**Position Paper for Framework on Climate Change**

*Topic 1: The Impact of Climate Change on Human Health*

The impact that climate change has on human health has rarely been referenced in climate talks, but is now one of the most prevalent issues. The changes in the factors that affect and alter the global climate bring a myriads of human health consequences[[1]](#footnote-1). Climate change has been shown to directly and indirectly affect the physical, social, and psychological health of humans.[[2]](#footnote-2) Some health concerns that are raised due to climate change are thermal stress, transmission of infection diseases, and floods and droughts. Montenegro’s main priority is to adapt its institutional capacity and legislation to European Union (EU) requirements, therefore all environmental policies will be made to help our inhabitants and meet the EU requirements.

In 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) published a work plan on climate change and health[[3]](#footnote-3). The overall aim of the work plan was to support healthcare systems in all countries which was centred on four objectives[[4]](#footnote-4). WHO has been incredibly successful in achieving these goals and has generated a widespread awareness of climate risks to health. The impacts of a rising temperature affecting human health are evident in Montenegro. Montenegro expects a further increase in temperature which will negatively affect the health condition of high risk groups[[5]](#footnote-5). An increase in average monthly temperature will also cause a higher frequency of diseases that are transmitted by food and water. These diseases include salmonellosis, toxic infections and diarrhea. Diseases transmitted by infectious agents and vector organisms are also very prevalent. Sand fly borne diseases are widespread in Montenegro with at least 85000 cases reported every year.

Montenegro is committed to the protection of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources and the process of European integration, which will define the directions and goals facing environmental development[[6]](#footnote-6). We are aware that a change in behaviour and awareness building of the population about the impact of climate on health and how to reduce the impact of future climate change must be encouraged. The necessary primary measures of adaptation for the purpose of prevention to climate change include different initiatives.

With the rise in temperatures, Montenegro’s summers can be expected to rise to 45 degrees Celsius. We plan to create hydration stations in the summer which will provide residents with shade and water to drink when the temperature is warmer than usual.To combat carbon emissions that cause the rise in temperature we will plan to integrate more renewable energy sources such as hydro energy, wind energy, solar energy, geothermal sources and solid waste. Currently we are only using around 17% of the total hydropower potential[[7]](#footnote-7). By 2025, we plan to construct several small hydro power plants that will be able to produce 78GWh[[8]](#footnote-8). This will provide Montenegro with more renewable energy resources to utilise. For wind energy we plan to contrast four wind farms. There is around 100 MW of potential wind energy especially with the large coastal regions of our country. Moreover, Montenegro is open to discussion and action on the subject of spreading awareness for climate change impacts on human health.

*Topic 2: Climate Refugees*

A Climate Refugee is a person who crosses borders for environmental protection[[9]](#footnote-9). Not only does the term include those fleeing from natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, droughts etc… it also includes those forced to leave due to health reasons. This issue is making its way to the fore front with the estimation that there will be between 25 million to 1 billion climate refugees by 2050. Climate change is impacting the way people live. Floods are the most common natural disaster in Europe and there is a multitude of adverse human health consequences. With sea level predicted to rise 40 cm, there are more people vulnerable to these disasters that are living within our borders.

One of the most pressing situation concerning the Western Balkans is the Drin River Basin. It is home to 1.6 million people and their lives depend on this system which provides them with the resources they need for electricity generation, irrigation, etc… We plan to focus on flooding and drought risk management in the basin. We have already implemented flood risk management plans for 31 municipalities. This has significantly reduced the vulnerability of approximately 200 000 inhabitants to risks of flooding. We also plan to extend more precipitation and stream gauging networks to measure real time for trans boundary flood forecasting. This enables floods to be predicted and the population in the relevant areas to be warned. Montenegro plans to create and enforce a Natural Disaster Emergency Plan (NDERP). We are also open to working alongside other countries which are vulnerable to similar hazards such as flooding and earthquakes.

*Topic 3: Steps to Enforce the Paris Agreement and Further Reduce Green House Gas Emissions*

Montenegro has not yet ratified the Paris Agreements, but we are ready to introduce mitigation and adaptation strategies as a response to climate change. We believe that the best way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is through education and renewable energy resources.

Education is an essential element of the global response to climate change[[10]](#footnote-10). By educating the younger generations and increasing “climate literacy” will ensure that they will change their attitude and behaviour towards climate change[[11]](#footnote-11). Moreover, it will help them adapt to climate change related trends. We will encourage innovative teaching approaches to integrate climate change into school education. We will also strengthen the quality of climate change education. In addition, Montenegro plans to enhance non- formal education programmes through media, networking, and partnerships.

Montenegro also has great potential for more renewable energy sources as referenced above.

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