



***REFORD STRATEGY
DOCUMENT***

2020 – 2024

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History

Forests and pastures encompass an important part of the livelihood of rural communities on the South-west Balkan. Often rural families have a higher dependency on forests and pastures (up to 50%) of their total family income. National Associations of Private and Communal Forest Owners (**NAPCFO**) from the Balkan countries, with the support of SNV Netherlands Development Organization have been cooperating since 2005 in protecting the interests of private forest owners and user. In addition to this regional aspect was provided opportunity for a more regional focus and cooperation between the associations. By the forest engineers who were directly involved in this cooperation, and at the same time knowing the needs of private and communal forest owners, in **2010** was born the idea of registering ***Regional Centre for Forestry and Rural Development REFORD***.

The idea of REFORD was to serve as an umbrella organization, where the NAPCFO will continued its cooperation, regular communication, intensive sharing, learning and exchanging experiences on the forestry reform processes, while REFORD's organizational management will be led by the NAPCFO from the Balkan region. The work of REFORD was focused on delivering and providing professional vocational trainings to forest owners. Through these trainings private forest owners were the first generation in our region receiving professional training in their fields of interest.

The long history of cooperation among the associations and REFORD resulted in a strong partnership, trust among the organizations and successful cross border collaboration. While time was passing, other Balkan associations recognized the importance in becoming part of the Balkan private forest family. In 2018 REFORD membership was counting 8 member associations from different Balkan countries: Montenegro, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Slovenia, Croatia and North Macedonia.

In 2018, REFORD decided to do some specific reforms in its structure, due to better organizational management. On the General Assembly held in June 2018 in Guca, Serbia, it was decided that the management of REFORD will be in North Macedonia, while all its member Associations of private and communal forest owners will join in the REFORD's platform for cooperation ***„Balkan Network“***.

Introduction

After completed reforms in the structure and having a new Statute of REFORD, in June 2019, new Strategy for the years to come was drawn, looking for REFORD growing in a stronger regional center in achieving its mission. This strategy should provide guidance and direction to the future development and operation of REFORD. Period of time for this strategy document is four years 2020 – 2024.

Initial discussion has taken place on the future development of REFORD at the last Assembly meeting in June 2018 in Guca, Serbia. Following up on that, REFORD organized additional Assembly meeting in June 2019, where the five of the six founders of REFORD and one representative from the Balkan Network provided input for the strategy document that you find below.

The end of this document includes part of the REFORD's Assembly meeting minutes, during which this Strategy document was adopted.

The document present the future focus of REFORD in achieving its mission and steps that will be taken.

This document will be revised once per year, at every Assembly meeting, and in a topics must be included next year annual work plan, activity progress report of the previous year and financial report.

This Strategy is adopted in Skopje, North Macedonia on 20th June 2019 and is valid until 2024.

1. REFORD' Statutory objectives

REFORD mission is "*Achieving a wider social interest in supporting rural development through sustainable natural resource management*"

The Association aims to contribute to better management of natural resources through its goals:

- Sharing new technologies, experiences and working methods;
- Increasing and strengthen the awareness, social and economic power of the rural population;
- All other activities that can help achieve the mission.

In addition to other goals, REFORD also aims to provide support in networking of the private forest owners in the Balkans, through its Platform for cooperation ***Balkan Network*** and it will do so as long as it has adequate resources and support from the national associations of private forests in the region.

