

Workshop Report: Climate Fresk and Local Territory Identification

Location: Rural Hub, Orah village, Nikšić, Montenegro

Date: 27.02.2025.

Facilitators: Nevena Savić, Ružica Janjić

Participants: 14 participants

Event schedule



CLIMATE AWARENESS

workshop

27 FEB 2025 RURAL
GUESTHOUSE ĐED RADOŠ
NIKŠIĆ MONTENEGRO

09:00 AM - 15:30 PM

09:00-09:30	Introduction
09:30-11:00	Climate Fresk
11:00-11:30	Break
11:30-12:30	Identification of the territory
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:00	Making connections
14:00-14:30	Break
14:30-15:30	Conclusions & Solutions

**AIDA**
Action, Mediation, Formation
Association internationale pour le développement de l'agroenvironnement

**European Climate Foundation**

**Zeleno Doba**
Centar za održivi rast i razvoj

Workshop Context and Objectives

This workshop combined the interactive **Climate Fresk** activity in the first part with **local territory identification** in the afternoon to engage participants in understanding the complex connections between human activities and climate change and the last session dedicated to solutions and challenges.

The sessions aimed to:

- Build awareness of the global and local impact of human activities on climate systems.
- Facilitate a participatory diagnosis of local territories to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for sustainability.
- Encourage participants to propose actionable steps for improving resilience and environmental stewardship in their communities.
- Facilitate networking, collective actions and solidarity



Our local hosts were representatives of Rural Hub Nikšić, an organization dedicated to fostering connections between local decision-makers and rural producers. They are currently working on establishing a Local Action Group (LAG) for their region and are well connected both within Montenegro and across the broader region.

The target audience primarily consisted of local stakeholders, Rural development network, civil society representatives from cooperatives and organizations, along with the representatives from the municipality of Nikšić-department for Agriculture and Forestry. Their expertise enriched the Climate Fresk and other sessions. Most participants have been actively engaged in awareness raising, advocating for rural development in a sustainable way, youth work and entrepreneurship.

Climate Fresk Session Report

During the Climate Fresk session, participants were divided into two groups to explore the methodology collaboratively. The session proved to be highly enriching, with participants reporting increased awareness of cause-and-effect relationships and the systemic nature of climate-related issues. Many participants highlighted the session's interactivity and expressed that it was both useful and engaging.

Local Context

At the beginning of the session, participants were introduced to locally available data.

- **Social/economical context**

Nikšić is the second largest city in Montenegro with a population of around 80000 people, while between 20000-30000 people live in rural areas. Trends are present of migration to urban centers with a tendency of aging of the working capable population.

Nikšić once was a traditional industry center, with metal production, and mining industry. Now, Nikšić is economically in a transition to utility services and development of small and middle size companies. There is more investment and interest in innovative technologies - startup ecosystems.

- **Geography**

Placed in the central part of Montenegro, Nikšić municipality is the biggest municipality geographically. It is surrounded by big mountain ranges such as Mountain Vojnik with various flora & fauna, hiking, sightseeing; Prekornica- Ideal for forest tourism, hiking, it is important for local residents; other important mountains are Maganik, Krnovo, Golija and Lukavica. River Zeta with its tributaries is very important for wild animals and the local community. Participants added the Nikšić park Trebesja, lungs of the city and Lakes Krupac as important resources they share.

- **Energy**

Nikšić municipality has a privilege that is located close to key energy resources. Hydro power plant Perućica adds up to 40% of total used energy. Wind power plants Krnovo i Gvozd are newer projects, so we couldn't find data of total energy used on a municipal level. In the seasons of less production, they import energy from TM Pljevlja. Regarding solar energy, new projects are "Slano Jezero" and "Sunčani Grad" and there the interest and potential in renewables and energy efficiency is rising.

