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EU Support to Flood Prevention
and Forest Fires Risk Management
in the Western Balkans and Turkey



European Civil Protection

PRESS RELEASE

IPA Floods and Fires Program Launch event in Serbia 31 May 2021

On 31 May, the seventh national launch event of the European Union funded program IPA Floods and Fires (IPA FF) took place, this time in Serbia, closing the series of launch events held in the Program Beneficiaries. IPA FF is a new 3-year initiative for floods and forest fires risk management in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

The launch event gathered representatives from the national authority in charge of civil protection and other relevant stakeholders, representatives from the European Commission Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), the EU Delegation to Serbia and the IPA FF Consortium partners.

The IPA FF program follows up on previous EU-funded initiatives aimed at strengthening capacities for disaster risk prevention and preparedness in the region of Western Balkans and Turkey. Ivan Baras, Assistant Head of the Sector for Emergency Management of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Serbia said: *It is with great pleasure that we enter the new IPA regional program, this time with an emphasis on forest fires and floods, which are among the main risks facing not only our country but also for the entire region. Being complementary to decades of our experience and already built scientific and professional knowledge base, IPA FF program is expected to be a step forward with its components and related activities resulting with enhanced capabilities and expertise in the field of disaster prevention, preparedness and response in accordance with EU best practice.*

The program represents another step towards regional cooperation, the sharing of best practices, and further alignment of program beneficiaries' systems with the EU legislation in civil protection.

Spyros Afentoulidis from the EU Delegation to Serbia, said: *Floods and Forest Fires are not only two of the main disaster risks in Serbia but constitute risks that, by nature, can have a transboundary impact. Therefore, risk mitigation has to be transboundary too, in order to be complete. It is the sole way to be effective. I am glad to see IPA FF sharing the same perspective and I am sure this project will have a concrete added-value for Serbia and the region.*

The IPA FF Consortium is established by the Italian Civil Protection Department as coordinator jointly with the civil protection agencies of Sweden, Slovenia, Romania, the Fire and Rescue Brigade of the Moravian-Silesian Region of the Czech Republic, the Romanian National Centre for Disaster Management Foundation and the Italian CIMA Foundation.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this event, as well as the first phase of the program, was organised in a virtual mode turning emergency into opportunity and guaranteeing the implementation of activities for a better risk prevention and response in the region.

Annex: IPA-FF fact sheet



Swedish Civil
Contingencies
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