results in a form that will be comprehensible to the local stakeholders and the community. The analysis of the current state of the environment consists of:

Document analysis

- – Action 1: Documents identification and their importance for Green Agenda
- – Action 2: Copies of documents
- – Action 3: Analysis of all the documents
- – Action 4: Impacts of the documents on the Green Agenda process

Then, you should include the results achieved by the working groups (briefly):

- – Step 5: Analysis of environmental trends
- – Step 6: Analysis of impacts of environmental trends
- – Step 7: Standards
- – Step 8: Problems
- – Step 9: Causes of problems
- – Step 10: Potentials and opportunities
- – Step 11: Priorities

Check once again the terminology used by the working groups when presenting the results and make sure to adjust it so that an ordinary member of the community can understand it. It is not enough just to copy the formats provided by the working groups; you will also have to transform them into a few clear and concise sentences.

Pay attention to being accurate. Check all the facts delivered by the working groups. Opinions of the working group members are not necessarily real facts. Opinions can be subjective; they can reflect fears or convictions. Try to find objective and measurable indicators; for example, if someone is claiming that the air is polluted, you should check that by conducting measurements. Create systems to check the facts. Once you have published the document, corrections will not be possible. This checking also needs to done during the work in the working groups in order to prevent using erroneous assumptions as a basis for the work.

STRATEGY

The first step towards successful strategy development is defining the vision. The vision is what you expect your community to be like within a certain period and defines a desirable future situation after achieving the goals. The vision is a description of what you would like to achieve in the future: an image of a desirable future for your community. By defining a vision you will determine the primary reason for the strategy and you will avoid any *ad hoc* actions. The main characteristics of the vision are:

- It is directed towards the distant future.
- It is very brief.
- Everyone can understand it.
- It describes a stable phase.
- It can be shared by several organizations.
  When creating a vision, ask yourself the following questions:
- How will Green Agenda activities and our cooperation with other organizations that share our goals change the world we live in and make it a better place?
- What is our "job"? Why are we doing it?
- What does the future we want to create look like?
- How will things change? At what level?
- What are the aspects of that future?

The vision should always describe a future situation, not actions that have to be undertaken in order to achieve the desirable future. It has to include certain dominant values shared by all the members of a community, because only the community where the values are clearly identified and shared by its members can move towards achieving its goals. In order to make a transparent and understandable vision, you will need a vision statement. The vision serves as guidance for identifying a course of development, values, areas of action, target groups etc. It answers the question "**why are we here?**".

STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic goals should be precisely defined, clear and realistic; they should serve as guidance for further activities. A goal is a description of what is to be achieved. Based on the vision and the results from analysis previously conducted by the working groups, it is now possible to identify the strategic goals of Green Agenda. They should be prioritized and presented in a form that will allow for a clear sequence and progress during the processes of application and evaluation. Based on the strategic goals, you will determine what the authorities and the community will implement and achieve during a specific period. There are two types of strategic goals: general and specific. Specific goals describe the general goals and they need to be quantified. Apart from strategic goals, there are also operational goals. Operational goals represent a concrete, active realization of the strategic goals. Operational goals are actually descriptions of specific activities. There are several criteria to define a strategic goal:

- – compatibility with the vision
- – precise definition of actions
- – focus on results
- – compatibility with other strategic goals
- – feasibility

Criteria to define an operational goal properly:

- – compatibility with the vision
- – help in achieving strategic goals
- – objective evaluation (has the goal been achieved?; when?)
- – simplicity, conciseness, accuracy and comprehensibility
- – appointment of specific persons/organizations responsible for implementation
- – objectivity and balance

A lot of mistakes can occur during the strategic goals identification, such as setting short-term goals, i.e. being more focused on immediate problems and not on broad outcomes. Administrative and other goals that are not closely related to the project are often forgotten. However, they should also be taken into account for they are an important precondition for achieving concrete goals. When identifying strategic goals you should ask yourself the following questions:

- ❑ What priorities can be achieved?
- ❑ What can be achieved but needs to be described differently?
- ❑ What preconditions cannot be fulfilled but to which we still can contribute?
- ❑ What outcomes will we achieve, and will they contribute to the overall aims?
- ❑ What does our community expect from us?

How to achieve the identified strategic goals? First we should determine strategies, concrete operational ways of achieving our goals, and specific objectives in accordance with strategic goals. One strategic goal often implies several objectives. They need to meet the SMART rules: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-framed. The greatest advantage when setting objectives is that the actions will be focused; we will know what to expect, from whom, and the contribution of each individual, institution or organization, involved in strategy realization.

ACTION PLAN

The action plan (or work plan) specifically shows how the community is going to achieve its strategic goals. It is a list of activities that must be performed in order to bridge the gap between the current and the desirable state. The plan usually contains components taken from a Gantt chart: Who is going to do what, by when, how, what are the costs, what the expected goal is, etc. The recommended activities should be logical. Begin by identifying the needs, continue with concrete actions and finish with monitoring the progress in implementation. Involving important persons and organizations is a very important step in the planning process, for this ensures responsible actuation towards achieving the desired results. After that, further concretization and specification of the requirements needed for the creation of action plan is possible.

- Identify critical areas that need special attention.
- Analyze the background; why is it necessary to carry out an activity?
- Define the activities needed for problem solving.
- Determine the indicators to check to determine whether the results are being achieved.
- Identify the resources needed for the action plan implementation (time, responsible parties, equipment, logistics).
- Identify the actors in plan implementation.
- Make a system to inform on progress in implementation.
- Think about problems that might occur during the implementation process and possible solutions.

Value	Identified problem	Activity	Indicators	Responsible persons/ Necessary resources	Period				
					2009	2010	2011	2012	2014

STEP 15: PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS AND REVISION

A public discussion is an important activity in the process of the document creation and a good instrument to consult a broad public. The destiny of the process depends on it, because during the discussion you will be able to notice possible errors or weak points in your document. The public debate is the last opportunity to check the document before its adoption and, at the same time, the first opportunity to test its practical implementation.

In each community there are parties who have conflicting interests, different points of view or past conflicts. "Difficult" or demanding actors may also appear. All these tensions will surely reflect on the Green Agenda process. In general, people do not like confrontations and, in order to avoid them, often tend to ignore each other. It can happen that one party ignores the process while the other chooses to leave it. There should be no vanity, ignoring

or rivalry in the Green Agenda process, for it insists on creating a local partnership among different sectors and actors, joint planning followed by compromise and respect and involvement of a large number of different actors, regardless of their past interrelations.

From our point of view, a problem can seem logical and its solution easy and simple. However, if we do not involve all the parties, there is the possibility that some of the activities of the action plan will be perceived as being unrealistic, irrational, uneconomical or unnecessary. For example, planning the primary waste selection without the participation of the representatives of local communal service could lead to non-implementation of the plan.

