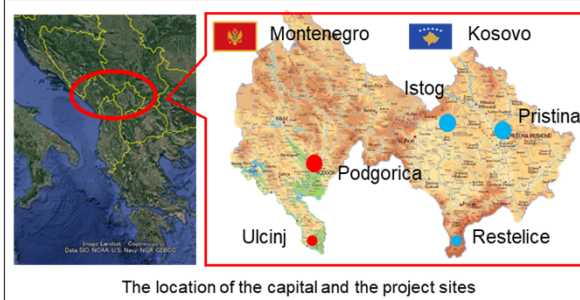


# NFFIS & Eco-DRR Newsletter

**Project on Capacity Building for Disaster Risk Reduction through National Forest Fire Information System (NFFIS) and Eco-DRR**  
Mar 2021 - Feb 2026

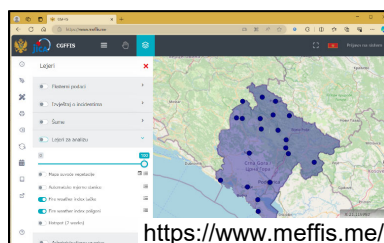
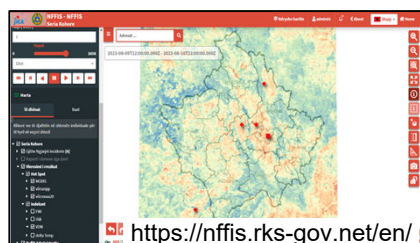
## Project on Capacity Building for Disaster Risk Reduction through National Forest Fire Information System (NFFIS) and Eco-DRR (the Project)

The purpose of the Project is to strengthen the capacity of government officials in the prevention and mitigation of forest fires and other natural disasters through the establishment of the NFFIS and Eco-DRR.



## NFFIS Ver 1: Completion and release of public version

The NFFIS has started operating in both Kosovo and Montenegro. Last summer during the fire season, the NFFIS provided early warning information and collected fire information for the first time. Although there were no problems with the operation of the system itself, since this was the first opportunity for actual operation, some points for improvement were found regarding data analysis and input inventories. Based on this experience, efforts to improve the NFFIS have already started. In addition, the following efforts will proceed for the expansion of the system and operations: 1) preparations to incorporate NFFIS operation into bylaws; 2) the sharing of automatic weather station (AWS) data by the three countries of Kosovo, Montenegro, and North Macedonia to improve the accuracy of analysis; and 3) the collection and provision of information regarding natural disasters other than forest fires.



NFFIS Ver 1.1  
(Left: Kosovo, Right: Montenegro)

## Eco-group activities

The Project, which promotes disaster risk reduction, also focuses on public awareness and environmental education. One of our specific activities is supporting the activities of eco-groups. Eco-groups aim to improve the quality of life in society through social activities and the discussion of issues.

Initially, the elementary school in Restelice Village did not have an eco-group, but the Project supported the formation of one as part of avalanche prevention forest activities. On Arbor Day in September, the group members performed a skit about environmental protection.

In Istog Municipality, experts explained windbreak forests and Eco-DRR to an eco-group already active at a high school, and then created a terrarium to visually demonstrate the effects of wind damage and windbreak forests.

In Ulcinj Municipality, students from school who participated in Project-led environmental education formed an eco-group and joined coastal forest planting activities. In 2024, there will be various activities in the coastal forest and awareness activities in cooperation with the municipality and others.



## Istog wind break forest

Wind damage is the most serious kind of natural disaster in Istog, a problem that has intensified since 2000. This acute issue thus requires urban planning that addresses wind damage, as well as the sound maintenance and management of forests that have the effect of mitigating wind damage. Given this background, a summary survey was done to measure distance and area at three schools in Istog; also, appropriate species were planted, such as black pine, which is locally known to be resistant to wind damage. Additionally, we conducted a survey to identify the types of landscape affected by wind in the area, such as forests, clarify problems that hinder restoration, and develop restoration solutions.

On Nov 17, 2023, the Arbor Day Festival was held in the presence of the mayor of Istog. In addition to planting trees, the Festival featured the eco-group of Haxhi Zeka High School, which gave: 1) a demonstration of wind resistance by creating a terrarium; 2) an explanation and display of the planted tree species; and 3) a presentation of Istog's rich culture and traditions. Future developments will include disseminating the activities conducted this year to other schools, creating a windbreak handbook, and incorporating windbreak activities into Istog's urban planning.



Above: Tree planting ceremony (tree planting by Istog mayor).  
Left: Explanation of windbreaks by high school students wearing traditional costumes.

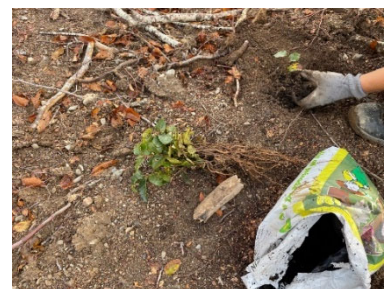
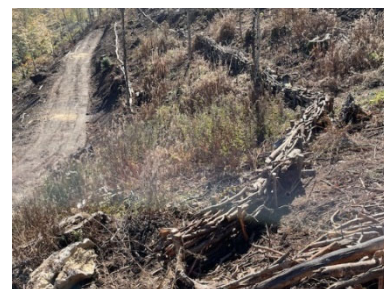


## Post-fire vegetation restoration (PFVR) in Kolasin

In Montenegro, forest fire area is increasing. Since abandoning post-fire sites may trigger other disasters and secondary damage, the challenge is to establish an effective technical system to promote vegetation recovery as soon as possible.

For this reason, as part of the technology for Eco-DRR, activities related to post-fire vegetation restoration (PFVR) were initiated in Kolasin Municipality last year. Although the main activity is planting of spruce and black pine seedlings, the following activities were undertaken: 1) soil erosion control measures using fences constructed of logs and branches; and 2) assisting natural regeneration (ANR) by liberating regenerants (clearing away unnecessary vegetation); enrichment planting (planting in areas with less regeneration of young trees); and soil scarification (raking up the layer of humus and other soils that hinder the growth of young trees).

In particular, as there are few past examples of ANR in the country, it was decided to set up survey plots and conduct regular vegetation surveys going forward. If results are achieved, the methods are expected to be utilised as a low-cost technique for Eco-DRR.



Above: Soil erosion control measure with branches.  
Below: ANR (enrichment planting).

## Summary of activities

### Kosovo/Montenegro Output 1

- Start NFFIS Ver 1.1 operation
- Completion of NFFIS public version
- Prepared NFFIS Guideline and SOP (Standard Operating Procedures)

### Kosovo Output 2

- Additional planting for avalanche prevention forest
- Conducted windbreak forest activities

### Montenegro Output 2

- Planted approx. 2,300 trees in Ulcinj
- Implemented post-fire vegetation restoration activities



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