

Open dialogue and mutual learning event

“Embedding RRI into the Green Agenda in Western Balkans”

11-13 October 2023

Place: Tirana, Albania

Organized by: Co-PLAN, Institute for Habitat Development and Albanian Ministry of Tourism and Environment

With the support of Polis University

Venue: Polis University, Rruga Bylis 12, Autostrada Tiranë-Durrës, Km 5, Kashar, SH2, Tiranë 1051

Background

The European Commission has made “sustainable development”, together with the digital agenda, the core element of its overall growth strategy for the present decade. From a global perspective the [European Green Deal](#) represents on the one hand the EU’s contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) – Europe’s Moonshot mission of the 21st Century – and on the other hand the EU’s “smart specialization strategy” – Europe’s attempt to develop at world level a leading position in sustainable development (McCann, P., Soete, L, 2020)¹.

Within this framework, the Western Balkans region has increasingly recognized this imperative of environmental sustainability and socio-economic innovation. [The Green Agenda](#) in WB has emerged as a comprehensive framework, aimed at promoting environmental conservation, green growth, and resilience. However, the achievement of these ambitious goals necessitates not only policy measures but also innovative, research-driven approaches that align with the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI). [The Western Balkans Innovation Agenda](#)² also sets as priority the innovation dimensions in supporting the implementation of the Green Deal for WB countries, partly through the implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3).

The Open Dialogue and Mutual Learning event in Tirana brings together academic and non-academic actors, partners from [WBC-RRI.net](#) network, and beyond, in a discussion on the common challenges in driving innovation and responsible research to promote sustainability and climate resilience. How can we contribute to integrating the innovation agendas with green agendas in our territories, considering that

¹ McCann, P. and Soete, L., [Place-based innovation for sustainability](#), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2020, ISBN 978-92-76-20392-6, doi:10.2760/250023, JRC121271

² The Western Balkans agenda on innovation, research, education, culture, youth & sport



the implementation of S₃ in WB is still at early stage? Is there room for place-based innovation in WB countries? [Join us](#) (online or in physical form) to tackle these questions.

Day 1 is dedicated to setting the scene: Discussing the core pillars of the Green Agenda in WB; the current challenges of implementation; the 'just' dimensions of the green agenda; and the current financial and institutional support to the issue. Moreover, we will share some best practices of Horizon/ EU-funded projects and initiatives that aim at conceptualizing and contextualizing Green Transition for WB through tailored policy research, action and innovation. Subsequently, you are all invited in contributing to a vibrant discussion on *How to integrate RRI principles in Green Transition*, including:

- Defining RRI (dimensions and keys) and Green Transition (pillars)
- What methods and tools can facilitate stakeholder involvement in Green Transition research? (World Café / Science Shops/ etc.)
- Do we face any challenges in ethics / open access / gender dimensions / etc?
- Citizen science: what are the opportunities and challenges?

We will end the day with an evening tour in the seaside city of Durrës, where we will get to know the city by analyzing historical and architectural layers through a novel lens.

Day 2 will capitalize on the discussions of the previous day, focusing now on the *S₃ Innovation agendas of the WB countries*, and the potential for developing research and innovation strategies for smart specialization (RIS₃). We will explore the replicability of the *Place-based innovation* approach, developed by JRC, in the context (and current progress) of WB countries. With this we conclude the 'open, public' session of the event.

Following, we will organize the hybrid **Working Group 2** meeting on 'Science Education and Public Engagement', which brings forth the actions conducted by WBC-RRI.net in relation to these key RRI dimensions, and some European best practices and initiatives promoting citizen science.

All participants of the event, with interest in delving into the discussions are invited to participate in the WG meeting. We finalize the day with a trip in Kune Vaini lagoon, where the Albanian [citizen science pilot initiative](#) takes place.

Day 3 is dedicated to a networking side-event with the International Conference "*Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory* ", organized by Polis University and the Albanian Science Academy. Updates on the conference to be uploaded soon [here](#).

