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# ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN 16 MUNICIPALITIES

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTER-MUNICIPAL COOPERATION

2016







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**C o D e**  
i n s t i t u t e



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# CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 8

2. CURRENT SITUATION 9

2.1 Municipal level 9

2.2 Common Problems/ Bottlenecks 27

3. BEST REGIONAL PRACTICES 28

4. JOINT OPPORTUNITIES 30

REFERENCES 32

ANNEXES 33

# Environmental Situation

## MAIN POLLUTERS

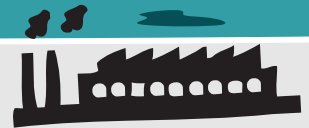
KEC



Ferronikeli



Sharrcem



75%

of the total greenhouse gasses are emitted from the energy sector



## CO2 EMISSIONS IN 2012



**PP A**

2.762.053 tons per year



**PP B**

3.314.555 tons per year



# EMISSION OF GREENHOUSE GASSES BY SECTOR

87%  
ENERGY

8%

Agriculture, forestry  
and land use

4%

Waste

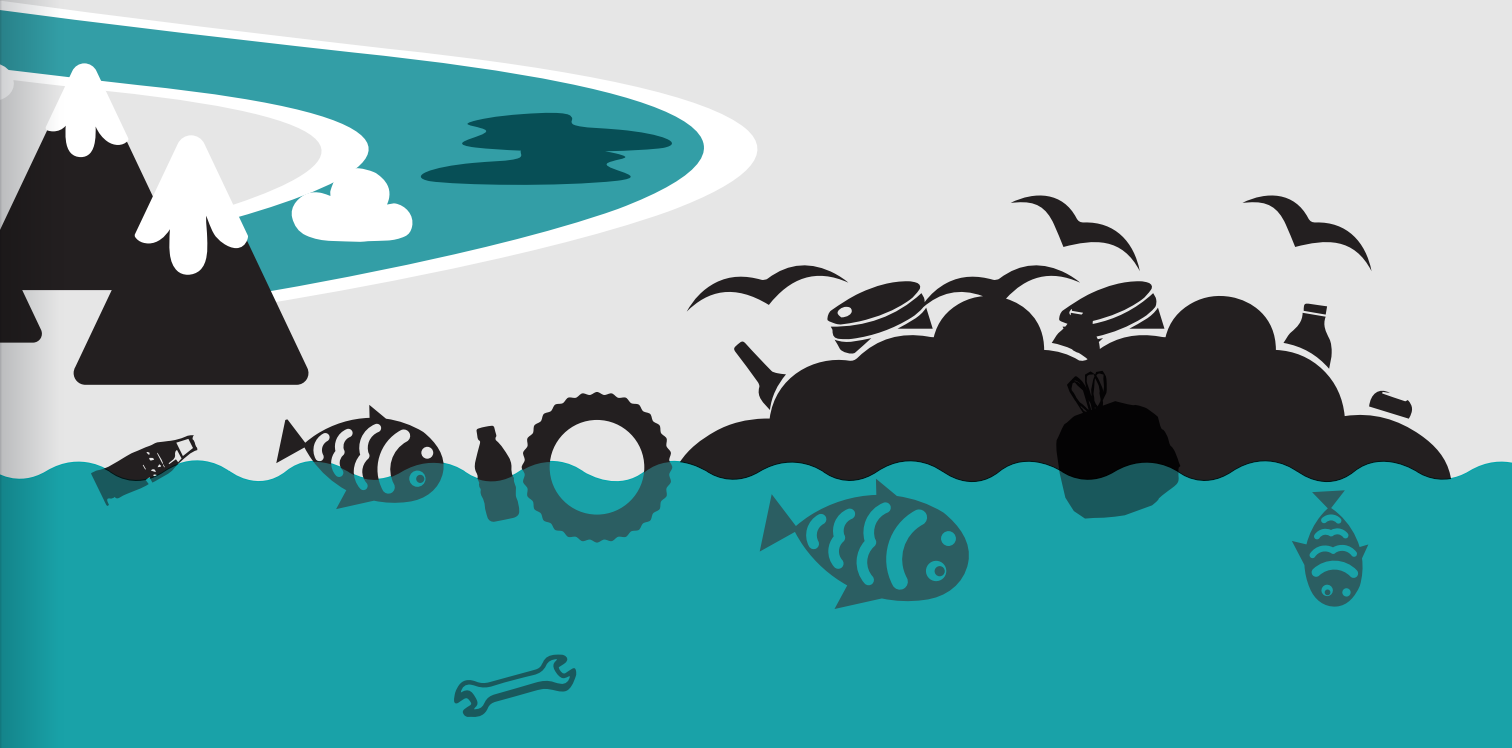
1%

Industrial processes and  
the use of products



12%

Is the total amount of  
greenhouse gasses emitted  
from road transport



# 1. INTRODUCTION

Municipalities in Kosovo face problems and challenges that hinder local economic development. Some of the problems and challenges have been created with the decentralization process where many of the central level competencies have been transferred to the local level. Furthermore, very little activities have been undertaken by the central level to strengthen the municipalities and ensure sustainable provision of services by the local level. As a result, majority of municipalities in Kosovo end up facing problems of common nature. Although a number of municipalities might have introduced improved or innovative practices, very little has been done on municipalities sharing their knowledge or resources with other municipalities. In other words, very little inter-municipal cooperation has been initiated between municipalities. According to the Association of Kosovo Municipalities (2010) Inter-Municipal Cooperation (IMC) refers to two or more neighboring municipalities working together to perform municipal administrative duties, provide public services to citizens and promote local development more efficiently and effectively than performing activities on their own. IMC's in Kosovo are few and dysfunctional in providing mutual services to citizens and reducing municipal costs. Mainly municipalities cooperate with each other in specific cases, though such cooperation is not formal (contract, agreement of understanding) (Association of Kosovo Municipalities, 2010). The legal framework for IMC's in Kosovo is established by the Article 124 of Constitution which states: "Municipalities have the right to inter-municipal cooperation and cross border cooperation, in accordance with the law". Furthermore, the Law on Local Self-Government specifies the right of municipalities to cooperate emphasizing that "municipalities shall be entitled to cooperate and form partnerships with other Kosovar municipalities to earn out functions of mutual interest, in accordance with the principles of the European Charter of Local Self Government and in accordance with the law" (Law on Local Self-Government, Article 28).

However, although little has been done regarding inter-municipal cooperation, there are opportunities for municipalities to pool their expertise and experiences to jointly solve common issues. Over time this type of inter-municipal cooperation can create the foundation for a sustainable municipal development strategy that will encourage municipalities to identify and meet their own development needs. It also encourages innovation in problem solving

and provides municipalities with the capacity to identify and address issues together and in partnership with other municipalities as well as higher levels of government. Furthermore, cost sharing will be encouraged and promoted among municipalities.

This report has been drafted to analyze the current situation regarding environmental protection in 16 municipalities of Kosovo and propose opportunities for inter-municipal cooperation. The municipalities covered are Gračanica/Gračanice, Klokot/Kllokot, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Parteš/Partesh, Ranilug/Ranillug, Štrpce/Shtërpçë, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Istog/Istok, Klinë/Klina, Obiliq/Obilić, Pejë/Peć, Vushtrri/Vučitrn, Mitrovica North, Leposavić/Leposaviq, ZubinPotok/ZubinPotok, and Zvečan/Zveçan. The main objective of this report is to identify joint problems municipalities face with regards to environment and propose joint solutions to these common problems.

The methodology used to identify problems faced regarding the environment involved conducting in-depth interviews with officials responsible for environmental protection. In most cases, the team conducted interviews with directors for public services and with an official responsible for environmental protection (when there was one). The questionnaire for the interviews was conducted based on thorough analysis of local environmental action plans and secondary research that was available. The questions were open ended and officials were encouraged to answer every question in detail. With the consent of the participants interviews were recorded and transcribed. The main reason for recording them is to not miss any details.