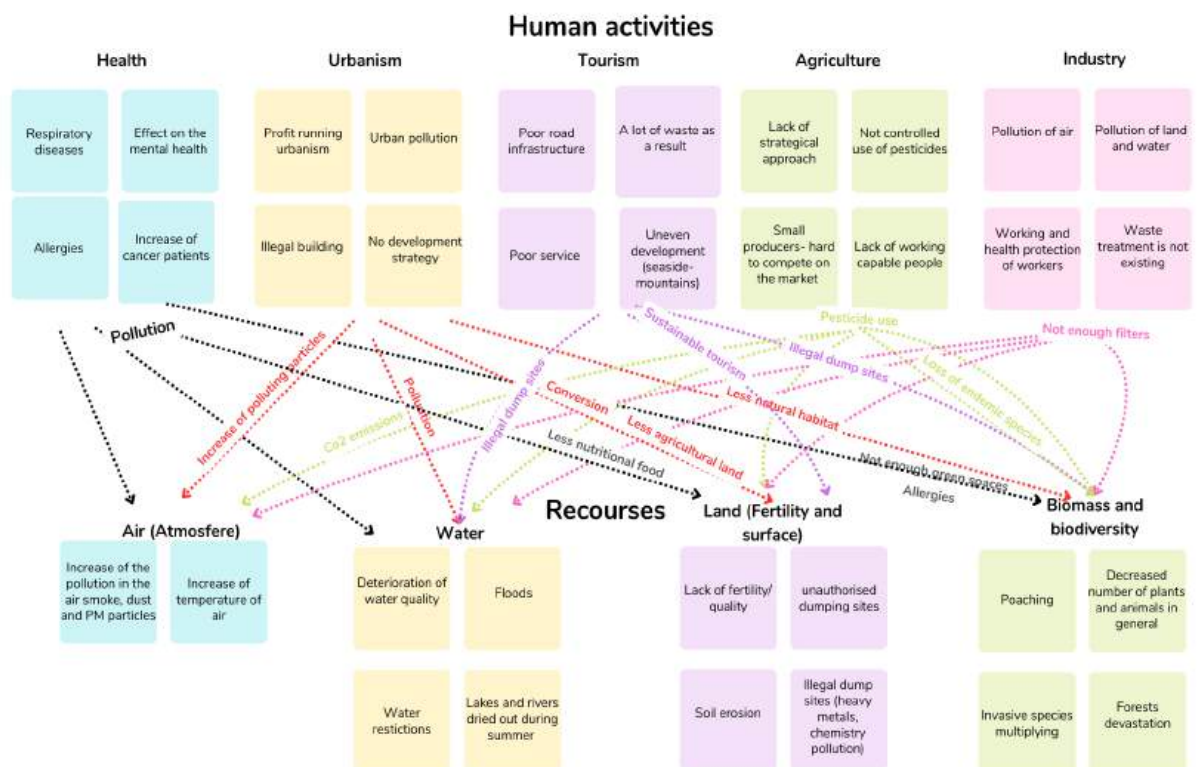
- **Climate**

Climate in the region is continental with mediterranean influence. Summers are pleasant, dry and warm, while winters are cold with bigger snowfalls. Amount of precipitation is the

same, but differently distributed. With heavier rainfalls and influence from mountain masses, the specific microclimate is developed. It is of key importance to recognize these new weather patterns and adapt to it through energy efficiency projects, our environmental impact, and development of agricultural practices.



After going through official data, the participants were divided in two groups and they were answering a question: Which human activities are affecting health, urbanism, tourism, agriculture and industry, while the other group was discussing the available resources in their area and how they are affected. This is the result of the session for local context for Nikšić-Montenegro.



If we look at the **health** aspect of human activities, pollution is affecting all the resources due to lack of institutional control (waste treatment), strategic approach and stricter regulations. It affects life expectancy, less nutritional healthy foods, and wellbeing of community members. Participants shared that in their close environment they are witnessing an increase in respiratory diseases, allergies as well as cancer patients. When we look into **urbanism**, it affects the air by contaminating it with polluting particles and it creates noise. Conversion from agricultural to construction land is creating less and less possibility for agriculture and it is polluted permanently and creates less habitat for wild species. **Tourism** is not developed strategically, but there are initiatives to promote sustainable tourism practices which can contribute to all resources conservation. Road infrastructure and waste disposal systems are significant challenges.

Agriculture affects all the resources through pesticide use which is not controlled enough, and also illegal dump sites which are becoming a normal part of the landscape. Regarding **industry**, cement factory have a big impact on resource depletion. There are not enough filters for gas emissions, and water treatment systems.