Part of the activities that will be undertaken for achieving the goals of REFORD are listed below:

Activity 1: Education of local communities and civic organizations, with an emphasis on rural areas (trainings, consultations, workshops);

Activity 2: Contribution to development of private and community forests;

Activity 3: Improving the practice of sustainable management of natural resources;

Activity 4: Promotion of rural development initiatives (land consolidation, development of value chains and product certification, use of renewable energy sources, promotion of agro-forestry, sustainable use of non-timber forest products, awareness on climate changes);

Activity 5: Promotion of integrated management of natural resources in order to reduce the negative effects of climate change;

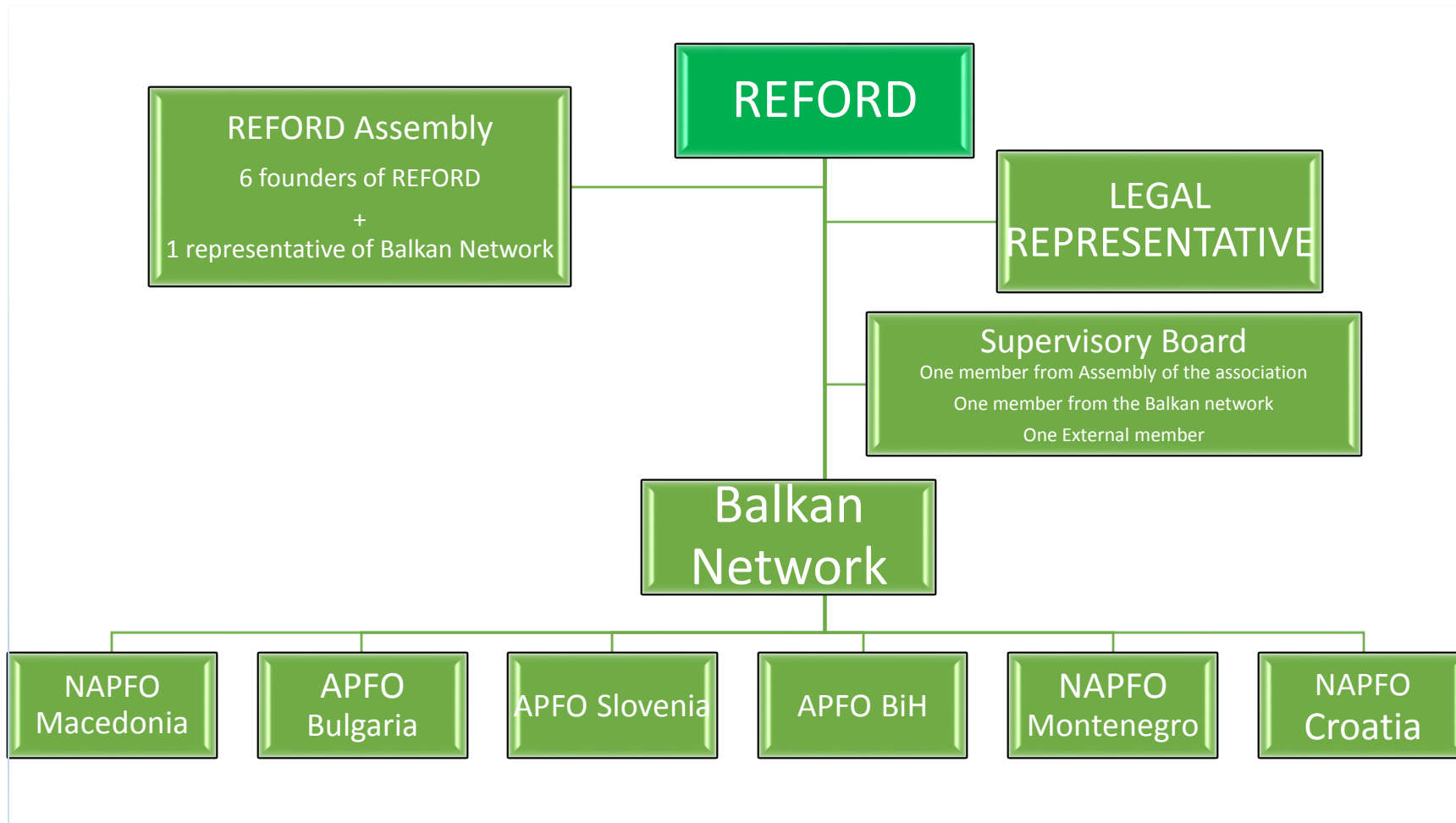
Activity 6: Focusing on the economic development of local communities;

Activity 7: Project implementation;

Activity 8: Cooperation and consultation with local communities;

Activity 9: Cooperation, consultation and education of local and national institutions.

