

Towards **Climate Adaptation Partnership** in Southeast Europe



Welcome to the **AGRICULTURAL POLICY FORUM 2023!**

Agricultural Policy Forum (APF) is a two-day event on regional agricultural policy in Southeast Europe (SEE) organized by the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in SEE, involving relevant regional and international stakeholders, resulting in regional policy recommendations. It has been organized on an annual basis since 2001 to serve as a wide platform for discussions and recommendations on regional policy issues in agriculture and rural development in SEE.

APF 2023 is organized by the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in SEE in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Montenegro. This year the Forum will emphasize the importance of partnership and cooperation in dealing with climate adaptation, as well as sustainable forest and soil management. The quality standards for fresh fruits and vegetables will be addressed aiming to ensure product integrity and safety, with special focus on organic agricultural production. APF will also highlight the unique challenges and opportunities for implementation of the LEADER approach and for enhancing the rural youth livelihood in the Western Balkan. The general trends of agricultural policy developments will be discussed with special focus on the implementation of IPARD.

SWG and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Montenegro have the immense pleasure to welcome you at the Agricultural Policy Forum 2023!

TOPICS

EU GREEN DEAL, SUSTAINABILITY
FOOD SYSTEM AND IPARD OPPORTUNITIES

TOWARDS PREPARATION OF A CLIMATE
ADAPTATION PARTNERSHIP

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT
IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

STATE OF THE ART OF THE FRESH FRUIT AND
VEGETABLE MARKETING STANDARDS IN SEE REGION

SITUATION AND NEEDS OF RURAL
YOUTH IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

REGIONAL SOIL PARTNERSHIP

AGRICULTURAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

ORGANIC AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

PROGRAM

Tuesday, 24 October 2023

- 17:00** On-site registration begins
- 20:00** Welcoming reception

Wednesday, 25 October 2023

- 09:00 – 09:10** Official address – **Mr. Vladimir Jokovic**, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Montenegro
- 09:10 – 09:20** Official address and introduction to the APF 2023 objectives and the program – **Mr. Boban Ilic**, Secretary General, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in SEE (SWG)
- 09:20 – 09:40** EU Green Deal, sustainability food system and IPARD opportunities - **Mr. Krzysztof Sulima**, Neighborhood, Enlargement and Pre-accession assistance Unit, European Commission, DG AGRI – online address
- 09:40 – 09:55** Towards Preparation of a Climate Adaptation Partnership – **Ms. Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska, PhD**, Professor, Head of Institute of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food – Skopje, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje
- 09:55 – 10:15** Policy Accelerating Organic Production and Market Breakthroughs: Lessons from Denmark and EU – **Mr. Paul Holmbeck**, World Board Member, IFOAM – Organics International, Director Organic Denmark (1995-2020)

10:15 – 10:30 Regional Soil Partnership – **Mr. Mirko Knezevic, PhD**, Professor, Biotechnical Faculty, University of Montenegro

10:30 – 11:00 **Coffee break and family photo**

11:00 – 11:20 Sustainable Forest Management in the Western Balkans – **Mr. Nenad Petrovic, PhD**, Professor, Faculty of Forestry, University of Belgrade, Serbia

11:20 – 11:40 State of the Art of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Marketing Standards in SEE Region - **Ms. Ivana Dulic Markovic, PhD**, SEEDEV – Agricultural Consultancy, Director, Republic of Serbia

11:40 – 12:00 Situation and Needs of Rural Youth in the Western Balkans - **Ms. Emelj Tuna, PhD**, Professor, Association of Agricultural Economists of North Macedonia

12:00 – 12:20 LEADER Approach in the Western Balkans – **Ms. Evelina Azizaj**, National Coordinator, Albanian Network for Rural Development

12:20 – 12:30 Introduction to the working groups topics

12:30 – 14:00 **Lunch**

14:00 – 18:00 **Working groups (Coffee break 16:00 – 16:30)**

WG1: Regional Soil Partnership

WG2: Agricultural Policy Developments

WG3: Organic agricultural production

19:00 **Dinner**

Thursday, 26 October 2023

09:00 – 09:20 Presentation of working group results WG 1

09:20 – 09:40 Presentation of working group results WG 2

09:40 – 10:00 Presentation of working group results WG 3

10:00 – 10:30 Discussion

10:30 – 11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:00 – 12:30 Formulation of the Podgorica Agenda 2023