The WBC-RRI.net General Assembly (closed to project partners) will take place during this day as well.

The 3-day event concludes with an Alternative Walking Tour of the city of Tirana, guided by architecture lecturer at Polis University.



Agenda

RRI in support of the Green Agenda in WB6 – New ways forward Wednesday, 11 October Public Event, Hybrid form <u>Polis University</u> Rruga Bylis 12, Autostrada Tiranë-Durrës, Km 5, Kashar, SH2, Tiranë 1051	
09:30-12:00	<i>Free morning</i> <i>Tirana Walk the city – self-guided tour</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Registration of participants
Part 1: Public event, recorded Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85260029652?pwd=QXVjSkprWUk5dEl1NodQRokydVMrZz09	
12:30 – 12:50	Opening and Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirela Kumbaro, <i>Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Environment</i> (tbc) • Besnik Aliaj, <i>Rector / Elona Karafili – Deputy Rector, Polis University</i> • Kejt Dhrami – <i>Presentation of the concept of the event and agenda</i>
12:50 – 13:30	INVITED KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of green transition process in Albania (10 min) <i>Almira Xhembulla, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Environment</i> • Just Green Transition – key concepts and implications (15 min – online) <i>Carlos Tapia - Nordregio</i> • Natural Capital and the Green Agenda– challenges for policy and CSO-s (15 min) <i>Giovanni Timillero – AICS (Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation)</i> • Green Agenda in Western Balkans – research perspective <i>Mihone Kerolli - International Business College Mitrovica & University of Zagreb</i>
13:30 – 15:00	ROUNDTABLE Best Practices: Working with RRI towards implementation of WB Green Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GreenFORCE: What does Green Transition mean for the WB? (15 min) <i>Kejt Dhrami, Fiona Imami, Co-PLAN</i> • POLICY ANSWERS: Supporting Western Balkans in implementing the WB Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport (15 min) <i>Desiree Pecarz, ZSI GmbH</i> • Green Action Space – Platform for promoting education and research on green transition (15 min)



	<p><i>Muhamet Mustafa, Luan Shllaku, RIINVEST Institute</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic Pirates – a EU Citizen Science initiative (15 min - online) <i>Philip Ackerman; Simone Berk, DRL</i> • StepChange: Citizen Science Activities in Europe: wildlife conservation and energy communities (15 min - online) <i>(tbc)</i> • <i>Moderated questions</i> • <i>Q&A from audience</i>
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Finger Food; Coffee break</i>
15:30 – 16:30	<p>WORKSHOP How to integrate RRI principles into Green Transition research in WB Group work <i>Kejt Dhrami (Co-PLAN), Fiorda Llukmani (ZSI)</i></p>
Part 2: Optional	
16:30-17:00	<p><i>Tour of Polis University</i> <i>Innovation Factory; Observatory of Mediterranean Basin</i></p>
17:00 – 19:30	<p><i>Trip to Durrës (approx. 30 minutes)</i></p> <p>Guided city tour <i>Dr. Artan Kacani – A glimpse to the past through observation of urban form</i></p>
19:30 – 22:30	<p>Informal Dinner in Durrës Location: tbc</p>



