

CEPROSARD STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2032

Promotion of effective civic engagement in planning, implementation and oversight of the climate and energy policies, as part of the EU accession process of North Macedonia and Western Balkans ENGAGE

Skopje, 2022



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1. ABOUT US

The Center for promotion of sustainable agricultural practices and rural development (CeProSARD) is independent not-for-profit making and non-governmental organization, acting on the whole territory of the Republic of Macedonia on *policy advocacy in shaping sustainable development policies related to Environment & Climate change*, as an effective way to bring about **change in society**.

We are established in 2007, upon initiative of a group of experts in the field of agriculture, rural development, economy and environment, based on their personal knowledge and experience.

We are **committed to social progress** and to the fundamental values of peace, freedom, equal rights and human dignity.

We **collaborate** with national and local authorities, public institutions, civil society organizations, private sector and experts.

We **provide** normative, analytical and technical assistance as well as capacity building in regional, national and local context.

More information about CeProSARD and its can be found at www.ceprosard.org.mk

2. BROADER CONTEXT IN WHICH WE OPERATE

2.1 Global context

World leaders adopted at the 70th UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015 a new global sustainable development framework: Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (hereafter the "2030 Agenda"¹) having at its core the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. The 2030 Agenda emphasises that the SDGs are integrated, indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

With the 2030 Agenda world leaders agreed on a common vision and roadmap addressing the key challenges of our time. The **need for a change** is recognised as a universal challenge, no longer **simply focused on the developing countries**. All countries are called upon to act and speed up transition towards greener, more inclusive development patterns by 2030. All levels of government in the countries should work to build a national consensus that places the Sustainable Development Goals at the centre of national, regional and local development.

In the same year, the Paris Climate Agreement², as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, are also adopted. It sets out a **global action plan** to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C – and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. As universal and legally binding, Paris Agreement sends clear signal to all stakeholders, investors, businesses, civil society and policy-makers that the *global transition to clean energy* is here to stay and resources have to shift away from fossil fuels. This calls for nothing less than a complete transformation of how we produce, transport and consume energy. The 2015 Paris Agreement **reflects a new international governance model** that seeks to balance ambition, accountability and transparency in *commitments with fairness, equity, justice and sustainable development goals*.

The climate crisis demands coordinated answers at the local and global level, and governance structures largely inherited from the 19th and 20th centuries - like patriarchal institutions and political parties - are being questioned as they reach the limits of their usefulness. Meanwhile inequality, the social and economic fallout from COVID-19, climate change, and migration have presented in creasingly thorny *governance challenges*. Only when government, private

¹ The Global agenda of the United nations: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a set of seventeen objectives for sustainable development, adopted in September 2015. https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf

² The Agreement entered into force on November 4, 2016.

enterprise, *civil society*, and *individuals* work together to turn commitments to the goals of the Paris Agreement into meaningful actions, significant progress can be achieved.

Energy lies at the heart of both the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7) represents a first-ever universal goal on energy, with five targets to be achieved by 2030. Energy is inextricably linked to virtually all the SDGs, including poverty eradication, food security, health, education, prosperity, gender equality, jobs, transport, ocean, water and sanitation, and the empowerment of women and youth. The progress made towards achieving advancement of the other SDGs can contribute to achieving SDG 7.

The *involvement of environmental and climate change issues in the development policies in the energy sector* is one of the prerequisites for achieving social and economic well-being. An inclusive and just energy transition can catalyse transformational co-benefits for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Based on the concept of 'leaving no one behind', a just and inclusive energy transition will enhance human well-being, health, and capabilities, increase resilience, and drive innovation towards a sustainable society at all levels, while also driving huge investments.

2.2 European Union context

Sustainable development is one of the overarching objectives of the EU as set out in its Treaties. The EU has also contributed to the development of 17 Sustainable Development Goals that will play an important part in 2030 Agenda. The EU is recognized as a leading proponent of international action on environment and is committed to promoting sustainable development worldwide.

On *climate change*, the EU formulates and implements climate policies and strategies, taking a leading role in international negotiations on climate. It is committed to ensuring successful implementation of the Paris Agreement. Current *EU climate and energy policies* are based on Articles 191-194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. According to Article 191, the fight against climate change is one of the objectives of the EU's environmental policy, while according to Article 194, EU promotes energy efficiency and energy saving, as well as development of new and renewable forms of energy.