12:30 – 12:45 Official closing of the Forum

12:45 – 14:30 **Lunch**

15:30 – 19:00 Field trip

19:00 **Dinner**

Friday, 27 October 2023

Departure after breakfast

Plenary Session

SPEAKERS



Ivana Dulic Markovic

*BSc and MSc Agronomy Fruit and Viticulture Growing
Faculty of Agronomy University of Zagreb;
PhD Biotechnology – Virology, Agriculture Faculty
University of Belgrade*

Ivana is dedicated professional with 38 years of professional research experience. Work experience includes fruit growing and phytopathology scientific research, agriculture policy creation and implementation as well as international consultancy. Her professional career combines 15 years of scientific research in Fruit research institute in Cacak, with 6 years of extensive involvement in policy creation and implementation as Director of the Department for Genetic Resources, Minister of Agriculture and Vice Premier of the Government of Republic of Serbia assigned as chief negotiator with the EU. Since 2009, she joined the SEEDEV consultancy company, working on major SEEDEV projects as well as individual consultancy for different international agencies. Ivana has excellent knowledge of different aspects of phytosanitary policy, fruit production and trade, value chain and competitiveness analysis.



Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska

*PhD, Professor, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje,
Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food-Skopje,
Institute of Agricultural Economics*

Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska is full professor and currently Head of the Institute of Agricultural Economics at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. Her research interests are in the area of economic and technical performance in agriculture, efficiency and productivity analysis, cost of production of agri-food products, cost-benefit analysis, and also socio-economic aspects of climate change, farmer behavior in decision-making and strategic choices, as well as agricultural and rural development policy. She participated in various national and international projects (SIDA, FAO, USAID, WB, FP7, JRC, HORIZON 2020, HORIZON EUROPE/COST etc), development of national strategic documents, and edited and (co)authored a number of research publications and applicative studies. Has so far published more than 90 research and technical papers and 2 university textbooks. She is member of the National Council for Higher Education and Research; National IPARD Monitoring Committee; National Liaison to the European Association of Agricultural Economics; Key expert in the National Convention for the EU – MK; and EDP Coordinator of the Smart Specialisation S3 domain “Smart agriculture and food with



higher added value”.

Evelina Azizaj

*National Coordinator,
Albanian Network for Rural Development*

Evelina is an accomplished professional in sustainable rural development, with over 20 years of experience in programming and management. She currently serves as the National Coordinator of the Albanian Network for Rural Development (ANRD), where she leads capacity building, networking, and advocacy initiatives to improve the well-being of rural communities in Albania.

Under Evelina’s leadership, ANRD has established itself as a leading voice for rural communities in Albania. She is highly involved in evidence-based and bottom-up advocacy initiatives that seek to advance the priorities of local communities. In particular, she serves as the Coordinator of the first nation-wide and bottom-up advocacy platform - the Albanian Rural Parliament. Additionally, she has initiated the Pro-Rural Women event and the creation of Rural Youth Hub, consolidating ANRD’s thematic work with women and youth in rural areas.

Evelina is a passionate advocate for sustainable and integrated local development. As ANRD’s Coordinator, she contributes to policy discussions about the promotion of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD)/LEADER, empowerment of women in rural areas, sustainable agriculture, and rural development. Her expertise and leadership have been instrumental in driving positive change for rural communities in Albania.



Emelj Tuna

*PhD, Professor, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje,
Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food-Skopje,
Institute of Agricultural Economics*

Emelj Tuna is an associate professor at the Institute of Agricultural Economics at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. She obtained MSc and PhD degrees at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Department of Economics, Uppsala – Sweden.

Currently, her research interests are in the field of social networks and agricultural cooperatives, socio-economic aspects of rural development (poverty, the role of youth and women in rural areas), value chain analyses, AKIS and agricultural advisory.

She has been involved in various activities within national and international projects (SIDA, SWG, FAO, WeEffect, UN Women, DG AGRI, etc.). Have also been part of developing national strategic documents and plans. As an author or co-author, she has published different research based and practical publications, and book chapters in the field of agricultural economics. She is an awarded teaching fellow (CERGE-EI) and part of a Rural NEET Youth Network COST action.



Paul Holmbeck

*World Board Member, IFOAM – Organics International,
Director, Holmbeck EcoConsult*

Paul Holmbeck led Organic Denmark as director until 2020, playing a leading role over 25 years in developing Denmark’s ambitious organic goals and policies and a strong organic organisation as a driving force for change. Market partnerships have made Denmark the world leader in organic sales, with organic market shares for many basic foods like milk, eggs, flour and many vegetables and fruits of 30-60% of total market share. Paul also played a central role in development of the first EU Organic Action Plan, and Denmark’s policies have provided best practice for European organic policy for more than two decades.

