69th SESSION OF THE UNECE
Promoting Circular Economy and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in the UNECE Region
STATEMENT BY MONTENEGRO

Dear Chairperson,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor to greet you on behalf of the Government of Montenegro. We praise the organizer for excellent work done under the able leadership of the Executive Secretary, Madam Olga Algayerova.

The complexity of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 has been further amplified by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

We need to ensure that our actions do not diminish economic performance, but encourage resource efficiency and productivity, innovation, job creation, environmentally friendly technologies and sustainable consumption and production. This position of Montenegro is closely linked to the national policy framework related to resource efficiency and the circular economy [as defined by the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) until 2030].

The SDG targets work well with the priorities of a green and sustainable economy and development, shaping our present and future actions around the following priorities.

- Fostering sustainable and efficient resource management;
- Greening the economy by promoting and implementing sustainable consumption and production;
- Increasing the competitiveness of the economy through green jobs;
- Implementing an integrated life-cycle approach to achieve resource efficiency in key economic sectors, as well as a low-carbon economy, along with a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 30% at least by 2030 compared to the 1990 baseline;
- Halting the degradation of renewable natural resources, biodiversity, water, air and soil, whilst enabling efficient natural resource management, as well as resource-efficient use of metallic and non-metallic resources;
- Promoting innovation in chemical management [to protect human health and the environment from the harmful effects of chemicals and waste;]
- Developing policies for sound waste management, including a commitment to ambitious national targets by 2025 for reducing waste generation and phasing out single-use plastic products;
- Undertaking innovative solutions to support circular economy modalities for the prevention, reduction and recycling of waste, as well as the reusing of products;
- Improving environmental monitoring systems and technologies;

In terms of resource productivity, the analysis of different scenarios found that reducing resource consumption in Montenegro by 20% would be the optimal model for improving resource productivity. We planned to achieve this goal in the sectors of energy, construction, tourism, industry, land management and urbanization. [To this end, the 2030 National Strategy for Sustainable Development is structured around strategic goals and measures that ensure the transposition of 3, 7, 9, 12, 13 and 17 SDGs into the national context.]
Despite the strong political commitment the implementation of the NSSD of Montenegro did not result in planned dynamics and progress.

It is worth mentioning that Montenegro is recognized as a regional energy hub and a leader in the production and use of energy from renewable sources. As a member of the Energy Community and a candidate for membership in the European Union, Montenegro aligns its policy and goals in the field of renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions with the policy and goals of the Energy Community and the European Union.

To backing industry during the COVID-19 period, the Ministry of Economic Development is looking for a long-term solution in creating a sustainable MSME support system that would include various programs for small businesses to build greater flexibility, and adapt them more easily to new market conditions.

Based on the new Industrial Strategy for a Globally Competitive, Green and Digital Europe, the leaders of the Western Balkans have adopted a Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. Montenegro is committed to developing policies, programs and taking the necessary actions to strengthen administrative capacity to implement the Green Agenda as well as to monitor, promote and enforce compliance with environmental obligations, and to ensure effective mechanisms for public participation.

The Government of Montenegro is working on guidelines for the Roadmap of Montenegro for the circular economy, identifying priorities, as well as barriers to be overcomed. This is also in line with the recently introduced EU Green Agenda, which supports the decarbonisation of the Western Balkans.

I thank you.