On February 2015, the **Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union** was adopted in order to provide a *safe, sustainable, competitive and accessible energy for all consumers* (households and businesses). For implementation of the Strategy a package of eight legislative documents titled "Clean Energy for all Europeans" was adopted. With this legislative package, the *energy transition* in all countries - European Union Member States, is accelerated by establishing a *balanced process for adopting decisions at all levels of government - EU, national and local level, and changes the role of the citizens who have gained the opportunity to switch from passive to active participants in the energy transition*. It strengthened concepts as consumers' rights, energy poverty and vulnerable

consumers, and introduced the notion of “citizen energy communities”. The *Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action* established the necessary legal basis for secure, inclusive, economic, transparent and predictable governance of the Energy Union and climate actions (*Governance Mechanism*). Pursuant to Article 11 of the Regulation, each Member State, in accordance with the national rules, will *establish a multilevel climate and energy dialogue*, which will enable local authorities, civil society organizations, the business community, investors and other relevant factors and the wider public to actively engage in and discuss the various foreseen scenarios for energy and climate policies, including long-term ones, and will assess their progress. Integrated National Energy and Climate Plans shall be considered within such dialogue.

On 4 December 2019 the European Environment Agency published Report of “*The European environment - state and outlook 2020, Knowledge for transition to a sustainable Europe*”, and its results are sobering. The current environmental, climate and sustainability challenges are of an unprecedented scale and urgency, requiring immediate and concerted action and systemic solutions. To respond to these challenges on 11 December 2019, the European Commission adopted the **European Green Deal**³ – an ambitious agenda for the EU to become the first climate neutral continent by 2050 and to protect, conserve and enhance the EU’s natural capital, and protect the health and well-being of citizens from environmental risks and impacts. Based on a regenerative growth model that gives back to the planet more than it takes, it outlines the environmental priorities for the coming years and the Union’s ambition to transform its economy for a sustainable future while leaving no one behind. The Sustainable Europe Investment Plan is the investment pillar of the European Green Deal⁴.

In March 2020, the EU submitted its long-term strategy under the Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, committing to become a climate-neutral economy by 2050. To enshrine this target the **European Climate Law**⁵ a number of new strategic initiatives are adopted, notably a new Circular Economy Action Plan for a clean and competitive Europe⁶, a Biodiversity Strategy for 2030⁷ and a Farm to Fork Strategy⁸.

On 14 October 2020 the Commission published a proposal for **8th General Union Environment Action Programme (EAP) to 2030**. The EAP should *support the environment and climate action objectives of the European Green Deal in line with the long-term objective to “live well, within the planetary boundaries” by 2050*. It should contribute to achieving the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. Reaching the 8th EAP’s priority objectives will require mobilising broad support *by involving citizens, social partners and other stakeholders, and encouraging cooperation in the development and implementation of strategies, policies or legislation related to the 8th EAP amongst national, regional and local authorities, in urban and rural areas*.

³ COM(2019) 640 final,

⁴ COM(2020) 21 final,

⁵ COM(2020) 80 final,

⁶ COM (2020) 98 final,

⁷ COM(2020) 380 final,

⁸ COM(2020) 381 final.

On 14 July 2021 the Commission adopted a massive legislative package of proposals known as the “Fit for 55 package” to make the EU's climate, energy, land use, transport and taxation **policies fit for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030**, compared to 1990 levels. Following the revision of the EU's climate and energy legislation, Member States will revise their National Energy and Climate Plans (NECP) at the latest by 2024. As current NECPs are already outdated because they are based on the EU's previous climate target, their revision will be an important exercise for Member States in translating the EU's upgraded legislation into concrete policies and measures to deliver the minimum ambition of “at least 55% net emissions reductions”.

2.3 Regional context – Western Balkans

The Western Balkans are an integral part of Europe and a geostrategic priority for the European Union. In regional context, Agenda 2030 represents a powerful lever with a common vision on the way to supporting and advancing sustainable development, reconciliation and human security across the Western Balkans. Relevance of SDGs for the Western Balkans European Integration is the main driver of political reform in the region.

The Western Balkans is *one of the regions in Europe most heavily affected by the impact of climate change* and this trend is projected to continue, with estimates of temperature increases of 1.7 – 4.0°C, and even exceeding 5.0°C by the end of the century, depending on the global effort in greenhouse gasses emission reduction. The Paris Agreement, ratified by five of the Western Balkan partners (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia), commits its signatories to take action to ensure that the global average temperature increase is kept well below 2° and to pursue efforts towards limiting global warming to 1.5°. In line with the new European Climate Law, climate neutrality will be reflected in the EU's bilateral relations and accession negotiations with the Western Balkans, who should already now start transforming their societies accordingly.

Western Balkan governments have committed *to pursuing a clean energy transition and sustainable development at the Energy Community⁹* on Ministerial Council in Podgorica in February 2019. With **Joint Statement on Clean Energy Transition** ministers of energy and of environment confirmed their will to align *as swiftly as possible with the EU's energy, climate and environmental policies and the long term objectives of the Paris Agreement, by this contributing to the well-being of citizens and the sustainable development of the region.*

By signing the Sofia Declaration on the **Green Agenda for the Western Balkans** as part of the “Berlin Process” in November 2020, Western Balkan governments commit to work towards the 2050 target of a carbon-neutral continent together with the EU through mainstreaming a strict climate

⁹ The Energy Community is an international organization which unites the European Union with its neighbours to create an integrated pan-European energy market. The mission of organization is to support the countries in implementing sustainability policies, including climate, energy efficiency, renewable sources and environment.

policy and reforming energy and transport sectors.

This new **EU Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans**¹⁰ aims to spur the long-term recovery - backed by a green and digital transition - leading to sustained economic growth, implementation of reforms required to move forward on the EU path, and bringing the Western Balkans closer to the EU Single Market. This Plan sets out a substantial investment package for the region. It is built on the foundations of a performance-based and reform oriented proposal for an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III (IPA III)³ and reinforced instruments to foster public and private-sector investment.

Although the transition pathways will vary based on the individual needs of country and Western Balkans regions, all pathways must be just and inclusive in order to accelerate collective actions to deliver on the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

2.4 National context

The full-fledged membership of the Republic of North Macedonia in the European Union is a clear and unequivocally expressed strategic interest and a priority objective of the country.

The new, enhanced **Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Climate Agreement**¹¹, setting ambitiously its national goal to achieve 51% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030, compared to 1990 emissions has adopted by the Government in April 2021¹². *It determines the country's contribution to the implementation of the EU Green Agenda and the EU Western Balkans Investment Plan and can serve as an instrument for enhanced investment.* The adoption of a separate law on climate action is expect to be adopt in 2021. Work on a long-term strategy on climate action started in March 2019 and is envisage to the end in 2021.

Energy is one of the chapters in the process of accession negotiations of the Republic of North Macedonia to the European Union and it is one of the priority areas for sustainable development of the country. The 2020 European Union Progress Report about North Macedonia, concludes that the country is moderately prepared in the field of *energy*. As a candidate for European Union (EU) membership, *the Republic of North Macedonia is obliged to transpose the EU legal framework into its national legal system, namely the 2030 Climate and Energy Framework and the 2050 Long-term Strategy / European Green Deal.*

¹⁰ COM (2020) 641 final,

¹¹ The submission incorporates the results of the analysis on the GHG emissions reduction potential and analyzes a total of 63 policies and mitigation measures in the following sectors: energy (including energy supply, residential, non-specific, industry and transport), agriculture, forestry and other land use, waste. It also identified additional measures which serve as enablers of mitigation measures.

¹² This strategic document is a new, more ambitious contribution to the global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and focuses on climate change mitigation.

Implementation of the electricity acquis is steadily improving after the adoption of the Energy Law in 2018. In this reporting period, North Macedonia has made significant progress with the adoption of the new Energy Efficiency Law that transposed the Energy Efficiency Directive, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and the Regulation on Labelling of Energy-related Products. They impose extensive and serious obligations for the state authorities (Government, ministries, agencies) and local self-government authorities (the council and the mayor) that directly affect the daily lives of citizens and the functioning of the private sector.

The reforms are underpinned by adoption of an ambitious **Energy Development Strategy 2020 - 2040**¹³. It reflects the EU energy and climate policy priorities and 2030 targets, as well as the integrated energy and climate strategy. With regard to strategic environmental assessment, the procedure was implemented for Energy Strategy, at a very late stage of the process without proper public participation.

There is currently no national legal basis for the **National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)**. Although there is no a specific reference to low-carbon strategies, the Law on Environment provides the legal basis for the preparation of the National Plan on Climate Change to be adopted in 2021. However, this gap will be covered by an amendment to the Energy Law, which is expected for adoption in 2021. Nonetheless, the national working groups have been established and North Macedonia was the first Contracting Party to submit its draft NECP to the Energy Community Secretariat in July 2020. After the formal review of the draft, the final NECP is expect to be adopted in 2021.

There is no doubt that the complex processes for country's accession to the European Union, and in that sense, to the Energy Union, have a great impact not only on the economy and the market, but also on public health and on the environment, thus contributing to the full and sustainable growth of the society. Such massive economic structural transformations, supplemented by changing the age structure of society, the rural-urban migration and the growing inequality in income and resource allocation, will put additional pressure on the social cohesion of the society and can increase the social tensions and the divide along all lines - ethnicity, religion and class. Equality was deemed the central element to advancing social cohesion.

This means that the *energy transition process* of the country toward a cleaner and a climate-neutral sector can be successful only if it is economically balanced and socially just, and if the entire society supports it. The realization of this process, should not only meet the long-term objectives of the Energy Community for increasing renewable energy sources, improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it *should also be done in a fair and inclusive manner*.

For decades, the energy sector in North Macedonia has been running a centralised approach with a very low level of active involvement from citizens and local governments, resulting in a considerable

¹³ The Strategy for Energy Development of the Republic of North Macedonia until 2040 adopted on 28.12.2019

gap between national and local energy policy standards. To truly fulfil the potential of an effective low carbon energy transition, we urgently need to involve local and regional authorities in this process; this will enable *active participation from citizens* who can take ownership of the production and use of efficient low carbon energy.

2.5 Role of the CSOs in achieving the national 2030 climate and energy targets of North Macedonia and Sustainable Development Goals

Civil society organizations at global, regional, national and local level have been widely recognized as key actor necessary for achieving sustainable development, since the first official global discussions around sustainable development that took place in Stockholm in 1972, when the world made formal commitments to bolster *civic engagement and participation* and guarantee an enabling environment for civil society.

The new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development itself includes goals that explicitly reference the need for an inclusive an open society (**Goal 16**) and for all stakeholders - governments, civil society and private sector - to work together in true partnerships for the realization of the Agenda (**Goal 17**):

- **Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.** Civil society needs SDG 16 and SDG 16 needs civil society. Key aspects of SDG 16 such as access to justice and information, fundamental freedoms and accountable institutions are critical for civil society to operate freely and for people to participate in public affairs and express themselves on issues that affect them. In turn, one can argue that targets on peaceful, just and inclusive societies (or any other SDG target for that matter) will only be implemented and monitored effectively if civil society is engaged.

- **Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.**

The Agenda also calls on national authorities to promote participation and multi-stakeholder partnerships, to facilitate the *participation of all sectors of society, in the process of "localising" the SDGs*. The goal is twofold:

- (i) to tailor the ambitious global-development agenda to specific local circumstances and
- (ii) to permit *productive discussion* on required policies and measures to achieve and follow up the new agenda, ultimately ensuring that "no one is left behind".

Hence, the involvement of civil society organizations, as among the key stakeholders in the process of creating, adopting and implementing the policies for *sustainable energy transition* plays an *exceptionally important* role in:

- successful integration process of North Macedonia in the European Union,
- achieving the objectives for sustainable development of the country and
- achieving social cohesion.

However, efforts are needed to ensure a more meaningful and timely consultation process for climate and energy policies, programmes and plans¹⁴. Both governmental and non-governmental actors should ensure that conditions are in place for proper checks and balances.