The rest of the report is organized as follows. Section 2 presents, discusses, and analyses the findings from in-depth-interviews with 16 municipality officials who are responsible for environmental protection. The same section presents the common problems faced by 16 municipalities. Section 3 provides best practices of inter-municipal cooperation regarding environment in regional countries, more specifically in Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania. Section 4 presents joint opportunities for cooperation between municipalities.



# 2. CURRENT SITUATION

This section of the report depicts the current situation regarding environmental protection in the 16 municipalities of Kosovo and common problems faced between municipalities. The analysis is based on information received from in-depth interviews held with municipality officials who are responsible for environmental protection.

## 2.1 MUNICIPAL LEVEL



## PEJË/PEĆ

In the municipality of Pejë/Peć, the main environmental challenge which the municipality faces is the protection of rivers from untreated wastewater. Due to lack of a modern sewage system and a plant for the treatment of industrial wastewater, rivers get polluted by untreated wastewater ending up in Lumëbardh and Drini i Bardhë. The municipality does not possess the financial and human capacities needed for the protection of rivers. The second challenge that municipality of Pejë/Peć faces is the destruction of riverbeds by the excavation of sand. Another challenge is proper connection to the sewage system. Only 10 percent of the villages have access to the system, while in the city around 60 percent of the citizens are connected. The upper areas of the city are not connected to the sewage system at all. For the moment fecal waters end up in Lumbardh's part of municipality of Pejë/Peć, because there is no treatment plant.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds



Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



To address the challenges with regards to the environment, the municipality has undertaken some steps. The municipality has reached an agreement in the value of 24.0 ml Euros with the German Bank for Development, for the construction of a wastewater treatment plant. Except for the grant from the German Bank for Development, the municipality will contribute financially as well. During 2016, the feasibility study for the construction of the plant for the treatment of wastewater will be completed. By the end of 2016, construction work is expected to be initiated. The municipality has also invested in building the sewage system which connects two or three villages at most. But, wastewater that gathers in those sewages is not treated. Regarding inter-municipal cooperation, officials have expressed readiness to work and cooperate with the municipality of Klinë/Klina in protecting the rivers, since Drini River passes close to the municipality of Klinë/Klina, and

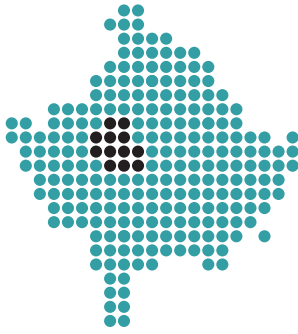


The municipality has reached an agreement in the value of 24.0 ml Euros with the German Bank for Development, for the construction of a wastewater treatment plant.

they are seeking for an opportunity to cooperate with the government or donor organizations, in order to solve this problem as soon as possible.

The municipality of Pejë/Peć has approved the Local Environmental Action Plan 2009-2015 and is working in drafting the Regulation on Environmental Protection. The regulation will determine responsibilities of inspectors and mandatory fines for environmental pollutants. Lack of a regulation for the protection of the environment has had an effect in deepening the above mentioned problems. Furthermore, due to lack of regulation, the municipality could not issue any fines for the pollutants.

Regarding the budget, municipality of Pejë/Peć, for the year 2016 has planned around 20 ml. Euros. From this amount, the municipality has allocated less than 190.000 Euros for the Department of Public Services, Civil Protection and Emergencies. Part of the same department are also projects for environmental protection, since the municipality does not have a special department for environmental protection.



## KLINË/KLINA

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



The main environmental problems in the municipality of Klinë/Klina are low quality of drinking water, lack of a plant for the treatment of wastewater, and high number of illegal landfills. The quality of drinking water in Klinë/Klina, does not fulfill the required standards, thus majority of the residents have to rely on private wells. Furthermore, in municipality of Klinë/Klina there is no plant for treatment of wastewater, and as a result they end up directly in Drin i Bardhë River.

Another problem that preoccupies citizens of municipality of Klinë/Klina is the ineffective management of waste and large number of illegal landfills (around 13 landfills are identified). As such, application of recycling measures, safe disposal of unused waste, and reduction of harmful effects that they may have in polluting the environment, remain a priority for the municipal officials of Klinë/Klina.

Regarding legislation, municipality of Klinë/Klina, has approved the Local Environmental Action Plan 2009-2015, and has appointed an official that monitors and reports to the Director of Public Services for problems with which they face regarding the environment. The municipality also has appointed an inspector for environment protection, which is responsible for the protection of the environment and for issuing fines. Regarding the budget of Klinë/Klina municipality, officials have planned around 8.0 ml Euros, where less than 800,000 Euros are allocated for the Department of Urban Planning and Inspection, which is responsible for environment protection.



Another problem that preoccupies citizens of municipality of Klinë/Klina is the ineffective management of waste and large number of illegal landfills (around 13 landfills are identified).

Regarding the budget of Klinë/Klina municipality, officials have planned around 8.0 ml Euros, where less than 800,000 Euros are allocated for the Department of Urban Planning and Inspection, which is responsible for environment protection.



## ISTOG/ISTOK

In municipality of Istog/Istok the main environmental problems that the municipality faces are treatment of wastewater, waste management, large number of illegal landfills, and illegal cutting of trees. Treatment of wastewater presents a huge challenge for Istog/Istok. Municipal officials have noted that they are making efforts to secure funds from the donors, in order to build the sewage system and a plant, because the municipality does not have the resources needed to make such investments.

Waste and illegal landfills are among the largest environmental pollutants in Istog/Istok. Citizens carelessly throw waste in open places. As a result illegal landfills are created, where different types of waste are thrown without being classified.

Illegal cutting of forests and their degradation is also having an effect in the destruction of surfaces that have the role of environmental protectors. As a result forest degradation, water from intensive rainfalls overpasses the riverbeds without any obstacle and creates floods.

Regarding natural resources, Istog/Istok has three main sources of water. To protect them from pollution, the sources have been declared as protected areas. The municipality in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning has drafted a regulation for water sources through which it regulates the protection and maintenance of these water sources.

Due to lack of financial resources, municipal official cannot offer services that are related to environment protection, but they mainly conduct monitoring activities. Regarding the budget, officials from the municipality of Istog/Istok have planned less than 9 ml Euros for 2016, while they have allocated around 200,000 Euros for the Department of Public Services, Civil Protection and Emergencies.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees



Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection

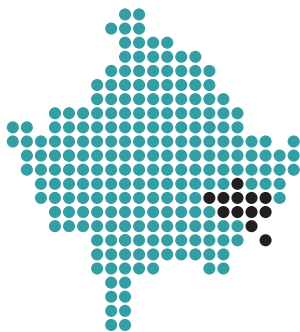


Waste and illegal landfills are among the largest environmental pollutants in Istog/Istok. Citizens carelessly throw waste in open places. As a result illegal landfills are created, where different types of waste are thrown without being classified.



Regarding the budget, officials from the municipality of Istog/Istok have planned less than 9 ml Euros for 2016, while they have allocated around 200,000 Euros for the Department of Public Services, Civil Protection and Emergencies

Regarding legislating, municipality officials sated that the Local Environmental Action Plan 2012-2020 has been approved but due to lack of finances they are facing problems in implementing the plan.



## GJILAN/GNJILANE

In municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane, the challenges regarding environmental protection are separated into two categories: i) institutional, and ii) technical. When it comes to institutional challenges, Gjilan/Gnjilane officials point out that one of the key issues for environmental protection is the fact that they do not have any inspector for environmental protection, but only an environmental official who has a lot of responsibilities and almost impossible to inspect the works and conditions in the field with regards to the environment. The municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane has had an inspector for environmental protection until 2004. In that year, a new regulation for environment protection was approved, upon which it the position of the official for environmental protection was established. Since 2012, the official for environmental protection has much more responsibility that cannot be conducted by one person. In order to conduct effective work, a department for environmental protection is needed.