Imagine the following situation: A donor provides resources for waste separation containers but a local company does not have an adequate truck to take these containers. We cannot know that unless we collaborate with the communal company representatives. Here is another example: Your action plan includes an analysis of the air quality but your community does not have any polluters. This is not rational, but it can happen if you do not involve a local secretary's office or a department for environmental protection in the working groups.

All these mistakes can be recognized and corrected at the public debate. The sooner you recognize a mistake, the easier it will be to correct it in the document. That is the reason why Phase 1 should be conducted as thoroughly as possible. We recommend that you send the first draft of the document to all the stakeholders and that you motivate them to read it and comment on it.

The best way to do that is to send a draft in electronic form, for example a CD, explaining what it is about, why it is important and what the stakeholders are expected to do. Give them a reasonable deadline for responding, but not more than 2 to 3 weeks.

In your letter, emphasize two important things: a) this is a good opportunity to participate in the creation of the document to reflect interests and views of the person/ organization; b) if they do not seize this opportunity, later comments and criticism will not be polite, because everyone who wanted to already had the chance to influence the process. It is very likely (and it often happens) that the stakeholders will not even look at the draft, let alone read it or comment on it. Therefore the organization in charge should motivate them in order to get feedback.

After getting stakeholders' comments, you should organize public presentations and discussions on the document. It is best is to discuss the draft at a big meeting to

which all the citizens are invited. If a community consists of several villages, you should organize debates locally; do not expect that people will come to town just to participate in a public debate. Every organization shall estimate the best number of public debates to be held. Choose the best way to inform the people on the debate; use both television and newspaper notices. A notice in the newspaper is the best proof that the invitation was sent; then no one can reproach you by saying, "I was not invited and I was eager to come."

Do not give too much detail, but focus on the action plan. Comments and suggestions can be collected at the debate or later, and if possible, they should be included in the document. It can happen that local groups present the draft to an audience that was not involved in the process. In this case, a lot of new suggestions might come up. A public debate is always a good way to increase local interest in the final result and to improve the quality of the document.

After the public debates are finished, take into consideration all the suggestions received and include them, if they are logical, useful and can contribute to the quality of the final version of the document. If there are suggestions that will completely change the concept of the document or some of its parts, you should first consult the working groups and then make a decision.

STEP 16: ADOPTION OF THE DOCUMENT

After including all the suggestions, a corrected version of the document is ready to be adopted by a local assembly. In this step you need to be familiar with the procedures, rules and practices It is also important to know and understand political conditions in the local community. Sometimes you will have to influence the decision-makers and to explain to them the importance of some decisions for the local community. Lobbying is a special way of influencing powerful individuals or groups. Lobbying is a process of developing efficient and effective communication with those who have formal and informal power. The process is successful if influential individuals or groups support certain initiatives and intensify their activities in order to achieve the planned goals.

The municipal council suggests the statute, budget and other decisions and acts that should be adopted by the Assembly. The municipal council is the first instance: The document should first be adopted by the municipal council and then by the assembly.

Send your Green Agenda, with an accompanying letter, to the municipal council. It is best is to address it to the president of the municipality, the president of the council.

If you know a member of the council in charge of environmental issues or some other Green Agenda related sector who is powerful enough to help adopt the decision, contact that person and involve him/her in the process as soon as possible. Note that in some municipalities, sessions are not held often and you could lose time. The municipal council will certainly meet before the Assembly does.

Once the document has passed the council session, it is very certain that it will be adopted by the Assembly. Still, your job is not finished. You now need to contact heads of political parties and presidents of council boards, especially the opposition, because this is a great opportunity for your organization to become a relevant actor in the area of the environment and cultural heritage.

Green Agenda is a good opportunity to demonstrate community agreement. Do not settle for having the required majority voting in favor of the document. Your goal should be to have all the members and all the parties accept it. If that is not the case, your document is at risk of being criticized or disputed; for example, an uninterested actor may use it as an excuse to fight the authorities.

There are long-term consequences as well. When an actor realizes he is defeated or that his opinion is not accepted, you need to be careful. The next election might change the political scene and critics and opponents could become authorities. It is very possible that the former opposition would want to get revenge, and that could jeopardize the process. That is the reason why broad consensus is important and that Green Agenda be accepted by as many as possible political actors.

Municipal statutes offer other ways of proposing the agenda for the assembly session: one-third of members or even only one member can ask for the change of the agenda if he/she considers a motion urgent. These are all back-up plans that you need to know about, but they are less effective because they are insufficiently prepared, usually started by the opposition and therefore without majority support.

It is very important to estimate when to start the activities in Phase 4..They have to be adjusted to local self-government plans. Adoption of the document is useless without developing other instruments, such as economic instruments of financing the programs of environmental protection, budget decisions, etc.

Therefore, the best time to adopt the document is the first session after the summer break (at the end of September/beginning of October). If you use this period, there is plenty of time to convince the decision-makers to include the action plan provisions in the public companies' and institutions' programs and to think of them when deciding on next year's budget. If you miss the opportunity, you will lose the next 12 months because later changes in budget are not that common.

Make a small plan for this important phase, as suggested in the format bellow. Determine who, when and how (with what resources) will carry out all the activities.

ACTIVITY	TIME FRAME	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES NEEDED
Strategy and action plan			
Writing the document			
Sending draft to stakeholders			
Public discussions			
Revision of the document			
Sending the document to the official procedure			
Lobbying political factors			
Adoption of the document			
Public promotion of the adopted document - final conference			
Lobbying to include the Green Agenda provisions in annual plans of responsible actors as well in decisions on the next budget			
Pilot projects			

PHASE 5

MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The highest risk that exists in Phase 5 is the failure of practical application of the document. One of the mechanisms for successful implementation of the strategy is forming teams which will take care of carrying out the plans. However, this is not the only mechanism developed through the Green Agenda methodology. There are few others which we will describe below.
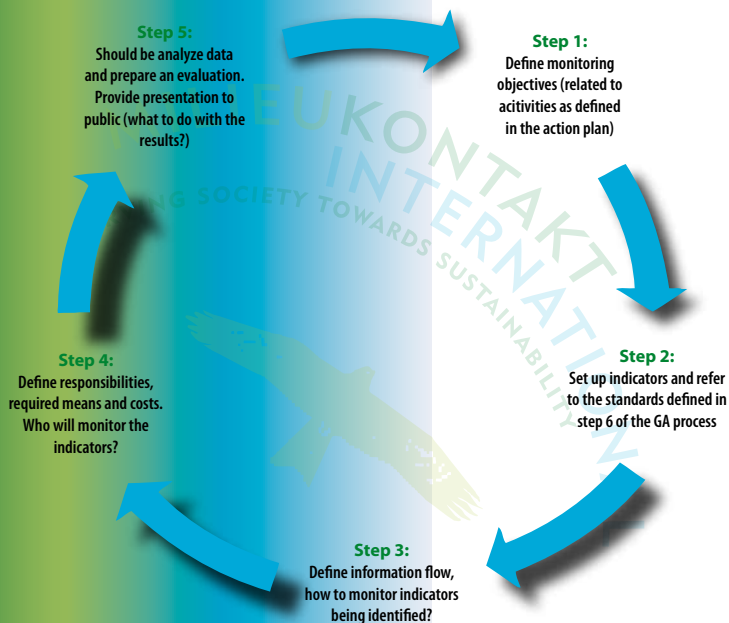
STEP 17: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The aim of monitoring and evaluation is to assess and estimate results achieved, in order to manage final results in the best possible way. Monitoring should provide objective indicators as to whether there is progress toward solution of an issue or a problem, while evaluation shows the progress in the function of achieving the final goal.