The legal and financial frameworks still need to be improved and implemented in practice. The existence of effective rules, processes and institutions for civil society participation in decision-making processes is essential for the efficient implementation of all undertaken obligations within the EU accession process. To ensure a vision for a collective future and a coherent plan for energy, it is important that the processes *enable participation and allow for co-ordination and interaction to strengthen dialogue*.

¹⁴ Public policy document "A Report with analysis and recommendations for more effective participation of citizens and the civil sector in laying down and monitoring energy policies" prepared within the project "Stronger civic support for effective application of energy policies in the EU accession process", implemented by - CeProSARD Skopje.

3. STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2032

The broader context in which we operate today shows the need for strategic long-term organization planning and encouraged us to develop this long-term Strategic Plan.

By exploring global changes in economic, political, social, technological and environmental systems, we understand that CeProSARD needs organizational and qualitative changes to become credible civil society organization able to participate *effectively in the political process for implanting SDGs into environmental & climate change policies, programmes and projects* at national and local level.

Our new Strategic plan is the product of a comprehensive consultative process involving our *General Assembly*, our staff, our funders, our partners and our expert team.

It **builds** on more than 13 years CeProSARD's experience on supporting *North Macedonia* accession process in area of Environmental protection & Climate change with main focus in energy efficiency & renewable resources.

It is **based** on our previous work results, and especially:

- Public policy document "PUBLIC PARTICIPATION The missing link- A report with analysis and recommendations for more effective participation of citizens and the civil sector in laying down and monitoring energy policies" prepared within the project "Stronger civic support for effective application of energy policies in the EU accession process", implemented by the CeProSARD. (2020)
- "Joint initiative for cooperation and partnership of civil society organizations with national and local authorities in the field of environment and climate change", led by CeProSARD and sign by un-formal network of 17 Macedonian CSOs operating at the national and local levels, on different issues in the area of environment protection and climate change. (2020),
- Commitment for *establishing* ongoing multilevel climate and energy dialogue that will contribute for a broad and balanced public participation and enable the representation of the interests of all parts of society, submitted by CeProSARD in the process of co-creating the National Action Plan for Open Government Partnership 2021-2023. That way, it will achieve: credibility of the adopted policies; better mutual harmonization (coherence) between policies and institutions at all levels of government; effective use of resources; greater transparency and reporting; broader acceptance of the transition to cleaner and more efficient energy; and encouraging investments necessary to fully decarbonize the EU economy by 2050 (2021)
- Public policy document "GENERATION FOR CHANGE Study on the potentials for implementing social and just transition in North Macedonia with focus on Bitola region as

case study” prepared within the project “Panda Labs Junior for Just Transition”, as part of the European Climate Initiative (EUKI). EUKI

It takes into account that:

- The UN’s **Declaration on the Right to Development**, promotes a **human rights-based approach to development** and obliges North Macedonia to integrate the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system within the plans, policies and processes for the development of society as a whole.
- At the core of the **2030 Agenda** lies a clear understanding that **human rights, peace and security, and development** are deeply interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that “there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.”¹⁵ Peaceful, just and inclusive societies are accordingly considered both outcomes and enablers of sustainable development.
- **SDG 16** “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” articulates the **key role that governance and the rule of law play in promoting peaceful, just, and inclusive societies and in ensuring sustainable development**¹⁶.
- In relation to **outcomes**, **SDG16** targets address critically important issues – such as violence, insecurity, conflict, injustice, exclusion, inequality, discrimination, weak institutions and poor governance – that negatively affect the daily lives of people around the world and undermine their ability to achieve sustainable development. SDG16+ provides a **human rights-based framework** to address issues that are relevant and matter to all citizens and people in all countries.¹⁷ In short, SDG16+ targets are important objectives to achieve in and of themselves, especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- As an **enabler**, **SDG16 provides the foundations needed for the achievement of all other SDGs**. Sustained peace and non-violence, access to justice, rule of law, effective and accountable institutions, inclusive governance, participatory decision-making and respect for human rights are all needed in order to be able to make progress in other areas of sustainable development.
- Mainstreaming **SDG16.7 target “Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels”** into national and sub-national development plans is one of the first steps to translating the global aspirations of SDG16 into concrete action¹⁸. This target is all-encompassing and underpins the entire 2030 Agenda by requiring governments to be more inclusive of people in all aspects of their decision-making

