

Participate! Decide! Win!

Green Home – Zeleni dom, Serbia and Montenegro, municipality of Danilovgrad

Project Background

Green urban space occupies approximately 15 per cent of the Municipality of Danilovgrad. While a regulation on physical planning and the protection of green urban areas exists, it is not implemented to any degree in Danilovgrad. As a result, no checks exist to prevent the chronic abuse and misuse of these lands, including vandalism, illegal building, the misuse of resources, and neglect of maintenance. Through a series of activities including holding meetings with stakeholders, raising public awareness through the media and other campaign activities, and soliciting public input, Green Home will facilitate the drafting of a Regulation on Physical Planning and the Protection of Green Urban Areas, encouraging authorities to adopt this regulation.

Goals and Overall Objectives

- **Strengthening Cooperation Between Citizens and Local Authorities**
Currently, citizens and local authorities do not work together or communicate effectively. Green Home hopes to remedy this through the project to facilitate the protection of green urban areas.
- **Engaging in an Active Public Participation Process**
In order to facilitate communication between authorities and the public, Green Home will assist a working group of stakeholders in crafting, distributing, and analyzing a questionnaire, and facilitating a series of public debates. The details from these activities will be incorporated into a Draft Regulation.
- **Drafting and Adopting Regulation on Physical Planning and Protection of Green Urban Areas**
At the end of the day, green areas need to be protected. Green Home will assist the working group in formulating a Draft Regulation on green space protection, and encourage its adoption at the Assembly level.

How to Get There – Specific Activities

- **Establishing a Working Group**
After meeting with local authorities and relevant institutions to introduce the project and encourage participation, a working group will be formed for the purpose of creating the Draft Regulation over the course of three meetings which will take into consideration public feedback from questionnaires and public debates.

- **Gathering Information Through Questionnaire**
Questionnaires will be distributed to local communities in order to determine what citizens consider most important in terms of protecting green areas, their perception of the use of a regulation, and their willingness to respect a locally administered regulation.
- **Producing Preliminary Draft Regulation**
Based on information provided by the questionnaires, and information from other stakeholders, the working group will write a Draft Regulation, which will be submitted to the Assembly of the Municipality of Danilovgrad.
- **Raising Public Awareness/Media Campaign**
A media campaign entitled “My Park,” will encourage citizens to take an active role in protecting their green spaces.
- **Facilitating Public Debates**
In order to solicit public feedback on the draft regulation, Green Home will facilitate 6 debates for the 15 affected local communities. Operationally, this amounts to about 1000 citizens taking an active role in providing further public input.
- **Analyzing Data, Finalizing, and Adopting Regulation**
Taking into consideration feedback from public debates, the working group will create a final version of the Regulation which will be submitted to the Assembly of the Municipality of Danilovgrad. Green Home will encourage the Assembly to adopt the Regulation.

Outcomes

Through this project, Green Home would like to set in motion a process that will encourage public participation in environmental decision-making in line with the principles of the Aarhus Convention. Even though Serbia and Montenegro is not a signatory of the Convention, the project will respect the tenor of the Convention, and produce visible results that both authorities and local communities can appreciate in the drafting of a Regulation for the Protection of Green Urban Areas.