



Perception and Knowledge of Environmental Issues, in Particular Biodiversity by Stakeholders and Laypersons in Kosovo - A Case Study

Petra Lindemann-Matthies*, Mimoza Hyseni

Institute of Environmental Sciences, University of Zurich, Winterthurerstrasse 190, CH-8057 Zurich, Switzerland

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Abstract: This paper presents the results of 20 in-depth interviews with local stakeholders (university professors, ministry employees, NGO members and politicians) and a questionnaire study with 492 randomly selected laypersons (all adults) in Kosovo on their perception and knowledge of environmental issues, in particular biodiversity. Most often study participants named various kinds of pollution such as air or water pollution as environmental problems, whereas the loss of biodiversity was only mentioned by some of the local stakeholders. All stakeholders but only 18% of the laypersons had heard the term biodiversity before. Stakeholders knew the term mainly from education, whereas laypersons knew it from the media. However, only the university professors and ministry employees could correctly define biodiversity, and most study participants had a poor knowledge of endemic and endangered species in Kosovo. Both stakeholders and laypersons named public education and information as main measures to conserve biodiversity. However, almost half of the laypersons felt that they themselves could do nothing to protect biodiversity.

Keywords: *Kosovo, biodiversity perception, stakeholders, laypersons, case study*

*Corresponding: Email: petral@uwinst.uzh.ch; Phone: +41 (0)44 635 47 41; Fax: +41 (0)44 635 57 11