¹⁵ United Nations (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1, Preamble. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

¹⁶ 2016 UNDP Annual Report on The Rule of Law and Human Rights

¹⁷ The Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies (2019). *Enabling the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through SDG 16+: Anchoring peace, justice and inclusion*, p. 22. Available at: <https://www.un-globalalliance.org/sdg16-report>

¹⁸ “Mainstreaming” means incorporating or integrating the SDG16 targets into national, sub-national and local plans, policies and strategies for development, and subsequently into budget allocations.

processes. Consequently, it embodies the **'people-centred'** nature of the 2030 Agenda, as well as the agenda's commitment that **'no one will be left behind'**.

- **A just and inclusive energy transformation is a participatory process that requires long- and medium-term planning and well-designed policies and regulations that engage all impacted stakeholders.**
- **Meaningful participation** is key to the 2030 Agenda and particularly relevant for SDG16 and its targets related to peace, justice, and inclusion.¹⁹
- **Aarhus Convention** adopted in 1998²⁰ emphasizes that adequate environmental protection is essential to the protection of fundamental human rights and that every individual has the right to live in a healthy environment and has the responsibility to protect the environment. Simultaneously, it is concluded that to be able to assert the right and observe the duty, citizens must have *access to information, be entitled to participate in decision-making and have access to justice in environmental matters.*

Our new Strategic plan promotes **'people-centred'** clean energy transition in which citizens are **at the heart of decision-making and 'no one will be left behind'**.

It **spells** out our ambition for the next years to be one of *leading civil society organizations working for sustainable and inclusive development, through empowering and involving citizens and CSOs in the processes on transformation of economy and society to meet national climate ambitions in energy sector.*

It **supports** implementation of the "Inclusiveness" and „Leave no one Behind", as among key governance principles underpinning the SDGs. It calls for the participation of all segments of society and ensuring that no segment of society, or even an individual, is left behind in the process, taking care of the most vulnerable in particular.

Main targets of our activities are policy and decision makers; the people who are mandated to develop, implement and evaluate policies, plans and programs for sustainable energy transition.

By alerting them to policy gaps and shortfalls, CSOs are able **to influence** the content of policies which in turn allows shifts to responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels (SDG 16, Target 16.7)

It **helps** us to enhance accountability of the national and local authorities for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDGs 16) Mainstreaming **SDG16.7 target** "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-

¹⁹ SDG 16 targets linked to the Environment: Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all, Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels; Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels; Target 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance; Target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements; Target 16.b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

²⁰ North Macedonia ratified the Agreement in 2017 (Official Gazette no. 161/2017).

making at all levels” into national and sub-national development plans is one of the first steps to translating the global aspirations of SDG16 into concrete action²¹. This target is all-encompassing and underpins the entire 2030 Agenda by requiring governments to be more inclusive of people in all aspects of their decision-making processes. Consequently, it embodies the ‘people-centred’ nature of the 2030 Agenda, as well as the agenda’s commitment that ‘no one will be left behind’ in the energy sector.

It **equips** CeProSARD to adapt, to remain credible and effective actor in the complex and rapidly evolving global, regional and national context.

It **increases** CSOs influence through the CeProSARD’s activities on advocating solutions to global challenges at national and local level.

It **enhances** CSOs influence and effectiveness in climate and energy dialogues with the national and local authorities and institutions

It **gives** strategic direction and sets priorities for CeProSARD’s work over the next years, reflecting:

- the needs of CeProSARD’s members, staff and CSOs signatories of the Joint initiative,
- the key implementation challenges.

It **clarifies** how we plan to position our organization for the next years working for mobilising broad support by CSOs for the country’s integration process in the European Union and in achieving the national 2030 climate and energy targets

It **assists** CeProSARD in gaining specific skills to collect evidence and make effective use of this evidence in the political process with the aim of strengthening the pure contribution towards positive social changes.

It **focuses** on consolidating CeProSARD role at grassroots level, to enhance credibility as ‘voice of the people’ and, in turn, strengthen our capacity to influence public policy.