Today, Paul is Director in **Holmbeck EcoConsult**, where he advises leaders in government, business, and NGOs around the world on organic market strategies, effective policy frameworks and organizational development. Most recently chosen by the European Commission to present best organic policy practice for ministry officials from the 27 EU member states, and advisor on organic policy frameworks in The Netherlands, Indonesia, Uganda and Canada.

Paul was elected to the IFOAM – Organics International World Board in September 2021.

Articles and more info: <https://paulholmbeck.com/> and Linked In.



Mirko Knežević

*PhD, Professor, University of Montenegro -
Biotechnical Faculty, Department for Soil Amelioration*

Mirko Knežević completed his primary education in Spuž and subsequently attended the “Slobodan Škerović” high school in Podgorica. He continued his education at the Faculty of Agriculture in Zemun-Beograd, specializing in Land Reclamation. He pursued post-graduate studies at the same faculty, concentrating on Land Drainage. The topic of his master’s thesis, defended in 2000, was “Land Drainage of the Zetsko-Bjelopavlička Plain in Conditions of Sustainable Development.” He achieved his doctoral degree from the same faculty in 2008, presenting a dissertation titled “Planning and Designing Systems for Drainage and Irrigation in the Bjelopavlička Plain.”

At the University of Montenegro - Biotechnical Faculty, he has engaged as a assistant professor in several courses: Basic Academic Studies of Agriculture in Podgorica, Plant Production Study Program - Pedology and Amelioration; Basic Applied Studies of Agriculture in Bar, Mediterranean Fruit Growing Study Program; and Basic Applied Studies of Agriculture in Bijelo Polje, Continental Fruit Growing Study Program Pedology and Amelioration and Land Management.

He has authored or co-authored 68 scientific papers and participated in 37 scientific research and professional projects.



Nenad Petrovic

*Associate professor at University of Belgrade,
Faculty of Forestry*

Dr. Nenad Petrovic is associate professor at University of Belgrade, Faculty of Forestry. Since 2003 he is working at chair of forest management planning where is responsible for teaching activities on same name subject. Special focus of his research is on forest planning, forest policy and small scale private forest management. He worked as visiting professor at University of Sarajevo and University of Banja Luka and is active in implementation of several regional and international project. He speaks English, German and Spanish language.



Krzysztof Sulima

*Pre-Accession Assistance Unit,
European Commission, DG AGRI*

Krzysztof joined the European Commission after completing his studies in the fields of international relations and European politics and policies.

He first worked in the Directorate for Environment from where he moved to the Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Development to focus on the aspects of the EU rural development policy. He now continues working in this Directorate in the Neighbourhood, Enlargement and Pre-Accession assistance unit responsible also for IPARD (instrument for pre-accession assistance for rural development).

Thanks to these professional experiences, Krzysztof has gained a valuable insight into different perspectives of shaping the Common Agricultural Policy (the CAP) and in particular on the aspects of integration of environmental concerns into this policy. His work on this integration has been reflected in developing agri-environment-climate relevant instruments as well as in setting workable solutions to the interactions between those instruments and the CAP mandatory requirements of cross-compliance and greening requirements, also in the context of the European Green Deal.

Working group 1: **SOIL PARTNERSHIP**

Moderator: Darko Konjevic

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 25 October 2023

- 14:00 – 14:15** Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteur for the group – Moderator
- 14:15 – 14:45** Progress report on the REAWG Soil Partnership group activities
Ms. Dragana Vidojevic, Regional expert
- 14:45 – 15:00** Discussion
- 15:00 – 15:20** Melioration cadastre data collection – history in East Germany and new (digital) methods
Mr. Christian Wiese, Environmental Office of Stendal District
- 15:20 – 15:45** Geological mapping and geological surveying of soils in Saxony-Anhalt
Dr. Henrik Helbig, Geological State Office of Saxony-Anhalt
- 15:45 – 16:15** **Coffee break**
- 16:15 – 17:30** Description of the specifics and thresholds of the pedogenetic factors for each soil type in the country
Presentation of the national experts (10 minutes each)
- 17:30 – 18:00** Discussion about the future steps and workplan for 2024
- 19:00** **Dinner**

Working group 2:

AGRICULTURAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Moderator: Boban Ilic

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 25 October 2022

14:00 – 14:20 Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteur for the group – Moderator

14:20 – 14:40 Progress report – **Ms. Ana Kotevska, Regional and National Expert**

