



Support to Economic Diversification of Rural Areas in Southeast Europe (SEDRA II)

59th SWG Assembly, 16.04.2024

Our vision for the way forward

- **GAWB Pillar IV: Sustainable agro-food systems** – SWG RRD as competent regional organisation mandated by its member ministries to be a regional coordinator in the implementation
- Establishment of **Regional Climate Partnership**
- Support measures for **Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture**
- Transformation of the **agri-food systems** in line with the **principles of Agroecology**
- Greening SMEs and align the primary production with **EU standards on food security**
- Support investments in **renewable energy production and technologies**, as well as GHG emission reductions and adaptation to climate change measures in agriculture (Action 50)



Output 1: Policy dialogue and strengthening the regulatory framework for transformative policy processes in the context of EU approximation

1.1 Supporting the development of **policy papers** and transformative policy processes on local economic development, agriculture and food systems and the environment

1.2 Fostering **regional exchange** on social and economic issues for ecologically sustainable economic development and sustainable nutrition with relevant ministries

1.3 Supporting the national design of **public-private dialogues** and coherence in policy design

Output 2: Promoting Knowledge Hubs for Smart Agriculture and Food Systems in the WB6

2.1 Promoting innovative green technology-driven approaches, smart solutions and **digitalisation for agricultural and food systems** by promoting knowledge exchange as well as research and innovation partnerships

2.2 Establishing agricultural knowledge and innovation hubs or centres of excellence with leading European institutions on agricultural development and counselling, applied research, etc.

Output 3: Promoting private sector development in rural areas (1)

3.1 Strengthening domestic agricultural and food systems by building capacities among food producers to comply with EU standards, by promoting the development of a quality approach to „Balkan Food“, and by integrating them in **regional and global value chains** (→ competitiveness)

3.2 Strengthening MSMEs through integrated development partnerships, capacities to comply with EU standards, integration into regional and international value chains and **access to markets** (cooperation with OECD on the SME policy index)

Output 3: Promoting private sector development in rural areas (2)

3.3 Supporting **access to funding** measures by facilitating cooperation with financial institutions with appropriate measures in their portfolio e.g. EBRD, EIB and others, as well as development partnerships through develoPPP and other EU/national programmes

3.4 Promoting **green and circular business models** and sustainable production patterns in agricultural and food systems

3.5 Increasing the employability of vulnerable groups, including women and youth, in rural areas through vocational training and access to finance (→ gender equality)

Action Document for implementation of the **Green Agenda for Western Balkan (GAWB)**

GAWB Pillar	Responsible Regional Organization	Coordination of Goals
1 – Decarbonisation: Climate, Energy, Mobility	Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)	1,4,6 (with IUCN), 7-10, 25-28
	Energy Community Secretariat (EnCS)	1 (tbc), 2 (with EC), 3, 5 (tbc)
	Transport Community Permanent Secretariat (TCPS)	10, 17-28
2 – Circular Economy	Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)	29-33, 34 (with EPPA), 35
3 – De-Pollution: Air, Water, Soil	Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)	36-41, 42 (with SWG RDD), 43
	Energy Community Secretariat (EnCS)	37, 37a, 38
4 – Sustainable Agriculture	Standing Working Group on Regional Rural Development (SWG RRD)	44-50 (Action 50: SWG with EnCS)
5 – Protection of Nature and Biodiversity	Union of Conservation of Nature	51-58 (52 & 58 with EPPA)
	Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)	51-58



Chair's Conclusion of the Berlin Process 2023

Joint Declaration of Intent between the WB6 and Germany on the Regional Climate Partnership

Conclusions of the 17th Annual Ministerial Meeting for agriculture and rural development in SEE

IPA III for period 2021-2027

Window 3:

Green agenda and sustainable connectivity

- Promoting renewables

Window 4:

Competitiveness and inclusive growth

Improve competitiveness of the agri-food sector and adapting agricultural production & processing to climate change effects

Green Agenda for the Western Balkans

Pillar IV - Sustainable agriculture and food production

Action Plan for Sofia Declaration Implementation

Sustainable Agriculture

Green agenda and sustainable connectivity

- Policies based on current emission baselines
- Transition to innovative and environmentally friendly technologies
- Farming methods via regional Agriculture Knowledge and Innovation System

Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans

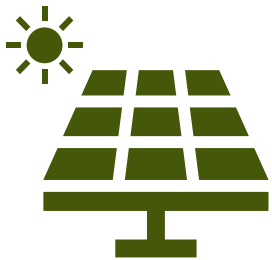
VI. Investment in environment and climate

- Involvement in the EU value chains – including sustainable food production

VII Boosting the private sector

- Investments in sustainable agricultural production
- Competitiveness of the agri-food sector

New Growth Plan for the Western Balkans / Common Regional Market



Status and next steps in our common approach:

- SWG and GIZ **shared the project concept** with DG Near and DG Agri. They gave initial feedback;
- SWG shared the project concept with the WB6 Ministries of Agriculture and NIPACs and addressed the need of **prioritizing this topic in the regional IPA '25 Programming**
- EU Commission is now dealing with the adoption of the regulation for implementation of the new Growth Plan. IPA Programming '25 is supposed to be completed **till June 2024**;



Status and next steps in our common approach:

- We would like to ask the Delegates/**Ministries of Agriculture** to actively promote this proposal on “**Transformation of the agricultural and food systems**” within their Ministries, as well as to the **NIPACs** in order to become part of the **Regional IPA 2025 Programming Document**:
 - with a budget of 15 million EUR (implementation period of 4 years);
 - Implementation modality: **Indirect management with a pillar assessed Member State organization**



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