

3rd Regional Competitiveness Conference in South East Europe

Enhancing Regional Competitiveness: Past, Present and Future

USAID, Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, Economic Growth Office's Regional Competitiveness Initiative (RCI) invites regional stakeholders from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus to share best practices in tourism and agribusiness, business service delivery mechanisms, e-solutions that enhance competitiveness, and investment attraction. Drawing on the experiences of local and regional experts, lessons learned from a wide variety of USAID projects will be shared.



Przno (near Budva), Montenegro

Maestral Hotel

May 20 – 22, 2008

Agenda

3rd Regional Competitiveness Conference in South East Europe Enhancing Regional Competitiveness: Past, Present and Future

DAY 1
Tuesday, May 20

Best Practices in Tourism and Agribusiness

09:00 AM – Welcome and Introductions

Moderator – **Joe Taggart**, Officer in Charge, USAID/Montenegro

- **H.E. Roderick Moore**, U.S. Ambassador in the Republic of Montenegro
- **H.E. Milo Djukanovic, Prime Minister of the Republic of Montenegro** (Invited)
- **Thomas Mefford**, Deputy Assistant Administrator, USAID/Europe & Eurasia Bureau

09:35 AM – Panel Preparation

09:40 AM – Macro Economic Situation in South East Europe and Comparisons with Other Regions

South East Europe's Competitiveness in an international context based on the results of the Global Competitiveness Report (maximum 30 minutes)

Moderator – **Neal Nathanson**, USAID/E&E/EG, Regional Competitiveness Initiative (RCI)

- **Dr. Jennifer Blanke**, World Economic Forum (WEF)
Competitiveness in South East Europe (maximum 20 minutes)
- **Ivana Vojinovic**, Institute for Strategic Studies and Programs (ISSP), Montenegro
Competitiveness in the Caucasus (maximum 20 minutes)
- **Gia Jandieri**, New Economic School, Georgia

10:50 AM – Networking Break (Hall TBD)

11:20 AM – Sector Scene Setters

Overview of Tourism Challenges and Opportunities in South East Europe
(Maximum 20 minutes each)

- **Susan Warren**, Independent Tourism Consultant

Overview of Agribusiness in South East Europe

- **Nancy Cochrane**, Economic Research Service, USDA

12:00 PM – Lunch

01:30 PM – PARALLEL SESSIONS

Session A South East Europe Tourism Best Practices	Session B South East Europe Agribusiness Challenges and Opportunities
<p>(All presenters confirmed, max. 15 minutes each) Moderated by Michael Kaiser, USAID/E&E/EG</p> <p>Quality Standard Services and Establishing National and Regional Tourism Networks <i>Croatia Case Study - Training for B&Bs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damir Novinic, Enhancing SMEs Program (ESP), Croatia <p><i>Bulgaria Case Study</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexander Babinov, Authentic Bulgaria <p>Promoting South East Europe Tourism Globally with Specialty Tourism Products <i>Montenegro Case Study</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slavica Vukcevic, Center for Sustainable Tourism Initiative (CSTI), Montenegro <p><i>Bosnia and Herzegovina Case Study</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snjezana Derviskadic, Cluster Competitiveness Activity (CCA) Project, Bosnia and Herzegovina <p><i>Armenia Case Study</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan Saffery, Competitive Armenian Private Sector (CAPS) Project <p>Taking a Holistic Approach to Sustainable Tourism to Achieve Multiple Development Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Bossi, Global Sustainable Tourism Alliance (GSTA) 	<p>(All presenters confirmed, max. 15 minutes each) Moderated by Filip Stojanovic, RCI</p> <p>Enhancing the Competitiveness of Agribusiness Value Chains – Regional and National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Maxwell, Macedonia AgBiz Project • Remer Lane, Serbia Agribusiness Project <p>AGBiz Information Sharing Portal / Regional Buyer/Seller Database</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCI Team <p>EU Markets and Requirements for Agribusinesses <i>How to Use EU Funding (SAPARD, IPARD) to Prepare for EU Market Competition</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Krasimir Kiriakov, VOCA Consult, Bulgaria <p><i>Competitiveness of Polish Agribusinesses in the EU Market after 4 Years of Membership: Challenges and Opportunities for New EU Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mirosław Zielinski, Unilob, Poland <p><i>Access to EU Funds for Agribusiness and Rural Development through USAID Support</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cristina Manescu, CEED Romania