The most important aims, next to the adoption of the strategic document, are monitoring, evaluating and sustaining the process. If these aims are not achieved, the process will fail, because even the best strategy is worthless unless the people responsible for implementation use it as a tool for reaching goals, or the public is not interested in these goals. However, monitoring shouldn't be perceived as supervision or control, but as a partnership process of learning how to deal with important issues in the community.

Participative monitoring and evaluation are **different** approaches that invite a **wide circle of interested parties**, including people, local governmental and non-governmental organizations, humanitarian and developmental international organizations, **to decide together** how the **success** of the strategy **should be assessed** and which activities have to be done in order to **gather necessary relevant data.**

Steps for

setting up a monitoring

system

Step 5:
Should be analyze data
and prepare an evaluation.
Provide presentation to
public (what to do with the
results?)

Step 1:
Define monitoring
objectives (related to
acitivities as defined
in the action plan)

Step 4:
Define responsibilities,
required means and costs.
Who will monitor the
indicators?

Step 2:
Set up indicators and refer
to the standards defined in
step 6 of the GA process

Step 3:
Define information flow,
how to monitor indicators
being identified?

Initiators of Green Agenda have a
full right to participate in monitoring the
action plans and the achievement of goals.

Within the plans for monitoring and evaluating, we suggest establishing a Council of Green Agenda, an informal body consisting of interested parties and the public, first of all NGOs that carried the whole process, representatives of local governments, institutions, individuals and other members of the public interested in the process. This body would have sessions at least twice a year (in March and September) and would analyze results of the process: whether progress has been achieved in every single part of the action plan, and if it has, how much progress has been made, whether it is helping to achieve the final goal, and if not, why not, what more is necessary, what are the levels of risk of the unachieved goal.

Opinions are descriptive reports on the progress, and suggestions include recommended corrective measures so that certain risks would be eliminated, goals would be achieved or activities which were missing before would be initiated. Opinions and suggestions are sent to persons responsible for certain activities and to the interested public. The public is notified of analysis results at sessions of the Council by means of brief written statements. In certain cases the Council will have a right to address the Council of the National Platform of the country which is constituted within the project of Green Agenda, all within goals and authority that the Council has on the national level.

Green Agenda is a process that has the potential to provide important benefits to the community in which it is being implemented. In order to prevent the process from coming to a halt and vanishing, it is necessary to provide economic sustainability. The experiences of countries that carried the process through to the evaluation phase, such as Croatia, has shown that within existing local plans or local plans for funds for environmental protection, it is necessary to plan for reliable funding for projects on the list in the Green Agenda action plan. This would be assigned to local NGOs as a co-financing effort for applying to other donors. In this way, NGOs would stimulate local governments to be active partners in solving joint issues of environmental protection and would provide great support to efforts of NGOs and projects applying for funds from other donors.

MONITORING PLANS

Strategic planning should include monitoring **plans**, and if needed, collecting initial data and providing certain funds to finance these plans. Plans should identify how information about how monitoring and evaluation activities will be used to direct activities toward achieving certain results. Monitoring plans include a definition of each process indicator and measurement unit, descriptions of sources of information for the indicator, initial data and methods for data selection and processing, frequency or schedule of data provision, and identification of individuals responsible for availability of information. Indicators of the process should be direct, objective and practical, meaning that most information will be available at intervals consistent with management needs. Quantitative indicators are advisable. However, if qualitative indicators are used, they have to be defined in such a way as to provide regular, systematic and relatively objective assessments regarding change of "values" or status of the indicator, in order to facilitate assessments of the previous and subsequent activities, and everything within or out of the project situation.

Credibility of results and assessments greatly depends on the way monitoring and evaluation are carried out.

Principles of good monitoring:

- Good monitoring is focused on results and corresponding activities. It looks for "something that is going on well" and "something that doesn't include progress" towards planned results. Then it is recorded in reports, followed by recommendations and suggestions about decisions and activities that need to be done.

- Good monitoring depends on good planning. If a project is poorly planned or rests on wrong assumptions, not even the best possible monitoring will be able to assure success. Planning of the realistic chain of comprehensive and specific results and activities is very important. Managers of the project should avoid using monitoring for correction of problems which emerge all the time and which need permanent solutions.

- Monitoring is also upgraded by using mechanisms of participative monitoring in order to insure commitment, ownership, corresponding actions and feedback on results. This is crucial for the monitoring of comprehensive results where the progress cannot be assessed without previous perception of what partners do. Participative mechanisms include groups for comprehensive results, meetings of participants and boards, as well as interviews of focus groups.

INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS OF MONITORING

Some of the most adequate instruments and mechanisms for monitoring are field visits, project reports, group reviews and analysis, annual reviews and quantitative and qualitative researches. Forms and approaches can be adjusted to needs of strategies, providing the minimum of the context to be reflected. These would include progress towards comprehensive and specific goals, as well as partnership between local authorities who adopted the strategy, and civil society that initiated its adoption. When it comes to the concrete case of Green Agenda, the Council will use the following instruments for analysis of results: analysis of documents, annual plans, project reports, researches, field visits. The Council will also have a book of regulations, and the results of session work will be documents: opinions, suggestions and statements for the public.

CATEGORY OF INFORMATION	WHAT TO MONITOR?	WHAT TO RECORD?	WHO COLLECTS THE DATA?	WHO USES THE DATA?	HOW TO USE THE INFORMATION?	WHAT DECISION TO MAKE?
ACTIVITIES						
FINANCES						
HUMAN RESOURCES						
INFORMATION						
RESULTS						

IV.
Risk management in the Green Agenda process

Risks are always present in strategic planning processes. It is directly related to danger and uncertainty. The more we are aware of certain risks, the easier it is to prevent them or to reduce their consequences. Green Agenda is a live process involving a lot of people. Among themselves they have different interactions, communicate a lot, have different expectations, which means lots of opportunity for potential conflicts and misunderstandings. By definition, risks are always related to some kind of a lost or undesirable outcome, to a possibility of something undesirable happening, due to unexpected circumstances. Risks are related to future events or to a probability that some activity or part of a process may be unsuccessful. During the four years of Green Agenda experience in the Western Balkans, we came to some conclusions that can help advance that certain risks are recognized and to overcome them.

Considering different methodologies and concepts on risk management, the commonly used methodology has 4 steps:

1.   Risk identification
2.   Risk analysis and assessment
3.   Planning on avoiding risks and its impacts
4.   Control of risk impacts

1. **Risk identification** is a process of identification, classification and ranking of all the risky events that can affect the project. In order to do successful risk identification, risks should be classified in several categories:

•   Human factor risks
•   Institutional risks
•   Technical risks
•   Financial risks

- Organizational risks
- Operational risks
- Environmental risks
- Political risks
- Socio-economic risks

2. **Risk analysis and assessment** is a detailed analysis of certain risky events and their influence on the process results. In this phase you should determine the following risk categories:

- Type (internal or external)
- Risk category (defined in the previous paragraph)
- Risk intensity (it helps us define the measures for its management)

3. **Planning the avoidance and minimization of risks effects** is a process of a strategy formulation. During this phase, we try to find the activities that will help us avoid or minimize the possible risk effects on the Green Agenda results. Activities:

- Ignoring risk
- Accepting risk
- Minimizing risk
- Transferring risk
- Division of risk
- Contingency plan

All the actions we plan to undertake have the same goal: neutralize or reduce the risk effects during the process. Very often, the activities have to be combined in order to achieve the results.

4. **Monitoring and follow-up** phase assesses the responses and reactions to the risk, the application of adequate actions and results.

The four phases should not be separated one from another. Only when considered as a cyclical whole in a continuous process, do the phases give the best results in risk protection.

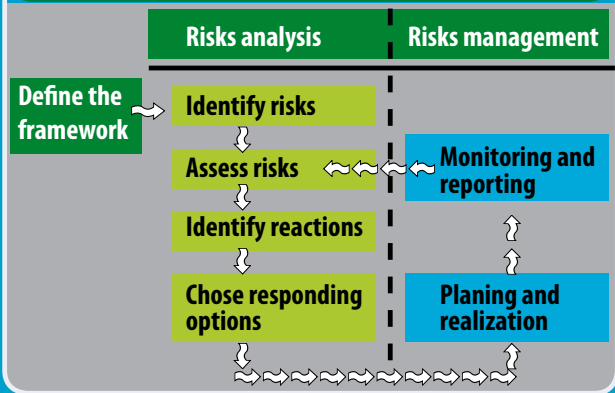*Risk assessment instrument for Green Agenda process:*

Steps	Description of a risk	Type Internal/External	Category - Financial - Political - Environmental - Operational - **Institutional** - Socio-economic - Human factor	Intensity **H** high **M** moderate **L** low	Plan of action Description of what should be done in order to reduce/eliminate the influence of the risk
Step 1 – Stakeholder analysis	An important stakeholder was not invited/included in the process.	Internal	Operational	Moderate	After determining the error, approach the important stakeholder directly and invite him/her to participate in the process. Ensure all the information and offer an official apology for the mistake.
Step 2: Document analysis	An analysis of important documents relevant for Green Agenda was not conducted.	Internal	Operational	Moderate	Conduct an additional analysis of the important document and include it in the official part of the document analysis.
Step 3: Values identification / The first meeting of stakeholders	Small number of stakeholders present at the first meeting of stakeholders. The risk is that due to the small number of stakeholders, they are not presenting community opinion, and values cannot be grouped and clearly defined.	External	Operational Human factor Political	Very high	- The meeting should be carefully prepared: choose the best way to inform the people about the meeting. - Ask the participants to confirm their attendance. - Use the local media to promote first meeting. - Mobilize local NGOs to help. - Choose an attractive location for first meeting. - In case the meeting is unsuccessful (small number of participants), reschedule the new one.

Step	Issue / Question	Internal/External	Type	Priority	Recommendation
Step 4: Establishment of the working groups based on values	People taking part in more than one working group can get tired by the voluntary work.. Motivation of members of WGs: – During the process members of WGs are losing motivation, they stop contributing to the work of the group, WGs are getting too small, sometimes 'one man show'.	Internal Internal	Operational Human	Moderate Moderate / High	Do not involve one person in more than one group. Inform the participants about their work and responsibilities. One of the biggest motivation 'lifting' activity for WGs was meeting with WGs from other communities (getting fresh ideas, feeling of belonging to a bigger 'movement'). - During the process organize as many 'concrete' activities as possible (people like to see products of their work). - Shorten the process: in communities where the process of analyses lasted half a year, as opposed to one year, it was easier to maintain motivation, because a) people commit easier (on voluntary basis!) for shorter period; b) meeting every 2 weeks keeps them 'involved', whereas once a month is too long a period to feel part of something. - If possible, form larger groups at the begining
Step 5 - Trends analysis of identifying values	What period should be selected for trends analysis?	Internal	Operational Socio-economic	Moderate	According to the community development, you should select a period in the past when an important socio-economic development occurred.
Step 6 - Analysis of the impacts of trends	Trends were not defined precisely enough in Step 5.	Internal	Operational Human	Moderate	Reassess all the trends with the members of the working groups.

Step	Description		Category	Level	Solution
Step 7: Analyzing minimum trends and defining a vision	Impossible to make a survey due to the lack of people; the results of a survey were unsatisfactory (when compared to the time invested).	Internal	Human	Moderate	Possible solution: include more multiple choice questions.
Step 8 – Problem analysis	You have failed to identify an important problem.	Internal	Human Operational Political	Moderate to High	After determining the error, go back to Step 8 and analyze the problem.
Step 9: Analyzing causes of problems	Problems were not identified properly.	Internal	Operational Human	Moderate	Recheck the results in working groups.
Step 10: Defining potentials and opportunities	Opportunities are not in accordance with potentials (they are not properly indentified).	Internal	Operational Human	Low	Be careful when making a list.
Step 11: Priorities	Step was not understood (in terms of methodology).	Internal	Operational Human	High	Careful preparation and group work.
Step 12: Strategy definition	Results that are produced by working groups is not collected in electronic form so you need a lot of time for their synthesis.	Internal	Operational Human	Low	Systematically collect results in electronic form during the work of working groups in phase 3.

Step	Risk	Internal/External	Type	Level	Recommendation
Step 13: Action planning	Working groups did not determine properly priorities.	Internal	Human Operational	Moderate	Arrange another meeting on priorities with the working groups, with clear instructions and expectations that will be included in Action Plan.
Step 14: Writing the document	The document has too many grids and tables results produced by the working groups.	Internal	Human Operational	Low	Try to show the content of some tables in the form of descriptive text.
Step 15: Public discussions and revision	Low interest of community for the part of review document that is manifested in low attendance at meetings that are organized for this purpose.	External	Human Operational Political Socio-economic	Moderate	Try to come up with different solutions to resolve this problem in the way to use the power of media to communicate with citizens.
Step 16: Adoption of the document	Certain political group opposed to the adoption of the document because Green Agenda document contains a part that is contrary to the interests represented by this group.	External	Political Socio-economic	High	- Try to find a common solution with a party that opposes the adoption of the document. - Always consult members of the working group as to whether they agree with the common solutions offered. - Tools you can use to help you to overcome this situation are negotiation, joint meetings, including members of political parties in the working groups.
Step 17: Monitoring and implementation	Low motivation of people to participate for a long time on voluntary basis in the monitoring teams.	Internal	Human Operational	Moderate	- Try to include in the part of document that talks about monitoring, explanation about responsibilities and obligations of local institutions and monitoring team members. - Motivate monitoring team members with study visits, opportunity for educational development, increasing awareness about social importance of their work.

