Air pollution from domestic heating in Serbia – impacts, challenges and solutions
26 May 2021, 9am to 12pm
MS TEAMS

Webinar organized by Task Team on Air Pollution under the Regional Issue-Based Coalition (IBC) on Environment and Climate Change

Programme

Background and objective

Domestic heating is a significant source of air pollution in Serbia as many households operate wood or coal stoves and ovens as the main source of heating. These devices emit large quantities of polluting substances, e.g. fine particles (PM2.5 and PM 10), including black carbon, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) as a result of incomplete combustion. A recent study by WHO on the health impact of air quality in Serbia finds that nearly 3600 premature deaths every year are attributable to exposure to PM2.5 in 11 studied cities in Serbia. Large urban areas are particularly affected by poor air quality, particularly during winter, when solid fuels are commonly burned to heat homes. The situation becomes further aggravated by the fact that energy poverty – a condition generally recognized to exist when people spend a disproportionate share of their income on fuel to heat their homes – is widespread in Serbia and the Western Balkans more broadly. Major health and economic benefits can hence be reaped by improving air quality in Serbia, through energy efficiency measures, awareness raising, and air quality monitoring, among others.

This webinar will discuss impacts and challenges from air pollution from domestic heating in Serbia, and possible solutions to be promoted with the support of the Regional IBC on Environment and Climate Change. The objective is to identify potential areas of mutual interest and key competencies and expertise of UN agencies and their complementarity, to support the UNCT in addressing air pollution from domestic heating in Serbia.

Agenda

Moderator: *Katrin Lichtenberg, UNOPS*

9.00 – 9.15 Welcome and introduction

Welcome
Air Quality in Serbia: causes, consequences and capacities, *Alexander Macura, RES Foundation*

9.15 – 10.00 Session 1: Impacts of air pollution in Serbia, considering emissions from domestic heating and other sources of pollution

This session will provide an overview of the main impacts of air pollution, including the health, economic and social (energy poverty, equity) dimensions.

- Impact of air pollution on health in Serbia – a call for intersectorial action, *Dorota Jarosinska, WHO*
- Impact of air pollution on children in Serbia, *Ana Prodanović, UNICEF*
- Tackling air pollution for improved health and greener future, *Cansu Demir, UNDP*

Time for discussion and reflections

10.00 – 10.45 Session 2: Experiences in addressing air pollution due to domestic heating

This session will provide examples of interventions undertaken and lessons learnt in other countries to tackle this challenge, which might be considered when planning actions in Serbia.

- UNEP work on Air Pollution in Serbia and in the Western Balkans, *Tomas Marques, UN Environment*
- Tackling air pollution from domestic heating – good practices and policies from Parties to the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, *Carolin Sanz Noriega, UNECE*
- Role of WMO in air pollution agenda, air quality forecasting and information system, *Oksana Tarasova, WMO*

Time for discussion and reflections

10.45 – 11.00 Break

11.00 – 11.30 Session 3: Discussion on solutions and funding opportunities

This session will look at possible integrated solutions and/or joint initiatives to address air pollution from domestic heating; coordinated and/or joint programming and possible funding opportunities to support the roll-out of integrated solution and joint initiatives.

- Operational solutions to address air pollution, *Katrin Lichtenberg, UNOPS*
- Energy efficiency solutions to address air pollution, *Gabriela Prata Dias, Copenhagen Centre on Energy Efficiency*

Time for discussion and reflections

11.30 – 12.00 Conclusion, follow-up actions and closing