3:30 PM – Networking Break (Hall TBD)

04:00 PM – PARALLEL DISCUSSION GROUPS

<p>Tourism Discussion Groups</p> <p>Group 1 – Quality Standards Services and the Importance of Establishing National and Regional Networks, Facilitated by Susan Warren, Independent Tourism Consultant</p> <p>Group 2 – Promoting SEE Tourism Globally with Specialty Products, Facilitated by Nevila Popa, EDEM Project, Albania</p>	<p>Agribusiness Discussion Groups</p> <p>Group 1 – Accessing New Markets and the Importance of Regional Information Sharing, Facilitated by Michael Brown, EDEM Project, Albania and Conrad Fritsch, Moldova Agribusiness Development Project</p> <p>Group 2 – Competitive Value Chains and Company Linkages, Facilitated by James Maxwell, Macedonia AGBiz Project and Greg Vaut, LAMP Project Bosnia and Herzegovina</p>
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05:30 PM – Day 1 Conclusion and Networking Reception (Hall TBD)

Welcome by **Joe Taggart**, USAID/Montenegro

DAY 2
Wednesday, May 21

**Tools for Competitiveness – Business Service Providers, Information
Technology Solutions and Investment Attraction**

09:00 AM – Conclusions from Day 1 Break Out Sessions

(maximum 5 minutes each)

Moderated by **Filip Stojanovic**, Regional Director, Regional Competitiveness Initiative (RCI)

- Tourism Group 1 – **Susan Warren**
- Tourism Group 2 – **Nevila Popa**
- Agribusiness Group 1 – **Michael Brown**
- Agribusiness Group 2 – **James Maxwell**

Session A

BSPs and the IT Sector and their role in increasing competitiveness

**09:30 AM – Panel Discussion: The Role of Business Service Providers
in Enhancing SME Competitiveness**

Opening Statement

- **Dragana Radevic**, CEED Montenegro (5 minutes)

Business Service Provision: What works, what does not and what is the future
(maximum 8 minutes each)

Moderated by **Dragana Radevic**, CEED Montenegro

- **Sharon Valentine**, Serbia Competitiveness Project
- **Nikolay Yarmov**, CEED Bulgaria, Mini MBA Program
- **Jovan Madjovski**, CEED Macedonia, Top Class
- **Zeljko Maric**, Microgrupa, Croatia, SME Training
- **Caroline Bryant**, EBRD TAM/BAS, TAM Manager & EBRD Related Investments
- **Artur Nowicki**, Unilob, Poland, Polish National Service Network for BSPs

11:00 AM – Coffee/Networking Break (Hall TBD)

**11:30 AM – Practical Examples of How E-Solutions Can Increase
Competitiveness** (maximum 8 minutes each)

Moderated by **George Sharkov**, European Software Institute (ESI) Centre / Bulgaria

- **George Brashnarov**, Nemetschek, Bulgaria, e-Solutions for Facility and Asset Management of Business and Industrial Parks, Case Study: Business Park Sofia
- **Mladen Simunac**, Microgrupa / Croatia, e-Solutions for Municipalities
- **Mita Stojic**, TIAC Group, Serbia, e-Solutions for Investment Attraction, Case Study: Vojvodina Investment Promotion Fund
- **Boris Krstanovic**, Multilink, Croatia, e-Solution for Tourism
- **Sasha Gavrilovic**, ExploringMacedonia.com, e-Solutions for Tourism Promotion in Macedonia

12:30 PM – Lunch and Networking Break (Hall TBD)

Session B

Investment in South East Europe

02:00 PM – Panel Discussion: Investment in South East Europe

(maximum 15 minutes each)

Moderated by **Filip Stojanovic**, Regional Director, Regional Competitiveness Initiative (RCI)