Smart Specialization in WB – From S₃ towards S₄₊, a place-based approach

Thursday, 12 October
Public Event, Hybrid form

Polis University

Rruga Bylis 12, Autostrada Tiranë-Durrës, Km 5, Kashar, SH2, Tiranë 1051

Part 1: Public event, recorded

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89230364112>

09:00 – 10:15	<p>Keynote session</p> <p>1_ S₄₊ Policy Response to the Green Deal – implications for WB? (20 min) <i>Dominique Foray, Full Professor at Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)</i></p> <p>2_ Smart Specialisation framework for the EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood Region (20 min) <i>Emanuele Fabbri, European Commission, JRC</i></p> <p>3_ S₃ Implementation in Albania – innovation ecosystems and citizen engagement (15 min) <i>Linda Pustina, Director of S₃ Working team/ Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister</i></p> <p>4_ The National Research Agenda with focus towards sustainability (15 min) <i>Mirela Muca, Director of NASRI (National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation)</i></p>
10:15 – 11:30	<p>Group Exercise + Open Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of matrix of opportunities and challenges for S₄₊ (focus on inclusivity and sustainability) • Discussion on Policy Recommendations for RRI enhancement of S₃ <p><i>Kelly Pasmatzi, Alexandra Prodromidou (SEERC); Kejt Dhrami (Co-PLAN)</i></p>
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee-break
<p>PART 2: <i>Informal session – not recorded, Hybrid</i></p> <p>Zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83994658166</p>	
12:00 – 14:00	<p>Meeting of the Working Group 2 on Public Engagement and Science Education</p> <p>Welcoming and Introduction (12:00-12:10) <i>Desiree Pecarz (WG2 Co-chair)</i></p>



	<p>Updates from the WG2 priority actions (max 7 minute per activity) (12:10 – 13:10)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Science to School initiatives (Act. 2.1), Radmil Polenakovik 2. Citizen Science actions (Act. 2.2), Jana Prodanova 3. RRI session(s) at scientific regional conferences (Act. 2.3), Edmond Hoxha, Desiree Pecarz, Kejt Dhrami 4. Presenting RRI related project results at Researchers Nights (Act. 2.4), Ivana Knezevic 5. Development of policy briefs (Act. 2.5), Alexandra Prodromidou 6. Engineering Creativity Center (Act. 2.6), Sanja Kojic or Ivana Knezevic 7. Developing tools for more effective communication skills fostering public engagement (Act. 2.7), Fiorda Llukmani 8. Mainstreaming science education for CSO-s in (national) open forums (Act. 2.8), Kejt Dhrami <p>Testing the webinar “Core skills for effective science communication”, <i>Desiree Pecarz and Fiorda Llukmani</i> (13:10 – 13:40)</p> <p>Q&A, Feedback by participants, Discussion on new activities (13:40-14:00) Desiree Pecarz and /or Ivana Knezevic (WG2 Co-chair)</p>
<p>14:00 – 15:00</p>	<p><i>Lunch</i> <i>Polis Canteen</i></p>
<p>PART 3: Optional</p>	
<p>15:00 – 19:00</p>	<p><i>Trip to the Kune-Vaini lagoon (approx. 70 minutes)</i> Meeting with Regional Administration of Protected Area + local representatives <i>Walk in the lagoon</i> <i>Refreshments</i></p>
<p>20:30</p>	<p>Return to Tirana Joint Dinner <i>Location tbc</i></p>

General Assembly + Side Event Friday, 13 October Albanian Science Academy 8RGF+G48, Shëtitorja Murat Toptani, Tiranë 1000	
09:30 – 11:00	General Assembly of the WBC-RRI.net Project Consortium (closed, Hybrid) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting the progress per WP-s Presentation of Implementation Logs Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86721721831
10:00-12:00	Side Event: Official Opening + Keynote Presentations International Conference “ <i>Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory</i> ”, Polis University + Albanian Science Academy Advancing the Green Agenda in the Western Balkans – Insights and Emerging Challenges (30 min) Marv Barbullushi, Regional Cooperation Council
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Free Time</i> <i>Lunch Break</i> + Networking / <i>PhD workshop exhibition</i> Dr. Llazar Kumaraku – Dean of the Faculty of Planning, Management and Environment, Sadmira Malaj – Head of Observatory of Mediterranean Basin
14:30 - 18:00	<i>Joint Walking Tour</i> <i>Exploring the city of Tirana through urban lenses</i> Dr. Skënder Luarasi, Polis University

Contact persons

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Organizers



Supporting partner:

