

PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Development Programme



Bonn, May 27th, 2008

Biodiversity Conservation in Montenegro

The country of Montenegro attended the **9th meeting of the Conference of Parties for the Convention on Biodiversity in Bonn, Germany** for the first time as an independent country. **The Ministry of Tourism and Environment Protection** invited the **UNDP Resident Representative a.i./UN Interagency Focal Point in Montenegro Mr. Garret Tankosić Kelly** to present the agency's work in Montenegro in the area of biodiversity and sustainable development at the side event organized by the Ministry.

Minister Nenezić said that Montenegro will focus in the future on achieving micro-economic stability and alignment of national development with the principles of sustainable development through creation of tourism product based on sustainable use of natural resources and rural development. He added that the emphasis will be on the natural, organic food and beverage, integration of environmental requirements into the transportation infrastructure development, and reduction of electricity losses and improvement of energy efficiency.

'The natural beauty and high biodiversity of Montenegro offers an obvious potential, and according to most competitiveness survey's Montenegro's Unique Selling Point, with significant opportunities for the development of experiential or geo tourism, which encompasses nature, heritage, cultural, soft-adventure and related sub-sectors such as rural, community, and organic food,' said **Mr Tankosić Kelly**. 'In focusing on its biodiversity, Montenegro is ideally positioned to attract the ideal tourists, LOHAS (life of health and sustainability) who spend US\$ 1000 to 1500 more per trip than do the traditional tourists, they are willing to pay up to 20% more for products made in a sustainable manner, and 75% of LOHAS are extremely interested in environmentally responsible travel,' he added.

UNDP is implementing a project that will result in the first Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Montenegro. **Mr Vasilije Bušković, an independent expert who is working on this initiative on behalf of both UNDP and the Ministry**, presented the process to the attendees at the side event.

UNDP recognizes that biological diversity is a 'common concern of mankind' and an integral part of the development process as well as the fact that protection and conservation knows no borders. Therefore, UNDP is assisting the Government of Montenegro to conserve its environment and utilize its benefits in a fair, equitable and sustainable manner through a programmatic approach that goes hand in hand with meeting the identified 2010 Biodiversity Targets through regional projects such as the Golden Triangle of World Heritage Sites that will

create regional linkages between the cities of Dubrovnik, Mostar, and Žabljak and the Environmental Hot Spot Clean-up that aims at remediation of the tailing mine impoundment in Mojkovac and the economic revitalization of the municipality through focus on organic agriculture, development of low impact tourism products that utilize biodiversity without destroying it such as kayaking, hiking and biking.

* * *

For additional information, please contact Ms. Nadica Dujović, Communications Associate, UNDP Montenegro; Phone: ++382 20 231 251; Fax: ++382 20 231 644; Cell: ++382 69 319 709; E-mail: nadica.dujovic@undp.org

Web: <http://www.undp.org.yu/montenegro>

* * *

UNDP in Montenegro promotes sustainable development, which is economically viable, socially inclusive and environmentally friendly.