

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.)

 Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum.)

PROJECT	
Participant:	[3] FONDATSIYA BLULINK (BLUELINK)
PIC number:	PIC 913731174
Project name and acronym:	Discussions and Actions on Climate and Environment – DACE

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	D6.1		
Event name:	National NGO forum		
Type:	Summary report based on the participation of 41 participants in the national event		
In situ/online:	[in-situ]		
Location:	Bulgaria, Sofia		
Date(s):	27.06.2023		
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.bluelink.net/en/discussions-actions-climate-environment.html		
Participants			
Female:	22		
Male:	19		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Bulgaria]:	41		
...			
Total number of participants:	41	From total number of countries:	1
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
On June 27, 2023, the Civil Society Network BlueLink organised a citizens' forum called "Time to Act for Climate Rights". The forum took place the House of Europe in Sofia. The forum aimed to raise people's awareness of what their climate rights are and how they are understood and defended by Bulgarian environmental, climate and human rights defenders and representatives of communities affected by climate change.			
Participants			

The forum was attended by 41 people – politicians, clean air experts, medical doctors, environmentalists, scientists, lawyers, climate activists and representatives of communities affected by different environmental and climate issues.

You can find the [detailed report with all presentations in English and Bulgarian here](#).

EVENT PROGRAMME

11:30 - 13:00 | Round table: "Who are climate policies for?"

Opening speeches from BlueLink Executive Editor Pavel Antonov, Bulgarian tennis legend and climate activist Magdalena Maleeva, and Head of the Office of the European Commission (EC) in Bulgaria Tsvetan Kyulanov.

- Necessary improvements in the Climate Change Mitigation Act, Plamen Peev, PhD, Senior Climate Policy Expert, BlueLink Foundation
- Clean air and climate for good health, Dr. Alexander Simidchiev, Member of Parliament, co-founder of the Air and Health Association
- Climate Policies for Clean Air, Ivaylo Hlebarov, Head of the Air Team at Environmental Association "For the Earth"
- Climate Policies for Clean Food, Georgi Sabev, Agriculture, Fisheries and International Trade Advisor in the European Parliament, former Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Bulgaria
- Climate Change and Women's Health, Zornitsa Spasova, Senior Assistant at the National Center for Public Health and Analysis (NCPHA)
- Responsibility for negative environmental impacts during conflicts (Will Russia pay for the environmental damage of the invasion of Ukraine?) Ksenia Vakhrusheva, Project Manager, Bellona International Environmental Organization

Discussion

13:00 - 13:30 | Lunch

13:00 - 17:00 | Climate rights in Bulgaria and the EU – how do we understand and defend them? Discussion and practical session

- 13:30 - 14:00 What is "climate rights"? An overview of the European and Bulgarian legal framework that allows for the defence of climate rights. Plamen Peev, PhD, international expert on climate law and policy, BlueLink.

Discussion

- 14:00 - 14:30 Time for action. Attitudes, understandings, needs and readiness for legal action of citizen advocates for climate rights. Pavel Antonov, PhD, BlueLink Foundation.

Discussion

- 14:30-15:00 The case against the emissions of TPP Maritsa East 2, Adv. Regina Stoilova from Greenpeace Bulgaria and Environmental Association "For the Earth" and the Director of Greenpeace Bulgaria Meglena Antonova will present the lawsuit filed by the two organizations in 2018 against the indefinite renewal of the operating permit for the TPP Maritsa East 2. It allows the plant to pollute with mercury and sulphur dioxide above the norm. The court of first instance refused to revoke the plant's permit. The case proceeded to a second instance before the Supreme Administrative Court, which sent a request to the CJEU. In March 2023, the Commission requested the court to investigate the case. The CJEU ordered the Bulgarian court to reconsider its decision because Bulgaria violated EU law. The CJEU's decision sets a precedent and could have an effect on plant permits across Europe.

15:00 - 15:15 BluLink Tearoom

- 15:15 - 15:45 The battle for Sofia's air, Adv. Dimo Gospodinov will present the case won by the Clean Air Group against Sofia Municipality. It is about the lack of measures to improve air quality. The court battle took over 4 years.

Discussion

- 15:45 - 16:00 Citizens against dirty air in Bulgaria, Adv. Mikhail Ekimdzhiev from the Association for European Integration and Human Rights (AEIHR) about the collective civil case won against the Plovdiv Municipality for the lack of measures to improve air quality. The case is a precedent for Bulgaria. The court battle took 10 years.

Discussion

- 16:00 - 16:45 Final discussion: follow-up joint actions. Moderated discussion.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).