

Third Annual Ministerial Meeting on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans

18–19 September 2026, Žabljak

Draft Agenda

DAY ONE: 18 September 2026

Hotel and Restaurant Nordik, Moticki Gaj BB

09:00 – 09:30 | *Registration and Arrival of Participants* (welcome coffee)

09:30–09:50 | High-Level Opening Addresses: Strategic Vision for the Green Agenda towards the 2026 Berlin Process Summit

- Mr Amer Kapetanović, Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)
- Mr Volker Oel, Director-General, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

09:50–10:10 | Welcome Remarks

- Mr Damjan Ćulafić, Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region Development
- Ms Bettina Hagedorn, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
- Ms Monika Hencsey, Director, Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV), European Commission

Family photo

10:15 – 11:15 | Ministerial Session: Advancing the Green Agenda in the Western Balkans

- Mr Sofjan Jaupaj, Minister, Ministry of Environment
- Ms Fitore Pacolli Dalipi, Minister, Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
- Mr Damjan Ćulafić, Minister, Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region Development
- Mr Muamet Hoxha, Minister, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
- Ms Sara Pavkov, Minister, Ministry of Environmental Protection

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11:15 – 12:00 | Strategic Partners' Session: Delivering the Green Agenda through Regional Cooperation

Short interventions (4-5min) from key mandated and cooperating organisations:

Regional coordinators mandated under the GAWB

- Mr Tālis Linkaits, Director, Transport Community Permanent Secretariat
- Mr Boban Ilić, Secretary General, Standing Working Group on Regional Rural Development
- Mr Oliver Avramoski, Regional Director, Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, International Union for Conservation of Nature
- Mr Adam Cwetsch, Head of Decarbonisation and Governance Unit, Energy Community Secretariat

Partner organisations

- Ms Ivana Živković, UN Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS (UNDP)
- Mr Bakyt Dzhusupov, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Mr Tadej Beočanin, Mayor of Ajdovščina and Vice President of the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe
- Mr David Piegazki, Secretary General, Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum
- Dr Mina Brajović, Head of Office, World Health Organisation (WHO)
- Ms Sonja Gebert, Programme Manager, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

12:00 – 12:15 Endorsement of GAWB Ministerial Declaration

RCC to present the key commitments, priorities, and guiding principles of Žabljak Declaration/short intervention - WB6 Ministers

12:15 – 12:45 | Press statements / **Departure to Crno Jezero**

13:00- 15:00 Lunch

15:00 Departure by bus to the hotel

16:00- 18:00 Bilateral meetings

19:00 Dinner - Hotel Aleksandar

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DAY 2: 19 September 2026

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Regional exchange on selected topics

08:30- Organised departures from the hotel:

09:00 – 09:30 | Welcome Coffee and Informal Networking

09:30 – 10:30 | **Session 1: Plastic pollution and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**

This session is particularly relevant in the light of ongoing regional efforts to operationalise the Regional Action Plan on Plastic Pollution Prevention, including Marine Litter, strengthen EPR systems, and advance harmonised approaches to reducing single-use plastics (SUPs). Progress in this area is essential for achieving circular economy targets and aligning with EU standards.

Moderated by: Ms Jelena Peruničić, GIZ

09:30 – 09:35 **Opening and Objectives of the Session**

Ms Jelena Peruničić, GIZ

09:35 – 09:45 **EU Policy Update on Plastic Pollution Prevention, Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) and Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)**

Ms Madalina Laxton, International Relations Officer - Coordinator for Enlargement team, European Commission, Directorate General for Environment, F.2 Unit for Regional and Bilateral Environmental Cooperation

09:45 – 09:50 **Overview of Activities on SUPs and EPR under the GAWB Action Plan**

Mr Hamdija Mujezin, Circular Economy Expert, Regional Cooperation Council

09:50 – 10:05 **Practical Experience of EU Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) in Implementing EPR for Packaging and SUPs**

Ms Julia Gawlik, Head of Operations and Programs, PRO Circularity Alliance, European Association of Producer Responsibility Organisations AISBL

10:05 – 10:20 **The Regional Perspective on Progress and Challenges**

Representatives of the WB6 present the current status of EPR and SUPs

10:20 – 10:30 **Interactive Discussion, Questions and Key Recommendations**

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10:30 – 11:30

Session 2: Biodiversity

Building on the development of the WB6 Biodiversity Strategic Plan 2030, this session would provide an opportunity to discuss regional approaches to conservation and ecosystem restoration, including alignment with the EU Biodiversity Strategy and global commitments, as well as implementation challenges and financing needs.

Moderated by: Ms Kornelija Radovanović, Governance and Policy Programme Officer, IUCN ECARO

10:30-10:46

Ecological Connectivity

Ms Bettina Hagedorn, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN)

Ms Tanja Radić Lakoš, State Secretary, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition

10:46-10:54

Conservation and Restoration Instruments

Mr Jure Čuš, Programme Manager EU Policies, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), European Commission

10:54 – 11:02

Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

Ms Linn Jansson, Programme Manager, Europe Department Western Balkans and Türkiye Unit, International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)

11:02 – 11:10

Institutional Coordination and International Support

Ms Erinda Toska, Programme Manager, Development Agency (ADA)

11:10-11:25

Tour de Table

WB6 representatives share:

- Priority next steps for implementation of BSP and FLRP
- Main gaps
- Example of good practice

11:25-11:30

Conclusions and Way Forward

11:30-12:00

Coffee break

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12:00–13:30

Session 3: Strengthening MRVA Systems and Advancing Sustainable Financing in WB6

Strengthening monitoring, reporting, verification and accreditation (MRVA) frameworks is essential for effective climate policy implementation, as it ensures the transparency, reliability, and credibility of data, while enabling alignment with EU mechanisms. As such, MRVA systems are an integral part of the Reform and Growth Agendas, as well as the Revised Green Agenda Action Plan. Robust MRVA frameworks underpin sound climate governance, facilitate access to climate finance, and support the region's progressive integration into EU policy and regulatory frameworks.

Moderated by: Ms Violeta Philippitsch (Environment Agency /Tratolow)

12:00–12:30

Part I – Strengthening MRVA Systems in the WB6

Introductory remarks

Advancing MRVA Systems in the Western Balkans

Mr Tomasz Karpinski, European Green Deal Expert on Greenhouse Gases Inventories and Monitoring, Reporting, Verification (MRV), Energy Community

Lessons from EU ETS Implementation

Ms Monique Voogt, EU Trading Emissions Expert, Tratolow Project

12:30–12:50

Tour de Table

WB6 representatives share:

- Current overview of MRVA framework and main technical and financial gaps
- Example of good practice or recent progress achieved
- Priority next steps for regional approach and alignment with EU requirements

12:50–13:00

Part II – Sustainable Finance and Investment in the WB6

Supporting sustainable financing in WB6

Mr Agon Nixha, Senior Expert on Competitiveness, Regional Cooperation Council

13:00–13:25

Tour de Table

Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Finance share:

- Most important data needs for sustainable finance and green investment
- Challenges and opportunities in operationalising current regional instruments
- Priority financing and cooperation avenues

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13:25–13:30

Conclusions and Way Forward

13:30–14:30

Lunch

Departures