

# Newsletter 2019

## Meeting SDGs







# fea

Forestry and Environmental Action



Forestry and Environmental Action (**fea**) belongs to a group of people/organizations that strongly believe in the possibility of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and is doing everything in its power to contribute to humanity along that historic path.

In its work so far, **fea** has aligned its work with the SDGs, build partnerships, and motivate others to join this magnificent journey. In 2019, **fea** placed a stronger focus on contributing to the achievement of these goals through its activities.

We at **fea** believe that people gathered around a common goal, approaching each other in good will and trusting in humanity's greatest strength – the ability of human beings to create and change their surroundings based on ideas, imagination and passion – is the driving force of today, enabling permanent changes towards the future we envision for ourselves as individuals and as members of our societies.



# 1 NO POVERTY



PFOs in BiH are mostly men who live in rural areas, are not highly educated and have low income jobs. More than one half of private forest owners are retired or unemployed.

Through the Programme Empowering Communities through Democratic Management of Natural Resources Programme, **fea** is aiming to capacitate PFOA to be able to help PFOs to find new and responsible strategies of using their forests to increase their livelihoods and income.

The Association of Private Forest Owners of the Central Bosnia Canton (established through the Programme in the pilot area - Busovača Municipality) aims to expand in the territory of all 12 municipalities of the Central Bosnian Canton.

In 2019, the Association worked on mobilization of private forest owners in the municipalities of Busovača, Travnik, Fojnica and Kreševo. Representatives of the Association held a meeting with the local community and the public forestry administration to obtain support for the Association's expansion.

Each local community appointed a contact person who helps the Association's activities through volunteer work.

Throughout 2019, the number of members increased daily. The Association currently has 120 members from 4 municipalities.



**Asocijacija  
privatnih  
šumoposjednika  
Srednjobosanskog  
kantona**

## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



The main activities of **fea** are related to non-formal education of different target groups.

Within the Empowering Communities through Democratic Management of Natural Resources Programme, **fea** is capacitating PFOAs through education and training activities with PFOs on various topics in the fields of marketing, economy, access to markets, writing project proposals and applying for grants, advocacy, etc.

Furthermore, we educate other target groups (such as children) and continuously implement different innovative and interesting awareness-raising campaigns for the general public.

Through the **fea** Leadership Academy - Developing Interpersonal and Entrepreneurial Skills among Young People through Education and Lifelong Learning, **fea** contributed to the development of the community by strengthening the capacity of its most important resource - the youth.



In November 2019, **fea** organised a training for key staff of PFOA on writing successful project proposals. It was one of multiple educational trainings provided by **fea** with the goal of building the capacities of the Association.



This year, **fea** took part in the European Researchers' Night (held on 27 September 2019) - a festival of science and research, which is celebrated across the Europe.

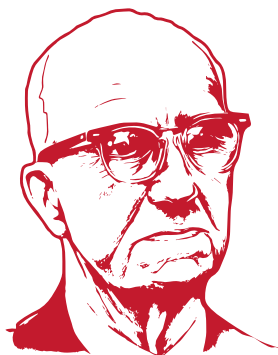
Besides a memory game and workshop "What can you do for forests?", children had the chance to make their own closed ecosystems in jars and take them home to watch them grow.





*Education is the passport to the future,  
for tomorrow belongs to those who  
prepare for it today!*

**Malcolm X**



*There is nothing in a  
caterpillar that tells you  
it's going to be a butterfly.*

**Buckminster Fuller**



**fea** has supported the reforestation action initiated by teachers and staff from the primary school "Hasan Kikić" in Sarajevo. The mission of the "Tree of Feneration" initiative is that first year students plant black pine seedlings in Barice (near Sarajevo) and take care of them throughout future school days. It is expected that by the day children finish primary school, their trees will be higher than the children.

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It is our pleasure to support such actions and to join the initiative of teaching the staff of this school on the road to better and more comprehensive education for our youngest.

This year, **fea** launched the campaign "Forest is more than trees!". The campaign was launched in Sarajevo and later moved to Travnik.

It is a modular and urban green construction designed by a young Bosnian team of architects and is self-sustainable (energy generated through solar power activates an automatic irrigation system). It is made of wood from private Bosnian forests. The green part of the construction is contained of air purifier plants.

In the first days of the campaign, we held discussions with citizens of Sarajevo on the possibilities of responsible and diverse enjoyment of benefits that forests provide us with. Apart from some criticisms regarding the lack of green areas in the city, our citizens had positive feedback to our campaign. They would like to see such campaigns grow into serious projects on the greening of urban areas. We also had great a response from the media, which was interested in our campaign story and helped us to spread our message to greater number of people. All of this motivates us to continue with similar practices in the future.



## 5 GENDER EQUALITY



Most **fca** employees are women, and we have thus developed sensitivity to gender equality.

Recognizing that the forestry sector is traditionally male oriented, **fca** is developing a gender mainstreaming policy as a guide to include gender considerations when planning, implementing, and monitoring Program activities.

So far, we have ensured that women are present in the planning and implementation of our project activities.