Waste management and wastewater treatment fall in the technical challenges related to the environment. Regarding waste, the landfill where 11 neighboring municipalities or around 12 percent of the Kosovo's territory, starting from Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë, Kamenicë/ Kamenico, and Štrpce/ Shtërpçë throw their waste, is located in Gjilan/Gnjilane. The main problems with the landfill are mismanagement and the lack of drainage system. These two problems are affecting the contamination of groundwater and the environment.

Regarding wastewater, majority of them end up directly in Mirusha River. Direct flow of wastewater from the houses, causes a noted environmental pollution, which is manifested with contaminated waters that in the end of the flow end up in an open field and pollute the land. Odor from the contaminated water represents a major problem for the residents who live nearby river, especially during the summer season.



To address the treatment of wastewater, municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane has reached an agreement with the German Ministry of Finance to obtain a soft loan for 26 years. The project will treat wastewater discharge in Mirusha and Stanishorka rivers, by building a wastewater treatment plant

To address the treatment of wastewater, municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane has reached an agreement with the German Ministry of Finance to obtain a soft loan for 26 years. The project will treat wastewater discharge in Mirusha and Stanishorka rivers, by building a wastewater treatment plant. The municipality is obliged to start the payment of the loan six years after the start of the loan. According to the municipality officials, payment of loan installments does not represent a large burden for the municipality. The budget for the municipality of Gjilan/Gnjilane is around 21 million Euros. From the total budget, 435,000 Euros are allocated for the Department of Public Service, Civil Protection and Emergencies, which deals directly with these challenges.

Regarding legislating, municipality officials stated that the Local Environmental Action Plan 2009-2015 has been approved but due to lack of finances the municipality faced problems in properly implementing the plan.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection



Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees



Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds



Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste



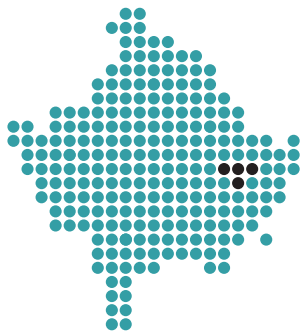
Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



## NOVO BRDO/NOVOBĚRDĚ



Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers

Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



In Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë, the main environmental challenges are illegal landfills and low level of citizen's awareness regarding environmental protection. Majority of citizens are not careful enough as to where they throw their garbage. Furthermore, the same citizens do not pay much attention to recycling or reusing waste.

During the conversation with municipality officials, the research team identified that in the municipality of Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, no service has been provided with regards to the environmental protection. Also, except for not providing any service, there is no official responsible for environmental protection that could at least conduct monitoring activities in the field. Lack of a department responsible for environmental issues has had a negative effect in environmental protection.

Similar to other municipalities, in Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, only the primary sewage network is installed. This sewage does not possess a collector or a plant for the treatment of wastewater that end up in the river. The reason for not possessing a plant is lack of financial resources. For this reason municipality of Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë has expressed interest to cooperate with other municipalities for building a joint plant to treat wastewater.

Regarding legislation, municipality of Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë has not yet drafted a regulation on environment nor it has approved the Local Environmental Action Plan. As a result, the number of illegal landfills that are close to the resident areas is large and has an effect in polluting the environment. In the absence of a regulation, municipal officials cannot issue fines for individuals or institutions who do not respect the rules.

Another problem in the municipality of Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë, is also carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that gets emitted from old cars. Further-

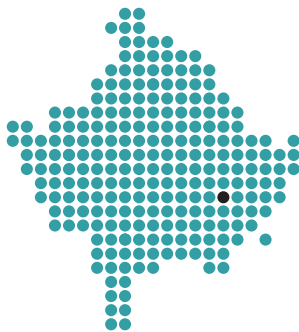


Another problem in the municipality of Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë, is also carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that gets emitted from old cars. Furthermore, the same cars pass on damaged roads and release dust.

more, the same cars pass on damaged roads and release dust. The dust created from old roads threatens orchards, pastures and people that live in those areas. These phenomena have an effect in further degradation of the environment.

Regarding environmental protection, the only activity that has been undertaken in the municipality of Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë is the manifestation of the national environmental day. During this day, different activities are organized to clean the illegal landfills. The municipality also undertakes activities for increasing the awareness of the public regarding environmental protection. These two activities are supported mainly from international organizations that operate in Kosovo.

The budget that the municipality of Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë has planned for 2016 is around 2 ml Euros, while for the Department of Public Service, Civil Protection and Emergencies, 30,000 Euros have been allocated. Furthermore, in that amount no project for environmental protection has been foreseen. The lack of funds required to implement activities related to environmental protection, presents a serious problem for the municipality of Novo Brdo/ Novobërdë.



## PARTEŠ/PARTESH

Municipality of Parteš/Partesh faces problems with regards to environment. Main problems are illegal landfills, untreated wastewater, spraying of herbicides and pesticides during spring season, and low level of citizen's awareness regarding the importance of environmental protection. Due to the low level of awareness, citizens contaminate Morava River, by throwing waste in the water. Besides throwing waste in the river, citizens throw waste carelessly in other public spaces of the municipality as well.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



The risks from contaminated water are especially present during Morava River floods. Floods usually happen in spring season, when rainfalls are more frequent. During floods, water contains large amounts of excrements and other pollutants. The water pollutes fertile lands that are close to the river. In order to improve this situation, measures that prevent river and groundwater contamination from wastewater and other impurities such as urban waste are required to be taken.

The municipality possesses the Regulation but not a Local Environmental Action Plan. This must be one reason why illegal landfills are created around Morava River. The municipality of Parteš/Partesh has employed one environmental inspector which is responsible for this sector. According to municipal officials, the inspector warns people to not throw garbage. During the interview, it has not been stated that the inspector has issued any fine. Except for the inspector, there is an official for environment protection, but due to the small budget and lack of funds, the municipality has not implemented any activity with regards to environmental protection.

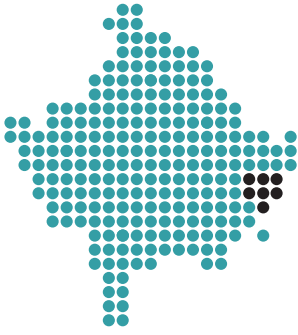
Regarding priorities, the municipality of Parteš/Partesh sees as an urgent challenge the treatment of wastewater, and would be very interested to cooperate



The risks from contaminated water are especially present during Morava River floods. Floods usually happen in spring season, when rainfalls are more frequent. During floods, water contains large amounts of excrements and other pollutants. The water pollutes fertile lands that are close to the river.

with other municipalities and donor organizations to solve the main problem in this municipality. Until now, around 90 percent of the citizens are connected to the sewage system, but the problem stands at the fact that wastewater does not get treated. Untreated wastewaters contaminate the rivers and the ground around them. The lack of a plant comes as a result of the small budget that the municipality has been allocated. The value of the budget is around 801,503 Euros and it does not have a department that deals with public services and the environment, and therefore it has not allocated any sum of money for environmental protection.

## RANILUG/RANILLUG



Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds



Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



In Ranilug/Ranillug the main challenges regarding the environment are the large number of illegal landfills and the treatment of wastewaters. Even though the municipality has been engaged in closing down illegal landfills, the removal of all illegal landfills and uncontrolled throwing of solid waste by citizens still represents a major challenge. Until now in Ranilug/Ranillug 13 illegal landfills that have a direct impact in environment degradation have been identified. These landfills contain construction waste, heavy household waste, dead animals that pose a huge threat for the citizen's health and for the air.

Regarding wastewater, similar to other municipalities of Kosovo, they end up untreated in Morava River. This happens as a result of a lack of a plant for the treatment of wastewater. As a result, Morava River is contaminated from the direct flow of wastewaters. Due to worsening conditions of the river, municipal officials are very interested to cooperate with any other municipality to solve this problem.

Another problem that the municipality faces is the damage that has done to riverbeds. As a result, during spring when rainfalls are more intensive, rivers overflow from the riverbeds and damage the fertile land around rivers. Due to the lack of funds, the municipality cannot prevent the floods.