1.1 ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT



The Assembly is consists of members of the association. The Assembly is the highest authority that manages the association.

Members of the Balkan Network can participate in the work of the Association Assembly through nomination of more than one member.

The following comes under within the competence of the assembly:

- Decisions on adoption of amendments to the Statute of the association;
- Decisions on accepting and dismissing members of the Balkan Network of the Association;
- Decisions on the selection and dismissal of the representative of the association;
- Decisions on selection and dismissal of members of the Supervisory Board;
- Decisions on the adoption of the work program of the association;
- Monitoring the material and financial condition of the association between the two assemblies;
- Adoption of financial plan and annual financial calculation;
- Adoption of decisions for the supply and distribution of fixed assets;
- Making decisions for awards, certificates and recognitions;
- Decisions on complaints and appeals;
- Making decisions on the formation of permanent and temporary committees
- Adopting internal rules for work
- Discussing the achievements of the association development.

Legal representative

The representative acts as the daily manager of the association and is responsible for the implementation of the association's program.

The representative takes care of strategic planning and prepares perspective annual and periodic programs and action plans, as well as financial plans.

The representative is responsible for the implementation of the program, the plan of activities and the financial plan and reports periodically and annually to the Assembly of the association and the Supervisory Board.

The Supervisory Committee consists of one member from:

- Assembly of the association
- The Balkan network
- External member

The Supervisory Committee works independently and upon the order of the Assembly. Its activities are directed to:

- Control the material and financial performance of the association;
- Providing advice and recommendations regarding the better functionality and sustainability of the association.

1.2 PLATFORM FOR COOPERATION "BALKAN NETWORK"

Within the framework of REFORD, a separate networking platform is foreseen, further referred to as "Balkan Network".

Membership in the Balkan network is of associative character and can include citizen associations and other legal entities related to ecology, natural resources, rural development and forestry, as well as other areas important for the development of local communities, which are registered in the regions in which REFORD aims to act.

The area of REFORD's activities is the Balkan region.

The members of the Balkan Network of REFORD actively participate in the implementation and realization of the program goals and tasks of the association, especially in the part regarding to networking, cooperation and sharing of experiences and at the same time contribute to the development and popularity of the association. For the part relating to networking, collaboration and sharing of experiences, the members of the Balkan network decide on their own, while REFORD provides logistical support. The manner of providing support is regulated with internal acts of the association

At the moment member organisations of the Balkan networks are the Associations of private forest owners from Montenegro, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Slovenia, Croatia and North Macedonia. REFORD will focus to increase the membership of the Balkan Network

1.3 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

For **achieving its objectives and mission**. One of the REFORD strategic goal is to broaden its international network and cooperation in other Balkan countries, and in the same time to establish linkages with EU partner network like:

- Confederation of European Forest Owners CEPF
- International Union of Forest Research Organizations IUFRO
- Confederation of Spanish Forest Organizations
- Scandinavian network of private forest
- Other vocational centers and networks

Till now REFORD had established good working cooperation with **Food and agriculture organization FAO**

1.4 REFORD working principles:

Legality

Openness and transparency:

Eligibility while decision making and variability:

Rationality and economy efficiency when performing administrative work.

The work of REFORD is **public**. The publicity of actions is provided through regular information in suitable media such as communication by the web site announcements or on another appropriate way.

REFORD is an independent, non-political, non-partisan, non-profit and autonomous citizens' association.

In **implementation of its mission and activities**, REFORD will focus on integrating relevant EU policies and strategies to local and national level and on that way will bring EU closer to rural population and in the same time will work in contribution of achieving SDG's.

