

GREEN ECONOMY IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Towards a Sustainable Future

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Edited by

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PREFACE

The book, *Green Economy in the Western Balkans: Towards a Sustainable Future*, is dedicated to the South East European region, mostly consisting of ex-Yugoslavian countries which are still facing problems of polarisation, unconnectedness and peripherality, while also striving to achieve and foster economic growth, social well-being and sustainable environments. Although this region has been a popular subject matter for the scientific and literature community, there is a lack of literature on a growing concern of widespread environmental degradation of the eco-system, which has been intensified by the European Commission and which has put sustainable development high on the agenda of all EU members. Accordingly, this book addresses the growing need for more research and expands the current knowledge base about environmental and developmental challenges, as well as the new, efficient and climate-neutral ‘Green Economy’ of this region.

The book consists of twelve chapters covering not only situations in the Western Balkan countries but also in the countries that historically and geo-politically are related to them. It is the work of a team of theorists and practitioners who attempt to have a multidisciplinary approach towards the Western Balkans, addressing topics such as the green image of a country, sustainable waste management practices, sustainable activities at the micro, mezzo and macro levels, the way in which small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) have adapted their financial and operational planning in order to develop green entrepreneurship, sustainability in the trade sector, potentials for sustainable tourism

development, green consumerism, energy efficiency and conservation projects, sustainable use of water, and the role of agriculture in achieving the sustainable development of a country. Therefore, this book can be considered as a systematic and holistic overview and critical examination of the situation in the region, and it shows drivers and barriers affecting the region in its effort to green its economy.

Readers can find theoretical explanations of specific phenomenon, supported by empirical and practical explanations in the cases of different countries. Thus, we hope that it will serve as a basis for others to extend the research and provide some new insights into this area. This book will be of interest for broad international readership: research scientists, students, practitioners, policy makers, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as other stakeholders that wish to be informed about the progress and current trends in sustainability and environmental issues.

We express sincere thanks to all our contributors from different countries for their individual and collaborative work in providing important information and diligently completing this project on time. We are also thankful to the reviewers who carefully and timely reviewed the manuscript.

Sanda Renko
Almir Pestek
Editors