Municipality of Ranilug/Ranillug has employed an inspector for environmental protection. The municipality has also approved the Local Environmental Action Plan 2014-2019, but this plan is not being implemented fully, due to the small budget that the municipality has. The budget of the municipality of Ranilug/Ranillug is around 1.4 ml Euros and municipal officials have not allocated a single line for the Department of Public Services.

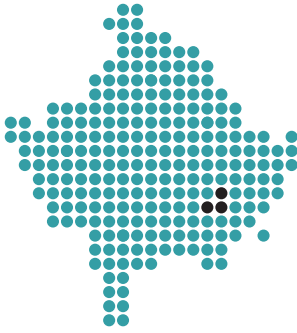


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The budget of the municipality of Ranilug/Ranillug is around 1.4 ml Euros and municipal officials have not allocated a single line for the Department of Public Services.





## KLOKOT/KLLOKOT

In the municipality of Klokot/Kllokot the main challenges regarding the environment are Morava River floods which occur at least twice a year, illegal constructions, and low level of awareness of citizens regarding waste disposal. Taking into consideration that water, land and air are polluted from different types of waste, the damage caused to the health of the people, plants, and animals is very serious, and as such this is one of the main concerns of this municipality.

Due to the small budget, the municipality did not undertake any activity with regard to environmental protection. The main activities of this municipality regarding environmental protection are some debates and workshops on this topic, with the objective of raising the awareness of the citizens of this municipality.

Similar to other municipalities, the municipality of Klokot/Kllokot also faces problems with wastewater treatment. The municipality started the construction of the sewage system in 2010. The first phase started to be built in Klokot/Kllokot and was completed in 2011. After completing the sewage system in Klokot/Kllokot, the second phase was started in village Mogillë, and was completed at the end of the year 2011, while the third phase was applied in Gërmaqarë and was completed by mid-2012.

The municipality of Klokot/Kllokot does not have a plan or regulation for environmental protection, but the municipality has approved the Local Environmental Action Plan 2014-2019. According to the municipal officials, due to lack of funds the plan is not being implemented fully. Furthermore, as a result of the small budget, the municipality does not have an inspector for environmental protection who inspects the situation in the field. The budget of the municipality of Klokot/Kllokot for 2016 is foreseen to be approximately 800,000 Euros, and not a single part of this amount is allocated for projects related to environmental protection.



The municipality of Klokot/Kllokot does not have a plan or regulation for environmental protection, but the municipality has approved the Local Environmental Action Plan 2014-2019.

The budget of the municipality of Klokot/Kllokot for 2016 is foreseen to be approximately 800,000 Euros, and not a single part of this amount is allocated for projects related to environmental protection.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection



Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds



Pollution of rivers

Chemical waste

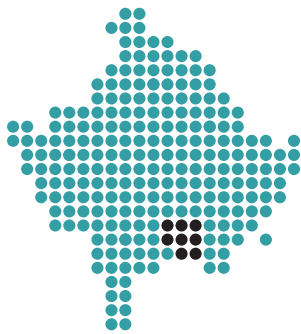
Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



## ŠTRPCE/SHTËRPCË



Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection



Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

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Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



The municipality of Štrpce/ Shtërpcë, as major problems related to the environment lists illegal landfills, river contamination, and the low level of citizen's awareness regarding environmental protection. Regarding illegal landfills, officials declared that in the municipality's territory there are around seven (7) illegal landfills. The municipality is committed to eliminate illegal landfills, and as a result they have managed to shut down 50 percent of them. But nevertheless, a number of landfills still exists and continue to pollute the environment.

Regarding wastewater management in municipality of Štrpce/ Shtërpcë, 12,5 percent of the resident areas are connected to the sewage system, while for 25 percent of the resident areas the sewage system is being installed. Around 6,25 percent are connected partly, and 56,25 percent of the resident areas are not connected to the sewage system. The sewage system is adapted to the steepness of the terrain. Similar to other municipalities, wastewater end up in rivers and streams without being filtrated or treated in a plant, affecting directly water contamination.

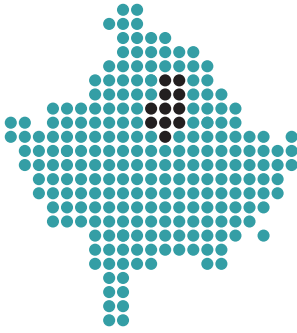
The third problem that municipality of Štrpce/ Shtërpcë faces is low level of citizen's awareness regarding environmental protection. As a result, illegal landfills are created and waste end up in the rivers. The waste thrown in the rivers and public spaces, have an effect in polluting the environment.

Regarding institutional capacities of Štrpce/ Shtërpcë municipality, there is no official or a department for environmental protection. For this reason, according to municipal officials, the Local Environmental Action Plan 2014-2019 is not being implemented. Another reason for not implementing the plan is lack of financial resources. The budget of Štrpce/ Shtërpcë municipality is around 3 million Euros, while for the Department of



Regarding wastewater management in municipality of Štrpce/ Shtërpcë, 12,5 percent of the resident areas are connected to the sewage system, while for 25 percent of the resident areas the sewage system is being installed. Around 6,25 percent are connected partly, and 56,25 percent of the resident areas are not connected to the sewage system.

Urban and Environmental Planning 58,359 Euros are allocated, which are not dedicated for the environment, but for building a new roads. Faced with all these daily problems, municipality officials are ready to cooperate with any other municipality, government, or donor organization, to solve the problems related to the environment.



## VUSHTRRI/VUČITRN

In Vushtrri/Vučitrn, key challenges related to the environment are illegal landfills, untreated wastewater that is discharged into river Sitnica, and forest management. A large number of illegal landfills have been registered in the Vushtrri/Vučitrn region. The municipality has worked in closing some of the illegal landfills that were close to the rivers and managed to remove those that were close to Sitnica River. Furthermore, the municipality has allocated a plot of land for inert waste and has put signs that inform citizens where they can throw inter waste. However, although progress has been made in eliminating illegal landfills, they still remain a challenge for the municipality.

In the past, the area near Sitnica River was used to organize picnics, recreational activities and fishing. Nowadays that river is characterized by high levels of pollution. According to municipal officials, river Sitnica is the most polluted river in Europe. The main sources of pollution in this river are uncontrolled discharge of industrial wastewater, mainly from Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEC) and the discharge of sewage from towns and cities along the river Sitnica. In fact, wastewater from the municipality of Lipjan/Lipljan, Ferizaj/ Uroševac, Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje, Prishtinë/Pristina, Podujevë/Podujevo, Obiliq/ Obilić and Vushtrri/ Vuçitrn end up in river Sitnica. Discharge of water used by KEC in Sitnica River has significantly contaminated the river. Based on the analysis conducted, it was determined that Sitnica has a significant amount of copper, lead, and zinc. Besides the concentration of ions, the danger comes from the presence of phenols which can penetrate even into wells that are used by households.

The sewage system in the municipality of Vushtrri/ Vuçitrn lies in 56 settlements or 83 percent of the territory. Investments made in this network are mainly co-financed together with the community. The municipal-

ity has supplied the pipes while the installation was performed by the community. The municipality does not have wastewater treatment plant. As a result, the wastewater ends up in the river Sitnica. Dealing with such problems, the municipality sees with great urgency and priority the possibility of inter-municipal cooperation that would lead to reaching any agreement on investments in the municipality. Expansion of sewage system and the construction of a plant for wastewater treatment are two priorities of the municipality.

The third challenge facing Vushtrri/ Vuçitrn is the protection of forests. The municipality has attempted to ban illegal cutting of trees but such a phenomenon has been continuing for years. One reason for the continuation of illegal cutting is the fact that cases filed in court by the municipality have not been processed for years. So far the municipality has sent 170 criminal proceedings in court but no decision has been taken for those cases.