**Ms Belkisa Merdan** at the founding assembly of the Association

Ms Belkisa Merdan is one of the two female members of the Management Board of the Association. She is proud to be part of this project because she believes that the Association can do a lot to change the position of women and their economic independence.

Belkisa wants to be a leader of change in the small community of Busovača, fight to improve the life of private forest owners and at the same time to protect the nature.

Working as a Board member, she feels that her work is accepted and respected equally compared with her male colleagues and that everybody sees and appreciates her work and dedication to make the Association a true representative of the community.

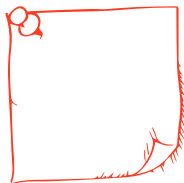
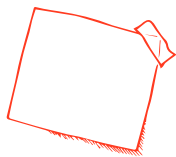
She especially appreciates the opportunity to participate in trainings, work groups and study trips to enhance her knowledge and help her community grow.





***No country can ever truly flourish if it stifles the potential of its women and deprives itself of the contributions of half of its citizens.***

**Michelle Obama**



The **fea** team successfully completed a training on the Theory of Change, organized by DFE and StrategyHouse from Denmark last week.

The theory of change and logical framework are providing conceptual clarity and focusing the program/project on a mechanism which supports and contributes to the desired outcomes and assumptions relating to the program/project implementation.

One of 4 key domains of change within the Theory of Change concept is Participation and Empowerment of Women (mobilisation of PFOs to engage in PFOA and ensuring active women's participation in PFOA activities).

# 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



Since its establishment, one of fea's goals has been to improve the state of natural (forest) resources in BiH and the region through sustainable management.

Our mission is to help build societies that responsibly manage their natural resources.

Understanding that the chances for long-term success in reaching sustainability are dramatically increased when local communities are fully invested in the design and implementation of policies and individual projects, we have developed a strong internal capacity to facilitate stakeholder consultations and empowerment of particular groups for decision-making.

fea is supporting rural development through projects such as mapping the rural development potentials of Kakanj and Vares region for preparation of the Master Plan for Tourism Development.





A meeting was held in Travnik with key stakeholders in Phase 2 of the program "Empowering Communities through Democratic Management of Natural Resources".

The purpose of the meeting was to present the activities and results of the work carried out under the Program so far, to exchange information and strengthen cooperation on future activities and to involve stakeholders, with a focus on local communities, in the implementation of the Program's activities - all with the aim of improving private forest management in the Central Bosnia Canton.

During the meeting, the Cantonal Forestry Directorate and other relevant institutions expressed support for the Program and the Association of Private Forest Owners.

We are happy that the continuation of Program implementation will be supported by the participants at the meeting, who selflessly shared their knowledge, ideas and suggestions for future work.

The issue of sustainable private forests is important at all levels, and we encourage co-operation and communication of these issues from local communities to cantonal institutions, seeking to find the right strategies for sustainable community development based on the use of private forests.

# 13 CLIMATE ACTION



Since its establishment, one of **fea**'s goals has been to improve the environment in BiH and the region through implementation of MEAs, including those related to climate change.

**fea** has coordinated or supported many afforestation actions across the country. Through its awareness-raising campaigns and projects, **fea** attempts to draw public attention to the importance of climate change issues in BiH and the region.



This year, **fea** coordinated 7 afforestation actions to mark the Climate Diplomacy Week in BiH, in cooperation with EU Info Center.

**fea** is always happy to contribute to concrete green actions on the field.



***The best time to plant a tree  
was 20 years ago. The second  
best time is now.***

**Chinese proverb**

# 15 LIFE ON LAND



Being a CSO focal point for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) for South East Europe and with vast experience working on environmental protection projects in the region, **fea** was engaged to develop National Action Plans (NAPs) to combat land degradation for 3 countries: BiH, Montenegro and Macedonia. **fea** also supported the implementation of a 4-year long UN Environment/GEF project “Enhanced Cross-sectoral Land Management through Land Use Pressure Reduction and Planning”

in Serbia, during which we prepared and published the Guidelines for Sustainable Land Management at the Local Level in the Republic of Serbia and an accompanying brochure for local self-governments and decision-makers at the local level (available at [www.feasee.org/publications](http://www.feasee.org/publications)), as well as a comprehensive website dedicated to land degradation and sustainable land management ([www.degradacijazemljista.rs](http://www.degradacijazemljista.rs)).

In addition, we helped PFOA to successfully develop and implement two projects related to rehabilitation of illegal landfills and afforestation.



The four-year UNEP / GEF project "Enhanced Cross-Sectoral Land Management through Land Use Pressure Reduction and Planning" was officially closed at this year's conference. We are proud that we were one of the significant partners in project implementation and that this project has contributed to establishing a successful and fruitful partnership between the public, private, non-governmental sectors and academic institutions.



**fca** is a partner in the "Identification, mapping and rehabilitation of selected landfills located on forest land in Travnik and Novi Travnik municipality" (2019 -2020) Project – the first project to be led and implemented by PFOA. The project is funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry, and the Cantonal Forestry Administration of the CBC.