Risk management cycle

Risks analysis	Risks management

Define the framework → **Identify risks**

Assess risks ← **Monitoring and reporting**

Identify reactions

Chose responding options **Planing and realization**

V.
Regional and
International cooperation

Regional and international cooperation is an important component within the concept of Green Agenda. This is so not just in the program implemented in the Western Balkans but also in other regions and countries. In this sense Green Agenda is part of the process of 'Glocalization': globalization of local initiatives. Activities on regional and international levels added value to the program in the Western Balkans.

Regional Skill Share seminars

To have successful implementation of Green Agenda processes on the community level, several support structures are needed. CSOs support the process on the local level, national coordinators manage, advise and support on the national level, trainers conduct training sessions on Green Agenda related topics, and there is overall international management. Regional skill share seminars are organized to facilitate sharing of knowledge, challenges and ideas for action, and provide input for further action in the Green Agenda communities. Participants in these skill share seminars can come from all countries involved in an international Green Agenda program, even before activities start in a respective country. In this way a regional network is developed with environmental NGOs, active communities with Green Agenda experience, trainers and (EU) experts. They act as change agents in their own country while being strengthened with new insights, knowledge, experience and skills from the regional level, training sessions, and the international skill share seminars. During the skill share seminars, connections were made with EU Member State experts and colleagues and the participants from the region.

In the Green Agenda project on the Western Balkans, three skill share seminars were organized:

1.) 13-15 June 2008

Struga, Macedonia

2.) 12-14 June 2009

Vora, Albania

3.) 22–24 October 2010

Struga, Macedonia

Besides exchange and capacity building, the added value of the skill share seminars turned out to be the development of joint activities such as between cross border communities that share similar issues. Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro, through IPA funding, realized one joint project named European partnership for local Green Agendas, which began in December 2009.

Study visits

Study visits are an instrument to stimulate exchange of people, experience and ideas. In Green Agenda, study visits are used to learn from other communities but also to experience the link between community development and international policy. EU accession is an important issue in several countries in the Balkans and is an excellent topic for a study visit to Brussels. In addition, a study tour to the Netherlands for participants from all countries took place to assess the Dutch experience and to meet with potential Dutch partners. In Croatia participants learned about Green Agenda and regional development there.

1.) 19-20 May 2008

Study visit to Brussels

A visit to Brussels was organized, including a meeting with European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the Network of environmental organizations in Europe, World Wildlife Fund and the Directorate Generals, Enlargement and Region. Study visit to Croatia.

2.) 21-24 May 2008

First Study visit to The Netherlands

3.) 16-19 September 2010

Second study visit to The Netherlands

Participants visited several Dutch initiatives on regional branding and regional development. Examples were "De Kleine Aarde", with an introduction to sustainable development and use of EU funds, a restaurant with locally produced food and a project on regional branding.

4.) 1-5 November 2009

Study visit to Croatia

The visit to Croatia was an exchange visit with members from CSOs, trainers and local project managers, to learn about the Green Agenda experience in Croatia. There was a meeting with WG members from Čakovec, Sveti Martin na Muri and Nedelišće. Several results from Green Agenda processes and a LEADER local action group were visited.

5.) June 2010

Second study visit to Croatia.

This visit was for working group members and local authorities, while the first was for CSOs.

6.) June 2010

Study visit to Montenegro

CSOs from Bosnia Herzegovina visited the communities Mojkovac and Niksic in Montenegro and had meetings with local partners and local authorities. The purpose of the visit was to share experience and discuss possible future cooperation. As a follow-up to this visit, a Memorandum of Cooperation between local authorities from Mojkovac and Visegrad was signed and currently they are working on preparation of joint IPA project. The study visit was organized by the working group and NGO members, financed by the Federal Ministry of Environment of Bosnia Herzegovnia.

Promoting the method on the international level

With a budget for international travel, participants in the program were able to visit meetings of international conferences and networks. They could promote Green

Agenda activities and learn about activities on the international level in the broad field of environment and regional development.

Workshops on EU Accession and funds

Community development is in many ways linked to international policy making. This is especially so in the EU where there are funds to stimulate regional development and EU accession. On the local level, it is not always easy to obtain EU funding for projects on a regional level. Training, workshops and exchange of experience can help to smooth the way to access to these funds and policy making structures.

In Shkoder, 21-23 March 2008, a workshop was organized on the European Union water framework directive. Participants had the chance to learn about the directive and its connection to local initiatives on water.

In Bar, Montenegro on 5–7 December 2008 a workshop was organized on cross border cooperation in the framework of the IPA program of the European Union. Participants learned about the possibilities for applying for this program.

Cooperation through international -

Eco Kontakt/Milieukontakt network

Due to internal and external factors, Milieukontakt International as an organization had to adapt and develop a new structure. Miieukontakt changed from a Dutch support organization with local offices and partners into an international network based on equal partnership. The main reason for this was the strong development of local offices and organizations which changed the role and position of the staff in the Amsterdam headquarters. Together with a sudden loss of financial possibilities in the Dutch programs for international cooperation, Milieukontakt had to adapt its structure. In the future we hope to be a strong network for the support of public participation in the field of nature and environment.

VI.
Achievements

Green Agenda is a balance between process and result. The proces itself is important, but it is not without tangible results. Some of these results can be described in quantitative terms, but they only have real meaning when described in a qualitative way. Other resuts are never described because they are achieved long after the Green Agenda process or are an unknown result.

The following figures give a picture of the achievements in the period 2007–2010 in the Western Balkans in the framework of the Green Agenda program:

- 22 communities have conducted a Green Agenda process.
- 16 communities, at this moment, have adopted Green Agenda document, 7 communities have gone through the process but until now adoption was not realized due to local circumstances.
- More than 60 working groups have been established.
- 30 pilot projects were conducted in 6 countries.
- More than 80 different promotional activities were organized.
- 6 training teams have been formed and have begun to function.
- 6 National Platforms Councils have been formed.
- The Western Balkans Green Agenda Network has been established.

Besides figures, it is important to describe the achievements in qualitative terms. In this way, lessons learned can be useful for communities and for organizations that are taking new initiatives in Green Agenda. There are several achievements we would particularly like to point out:

- The synergy between different stakeholders.
- The wide range of participation.
- The orientation on both process and result.
- The strengthened capacities of process participants.
- The levels of cooperation: local, national and regional.

Synergy among different stakeholders

The Green Agenda project on the Western Balkans has involved many different stakeholders on different levels. Starting this proces is never without risk because you will never know if all stakeholders are wiling to participate and communicate with each other. In the Western Balkans reasons for not cooperating in the process can be:

- a lack of tradition of cooperation at the community level;
- due to the large number of participants, communication problems can easily arise;
- adherence to different sectors of society;
- the legacy of previous systems and regimes.