Regarding legislation, the municipality has approved the Waste Management Plan 2016-2020 and the Local Environmental Action 2014-2019. However, the implementation of both plans as a whole is not possible due to lack of funds. Vushtrri/ Vuçitrn budget for 2016 is around 15 million Euros and for the Directorate for Urban Planning and Environment 1.1 million Euros have been allocated.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees



Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers



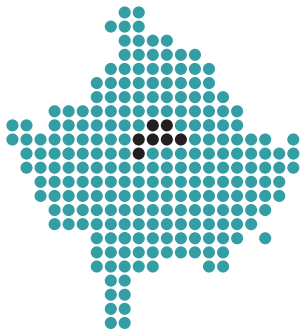
Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection





## OBILIQ/OBILIĆ

Among the main problems facing municipality of Obiliq/Obilić in terms of the environment are: the dust of two power plants operating for years in this municipality, water and air pollution, toxic waste, problems with air filters, and the degraded regional landfill in Mirash.

The energy sector is one of the biggest polluters of the environment in the municipality of Obiliq/Obilić. The high level of greenhouse gas emissions that are highly concentrated with acidic materials, dust, and coal ashes, cause the major air pollution in the municipality. Untreated wastewater from the technological process, water flowing from opencast mines, not a good state of reservoirs and basins of water phenol and phenol concentrated in the area of gasification, and elution of earth from the rainfalls, in the entire area of KEC, are the major causes of pollution in Sitnica River.

The sewage infrastructure including main tubes, primary, secondary, wells etc., has been designed and built during 1970, 1985, 1990, 2000-2011. The network has originally included only the urban area of the municipality. The existing system besides collection urban wastewater it also collects rainfall and snowfall waters. So far, about 73 percent of the population is connected to the sewerage network. However, like other municipalities, wastewater is not treated but discharged directly in eight (8) discharge points in Sitnica.

Discharge of wastewater in open spaces in those settlements that do not have access to the sewage network and discharge of untreated wastewater in river Sitnica are problems that require immediate solutions. Therefore, construction of sewerage network and plant for wastewater treatment is an issue that requires immediate resolution.

Another big environmental problem caused to Obiliq/Obilić is the waste landfill located



The sewage infrastructure including main tubes, primary, secondary, wells etc., has been designed and built during 1970, 1985, 1990, 2000-2011.

in village Mirash that is used by 6 other municipalities. Waste deposited in the landfill is not selected or classified. All that the waste management company does is periodically cover the waste with layers of soil. No management or aftercare of the landfill is done. The director for public services stated that it will take decades to overcome the damage caused to Obiliq/Obilić by all the chemical waste being dumped in the landfill.

Obiliq/Obilić municipality budget is around 5 million Euros and for the Department for Planning and Environmental Inspection 346.428 Euros were allocated. The municipality has approved the Local Environmental Action Plan 2012-2017 and has drafted and adopted a regulation to protect the environment, but their implementation is not followed. Due to a very limited budget of the municipality has no specific activity related to environmental protection have been implemented. The municipality has planted some trees and invested in some parks. Department for Environmental Protection is limited to performing monitoring and reporting activities related to the environment.

Lack of department for environmental protection

Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

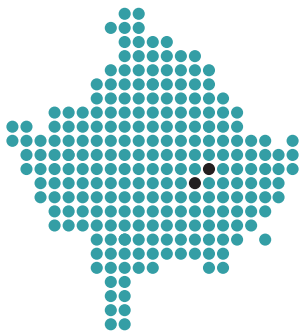


Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection





## GRAČANICA/GRAČANICĚ

Gračanica/Gračanicë, as a relatively small municipality, has many problems related to the environment, but the major ones are illegal dumpsites, lack of a wastewater treatment plant, and low level of awareness of citizens regarding environmental protection. Waste management in the municipality is not yet at the satisfactory level and as a result 21 illegal landfills have been created. The most hazardous illegal landfills are those built around the rivers. For this reason, the municipality during year 2015 has cleared the rivers that cross its territory as a precaution against further flooding.

Lack of department for environmental protection

Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



Similar to other municipalities, wastewater in Gračanica/Gračanicë is not treated and flows directly in the rivers. Sitnica, Pristevka, Gračanka are the three rivers that flow in the municipality of Gračanica/Gračanicë and all these rivers are polluted by wastewaters. The municipality does not have the financial resources to invest in a wastewater plant. As such, it is looking for opportunities to establish inter-municipal cooperation. The municipality officials are very interested to solve these issues considering that water, land, and air in urban areas are polluted by sewage and different types of waste that are harmful to human health, plants and animals.

In order to raise the awareness of citizens about illegal landfills, municipality officials in Gračanica/Gračanicë have organized five (5) day seminars. The municipality has also organized cleaning days to clean the areas around the rivers. Still, the difficulties are numerous because there carelessness citizens who contribute highly to environmental pollution.

Regarding legislation, the municipality of Gračanica/Gračanicë has approved the Local Environmental Action Plan 2012-2017 and the Regulation on Environmental Protection. Municipality officials stated that they regularly monitor implementation of the plan



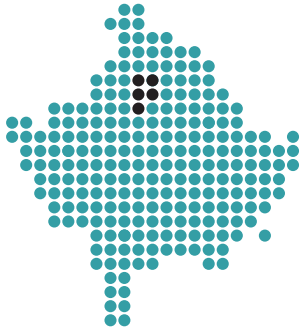
Waste management in the municipality is not yet at the satisfactory level and as a result 21 illegal landfills have been created.



The municipality does not have the financial resources to invest in a wastewater plant.

and regulation. The municipality has also established the Department for Environmental Protection, which is responsible for issuing environmental permits and focuses on the prevention of environmental degradation and increasing the awareness of citizens. The officer for environment and environmental inspector are employed in this department. The two officers patrol and try to prevent environmental pollution.

Gračanica/Gračanicë municipality budget is about 6 million Euros and for the Department for Urban Planning and Inspection 411.559 Euros are allocated. Municipality officials stressed that in order to have a clean and healthy municipality joint action plans need to be drafted between municipalities.



## MITROVICA NORTH

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds



Pollution of rivers

Chemical waste



Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



The key challenges in Mitrovica North regarding the environment are medical waste from the hospital, illegal landfills, pollution of Ibar/Ibër river, and untreated wastewater. Medical waste present high risk because during storage in the landfill they are not classified in specific categories nor treated further. The reason for not sorting or treating is the lack of equipment for processing waste from the municipality. Their improper storage has adverse effects on the environment.

Regarding illegal landfills, they can be found anywhere in the municipality, especially in the vicinity of the Ibar/Ibër River. Municipal officials have indicated that the best idea would be to cooperate with Mitrovica South to find a common solution for cleaning and protecting the river Ibar/Ibër. One idea proposed by municipal officials is common investment in the collector and cleaning filter.

Regarding wastewater, the primary network is installed in the municipality and around 82 percent of the residents of Mitrovica North are connected. However, like other municipalities, there is no treatment plant and wastewater gets discharged directly into the river Ibar/Ibër polluting in this way the river. Municipality officials have stressed that they are limited in maintenance of the river due to political problems.

Although it is newly established municipality, Mitrovica North has an environmental officer and environmental inspector. But these officials are limited in the provision of services because of the small budget and political situation. North Mitrovica budget for 2016 is in the amount of 4.5 million Euros and for the Department for Public Services, Civil Protection and Emergencies 199.415 Euros are allocated.

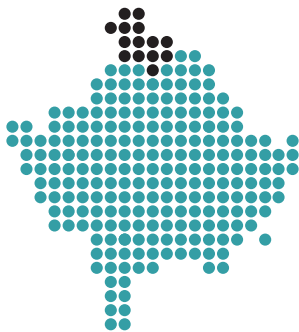


Regarding wastewater, the primary network is installed in the municipality and around 82 percent of the residents of Mitrovica North are connected.



Although it is newly established municipality, Mitrovica North has an environmental officer and environmental inspector. But these officials are limited in the provision of services because of the small budget and political situation

Regarding legislation, municipality officials are currently working on drafting the Local Environmental Action Plan. Drafting of the report is being financed by Advancing Kosovo Together- Local Solutions program.