All activities supported under this work programme are designed and will be implemented in accordance with principles of good governance and human rights, gender equality, cultural diversity and environmental sustainability and the inclusion of socially or economically deprived groups

REFORD's General Assembly will be held at last ones in a year. On every GA topics must be included next year annual work plan, activity progress report of the previous year and financial report.

2. Strategic Work Programme by the statutory objectives from 2020 till 2024

This four years REFORD Strategic work program, starting from 2020 and valid until 2024 is prepared on bases of the 9 organizational statutory activities, which envisaged planned actions in priority sectors of the organization. Gained results of these activities shall reach the goals, which will lead in achieving organizational mission/ long term objective “Achieving a wider social interest in supporting rural development through sustainable natural resource management“

Envisaged actions in the Strategic working plan are described more overall, in addition to this working plan will be following more detailed in the One year working plans

Activity	Action to be taken	Priority sectors	Results
1. Education of local communities and civic organizations, with an emphasis on rural areas	1.1. Trainings, Consultations, Workshops	Sustainable forest management Climate change Rural development Nature protection Biodiversity Ecology / Environment	1.1 Freely expression; 1.2 Knowledge of existing policy 1.3 Increased capacity in monitoring and quality assessment of existing legislations and policy 1.4 Accountability, transparency , human right and gender equality
2. Contribution to the development of private and communal forests	2.1 Trainings, Capacity building, sharing knowledge in the Balkan network 2.2 Service delivery	Business development Sustainable forest management Climate change Nature protection Rural development Biodiversity Ecology/ Environment	2.1.1 Better implementation and adaptation to relevant legislations; Increased knowledge on existing legislation and policy frameworks 2.1.2 Capacity increased on constitutional rights and protecting its ownership 2.1.3 Improved cooperation between associations of private forest owners from the Balkan countries and strengthening Balkan Network and increasing its membership 2.2. Sustainably managed private forest 2.3 Improved of existing forestry legal framework.

<p>3. Improving the practice of sustainable management of natural resources</p>	<p>3.1. Developing research and analysis skills of environmental CSOs; 3.2. Presenting of Forest certification methods;</p>	<p>Sustainable forest management Climate change Rural development Nature protection Biodiversity Ecology / Environment</p>	<p>3.1.1 Strengthened capacities and skills of the Environmental CSOs on analyses and research, in the same time monitoring of implementation 3.2 Understanding of Forest certification methods and advantage of certified forest</p>
<p>4. Promotion of rural development initiatives</p>	<p>4.1. Establishing co-operation between rural areas, neighbouring regions, and across national borders of Balkan countries; 4.2. Sharing knowledge and raise Awareness by know-how and learning by doing principles, with national and local expertise; 4.3 Developing research and analysis skills of environmental CSOs</p>	<p>Land consolidation, Development of the production chain, Renewable energy sources, Agro-forestry, Non-timber forest products, Climate change</p>	<p>4.1.1 Promoted Sustainable management on nature resources, (adaptation and mitigation of Climate Change impact) 4.2.2 Established sustainable financial environment 4.3.1 Improved understanding of RD and Climate change strategies and policy, better implementation in practice. 4.3.2 Better understanding of RD and Climate Change policy and strategies closer to the rural population</p>
<p>5. Promotion of integrated management of natural resources</p>	<p>5.1 Training Capacity Building 5.2 All related activities on integrated management of nature resources</p>	<p>Sustainable use of nature resources</p>	<p>5.1 Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources 5.2. Reduce the negative effects of climate change</p>
<p>6. Focusing on the economic development of local communities</p>	<p>6.1 Conducting specific analysis on economic development 6.2 Gender equality in rural areas 6.3. Capacity building on market oriented approach (producing marketing and management skills);</p>	<p>Business development, Rural development, Climate Change, Gender equality and human rights</p>	<p>6.1 Increased opportunity for employment and retaining young people in rural areas 6.2 Better position of rural women 6.3 Increased income of local communities</p>

