



**Commission on Sustainable Development
Sixteenth Session, 5 - 16 May 2008, New York**

Ministerial statements „The Way Forward”

**The address by H.E. Mr. Predrag Nenezic,
Minister of Tourism and Environment of Montenegro**

Mr. Chair, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman,

It is a great pleasure and honor to have an opportunity to share with you the substantial efforts we are making in Montenegro to fully and comprehensively address some of the issues that are on the agenda of today's meeting.

Notwithstanding the problems we face and challenges that lie ahead, we believe that substantial progress has been made in implementing Agenda 21, JPI and MDG Declaration on the national level. The gradual adjusting of national policies and practices to the EU ones through the Stabilization and Association Process is an overall priority of the Government of Montenegro. In fact, sustainable development lies at the core of both EU policies and Montenegro's policy direction. Thus, the ongoing legal harmonization, institutional reforms, and policy adjustments required for EU compatibility are consonant with, and reinforcing of, the goals and priorities defined in our National Strategy for Sustainable Development, which itself plays a central role in our national development. We realize, in fact, that in order for our citizens to have the quality of life to which we are committed, and which they deserve – a commitment to sustainable development must be at the heart of all we do. And as an important facet of this commitment, we are making substantial and ongoing progress in the implementation of the UN treaties, most notably the UNFCCC, UNCBD and UNCCD, as well as other relevant international agreements.

The GEF supported National Capacity Self Assessment and the consequent project outputs strongly emphasized the need for coordinated action in planning and policy measures in order to identify and respond to:

- Land degradation caused by changed soil humidity, erosion caused by overbuilding and water impacts and contamination of areas by heavy metals;
- Prevention of further degradation of agricultural land and application of good agricultural practices;
- Climate change impacts and biodiversity loss, taking into account their impact on tourism; and
- Transfer of knowledge and innovative technologies for ecosystems restoration.

The NCSA project has resulted in an Action Plan, the implementation of which is underway in parallel with other related and supportive initiatives and programmes.



Starting from the national priorities, Montenegro's Way Forward and its contribution to making progress on the issues considered under the CSD 16 will be made through the:

- The development and implementation of the National Plan to Combat Desertification and Restore Degraded Lands;
- The implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan;
- Greenhouse gases emission reduction measures and CDM projects implementation;
- Integrated land use planning and management;
- Integrated water resources management;
- The use of a suite of policies and programs developed to significantly reduce or prevent pollution resulting from wastewater and solid waste, as well as from industrial and agricultural activities.

Building up on the previous successes and ensuring that further progress is made will largely depend on strong partnerships. Partnerships will, as they have done in the past, play a crucial role in overcoming challenges and improving environmental performance not only on the national but also on wider levels. In this sense, we are appealing for a continued donor support for environmental priorities and for a more effective coordination of donor activities towards fulfillment of the CSD 16 agenda.

Last but not least, I would like to underscore the importance of a thorough review and an assessment of the feasibility of CSD 16 comprehensive agenda, which would guide us in planning effective policy measures for CSD 17.

Thank you for your attention.