## LEPOSAVIĆ/LEPOSAVIQ

The main problems in Leposavić/Leposaviq regarding the environment are old landfill, untreated wastewater that is discharged into the Ibar/Ibër River, and the low level of awareness of citizens regarding environmental protection. The existing landfill located in Leposavić/Leposaviq was established in 2012. During the construction of the landfill, no hygiene standards were followed and the drainage system was not installed. Due to the lack of drainage system, sewage generated in landfills pollutes groundwater.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection



Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds



Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



Similar to other municipalities, Leposavić/Leposaviq does not possess a wastewater treatment plant. As a result, sewage ends up in the Ibar/Ibër River without being treated previously. This phenomenon pollutes the Ibar/Ibër River and as a result directly effects environmental degradation in the municipality of Leposavić/Leposaviq. The municipality is interested to find a solution, as soon as possible, either through inter-municipal cooperation, agreement with the government or donors.

Another problem in Leposavić/Leposaviq, similar to other municipalities, is the low level of awareness of citizens regarding the importance of environmental protection. Due to the low level, the citizens of Leposavić/Leposaviq do not show much interest in preserving the environment. Municipality has tried to increase the level knowledge regarding the importance of protecting the environment by organizing cleaning days. Volunteer citizens participate in these events help clean up the environment.

Regarding legislation, the municipality has approved the Regulation on Waste Management and has hired an environmental officer who is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the environmental situation in this municipality. But the municipality has not approved any plan of activities and



Similar to other municipalities, Leposavić/Leposaviq does not possess a wastewater treatment plant.

Another problem in Leposavić/Leposaviq, similar to other municipalities, is the low level of awareness of citizens regarding the importance of environmental protection.

therefore the regulation is not being implemented. Municipality officials are currently working on drafting the Local Environmental Action Plan. Drafting of the report is being financed by Advancing Kosovo Together- Local Solutions program. Another factor which affects the implementation of the regulation is limited budget. Leposavić/Leposaviq municipality has a budget of 3.5 million Euro for 2016 and for the Department for Public Services and Environment has allocated 30,000 Euro.



## ZVEČAN/ZVEÇAN

Zvečan/ Zveçan municipality also faces a number of environmental problems. Trepça/ Trepča as one of the largest industries in the municipality is the main factor of pollution in Zvečan/ Zveçan. Although it is not functioning currently, in the municipality there is still heavy waste from when Trepça/ Trepča used to function. The waste remaining for years has had an adverse impact on the environment.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds



Pollution of rivers



Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



Another challenge in the municipality is treatment of wastewater. Similar to other municipalities, Zvečan/ Zveçan does not have a wastewater treatment plant and all the waters are discharged directly into the river Ibar/Ibër without being treated. Municipal officials stated that they have started preparations to draft a joint project with Mitrovica North regarding treatment of wastewater.

Illegal landfills represent the third problem regarding the environment in the municipality of Zvečan/ Zveçan. They can be found around Ibar/Ibër River leading in this way to the deterioration of the river bed. As a result of deterioration of the river bed heavy rainfalls lead to flooding. Municipality officials stated that they are trying to increase the awareness of citizens regarding environmental protection by holding various workshops and campaigns to clean illegal landfills in their territory.

Zvečan/Zveçan municipality has no regulation on environmental protection or action plan. Municipality officials are currently working on drafting the Local Environmental Action Plan. Drafting of the report is being financed by Advancing Kosovo Together- Local Solutions program. However, the municipality has hired an environmental inspector who is responsible for environmental protection. The budget of the municipality for year 2016 is 1.7 million Euros and for the Department of Public Services and Emergency 227.856 Euros has been allocated.



Another challenge in the municipality is treatment of wastewater. Similar to other municipalities, Zvečan/ Zveçan does not have a wastewater treatment plant and all the waters are discharged directly into the river Ibar/Ibër without being treated.



Zvečan/Zveçan municipality has no regulation on environmental protection or action plan. However, the municipality has hired an environmental inspector who is responsible for environmental protection.





## ZUBIN POTOK/ZUBIN POTOK

Zubin Potok/ Zubin Potok municipality as the most pressing challenges related to the environment lists wastewater management and solid waste disposal around the rivers. As in other municipalities, wastewater management is a major problem that must be addressed with high priority. Unlike other municipalities where there is primary sewage network, some villages of Zubin Potok/ Zubin Potok lack the primary sewage system. The rest of the municipality in which the primary sewage system is extended does not possess the treatment plant. This represents a key factor for environmental pollution.

The municipality is developing projects for removing solid waste and natural erosion around rivers. The main aim is to organize activities to clean up the city and raise the awareness of citizens in the municipality about the importance of environmental protection.

Regarding legislation, the municipality of Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok has approved the Regulation on Environmental Protection and employed an environmental inspector who is responsible for monitoring the situation. Municipality officials are currently working on drafting the Local Environmental Action Plan. Drafting of the report is being financed by Advancing Kosovo Together- Local Solutions program. Municipality oversees the implementation of this regulation using the capacity and resources it has. The budget of the municipality for 2016 is 1.8 million Euros. In this budget there is no project planned for environmental protection.

Lack of department for environmental protection



Lack of inspector for environmental protection

Mismanagement of landfills



Illegal landfills polluting the environment



Illegal cutting of trees

Lack of waste water/ sewage system



Excavation of riverbeds

Pollution of rivers

Chemical waste

Low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment



Lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection



The municipality is developing projects for removing solid waste and natural erosion around rivers. The main aim is to organize activities to clean up the city and raise the awareness of citizens in the municipality about the importance of environmental protection.



The budget of the municipality for 2016 is 1.8 million Euros. In this budget there is no project planned for environmental protection.

## 2.2 Common problems/ Bottlenecks

From the analysis done in the previous section it can be clearly deduced that the sixteen municipalities face several challenges with environment. Furthermore, majority of the problems faced between municipalities are actually very similar in nature. From in-depth interviews and analysis, the team managed to identify 11 problems shared by municipalities with regards to the environment. For more information on which municipalities share an actual problem please see Table 1 in Annex 1 (Note: problems are not ranked in the order of importance).

The first problem faced by municipalities is lack of a department or unit for environmental protection. In most of the municipalities one person is appointed as the environmental protection officer which according to municipality officials is not enough. In order to do a better job at environmental protection, municipalities should have a separate sector. Some municipalities do not even have an environmental protection officer. The second problem faced by municipalities is lack of inspector for environmental protection. Due to a lack of inspector municipalities have problems in identifying the exact situation that they are facing with regards to environmental protection.

The third problem faced by municipalities is related to mismanagement of landfills. Most of the landfills when they were built they fulfilled all the conditions required by the law, but by time they have degraded and are polluting the environment. Most of the landfills do not have drainage systems and pollute underground water. The biggest mistake in management of the landfill is lack of pipes which have not been installed. The fourth problem related to environment is illegal landfills. These landfills do not fulfill any standards and pollute the environment and the underground water.

The fifth problem that municipalities face is illegal cutting of trees. This happens especially in late autumn when people start to prepare for winter. Lack of inspectors is causing an uncontrolled level of illegal cutting of trees. The sixth problem faced by municipalities related to environment is lack of waste water/sewage system. Almost all municipalities face this problem. The waste water ends in the river untreated. This leads to the seventh problem which is pollution of rivers.

The eighth problem is excavation of river beds. In some municipalities in Kosovo this problem is very apparent and severe. There were cases when people have died due to excavation of river beds. There are also cases of rivers

overflowing and causing damages to people living in nearby areas. The ninth problem faced is low level of awareness from citizens to preserve the environment. This is leading to uncontrolled production and dumping of waste and creation of illegal landfills. As a result the environment is getting polluted. The tenth problem faced is chemical/medical waste deposited in the landfills. This type of waste does not get treated further after being deposited. There is a lack of equipment needed to process this type of waste. Eleventh problem is lack of financial resources to invest in environmental protection.



Furthermore, majority of the problems faced between municipalities are actually very similar in nature. From in-depth interviews and analysis, the team managed to identify 11 problems shared by municipalities with regards to the environment.