<p>7. Project implementation;</p>	<p>7.1 Project development 7.2. Learning opportunities 7.3 Meeting with possible partners; 7.4 Reconstruction and update of REFORD website with adequate information.</p>	<p>Organisational strengthening of REFORD</p>	<p>7.1 Financial stability; 7.2. Increased organizational knowledge 7.3 strengthen REFORD functioning, representation and its network; 7.4 Increased visibility, transparency and accountability of REFORD;</p>
<p>8. Cooperation and consultation with local communities;</p>	<p>8.1 Providing services, trainings, capacity building to LC on relevant topics.</p>	<p>advocacy and lobbying practices, crowdfunding, communication strategies and practices, Partnership principle implementation, accountability of CSOs, transparency , Climate action and climate justice.</p>	<p>8.1.Improve cooperation between LCs and environmental CSOs ; 8.2 Enlarged REFORD network with environmental CSO; 8.3 Increased representation of citizens from rural areas; 8.4 Increased visibility and representation of REFORD;</p>
<p>9. Cooperation, consultation and education of local and national institutions</p>	<p>9.1 Initiate meetings with the local and national government institution. 9.2 Monitor implementation of legal policies 9.3 Delivering services to local and national institutions</p>	<p>Sustainable forest, management, Climate change, Rural development, Nature protection, Biodiversity, Ecology / Environment</p>	<p>9.1 Improved communication and collaboration with local and national institutions; 9.2 Proper implementation of the legal framework 9.3 Local and national institutions recognized the importance of CSOs participation in decision making;</p>

2.1 Minutes from the Assembly meeting

The following is the part regarding the REFORD Strategic Work Programme 2020-2024, of the REFORD Assembly meeting held in Skopje on June 2019, where the five of the six founders of REFORD and one representative from the Balkan Network provided input for the strategy document. During this meeting the final strategy was discussed and adopted. This minute form is an addition to the Strategy presented above.

Starting from the Assembly meeting in Guca, Serbia in June 2018 and reforms done in organisational structure of REFORD. At the same time taking into account organisational situation in the period when this Strategy is planned and ability of taking bigger activities in implementation of its statutory objectives, due to lack of financial stability. The discussion between the present was, whether the Strategic working plan should give bigger focus on Business development of the organisation or to strengthen its internal capacities and at the same time to implement its statutory objectives.

It was agreed the four year REFORD Strategic work program to be prepared on bases of the 9 organizational statutory activities for achieving the organizational goals, and will envisage planned actions in priority sectors of the organisation. On the content, planned action will be more overall in the four year strategy, in order to have the possibility for taking steps in wider actions for achieving its mission. While in the annual working plans actions will be described in details, according to the activities and action planned in the four years working program.

At the same time with every taken action we shall work on increasing of our representation, visibility and capacity, in order to ensure REFORD sustainability and organisational straightening.

Improvement of networking and increase membership of Balkan network is also one of the priority from this working program. In this strategy we planned to expand the membership of the Balkan network and meanwhile establishing cooperation with other international networks.

The quality assurance issues of the organization was taken in to account and was set in mainly in the beginning period of 2020. After that period it should become a general practice of learning, reflection and knowledge development. This will be done through learning and training within REFORD and share experiences among staff. Further issues will come up but those will be defined based on the review end 2020.

It was agreed that this document will be revised ones per year, at every Assembly meeting, and in a topics must be included next year annual work plan, activity progress report of the previous year and financial report.

The REFORD strategy was adopted by the Assembly meeting with the following suggestions:

- The minutes of the Assembly meeting to be attached to the strategic paper document;
- The strategic working plan added on the REFORD web site and shared with all members of the Balkan network in order of having understanding of future REFORD work;
- An evaluation to be done in December 2020 to define further steps and priorities as needed.