Upon reviewing the **resources** of the county, it is evident that they are affected all the time by human activities. What was voiced out the most was plastic waste which is present everywhere and by falling apart in nature creates more and more issues for all species including humans. Regarding climate trends, we could observe patterns similarly as in Bosnia or Serbia with wild species and insect decreasing, lack of fertility of the land and soil erosion, water scarcity during summer particularly and increase of PM particles in the air.

Solutions and challenges session

As a conclusion of the day, participants had a session named "Solution and Challenges" where they went through three levels of solutions marking them on the level from easy implementation towards harder implementation and smaller and bigger impact.

- On the **personal level** participants shared what they could implement easier: use reusable bags, plant a tree, grow a garden in an alternative way, educate more, buy at more local stores, use resources rationally, use more ecological products. What they said could be more challenging was cleaning of illegal dump sites, creating less waste, repurpose, and selecting waste in separate bins.
- On a **local and institutional** level what could be easier is advocating for Cleaning Saturdays, having forestation actions, advocate for stronger policies and fees for ecological crime. What could take more effort is development of mechanisms and strategies with local actors, development of companies that take care of the environment, support local products, bring back the power of decision making process to the locals, building trust, responsibility, transparency, do not give up from partner approach, stay motivated to sustainability approach.

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Evaluation Summary of the Workshop

- **Overall Experience:** Participants unanimously rated the workshop with the highest score (5/5), reflecting a strong sense of satisfaction and positive engagement throughout the event.
- **Highlights of the Workshop:** The most valued parts of the program were the interactive elements, particularly the group work, the Climate Collage activity, and sessions focused on personal impact. These were described as engaging, insightful, and highly relevant.
- **Usefulness and Applicability:** Most participants stated that the knowledge and skills gained during the workshop are applicable to their professional contexts. They plan to use them in team settings, initiate small-scale changes, or spark conversations about sustainability within their organizations.
- **Facilitation and Organization:** The facilitation received excellent feedback, with praise for clarity, professionalism, and the engaging approach of the facilitators. The organization of the event—logistics, communication, venue, and timing—was also rated very positively, creating a comfortable and motivating learning environment.
- **Impact and Future Potential:** All participants agreed that workshops like this can play an important role in building stronger cooperation between decision-makers and civil society actors. Several expressed their intention to share the outcomes and approaches from the workshop within their teams or institutions.



Methodology Commentary

The workshop methodology combined structured activities with open dialogue, fostering both learning and collaboration.

Strengths

- **Engaging and Practical Methods:**

The workshop's participatory approach—featuring tools like the Climate Collage, group work, and personal reflection—was a major strength. These methods were well-received for being interactive, engaging, and directly applicable to participants' real-life contexts.

- **Supportive and Inclusive Learning Environment:**

The methodology effectively created a safe, open space for dialogue and collaboration. Participants appreciated the relaxed and motivating atmosphere, which contributed to high levels of engagement and satisfaction.

Areas for Enhancement

- **Opportunities for Strengthening Practical Implementation:**

While participants expressed interest in applying what they learned, few shared concrete plans. Adding structured follow-up tools—such as implementation plans or peer support—could help translate learning into action more effectively.

- **Potential for Broader Impact through Cross-Sector Dialogue:**

To deepen the workshop's influence, future sessions could include more time for sharing individual contexts, and introduce activities that encourage cooperation between civil society and decision-makers—such as role mapping or joint planning exercises.

Dissemination

We shared about the workshop through our website and social media as well we had local television and a portal which documented the workshop and shared it through their channel.

Conclusion

The evaluation results reflect a deeply positive experience among participants, who consistently rated the workshop highly in terms of content, facilitation, and organization. The use of participatory and interactive methods—such as group work, the Climate Collage, and reflection exercises—proved to be particularly impactful, encouraging engagement, dialogue, and critical thinking. Participants highlighted the relevance of the workshop for their personal and professional lives and expressed interest in applying the insights within their institutions and communities.

Moreover, the workshop successfully created a supportive and inclusive learning environment, enabling open sharing and connection among diverse actors. While the potential for practical application is evident, future workshops could benefit from clearer follow-up structures and more focused opportunities for exploring intersectoral collaboration. Overall, the workshop not only strengthened participants' understanding of sustainability and climate issues but also opened space for future cooperation between civil society and decision-makers—laying a solid foundation for continued learning and action.