It **establishes** an open and dynamic communication channels between CSOs participating in the Joint initiative and relevant government institutions at national and local level throughout national platform.

It **guides** decisions on how CeProSARD’s resources will be invested in specific programmes, projects and activities.

It **underlies** the main **guiding principles of our work**:

- to be inclusive and accessible to wide range of civil society actors including small and grass-rooting CSO and to represent their interests and linkages;
- to listen to, and engage with experts to ensure evidence-based approach;

²¹ “Mainstreaming” means incorporating or integrating the SDG16 targets into national, sub-national and local plans, policies and strategies for development, and subsequently into budget allocations.

- to be open and transparent to make sure people can see and understand our actions;
- to have the inclusive and just transition embedded in our approach;
- to encourage dialogue on climate and energy.

▪ Our vision

- We are **committed to social changes** based on the fundamental values of peace, stability, human rights and effective environmental governance, as important conduits for sustainable development of North Macedonia

▪ Our mission

- To **promote** effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels through effective civic engagement in the climate and energy policies, as part of the EU accession process of North Macedonia

▪ Our objectives

Overall objective

- To **empower** active participation and engagement of CSOs and CSO networks in the of public policies in Climate and Energy sector arising from EU's Green Deal²² and Green Agenda for the Western Balkans²³.

Specific objectives

- To **strengthen** CSO's capacities, position and role as trusted partner of national and local authorities and institutions in representing citizens' voice in the public policies for 'People-Centred' Clean Energy Transition at all levels (regional, national and local)
- To **increase** CSO's influence in finding solutions for the global climate & energy challenges,

²² The European Green Deal aims to make Europe the world's first climate-neutral continent, in part by developing cleaner sources of energy and green technologies.

²³ First pillar of the Green Agenda: (1) Climate action, including decarbonisation, energy and mobility

through research, analysis and advocacy for sustainable energy transition at regional, national and local level

→ To **promote** cooperation and networking among the CSO's in order to accelerate joint actions for the inclusive and just energy transition at regional, national and local level, as an opportunity for sustainable development and better life of citizens.

▪ Main programmes and activities

1. **Programme LIDERSHIP** - To assist organization in gaining specific knowledge and skills to be recognized as professional and reliable civil society actor, effectively advocate for sustainable development in the energy sector as key reform area for the European perspective of North Macedonia

Main activities

1.1 Workshops to outline the capacity building (CB) programs through engagement with target groups and based on pre-existing capacities

1.2. CB on internal governance, including strategic planning, monitoring, evaluation and transparency of the work in relation to their performance in pursuing climate & energy sector goals

1.3 Programmes for increasing the capacities for evidence and argumentation based engagement in relevant policy and law making processes

1.4 Building capacities on networking and coalition-building for increased impact in campaigning and advocacy at national and regional level

2. **Programme ADVOCACY** – To assist organization's in gaining specific skills to collect evidence and make effective use of this evidence in the political process with the aim of strengthening the pure contribution towards positive social changes.

Main activities

2.1 Reports with analysis and recommendations for effective civic engagement in planning and oversight of the climate and energy policies, as part of the EU accession process of North Macedonia

2.2 Reports with analysis on relevant CSOs to be engage in policies concerning sustainable energy transition at local level in North Macedonia

2.3 Roundtable discussions with the authorities to accelerate the establishment of mechanism for structured multi-level climate & energy dialogue with the stakeholders

2.4. Developing tools and resources to help empower and strengthen civil society capacities.

3. **Programme COMMUNICATION AND NETWORKING** – To assist organization's to perform as information and knowledge sharing hub on policies for the clean energy transition, based on the needs of wide range of civil society actors in the country.

Main activities

3.1 Development of Information and promotional materials

3.2 Social / electronic media campaigns to encourage greater cooperation and participation of the civil society actors in the CSO platform

3.3 Development of electronic CSO platform for climate & energy – as communication, knowledge and information sharing system for the CSOs with long-term commitment in the climate and energy sector (including drafting procedures, outline and web application)

3.4 Organizing conferences, workshops and other events to present the CEPROSARDs activities and encourage wider participation of the members/target group representatives