- **Petar Ivanovic**, President of Montenegrin Investment Promotion Agency (MIPA), “Investing in Montenegro”
- **Denis Kalenja**, Executive Director, Albinvest, “Investing in Albania”
- **Andrija Mijanovic**, Capacity Building for European Integration / Pristina, “Investing in Kosovo”
- **Nimish Jhaveri**, Macedonia Competitiveness Project, “Investing in Macedonia”
- **Ana Trbovic**, Serbian Competitiveness Project, “Investing in Serbia”

03:30 PM – Coffee/Networking Break (Hall TBD)

04:00 PM – Investment Funds (Equity and Venture Capital) interested in South East Europe (maximum 5 minutes each)

Moderated by **Steve Eastham**, USAID/E&E/EG, RCI

- **Oliver Corlette**, CEO, Adriatic Marinas, Montenegro
- **Georgi Malchev**, Alfa Developments, Bulgaria
- **Berislav Martic**, Jadran Invest, Croatia
- **Nikola Stefanovic**, Deputy Director, SEAF South Balkan Fund
- **Mario Orasche**, Founder, New Europe Venture Partners, Slovenia
- **Dawid Sukacz**, President of the Managing Board, BBI Capital Investment NFI SA, Poland
- **Dr. Gregory Mitrovich** and **Milica Mitrovich**, Voltan Frontier Markets Fund, New York, USA
- **Marek Lorinc**, Country Director, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

05:30 PM: End of Day 2 - Closing remarks, Steve Eastham and Neal Nathanson, USAID/E&E/EG, RCI; Reception and Networking [Hall TBD]

DAY 3
Thursday, May 22
Regional Cooperation and Cross Border Initiatives:
An Open Discussion with USAID Missions and Projects

09:30 AM – Best Practices in Competitiveness from South East Europe and its Implications for Future Competitiveness Projects in the E&E Region

- **Luis Aldo Sanchez-Ortega**, FIAS - World Bank Group, *Doing Business in South East Europe 2008* (maximum 10 minutes)
- **Neal Nathanson**, USAID/E&E/EG, RCI
 - **Review of key themes and trends in competitiveness**
 - **Impact of interventions at firm, sector, and policy level**
 - **Relevant measurements of impact**
 - **Budgets, timeframes, and realistic expectations for competitiveness projects**

Questions & Answers

10:30 AM – Open Discussion on Regional Cooperation Opportunities

Moderators: **Steve Eastham and Neal Nathanson**, USAID/E&E/EG, RCI

- **Role of RCI in Assisting Missions in Regional Cooperation** (short term goals for FY 2009)
- **Possible Regional Cooperation Opportunities:**
 - **IT – Quality Standards: CMMI/ITMark, Microsoft Innovation Centers;**
 - **Agribusiness – Agriculture Information Sharing Portal (including a Buyers/Sellers Database), B2B Matchmaking events;**
 - **Tourism – Quality Standards in Small Hotels, National and Regional Networks, Promotion of Niche Products;**
 - **FDI Promotion;**
 - **Business Service Providers – CEED Network;**
 - **Others**

12:30 PM – Conclusion and Next Steps

AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE

Possible Investment Project Site Visits and Meetings:

In cooperation with local partners, including the Montenegrin Investment Promotion Agency, the Ministry of Tourism, CEED-Montenegro and other local partners, visits to potential investment sites and one-on-one meetings can be arranged for interested investment funds.

"Presenting Montenegro": a Photo Exhibition

Guests will have the opportunity to experience all that Montenegro has to offer in tourism, including adventure tourism, eco-tourism, cultural tourism, etc. in cooperation with the Center for Sustainable Tourism Initiatives, www.cstimontenegro.org.

Matchmaking Opportunity: Small Producers of Montenegrin Souvenirs, Crafts and Specialty Food Products

With local partners, a trade show will be organized for buyers and sellers of souvenirs, crafts and specialty food products from Montenegro and the region. The effort will be lead by the USAID CRDA-E North project in cooperation with local partners, including the USAID MCP project, the GTZ Support to Tourist Destinations in the Hinterland project, Austrian-Montenegrin Cooperation Sustainable Tourism and Regional Development in North Montenegro, the Montenegro Business Alliance (MBA), the Montenegrin Hotel Association and Crafts and SME Chamber, the Business Start-Up Center, the Centre for Sustainable Tourism Initiatives (CSTI) and CEED Montenegro.