# 3. BEST REGIONAL PRACTICES

In order to learn from best practices used in the region, the team conducted secondary research and chose to present the best examples of cooperation on environmental protection. In Montenegro, one area that is common for inter-municipal cooperation is environmental protection and preservation. Environmental protection has been listed as a strategic priority for the municipalities of Bijelo Polje, Herceg Novi, Kolašin, Kotor, Mojkovac and Nikšić. The six municipalities have signed inter-municipal cooperation agreements for environmental protection (UNDP Montenegro, 2010). Another form of cooperation between municipalities in Montenegro is construction of a common wastewater treatment plant. Common wastewater treatment plant and sewage network have been constructed for the municipalities of Kotor and Tivat, and municipalities of Plav and Gusinje. A common water supply system has been constructed for the municipality of Budva, Herceg Novi, Tivat, Kotor, Bar and Ulicnj (Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment in Montenegro, 2010).

In Albania two municipalities (Berat and Kucova) and four communes (Vertop, Otlak, Perondi and Kozare) situated in the county of Berat, in the southern-central part of Albania have cooperated to create a water and sewage management company. The company established is a joint shareholder company Kucova-Berat Water and Sewage, which provides water supply, sewage collection and processing for the above mentioned units for a population of 133,291 inhabitants. This joint company was created by a merger of the previous companies owned by the Municipality of Berat, Commune of Vertop and Commune of Otlak and another company owned by the Municipality of Kucove, Commune of Perondi and Commune of Kozare. Both companies were founded separately in year 1992 based on the law applicable and merged in 2008. The merger act has been registered in the National Registration Center and it stipulates the changes of the statute of Berat owned company as the absorbing company. The company is a public regional company owned by the local government units concerned. The decision making process is led by the members of the Shareholders' Assembly composed by the local government units included in cooperation. The steering structures of the company are composed by the Supervisory Council elected by the Assembly of Shareholders and the General Director. Among other objectives, the company aims to ensure provision of the service of collecting and treating sewage and maintenance of the sewage system (Institute for Democracy and Mediation, 2013).

In Macedonia, three municipalities, Novo Selo, Vasilevo and Bosilovo, have agreed to establish joint administrative bodies that will provide services for all citizens from the three municipalities, while ensuring that citizens have access to those services in the nearest unit. Municipality of Novo Selo will be providing urban planning and management related services, municipality of Vasilevo will be the center for taxation department and evidence, while the municipality of Bosilovo will specialize in provision of services related to law enforcement and inspection. Besides urban planning, municipality of Novo Selo will be responsible for environmental protection as well. The seat of the body is in the administration premises of the Municipality of Novo Selo. This unit ensures the conditions and operations of the urban planning system, the type and contents of the plans, their drafting and the procedures for their approval and implementation, as well as monitoring of their implementation, particularly in villages and for non-populated areas. The unit also manages the decision-making procedures on site conditions for construction, according to the Law on Spatial and Urban Planning, as well as issuance of construction licenses in compliance with the Law on Construction. The unit also deals with other issues provided in the above laws. The unit creates the conditions for improving and protecting the environment, enabling citizens to achieve their rights to a healthy environment. The unit is organized as follows: the Head of the Unit; the Associate for the Issuance Procedures for Construction Licences; the Associate for the Issuance Procedures on Construction Licences; the Senior Associate for Creating and Monitoring the Procedures for Urban Plan Approval; the Senior Environment Protection Associate; and an Independent Geodetic Officer (UNDP, 2008).

Another example of inter-municipal cooperation in Macedonia is the cooperation between the municipality of Struga and Ohrid to construct a joint water and wastewater system. The company was created as a result of the merger of three existing public enterprises, the water supply company of Ohrid, the Water/Wastewater Company of Struga and the company for the preservation of Lake Ohrid. Today they operate the water supply, waste water disposal, waste water treatment and preservation of the lake from waste water. The company has a fifteen member management board, composed of five members appointed by the municipality of Struga, five from the municipality of Ohrid and five from the managers of the company. The company is responsible for managing the drinking water supply including treatment and

distribution of the water to the beneficiary's measurement instrument; removal and filtration of waste water, which includes: sewage of the waste water from the individual houses to the street sewage system network, filtration, ejecting into a recipient, and cleaning of septic pits; removal of rain waters, which includes their sewage from the urban areas in the sewage system and ejecting into a recipient; removal and filtration of waste water through sewage systems and filter stations (collector system for protection of the Ohrid lake); maintenance of the facilities of the communal infrastructure, which includes the buildings, plants, and installations (OSCE, 2004).

In Serbia, the municipality of Vrbas and Kula have partnered to construct a common Central Waste Water Treatment Plant in Vrbas. The treatment plant will serve around 120.000 inhabitants. The main reason why the treatment plant is constructed is because the pollution of the Veliki Bački kanal, which drains into the Tisa river and ultimately the Danube river, is considered as one of the major environmental problems in Serbia. The pollution is considerable due to discharge of untreated industrial and then from communal waste water. The overall objective of the cooperation is to protect and improve the water quality of the Veliki Bački kanal and to improve sanitary and health conditions in the municipalities of Vrbas and Kula. The plant will treat sewage discharges from Vrbas and Kula towns, villages of Vrbas municipality and pre-treated industrial wastewater for identified industries. The investment made is around 23 million Euros, however the municipalities have received funding from the European Union and other donor organizations (European Union in Serbia, 2012).



In Albania two municipalities (Berat and Kucova) and four communes (Vertop, Otlak, Perondi and Kozare) situated in the county of Berat, in the southern-central part of Albania have cooperated to create a water and sewage management company. The company established is a joint shareholder company Kucova-Berat Water and Sewage, which provides water supply, sewage collection and processing for the above mentioned units for a population of 133,291 inhabitants

# 4. JOINT OPPORTUNITIES

As municipalities share many common problems regarding environmental protection, opportunities for establishing inter-municipal cooperation in order to engineer joint solutions are created.

1

One way that municipalities can cooperate is to create joint administrative bodies similar to the ones established in Macedonia. Gjilan/Gnjilane, Klokot/Kllokot, Leposavić/ Leposaviq and Štrpce/Shtërpçë do not have inspectors responsible for environmental protection. As such, these municipalities can agree to create joint administrative bodies so that one of them has the department for environmental inspection that could serve all four municipalities. The inspector would help municipalities to protect the environment. The other municipality can establish the department for environmental protection and be responsible for that sector.

2

Another possibility to cooperate is between municipality of Istog/Istok and Klinë/Klina for protecting river Drin which gets polluted due to a lack of sewage system and collector. One option to protect the river is to build a joint collector. In this way both municipalities can benefit from joint cooperation.

3

A further possibility to cooperate is presented between municipalities of Lipjan/Lipjan, Obiliq/Obilić, and Vushtrri/Vučitrn. Waste water created in these municipalities ends up in river Sitnica which is part of Obiliq/Obilić region and the municipalities can cooperate to create a joint collector.

4

Yet another opportunity to cooperate is presented between municipality of Lipjan/Lipjan, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje, Prishtinë/ Priština, Podujevë/Podujevo, Obiliq/ Obilić and Vushtrri/Vučitrn. Vushtrri/Vučitrn municipality has a sewage system however it does not have a wastewater plant. The wastewater ends up in river Sitnica which is the most polluted river in Europe. The wastewater from seven municipalities (Lipjan/Lipjan, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje, Prishtinë/ Priština, Podujevë/Podujevo, Obiliq/ Obilić and Vushtrri/Vučitrn) ends up in Ibar river and then in Sitnica. The municipality is willing to allocate a plot of land in Vushtrri/Vučitrn where the plant can be located. However, this type of investment requires help from donors as well. Another way these municipalities can cooperate is to invest in reconstruction of embankment for protection from floods and creating walk and cycling trails near Sitnica bridge.