3 ANNUAL WORKING PLAN 2020

The Annual working plan 2020 is built on the bases from Strategic Work Programme 2020-2024 (**SWP**) and take steps to achieve REFORD mission "Achieving a wider social interest in supporting rural development through sustainable natural resource management", through its statutory goals

This Annual plan includes activities envisaged in the four year Strategic Work Programme 2020-2024, but all activities are not taken in consideration, due to period of time for realization.

REFORD Mission " <u>Achieving a wider social interest in supporting rural development through sustainable natural resource management</u> "			
Statutory Activity	Action/Delivery	Results	Indicator
Goal Sharing new technologies, experiences and working methods			
1. Education of local communities and civic organizations, with an emphasis on rural areas	SWP 1.1 1.1.1 Delivering trainings and consultations to local community and CSOs on existing policies on rural development, sustainable forest management, nature protection and climate change	SWP 1.1 R 1.1.1 Knowledge of existing policy R 1.1.2 Increased capacity in monitoring and quality assessment of existing legislations and policy R 1.1.3. Human right and gender equality REFORD improved knowledge	- At least conduct 5 training to environmental CSOs from rural areas Source of funding: Project
3. Improving the practice of sustainable management of natural resources	SWP 3.2 3.2.1 Promotion of Forest certification methods to the private forest owners, PE National forest and Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water economy	SWP 3.2 3.2.1 Understanding of Forest certification methods and advantage of certified forest REFORD will increase representation and organisational infrastructure	- At least held 2 meetings with PE National Forest and Ministry of agriculture forestry and water economy - At least 5 meetings with private forest owners - At least 50 private forest owners increased knowledge on forest certification Source of funding: Project or REFORD voluntary basses

<p>5. Promotion of integrated management of natural resources</p>	<p>SWP 5.2 5.2.1 Meetings with environmental CSOs from rural areas on Integrated management of nature resources</p>	<p>SWP 5.2 R 5.1.1 Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources R 5.2.2 Reduce the negative effects of climate change (adaptation and mitigation) REFORD opportunity to increase its membership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 3 meetings with environmental CSOs from rural areas on Integrated management of nature resources with emphasis on reduce the negative effects of climate change (adaptation and mitigation) - Awareness raised at least 6 CSOs on integrated management of nature resources <p>Source of funding: Project</p>
<p><i>Goal increasing and strengthen the awareness, social and economic power of the rural population;</i></p>			
<p>2. Contribution to the development of private and communal forests</p>	<p>SWP 2.1 2.1.1 Capacity building on EU and countries forest legislation, 2.1.2 Training on cooperation and lobbying in front of local and national government 2.1.3 Sharing knowledge and good practices from the Balkan region SWP 2.2 2.2.1 Delivering services on new technologies and working methods to private and communal forest owners from the Balkan 2.2.2. Conduct analysis on existing legal framework and recommendations in the forestry law</p>	<p>SWP 2.1 R 2.1.1 Better implementation and adaptation to relevant legislations; Increased knowledge on existing legislation and policy frameworks R 2.1.2 Capacity increased on constitutional rights and protecting its ownership R 2.1.3 Improved cooperation between associations of private forest owners from the Balkan countries and strengthening Balkan Network and increasing its membership SWP 2.2 R 2.2.1 Sustainably managed private forest R 2.2.2 Improved of existing forestry legal framework. REFORD' Strengthened existing membership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 5 training conducted to the association of private forest owners on EU and countries forest legislation, - Increase capacity of 100 private forest owners on ownership right - At least 1 meeting and 1 shared good practice - 3 Delivering services on new technologies and working methods to private and communal forest owners from the Balkan - Delivered recommendations to the Ministry of agriculture forestry and water economy - Conduct analysis <p>Source of funding: Project or part by REFORD voluntarily</p>
<p>4. Promotion of rural development initiatives</p>	<p>SWP 4.3 4.3.1 Bringing RD and Climate Change policies and strategies closer to the rural population</p>	<p>SWP 4.3 4.3.1 Improved understanding of RD and Climate change strategies and policy, and better implementation in practice. 4.3.2 Strengthened capacity and skills of the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased capacity of at least 50 peoples on RD and Climate Change policy and strategies - 1 resurche prepared - Increased knowledge of 4 environmental CSOs from rural