These conditions made a carefull approach to stakeholders necessary. Every step in the methodology was carefully planned and implemented by local partners, trainers and Milieukontakt International management in each of the 6 countries. This was especially the case during the first 4 steps in the process, when working groups of different stakeholders were formed. With tact and understanding for the situation, local institutions, civil society organizations, ordinary citizens and economic entities were approached and asked to participate. Thanks to this approach, people in all communities were willing to participate and become active in the working groups. Later this resulted in synergy among them. During the following steps in the process, as in the activities in the working groups, numerous training sessions, study visits, informal socializing, special attention was paid to the creation of a positive atmosphere among participants.

This created an atmosphere of trust and respect among participants. It was manifested in formal relations, such as in their involvement in other processes and project implementation on the local level, and also in informal socializing and spending coffee breaks together. One can say that one of the major achievements in this project is the synergy among stakeholders that has enabled the implementation of all above-mentioned quantitative results.

Wide participation

While most processes of community development have huge problems with the mobilization of citizens for the process, one of the main characteristics of Green Agenda methodlogy is its wide participation. Practice shows that the most sustainable processes of strategic planning are those that involve all community sectors. Always bear in mind that Green Agenda is an open, democratic process of integration of citizens, local authorities and the business sector by following

Public sector

Civil sector

Business sector
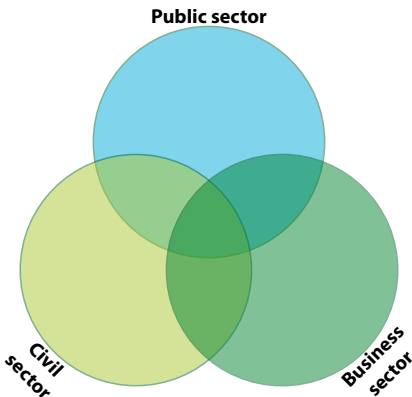
"bottom-up" and "people to people" principles. The aim of those principles is to create a dialogue and agreement on important environmental issues to bridge the differences between the current situation and the desirable future (the vision of the community). It is a participatory way of dealing with local issues, solutions, opportunities and threats to the environment. The achievements of the four-year project implementation have justified the importance of this component of the methodology. All involved in the process have noticed that the broad participation is a great value achieved in the Green Agenda process. In total, hundreds of citizens were involved in more than 60 working groups in 20 communities. However, the rule to have everybody included has not always been easy to achieve. Very often, stakeholders from business were missing, since their motivation to participate in such processes was often at the lowest level.

- Public sector is right-driven: provides information, stability and legitimacy.
- Private sector is profits-driven: it is inventive, fast and single-minded.
- Civil sector is value-driven: it is responsive, imaginative and inclusive.

Orientation to the process and the results

Green Agenda is a model of citizens' initiative that can contribute to solving some of the local problems. The aim of Green Agenda is twofold: on one hand the participatory process is important, through which common agreement, communication and cooperation can be achieved. On the other hand, the output of the process is equally important: a local action plan to improve the local quality of life by means of sustainable development. Green Agenda offers rational and economically sustainable solutions to environmental problems and supports positive values that become part of the official municipal policy, regardless of the political will. In this way, it enables the continuity in problem solving and disables the suspension of the positive processes in case of local government changes. The document is also an important requirement for international integration for it shows the democracy in decision making and local policies in the area of environmental protection.

Strengthened capacity of stakeholders

Work on capacity strengthening is an achievement that is possible to measure in terms of events and number of participants. Although it is indeed the qualitative achievement, the number or quantity of events aimed to increase the capacity of project participants was significant. Each country had its own special training team working with the partner organizations, working group members, local institutions throughout the whole project duration. Education and strengthening of capacities was organized on different levels.

Training sessions and other educational activities were organized at the local level with the in-house participatory approach, mostly in relation to the Green Agenda methodology.

At the national level, there were periodic training sessions, gathering community representatives, with topics that were raised during the Green Agenda process, but also project proposal writing, advocating and lobbying, monitoring and evaluation, and communication. At the regional level, seminars for the training team were organized at least once a year, so that the team members could exchange their knowledge and

experience and also gain new knowledge and skills. The topics were: Green Agenda methodology, Facilitation, Coaching and Mediation. With regard to strengthening the capacity of the target group the following channels were defined:

- Teams of trainers in every country
- NGO partners in the project
- Working Group members
- Representatives of local institutions where the project was implemented (in most cases they were part of the working groups)

The project evaluation showed a significant improvement of knowledge and skills on the chosen topics mentioned in this document.

The levels of cooperation: local, national and regional

One of the significant achievements of this project was the work at all levels. As one of rarely implemented projects in the Western Balkans region, this project has successfully achieved all its areas. The project was successfully implemented in 6 countries and, to date, 23 local communities, a significant achievement to be particularly proud of. The following instruments were the main factors of success on each level:

Localy

Nationally

Regionally

Internationally
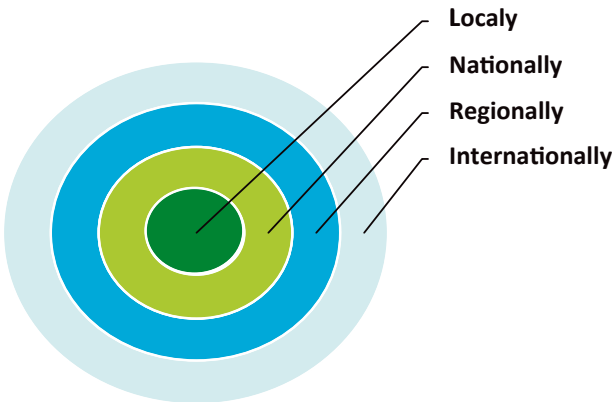
Local level

The main focus of the project was at the local level. The Green Agenda methodology was prepared for the local communities that have the greatest benefit from it. The whole set of activities from initiating and the project implementation, strengthening of capacities, promoting, and realization of pilot projects, occurred at the local level.

National level

Each participating country in the project had its 3 to 5 local communities included in the project. Though we can't talk about some significant number of local communities' participants in the process at the national level, even that number has attracted public attention. Linking at least three local communities meant something. In this case, it was a good example to which other local communities could link. This was apparent during the design and implementation of national conferences, media visits, and joint appearances before national institutions. All of that resulted in clear visibility at the national level. In order to somehow formalize the work at the national level, National Platforms on Green Agenda were established in all 6 countries. They will take over the role of Milieukontakt and the local teams to provide support to, and sustainability of, already started processes, as well as initiating the new ones.