5

Another possibility to cooperate is to create a joint awareness campaign to promote the importance of environmental protection. Almost all municipalities complained that citizens have a low level of awareness regarding the damage that it is being caused to the environment. Citizens throw waste at inappropriate places and at times burn it causing in this way environmental pollution. Municipalities also complained that illegal landfills and mismanagement of landfills is affecting the environment negatively. As such municipalities can cooperate to create joint programs and closing down illegal landfills.

6

Another way municipalities can cooperate is through initiating joint recycling activities. The activities can vary from awareness campaigns, putting waste bins, up to creating public private partnerships with private investors who are willing and able to invest in recycling.

7

Another way that citizens affect negatively the environment is driving old cars which emit a lot of carbon dioxide. In this regard, municipalities can cooperate to create an organized urban transportation system so that citizens use the public transportation instead of using their vehicles and promote use of bicycles. Nearby municipalities such as Peja/Peć, Istog/Istok, Klinë/Klina can cooperate on improving the access inside and outside the city by creating new trails for cyclists for bike riders so that the usage of bicycles is encouraged. The same applies to northern municipalities such as Mitrovica North, Leposavić/Leposaviq, Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok and Zvečan/Zvečan and to eastern region municipalities such as Gjilan/Gnjilane, Novo Brdo/Novobërdë, Klokot/Kllokot, Parteš/Partesh, and Ranilug/Ranillug. Another way municipalities can cooperate is to promote the use of energy from renewable sources (biogas, solar panels, wind energy, hydropower) to heat their houses and water.

8

Municipality of Parteš/Partesh, and Ranilug/Ranillug can cooperate to protect River Morava from being polluted further. These municipalities can devise joint programs or enact joint policies that regulate protection of Morava. The municipalities can draft joint-municipal regulations on environmental taxes, use of plastic bags, and incentives for environmentally friendly products. They can cooperate to establish a joint environmental protection unit or joint inspectorate.

9

Smaller municipalities can also cooperate by purchasing together vehicles that are needed to collect waste and clean the streets. Many of the municipalities complained that they do not have the needed resources to implement the local environmental plans and waste management plans. As a result, these municipalities can join their finances and invest in purchasing equipment needed to collect and transport waste. Timetables can be drafted so that each municipality knows exactly when they can use the equipment.



Another way municipalities can cooperate is through initiating joint recycling activities. The activities can vary from awareness campaigns, putting waste bins, up to creating public private partnerships with private investors who are willing and able to invest in recycling.

## 4.1 JOINT OPPORTUNITIES DERIVED FROM THE FORUM ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Forum on Environmental Protection in 16 Municipalities – Opportunities for Inter-municipal Cooperation was organized by mid-April 2016. The main idea of the forum was to present the report on environmental protection and to derive further opportunities for inter-municipal cooperation. Present in the panel was the minister for environmental protection. On the forum, municipality officials who are responsible for environmental protection in the 16 target municipalities were invited and were encouraged to provide ideas for inter-municipal cooperation that could be implemented successfully. Besides municipality officials, present in the forum were also civil society. It is important to note that the ideas for inter-municipal cooperation presented in the report were evaluated as very good and easy to implement. However, municipality officials added that with decentralization process, the central level passed on responsibilities to municipalities without thinking about sustainability. The municipalities complained that they do not have the financial and human resources to protect the environment effectively on their own. Furthermore, very little activities have been undertaken by the central level to strengthen the municipalities and ensure sustainable provision of services by the local level. As such municipalities face many problems with environmental protection and need to cooperate with one another to improve the situation.

### Ideas that were derived from the forum regarding inter-municipal cooperation are the following:



The first idea for inter-municipal cooperation proposed was to build lagoons for the treatment of wastewater. Lagoons were proposed as cheaper version of treatment plants. Almost 60 percent of the water that comes out of the lagoons is re-usable. The water that comes out of the lagoons does not have a smell and can be used for irrigation.



The second idea for inter-municipal cooperation proposed was to build small scale treatment plants for wastewater treatment that are much cheaper than larger ones. The small scale plants can serve the needs of villages that are bordering different municipalities. Such plants have been installed in Fushë Kosovë/ Kosovo Polje and serve the needs of several villages.



The third idea for inter-municipal cooperation proposed was for municipalities to build joint septic tanks. The septic tanks are much cheaper to implement than wastewater plants. As such, municipalities might be able to finance the septic tanks with their budgets.





The fourth idea for inter-municipal cooperation proposed was investment in joint collectors that would collect wastewater and transport it to a treatment plant. Majority of municipalities do not even have collectors. As such, building joint collectors would benefit several municipalities at the same time. Municipality of Klokot/ Kllokot, Gjilan/ Gnjilane, Ranilug/Ranillug, and Kamenica/ Kamenica can cooperate to build a joint collector.



The first four ideas were proposed as low-cost investment ideas for primary treatment of waste water that could be financed by the municipalities themselves since the financial investments required to build treatment plants are very high. Wastewater treated in either lagoons, septic tanks, collectors or small scale plants could be transferred to one of the seven (7.00) plants that are foreseen to be built around Kosovo.



The fifth idea for inter-municipal cooperation proposed was investment by four northern municipalities, Mitrovica North, Leposavić/ Leposaviq, Zvečan/Zveçan, and Zubin/Potok/ Zubin Potok, in a joint recycling facility. None of the municipalities have the financial resources needed to invest on their own in a facility. As such, they can invest jointly to construct a recycling facility.



The sixth idea for inter-municipal cooperation proposed was decreasing the number of regional landfills from seven (7) to two (2). The main idea is to have two regional landfills that are managed effectively and efficiently rather than have seven that are in terrible conditions. Two new landfills that fulfill all the required criteria can be established. These landfills should be maintained properly. The main goal with the decrease in the number of landfills would be to decrease the amount of waste produced by citizens.



The seventh idea for inter-municipal cooperation proposed was related to forest and biodiversity protection. Municipalities that share joint forests can build ribbons for forest protection.



The eighth idea proposed was to re-actualize the committees for environmental protection within the association of municipalities. Municipality officers for environmental protection used to meet and discuss about environmental challenges they face. However, no meetings have been organized for some time. It would be a very good idea to re-actualize those meetings since officers can communicate their challenges and come up with joint solutions.

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# ANNEX 2

#	Municipality	Name & Surname	Position
1.	<b>Gjilan/Gnjilane</b>	Fehmi Agushi Fadil Osmani	Officer for Environmental Protection Officer for Economic Development
2.	<b>Pejë/Peć</b>	Uke Selimaj	Director for public services
3.	<b>Obiliq/Obilić</b>	Burim Gerguri	Director for public services
4.	<b>Istog/Istok</b>	Bedri Hasani	Director for public services
5.	<b>Vushtrri/Vučitrn</b>	Sami Istrefi Islam Latifi	Director for urban planning and environmental protection Official for public services
6.	<b>Klinë/Klina</b>	Xhoke Lleshli	Director for public services
7.	<b>Gračanica/Gračanicë</b>	Dejan Jovanović Vladica Trajković	Director of Department of Urbanism, Planning, Cadastre and Environmental Protection Director of Department of Public Services, Agriculture, Forestry and Emergency Situations
8.	<b>Ranilug/Ranillug</b>	Ivan Janičijević	Director for public services
9.	<b>Štrpce/Shtërpçë</b>	Siniša Budurić	Director of Department of Public Services, Protection and Rescue
10.	<b>Novo Brdo/Novobërdë</b>	Nebojša Arsić	Director of Department of Public Services
11.	<b>Klokot/Kllokot</b>	Hasan Rashiti	Deputy Mayor
12.	<b>Parteš/Partesh</b>	Živojin Cvetković	Director of Department of Public Services and Security
13.	<b>Zubin Potok /Zubin Potok</b>	Dejan Radojković	Director of public services in Municipality of Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok
14.	<b>Leposavić/Leposaviq</b>	Goran Lazović	Public Communal Company "24. novembar"
15.	<b>North Mitrovica</b>	Jelena Milenković	Administrative Office in North Mitrovica
16.	<b>Zvečan/Zveçan</b>	Nadica Hristov	Director of Department of Urbanism





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