	4.3.2 Including environment CSOs from rural areas in research and analysis	Environmental CSOs from the rural area on analyses and research, in the same time monitoring	areas in research and analysis, and monitoring Source of funding: by Project
6. Focusing on the economic development of local communities	SWP 6.1 6.1.1 Conducting specific studies based on analysis and survey to investigate issues affecting livelihood of rural citizens; SWP 6.2 6.2.1 Analysis on the role of women from the rural areas;	SWP 6.1 R 6.1.1 Increased opportunity for employment and retaining young people in the rural areas SWP 6.2 R 6.2.1 Better position of the rural women Increased REFORD knowledge	- Conduct one analysis and survey to investigate issues affecting livelihood of rural citizens; - Analyze on the role of women from the rural areas Source of funding: by Project
All other activities that can help achieve the mission			
7. Project implementation;	SWP 7.1 7.1.1 Mapping opportunities for project development and applying. SWP 7.2 7.2.1. Following new trends and participation at relevant events; 7.2.2. Learning opportunities of our staff and volunteers to gain knowledge and expertise through training, job coaching, sharing and exchange; SWP 7.3 7.3.1 Meeting with possible partners 7.3.2 Establishing cooperation with international networks SWP 7.4 7.4.1 Reconstruction and update of REFORD website with adequate information.	SWP 7.1 R 7.1.1 Organisational stability; SWP 7.2 R 7.2.1 and R 7.2.2 Increased organizational knowledge SWP 7.3 R 7.3.1 and R 7.3.2 Strengthen REFORD functioning, representation and its network; SWP 7.4 R 7.4.1 Increased visibility, transparency and accountability of REFORD;	- At least 5 project submitted - At least 5 participation on training or workshop in North Macedonia on relevant topics - At least 1 participation on workshop or seminar abroad - In the first period of this annual plan the web site of REFORD should be reconstructed and updated with new information - Involved 1 volunteer in the work of REFORD Source of funding: projects or REFORD voluntary (regarding the web side must be found source of funding)
8. Cooperation and consultation with local communities;	SWP 8.1 8.1.1 Consultation meetings with LC	SWP 8.1 R 8.1.1 and R 8.1.2 Improve cooperation between LCs and environmental CSOs ;	- At least 5 consultation meetings with LC - At least 3 new member CSOs in the Balkan Network

	8.1.2 Organize a meeting with environmental CSOs from the rural area on networking;	8.1.2 Enlarged REFORD network with environmental CSO; 8.1.3 Increased representation of citizens from rural areas; 8.1.4 Increased visibility and representation of REFORD; REFORD Strengthened Representativeness	Source of funding: projects or REFORD voluntary
9. Cooperation, consultation and education of local and national institutions	<p>SWP 9.1 9.1.1 Initiating meetings with local and national institutions; 9.1.2. Meetings for sharing of new and good practices between the REFORD and local and national institutions</p> <p>SWP 9.2 9.2.1 Participation in legislation review and consultations in drafting of policy recommendations; 9.2.2 Monitoring on implementation of the strategies, law and other policy</p> <p>SWP 9.3 9.3.1 Delivery of certain services to local and national institution</p>	<p>R 9.1.1 Improved communication and collaboration with local and national institutions; R.9.2.1 Proper implementation of the legal framework R 9.3.1 Local and national institutions recognized importance of CSOs participation in decision making;</p> <p>Increased REFORD capacity visibility and representation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 3 meetings with local and national institutions - At least 1 paper prepared with policy recommendations - Prepared 1 analysis on strategy implementation - At least 1 service delivered <p>Source of funding: projects or REFORD voluntary</p>

- This document will be reviewed on the end of 2020 and its results will be evaluated