14:40 – 15:40 Presentation of draft national reports (country case studies), max 20 min each:

- Albania – **Mr. Edvin Zhllima, National Expert**
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of BiH – **Mr. Sabahudin Bajramovic, National Expert**
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Srpska – **Mr. Zeljko Vasko, National Expert**

15:40 – 16:00 Discussion

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 – 17:50 Presentation of draft national reports (country case studies), max 20 min each:

- Kosovo* – **Ms. Iliriana Miftari, National Expert**
- North Macedonia – **Mr. Dragi Dimitrievski, Regional and National Expert**
- Montenegro – **Mr. Mirsad Spahic, National Expert**
- Serbia – **Mr. Vlado Kovacevic, National Expert**

17:50 – 18:10 Discussion

18:10 – 18:30 Review of the workplan and concluding remarks

19:00 Dinner

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

Working group 3:

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

Moderator: Dusan Neskovic

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 25 October 2023

14:00 – 14:20 Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteur for the group – Moderator

14:20 – 15:30 Progress report on implementing the EU 848/2018 Regulation - transposition and achievement
Representatives of the Ministries - tour the table - max 10 min each

15:30 – 16:00 Discussion

16:00 – 16:30 **Coffee break**

16:30 – 16:45 Assessment of the competence of the laboratory regarding the existing capacity in testing samples of organic products, especially for pesticide residues (country case – R. Serbia)
Mr. Branislav Raketec, Regional expert

16:45 – 17:20 Thematic outline – Organic Market Development: “Key Drivers for Organic Market growth: Policy, Partnerships and organic sector development”
Paul Holmbeck, World Board Member IFOAM – Organics International

17:20 – 18:15 Discussion
Challenges, Priorities and Solutions for Sustainable Organic Market Development in Western Balkan Countries in the context of Green Agenda, climate change challenges and sustainable management of natural resources

18:15 – 18:30 Review of the workplan and concluding remarks - **Moderator**

19:00 **Dinner**

FIELD TRIP



Donkey Farm in Martinici Village

Nestled just 17 km from Podgorica, the Donkey Farm at Martinici Village immerses you in the rich heritage of Montenegro's Bjelopavlici region. For centuries, donkeys have been the unsung heroes, toiling in the fields and carrying water for the local community. Today, they take center stage in a whole new way.

This extraordinary donkey farm sets the standard for eco-friendly, humane animal care, and a profound connection to the natural world. The donkeys are more than just farm animals; they're integral to the farm's sustainability. They provide organic milk and offer companionship during therapy sessions for children with disabilities. Their heartwarming presence brings joy to visitors of all ages.

Mr. Darko Saveljic is an ornithologist and environmental visionary, who has dedicated his life to protecting the salt ponds of Ulcinj in southern Montenegro. In 2015, Darko transformed his vision into reality by establishing this remarkable donkey farm. Today, he's channeling his energy into developing the farm as a place of personal solace and environmental education.

The Donkey Farm at Martinici and Darko has garnered international recognition, having been featured in German and French documentaries and mentioned on esteemed websites and news portals such as Lonely Planet, Yahoo.com, and RyanAir.





Winery Velimirovic

The Velimirovic family has an impressive history spanning over three centuries of vine cultivation under the picturesque slopes of Mount Garac, which lies approximately 15 kilometers from the city of Podgorica. Wine and brandy production have deep-rooted traditions within the Velimirovic family, serving as a cornerstone of their way of life.

Over time, the Velimirovic family's modest vineyard and distillery have grown into something truly remarkable, thanks to the passionate commitment of the renowned Montenegrin lawyer, Goran Velimirovic. While establishing a distinguished career in the legal field, including serving as a judge at the High Court in Podgorica, and later thriving as a successful lawyer, Goran Velimirovic dedicated his precious free moments to the pursuit of crafting top-quality wines.



This transformation from a small family-run enterprise into an intriguing and noteworthy winery represents not only the family's enduring dedication to winemaking but also the vision and enthusiasm of Goran Velimirovic. It's a testament to the harmonious blend of tradition and innovation, where the rich heritage of the Velimirovic family merges seamlessly with modern winemaking practices.

Winery "Velimirovic" stands as a symbol of Montenegrin winemaking excellence, offering wines that encapsulate the essence of the region, making it a must-visit for anyone interested in the world of wine. Their commitment to quality and meticulous attention to detail in both viticulture and winemaking has earned them a well-deserved reputation as a prominent and respected winery in the area.