One of the illegal landfills was located near the Jaglinac spring in the village of Muhonjici. Approximately 60 m3 of various waste was collected and transported.

# 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Through multiple projects, **fea** has been working on building the capacities of local stakeholders in making decisions on fulfilling environmental protection obligations of BiH, with particular reference to the capacities of civil society.

Equally, **fea** has provided technical support to institutions in BiH and Serbia for preparation of projects for GEF and other financial institutions. **fea** has assisted in the establishment of the PFOA CBC, ensuring a democratic structure, transparency and participation.



The first regional workshop within the "Regional Action for Combating Forest Crime and Corruption" Project was held in Sarajevo on 5 November 2019, bringing together representatives of the forestry sector from BiH, North Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. The workshop was organized with the aim of establishing a regional communication group, knowledge and experience-sharing in the prevention and detection of illegal activities in forestry.

It was stated that the region (4 Western Balkan countries) is experiencing almost identical problems, and some institutions face additional issues related to lack of staff and adequate equipment, as well as the inability to control large forest areas.

The severity of the problem is confirmed by data collected by the Agency for Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight Against Corruption in BiH – namely, in the period from 2016 to 2019, there was an increase in illegal logging in BiH, but the number of indictments for forest thefts is decreasing.

The workshop participants agreed that cooperation and involvement of a large number of institutions are needed to solve these problems. The next regional workshop will be held in 2020 in Serbia.



# 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



**fea** is a member of 3 international organisations: UNCCD CSO NETWORK, GEF - CSO NETWORK, and UN Global compact.

It has also established cooperation with 12 international and domestic donators and partners. These days we are working on becoming a member of the FOREXT network (FORestEXTension network) supported by the European Forest Institute.

The aim of this network is to ensure that organisations build their capacities in training and education of private forest owners, supporting the development of their associations, inventorying and marking of private forests, preparation of forest management plans for private forests, enforcement of forest legislation in private forests, providing subsidies for more sustainable forest management, organizing sale of wood from private forests, capacity building for private forestry, etc.





As a member of the GEF-CSO network, **fca**, together with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH, the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management RS, represented BiH at the GEF Expanded Constituency Workshop held on July 8-12 2019 in Minsk (Belarus). The theme of the workshop was to become acquainted with the rules and principles of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the application methods for projects that GEF finances. One of the most interesting topics was the consideration of including BiH in the group of countries eligible for the Small Grants Program (SGP). Non-governmental organizations would thus be given the opportunity to apply for funding needed to implement projects in accordance with the national goals from Biodiversity Strategy of BiH (NBSAP) and contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and the nature protection of our country.

An interesting visit was also made to the Nalibok Natural Reserve as an example of good practice where participants had the opportunity to see the direct results of nature protection and improvement of nature management achieved by the implementation of GEF SGP projects. This Reserve is unique due to the fact that it has developed the concept of eco-educational tours and it "maintains" 93% of the total flora of Belarus. Of the animal species living in the area of conservation, it is important to mention the European bison and grouse species.



A **fca** representative attended the annual meeting of the FOREXT Network in Helsinki. **fca** is not a full member but has the status of an observer organisation.

The visit to Helsinki was one of the activities of building a partnership network that provides for the future development of **fca**, and broadens the portfolio of activities.

In addition to presenting the projects of individual members, future activities and proposals for joint projects were discussed. These activities would enable the sustainability of the network and make its members even more active in achieving the defined goals.



Forestry and Environmental Action



*We help build  
societies that  
responsibly  
manage  
their natural  
resources.*

## Who Are We?

The regional non-governmental organisation (NGO) **fea** was established in 2007 in Sarajevo, BiH, with the main purpose of advancing the state of environment and forests in BiH and the SEE region (today we also have an office in Belgrade, Serbia).

Since **fea**'s inception, the guiding principle of its work has been to support authorities and communities, as well as the private sector, in the responsible use of natural resources in accordance with the legitimate demands of society.

**Our team has provided practical and professional support to a range of development initiatives in the field of environmental protection.**

The most important areas of fea's operations to date are:



sustainable development and management of natural resources (forests, water, land),



implementation of international multilateral environmental agreements (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification - UNCCD, United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity - UNCBD and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - UNFCCC),



support to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



environmental protection and improved management of protected areas, and



empowering women and young people.



# Why support **fea** ?

Forestry and Environmental Action

- ✔ We embraced principles of sustainable development and sustainable natural resource management
- ✔ We are strongly committed to contributing in achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through our work
- ✔ We believe in the principles of democracy and are aware of the role and importance of civil society organisations (CSOs)
- ✔ We have a history of successful projects and experience of working with people, both the private and civil sectors and decision-makers especially in the area of forestry and land management
- ✔ We are able to recognize key problems and the obstacles to development in our country/region and to find possible solutions
- ✔ Our team consists of young, educated and ambitious people (predominantly women) who have the motive and the energy to change their environment and fight injustice and poverty.

More information about our  
work can be found on



*Be free to contact us for additional information.*

