



**AARHUS CENTRE VLORA**

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## **TRAINING ON**

### **The role of local institutions in preventing the earth erosion in Berat town**

**Berat on 22 April 2010**

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## **PREFACE**

Vjosa valley is one of the most beautiful valleys in Albania for its richness in flora and fauna and with significant tourism potential in the region, yet with lot of problems in terms of improper planning of urban wastes, illegal dumping thus causing massive pollution to the whole valley, which concerns more than nine local government units. This is due to lack of public participation in planning processes and decision making.

Where public has the potential to participate in various processes they do not participate and attend in institutional life thus there is no proactivity or partnership among state bodies and civil society. In order to fill this gap OSCE in co-operation with Aarhus Information Center introduced this training on Aarhus Convention for LGU public officials of Permet, Petran, Kelcyre, Ballban, Carshove, Piskove, Deshnice and Suka, which was followed by a second workshop among nine mayors to discuss on a common agreement on Vjosa valley protection and signing an agreement to Protect Vjosa Valley from waste dumping.

Albania continues to benefit from investment by domestic and international companies in the energy, infrastructure and other important sectors. The resulting projects are essential to enable the country to compete economically in the future and provide vital employment opportunities especially in rural areas. Such developments, however, also

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present challenges for the environment and for local communities living in close proximity to proposed roads, quarries, power stations, etc. In line with the government's commitment to achieving EU planning standards, and in compliance with the "Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environment Matters" and other such agreements, revisions have been made in recent months to legislation that has implications for the procedures businesses should follow when making planning applications. Thus on 30 March 2010 training was organized for private sector in Saranda on compliance mechanism and Public Participation.

Aarhus Information Centre Vlora has been intensively involved in various training session with Local officials in Vlora district and it considers very useful and necessary the training with them. Most of the officials have no clue of the Aarhus Convention and in the best case the ones that do heard do not apply it at all. These kind of trainings are very helpful both directions which can influence for a proper planning for their communities.

## **PREPARATION**

The preparation for this training has been jointly done with OSCE, Municipality of Berat and Aarhus Centre. AIC Vlora tailored the training according the participants needs and OSCE requirements in order to reach the outmost of the events. It took 2 weeks for the trainer's team to prepare the training modules, agenda, deliver the training in Berat. The training materials were used the ones produced by the Guidelines of UNECE on Aarhus Convention, AIC Vlora shared its annual report on Aarhus Convention Implementation in Albania and other materials from EBRD such as Public Participation Toolbox. OSCE took care of the logistical such as inviting participants, local media, NGOS etc.

## **TRAINING**

### **Training Objectives and Programme**

#### **Knowledge about:**

- Erosion in Berat town the legal frame and the Institutions' responsibility on this issue.
- Geologic situation or the land in Berat Region
- Cooperation of the local Institutions, sharing and dissemination of information and its relation with Aarhus Convention pillars.
- Erosion not only as an emergency. Technical measures needed to be taken from the view of specialists.

#### **Programme**

## **Workshop on; The role of local institutions in preventing the earth erosion in Berat town**

09:00 – 09:30 Welcoming and Introduction of participants

09.30 – 10.00 Erosion in Berat town the legal frame and the Institutions' responsibility on this issue

10.00 – 11:00 Geologic situation or the land in Berat Region

**11: 00 – 11: 15 Coffee break**

11:15 - 12:00 Cooperation of the local Institutions, sharing and dissemination of information and its relation with Aarhus Convention pillars.

**12.00 - 13:00** Erosion not only as an emergency. Technical measures needed to be taken from the view of specialists

**13.00 – 13.30 The role of working in Groups, and recommendations**

**13.30 – 14.00 Lunch**

### **Berat 22 April 2010**

( describe how went every event report of the training from notes you took.)

The training session started at 09.10 with the participation of 27 participants representing different local institutions of Berat Municipality, Communes, Region, Prefecture and local environmental departments. Participants introduced themselves and their expectations from the workshop. Their expectations were mostly focusing on the exchanging the information between institutions, best experiences, increasing the transparency and accountability of all institutions, increase the public awareness of all local actors for protection the environment in general and the erosion in particular.

Then, the representative of Berat Municipality presented the actual situation in Berat Region the erosion of land, during the winter and in the past years, the reasons and the role of the local institutions in preventing the erosion. During the presentation and at the end of it there was a lot of discussion from participants, admitting that all actors should take more responsibility for protecting the environment in Berat Region.

On the second session it was presented the areas of Berat Region that are exposed to the erosion and the high risk of land erosion if premeasures are not being taken rather

quickly to protect the land. The lack of forests, barriers and drainage canals in main roads causes the land erosion and landslide too. More attention should be pay by decision makers in programing and planning according to the specialist (geologist) and admitted by the participants too.

The third discussion it was focused on Institutional Cooperation, exchanging the information and the relation of Aarhus Convention with the role that should be played by local institutions for informing the community and increasing the role of citizens in decision making processes in order to have better planning and programming in local level. It was stressed out that the cooperation between all local institutions it assures efficiency and transparency in managing better the natural recourses and local planning with the final aim to protect the environment.

On the other session it was discussed the role of institutions in raising the public awareness towards citizens for protecting the environment, and educate them to care about the land as it is the only place where we organize all activities and should live to the other generation a better environment.

## **OBSERVATION OF THE TRAINERS**

### **In Berat**

This workshop was organized very well, from the logistic aspects. There were all equipment's needed and every thing was going as planed. The workshop started 10 minutes latter than planed but this did not influenced in the overall unfolding of the sessions.

## **CONCLUSION**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **On Logistical issues**

There is no recommendations regarding the logistic issues.

### **On thematic Issues**

Regarding the thematic issue in Berat there was one of the most concerning local issue at the present, bearing in mind that the last winter was very wet and caused a lot of landslides, erosion and other damages in environment.

The fact that in this workshop were present the highest representatives from all local institutions shows that this issue really fit the local concerns and it seems to have a great commitment from all local institutions especially in finding ways of cooperation for preventing the natural disaster in the future by increasing the role of cooperation between all institutions.

### Annex 3: Training Evaluation



### Annex 4: List of Handouts

#### Books

1. Pjesëmarrja Publike në praktikë – Milieukontakt Oost Europa
2. Udhëzues Zbatimi Konventa e Aarhusit – Komisioni Ekonomik për Europën
3. Public Participation Toolbox- EBRD

### Annex 5: List of Participants

## Annex 6: Photos of the event