Regional level

The regional component of the cooperation, the Western Balkans, was very important from the beginning of the project implementation. Somehow, with the organization of the regional training for the trainers, the project had a strong impulse. Besides the already mentioned training sessions, there was a number of Regional Skill Share Seminars (RSSS) organized for the exchange of experience and knowledge among the local partners and local communities participating in the project. Several regional study visits also provided a significant contribution

to the successful implementation of the project. Eventually, an initiative was launched on the formal networking and creation of the Green Agenda of the Western Balkans regional network.

International level

On the international level the Green Agenda Network is growing. The program in the Western Balkans is the biggest and most successful contribution to date. Currently in 10 countries in Europe there are communities with experience in Green Agenda and more will surely follow. The partners in the Western Balkan Program decided to maintain the international structure as an International Milieukontakt Network aimed at further development of citizens' involvement and participation, capacity development and solving of environmental problems.

Results in the further development

of the Green Agenda methodology

The value of the Green Agenda methodology is that it takes into consideration the specific aspects of a community; the methodology should be adjusted to specific needs of a community and changed if needed. During the project implementation in 20 communities, some changes and adjustments to the needs of these communities occured. Today we can discuss the development and improvement of the methodology in relation to the period of 4 years ago, when it was introduced to us for the first time. Speaking of the development of Green Agenda during the project in the Western Balkans, we can focus on the three most important elements:

- Methodology improvement
- Introduction of new sections in the methodology
- Methodology implementation

5 phases - 17 steps

The improvement of Green Agenda methodology occurred mostly during the work in Working Groups: strategy synthesis, writing and adopting of the strategic document. The first time the members of the program team met and discussed concepts and terms of the Green Agenda methodology, experiences from Croatia showed the way. On that occasion, the Croation Manual was the guide through the process. It explained very well the concept and the reasons why it is good to have a Green Agenda in a community in theory, but the section of the manual that concerns practical advice on what, when and how to work often remained incomplete. This created the need to define certain steps in more detail and to create a more precise timeline of events. Additionally, as the methodology was applied, the experience grew and the manual could be improved. In the period of initiating working groups, trainers and local NGO partners often exchanged information.

Specific improvements of methodology

As a result of the experiences in the Western Balkans, several improvements for the manual can be suggested:

- Although working group members make the final decision on what are the best dynamics for them, the working groups in the Western Balkan program found that the best pace of organizing Working Group meetings is twice a month, instead of once a month. This gives working group members the chance to focus on a particular subject and promotes high motivation.
- The total duration of the methodology implementation from phase 1 to the completion of phase 4, i.e. adoption of the document, should not last longer than one year. In some communities 10 months is feasible.
- In step 7, in defining the vision it would be very useful to include more mechanisms of gathering material for creating elements and

defining the vision statement. The Working Groups organize their meetings in the form of focus groups and even to study the opinion of the community through the questionnaire comprised of both the open questions and questions with offered answers. The total number of respondents should be representative in accordance with the total number of citizens.

- In steps 12 and 13 clear instructions must be given on how to prepare the form of the action plan as well as the form of defining strategic objectives and opinions.

- In the process of writing the document, in step 14, a precise format for the document should be given describing all characteristics of the community and the process that occurred.

- Steps 15 and 16 are rather vaguely described and requires some additional efforts and explanation to the local communities how to, in the best way, present the prepared document and, what is most important, how to adopt it. The legal base is different in all 6 countries and here it is very difficult to provide specific instructions on the ways that are the most efficient for the document to be adopted; however the subject is well described in the national manuals.

- In step 17 a clear form is developed on what the monitoring teams should look like and what they should deal with in the period after the adoption of the document. These guidelines have been assessed by the members of the monitoring teams as very useful and applicable in practice.

This is another aspect of Green Agenda: it is developed further after each experience. The aforementioned adaptations of the methodology will be useful in new communities that will implement Green Agenda. The process of development and improvement will not end at this point. Some new communities and some new people will find new solutions that will confirm them in the best way. That is, eventually, one of the greatest values that Green Agenda offers.

Risk management

As was shown in a previous chapter, risk management is one of the innovations introduced in Green Agenda methodology after the program was implemented in the Western Balkans. Successfully identifying risks and avoiding them helps us to become efficient and use less energy, time and money in certain activities. Working simultaneously in 20 communities, events were identified, being repeated and rated as risks in the Green Agenda process. In the section on risk management these situations were reviewed, and suggestions were made on what should be done to prevent or solve the problems. Of course, those are not the only situations; there could be others depending on the particularities of communities where Green Agenda is implemented.

Micro regional Green Agenda

This concept of working with Green Agenda on a micro regional level of two or three communities was developed earlier in Romania and was re-introduced in the Western Balkans. Green Agenda in the municipalities of Vrsac, Bela Crkva and Plandiste in Serbia took a new direction: it expanded the vision and integrated three individual processes into one (micro) regional process.

As well as Green Agenda on the community level, the one on the (micro) regional level is a living process, subject to improvement, development and finding new and better mechanisms. Moreover, it is desirable to improve our initial idea and add new forms and contents. The regional approach has its advantages and weaknesses.

In Romania micro regions like river basins or valleys were chosen as ecological areas. In some countries there is an administrative (micro) level in the form of districts. Mostly the administrative level of a micro region is lacking and there is no "middle", district or regional authority with political power and funds. In these cases there is no political body that can adopt or implement any kind of a document. However, this may not be an obstacle for unofficial cooperation, especially within the civil sector. Green Agenda can be a very useful instrument for cooperation among the different parts of the civil sector. Using a regional Green Agenda, a regional NGO

network can be developed with the participation of the civil sector in the decision making process. Sometimes there are national funds destined for regional projects that can be developed simultaneously in more than one municipality. For example in Serbia in April 2010, the Office for Sustainable Development of Underdeveloped Areas co-financed projects of NGOs in agriculture, tourism and small enterprises in forty-four underdeveloped areas. Two important priorities were: 1) projects have to be regional (they should be implemented in more than one municipality) and 2) they should be one of the priorities listed in a strategic document.

The meetings attended by the people of the three municipalities are an important result of Green Agenda. During the meetings, many important conclusions can be drawn and many project ideas can appear.

Ecological regions do not always follow country borders. A logical step would be a cross- border Green Agenda between communities from two different countries. The implementation of such a project would be a great challenge for NGOs but also a great opportunity for collaboration and project development in the framework of cross-border cooperation programs, financially supported by the EU. Maybe this will help us realize that the people in other countries have problems similar to ours. We would be very pleased if Green Agenda contributed to it.

The image presents the values of Vrsac, Bela Crkva and Plandiste municipalities. Some of the values are specific and others are shared by two or three communities, which leads to the conclusion that some ideas can be carried out in more than one municipality. Multiculturalism, cultural manifestations and historic-cultural monuments are shared values. During the analysis, members of working groups realized that all the municipalities carried out similar activities, and when looked at from a regional perspective, all the activities looked more like parts of one single project.

