

PRESS RELEASE (non-official translation)

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Hungarian companies support greening the Western Balkans

“Despite all the economic challenges due to the pandemic the Western Balkans Green Center’s second Call for climate protection activities attracted significant attention. The applications are of high quality, that prove the preparedness and competitiveness of Hungarian green companies.” – said Péter Kaderják, Minister of State for Energy and Climate Policy, Ministry for Innovation and Technology (MIT) of Hungary.

Hungary’s Western Balkans Green Center, a state-owned company under MIT launched its second Call in November, which is targeting to foster the green transition of the Western Balkans via knowledge-based cooperation and competitive technology export.

Péter Kaderják pointed out that the impacts of climate change are strongly demonstrated in the Western Balkans, which experiences increasing average temperature, wildfires and unbalanced water supply, among others. These challenges will not stop at the border, thus a common action is required. Additionally, energy production in the region mostly relies on fossil fuel. Sixteen local coal-fired power plants emit as much carbon dioxide as 250 similar units across the European Union.

Hungary, as a country with proven results in climate protection compared to international standards, is committed to provide meaningful support in tackling these tasks. Having recognized the challenge, decarbonization of the Western Balkans will be considered by Hungary as a priority area in the program of the V4 Hungarian presidency due in 2021.

Mr. Kaderják explained that the Call, in accordance with the pandemic recovery plans is paying a particular attention to the job-creation potential of the projects. The selected projects of the best quality will support the green transition of a region with strategic importance for Hungary and will increase Hungarian companies’ competitiveness abroad.

László Örlös, managing director of the Green Center said that, similarly to the previous Call earlier this year, a large number of applications were received this time too, with requests exceeding the available resources by nearly four times. Applicants include small and medium sized enterprises, foundations and institutes of the higher education sector. All six focus countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) are represented in the project applications, with energy and water sectors enjoying dominance.

The evaluation of the applications will be organized by the Green Center involving acknowledged external experts, the grant decision as well as the start of the projects is expected during the spring of 2021.

The original press release in Hungarian is available at:

<https://kormany.hu/hirek/magyar-cegek-segitenek-be-a-nyugat-balkan-zolditesebe>

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