EU energy roadmap more cost effective for South East Europe than current policies, shows new energy model

June 17, Brussels, Belgium - By aligning their energy policies with the EU energy roadmap and closing all coal power plants and replacing them with renewable energy sources, the countries of South East Europe (SEE) can have a cleaner and cheaper energy system.

These are the findings of seven new energy models developed for the SEE region, based on open source data and above 500 stakeholder consultations, that were launched today at a conference1 organised by SEE Change Net and co-hosted by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, as a part of EU Sustainable Energy Week2.

The models also show that by implementing EU Energy Road Map goals, the countries would reduce their yearly energy consumption by 60%, instead of increasing it by 6% compared to the business as usual scenario. They would also increase energy efficiency in all sectors as well as prevent rising health costs and reduce dangers to the climate.

“If the EU pathway is technically possible for a similar cost as the current 'Road to Nowhere' approach which is leading the South East Europe governments away from EU standards, then why are we not investing in an energy system that will, for all the people of South East Europe, be fairer, cleaner and more efficient?” asks Garret Tankosić-Kelly, Principal of SEE Change Net, who chaired the session.

The South East Europe energy models are based on the 2050 Calculator, developed by UK’s Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). DECC’s Deputy Director Tom Counsell explained the benefits of the 2050 Calculator3: “In the UK, we’ve found that we get a much better quality of discussion about the future of energy by engaging in an open process that results in transparent, challengeable, easy to use tools like the 2050 Calculator. We are delighted that other countries and regions have made similar tools, so that they too can have a good robust debate about what is right for them.”

“These energy models demonstrate that energy and climate leadership through regional coordination can make a vision of a sustainable, job-creating energy a reality”, said Dan Kammen, director of UC Berkeley’s Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory (RAEL)4, who presented the main results of the energy models. “With this energy and climate roadmap, SEE is demonstrating that by taking

1 http://www.eusew.eu/component/see_eventview/?view=see_eventdetail&mapType=hlpc&eventid=4585
2 http://www.eusew.eu
3 http://my2050.decc.gov.uk/
4 https://rael.berkeley.edu/
advantage of rapidly evolving clean energy technologies and shared knowledge, it can become a global leader in the march to the energy future we want, not just the one we happened to inherit.”

According to the data from the latest report of the World Health Organization, the SEE region is spending the average of 19% of its GDP on the economic cost of deaths from air pollution, equaling 30 billion US dollars.

As opposed to the “Road to Nowhere”, that would result in a poor 25% emissions reduction by 2050, the EU road would mean that no new thermal power plants should be built beyond the ones that are being constructed in the region right now, which would result in achieving close to 80% emissions reduction between 2010 and 2050.

“By investing an equivalent amount of money in renewables as opposed to dirty lignite, and by investing in reducing electricity losses, increasing energy efficiency and mitigating pollution, the region could start its journey on a new and necessary sustainable energy path”, stated Ana Ranković of Serbian NGO Fractal, on behalf of the team of energy modellers from 9 South East Europe CSOs who participated in the creation of the energy models.

Contacts:
Masha Durkalić, SEE Change Net, masha@seechangenet.org, +387 63 999 827
Bojan Stojanović, Communications Officer, WWF Adria, +385 95 598 14 58, bstojanovic@wwf.panda.org

SEE SEP partner organizations:
SEE Change Net
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Green Home (Montenegro)
MANS (Montenegro)

* According to the UN, the official name for Macedonia is “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.
** This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

6 17% of GDP in Albania, 20% of GDP in BiH, 11% of GDP in Croatia, 20% of GDP in Macedonia**, 14% of GDP in Montenegro and 33.5% of GDP in Serbia. Note: No data for Kosovo was available; Calculated according to the data from WHO: Annex: Economic Cost of deaths from air pollution (outdoor and indoor) per country, as a percentage of GDP: http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/276956/PR_Economics-Annex_en.pdf?ua=1 and World Bank's GDP data for 2013.
7 Calculated according to World Bank's GDP data for 2013: http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/GDP-ranking-table. Note: No data for Kosovo was available.