Differences in countries

Speaking of the achievements, you were introduced to the achievements common to all Western Balkan countries. However, each country (as well as each local community) has its own characteristics and differences. Three factors are dominant in these differences:

- Legal basis
- Culture
- Awareness

Legal basis

The Legal basis varies from state to state. In a number of states, there is a distinctive legal framework which defines the adoption of strategic documents governing the work in the field of protection and improvement of the environment. Practically, it has been implemented in Macedonia, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Montenegro. In Serbia, this legal framework has remained undefined as there is no distinctive obligation of the local governments to adopt such strategic documents. However, practice has shown that local governments have not adopted local strategies that govern such area even if it is legally defined.

Despite these differences, one thing is certain: In every country there is a legal basis for introduction of Green Agenda as an official methodology for resolving local issues related to protection and improvement of the environment.

Culture

Although apparently the Western Balkans region has many similarities in language, religious affiliation and tradition, in practice there are often great differences in two local neighboring communities or even within the community itself. These cultural differences can often be either an aggravating or mitigating factor in the Green Agenda. Within communities, we have clearly seen that the participation level is often directly related to the particular cultural and ethnic background of the people living there. With some folks (nations), there is a tradition that all community related issues should be resolved jointly and collectively, while in some communities individualism persists.

The legacy of the previous communist regime significantly influenced the ways of decision making in this area. All the Western Balkan countries are relatively young democracies that lived for fifty years under the influence of autocratic government and a one–party system. This in turn affected the decision making process in communities. In practice this means that some communities have moved faster through the transition process and some have moved slower, which has resulted in visible differences in communities' participation in such processes, motivation for change and adjustment to new situations. The sense of ownership has not yet fully flourished in the minds of individuals as it is either distorted with misinformation or imposed previously by the autocratic rule. It should not be forgotten that the entire region was exposed to isolation and that restriction on movement of the young has resulted in the wrong image in the western democracies and in the EU.

Awareness

Collective awareness represents the system of common beliefs, attitudes, world views, and values of people in a society, where individuals find a particular cultural and social community, which defines their way of thinking and acting. The key role of such a concept is to explain social occurrences and people's social behavior, because collective awareness forms individual awareness in the members of a social community. In the course of work on the Green agenda processes, we have seen

that in 23 communities of the Western Balkans, the collective awareness and the individual awareness on the following issues varies from community to community:

- Relation to community
- Relation to the environment
- Participation in decision making
- Strategic approach to problem solving
- Sense of collective ownership

Each of these issues is important for the Green Agenda process, and it influences the success of the process to some extent. In this section, we focused primarily on the relation of an individual to the environment. Although environmental problems are among the issues to be resolved by the city and state authorities, the role of an individual in the entire system should not be ignored. The key factor for changing the overall environmental picture in the region is the awareness of an individual, his consciousness about real dangers and threats to himself and all other living beings, as well as his behavior.

In order to take steps in changing environmental awareness and citizens' behavior, it is important to first determine to what extent the citizens are informed about the causes and consequences of environmental problems, how they perceive it, and in which ways they treat these problems in their real life circumstances. Based on the experience gained in the four year project, we realized that the most common problems, as we speak of individual awareness, are the following:

- Low awareness or complete lack of information on important environmental issues.
- The school system is not sufficiently oriented to raise environmental awareness in children and youth. It is said that an environmentally responsible individual is formed at an early age. Therefore, given the seriousness of environmental problems, it is necessary to introduce environmental education at all educational levels. Introduction of such concepts in the education curriculum would encourage young people to reflect on this important subject and form environmental values and behavior.
- Low willingness and motivation to participate environmental actions.
- Unwillingness to deal with and solve specific environmental problems.

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Trainers support in the Green Agenda process

The role of the trainer in the Green Agenda process is very important because of their support to the process itself and to participants through capacity building of both NGOs and the working groups. Trainers are the persons who possess knowledge about the methodology and have the capacity to transfer the necessary knowledge and skills to other persons. Each of the countries involved in the Green Agenda project in the Western Balkans had its own training team consisting of 2 to 5 people.

One of the most important roles of trainers in the Green Agenda project was to strengthen the capacity of local partners and working groups through various educational activities. In each country training sessions were organized on:

- The methodology of the Green Agenda
- Strategic planning
- Writing projects and project management
- Advocacy and lobbying
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Teamwork

Also, regional trainings for trainers are part of the capacity building program for the training teams. The teams attended regional sessions of 'training for trainers':

- September 2007 – Risan, Montenegro (Green Agenda Methodology)
- February 2008 – Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Facilitation)
- October 2009 – Struga, Macedonia (Coaching)
- June 2010 – Pogradec, Albania (Mediation)

Apart from the work with process in the specific community, the training team worked on:

- Application of methodology,
- Preparation of materials,
- Facilitation multi stakeholder meetings,
- Supporting local teams in drafting documents.

Trainers have a complex and important role in accomplishing all envisaged processes and project results.

Writers:

Nenad Rikalo (1973) is consultant / trainer active in civil society sector in Western Balkan since 1994. His fields of expertise are strategic planning; results based management, project cycle management, fundraising, leadership. In the last ten years he conducted hundreds of training sessions in all the Western Balkans countries. He is founder of several local NGOş and supporter of many local and regional civil initiatives.

Jerphaas Donner (1961) has been director of Milieukontakt International since 2000. In 1994 he managed his first support project in Kracow, Poland, while he was communication expert and fundraiser for a provincial umbrella organization on environment in the Province of Overijssel in The Netherlands. Before that he worked as a campaign and communications officer. He is a social scientist with a specialization in network development. Furthermore he is active as a trainer and advisor of networks of environmental organizations in more than 20 countries.

Civil society organizations

Permaculture Association (APA), Transborder Wildlife, PPNE of Shkodra, EDEN Center, Albania

Centar za životnu sredinu, Banja Luka, Nove Nade, Višegrad, Sadnice Mira, Zavidovići, Bosnia and Herzegovina

ERA, Rugova valley, Peja, Natural Fresh, Rečane, Prizren, Liria, Istog, Kosovo

Biosfera- Bitola, Krste Jon-Struga, RAC Delčevo, Macedonia

Green Step, Ulcinj, Local Democracy Agency (LDA), Nikšić, FORS Montenegro, local office Berane, Environmental movement Ozon, Montenegro

Timok Club, Knjaževac, Nature Conservation Movement of Sremska Mitrovica Ecological centre 'Stanište' Vršac Serbia

The communities of

Knjaževac, Sremska Mitrovica, Vršac, Plandište, Bela Crkva, Serbia
Dajci, Voskopoja and Preza, Albania
Lovnica, Krupa na Vrbasu, Višegrad, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Istog, Rečane and Rugova, Kosovo
Vevčani, Bitola and Delčevo, Macedonia
Ulcinj, Mojkovac and Nikšić, Montenegro

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Violeta Milanković, **Milena Ristić-Radojević**, *translation*

Main supporter of the project:

Regional Programme on Environment for the Western Balkans of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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GREEN AGENDA ON THE WESTERN BALKANS

The history,

the process and the achievements

MILIEUKONTAKT INTERNATIONAL

SERVING SOCIETY TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY