

2016



## ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

ON THE COMPATIBILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE "INTERREG - IPA CBC BULGARIA - THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA" FOR THE YEARS 2014-2020 UNDER THE INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) WITH THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL (SEA) REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

The current Monitoring Report is prepared in accordance with:

SEA Report of the INTERREG-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

DIRECTIVE 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (referred to as the SEA Directive)

### **Relevant legislation of the Republic of Bulgaria:**

- Environmental Protection Act
- Climate change mitigation Act
- Biological Diversity Act
- Protected Areas Act
- Water Act
- Soils Act
- Waste Management Act
- Tourism Act
- Bulgarian national rules on the terms and procedures for assessment of the compatibility of plans, programs, projects and investment proposals with the objectives and purposes of the preservation of the protected areas (last amended as of 30.11.2012)
- Environmental Assessment Statement ref. № 7-5/2014 issued by the Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW) of the Republic of Bulgaria

### **Relevant legislation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:**

- Law on Ambient Air Quality
- Law on the Environment
- Law on nature protection
- Law on Waters
- Law on Waste Management
- Law on Land Survey and Registration
- Law on Agricultural Land
- Law on Building Land
- Law on Spatial and Urban Planning
- Law on Waste Management
- Law on Mineral Resources

## GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROGRESS OF THE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The Programme was officially approved on 5<sup>th</sup> of August 2015 with EC Decision № C (2015) 5653.

During 2016 an amendment of the "Interreg - IPA CBC Bulgaria - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" for the years 2014-2020 (the Programme) was performed concerning the establishment of baseline and target values of qualitative programme result indicators which does not influence the envisaged priorities and activities, respectively does not require new SEA report and new Environmental statement by the MoEW.

The first subsidy contracts under the First Call for proposals of the Programme were signed on 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2016. By the end of 2016, a total number of 45 projects started their implementation (out of which 16 investment and 29 soft projects).

## INFORMATION ON THE MEASURES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PREVENTION, REDUCTION AND ELIMINATION AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE OF POTENTIAL NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FROM THE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

According to item I "Measures and requirements for prevention, reduction and elimination as completely as possible of potential negative consequences from the Programme implementation" of the MOEW Environmental Statement, the following requirements shall be met:

1. Plans, programmes and projects, as well as investment proposals, subject of INTERREG-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria-Serbia, which fall in the scope of the Bulgarian Environmental Protection Act or outside it, and under the provisions of Art. 31 of the Biological Diversity Act are a subject of compatibility assessment with the scope and purpose of the preservation of protected areas. The above interventions may be approved only after a positive decision/statement on the EIA/SEA/environmental compliance assessment, following the respective recommendations, as well as the conditions, requirements and measures set in the decision/statement;
2. The development of tourism should be in conformity with the recreation capacity of the territory and a proper waste water treatment and waste management are to be ensured.
3. Activities as "safari" hiking, "off-routes" tracking for monitoring of rare and endangered species" should not be included in the development of tourist packages under Priority Axis 2, since they lead to significant damages on the environment and in particular on Biodiversity .

Taking into consideration the above requirements, the Managing Authority included all of them into the Guidelines for applicants (GfA) under the First Call for proposals, as follows:

- Every investment proposal envisaging construction works is required to present as an attachment to the application form (AF) a positive environmental impact assessment (EIA) required by the national legislation or a statement issued by the relevant body clearly stated that Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary;
- All investment activities have to be in line with the relevant national legislation for the respective type of construction works (including those related to development of tourism);

- Activities as "safari" hiking, "off-routes" tracking for monitoring of rare and endangered species" are included in the lists of ineligible activities for all Priority axes (PA).

As set out in the GfA, in addition to all annexes and supporting documents, the project proposals that envisage works activities must also provide the additional supporting documents, concerning works activities only:

- In case of investment activities within territories with special status (National parks, environmental and architectural reserves, cultural monuments, protected areas and territories, areas included in Nature 2000, etc.) relevant documentation (permits, approvals, certificates, statements, etc.) required by the respective national applicable law (B3.3) and
- Positive Environmental Impact Assessment positive opinion from the relevant body, required by the national legislation (B3.4) **or**
- Statement issued by the relevant body clearly stated that Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary.

*At application stage* all 15 of the approved for financing projects that envisaged construction works provided the requested documents issued by the competent environmental bodies (according to the respective national legislation) that an EIA is not required since the planned activities will not affect directly natural habitats and protected areas, as well as there is no possibility of negative effect on the environment and human health.

The rest of the projects approved for financing do not envisage construction works and respectively EIA/statements from the competent environmental bodies are not required for the implementation of their activities.

*During the assessment process* the compatibility of the project proposals to the above requirements was duly checked by the assessors and only projects that met the above criteria were proposed and approved for financing.

*After contracted*, all approved projects under the first call performed a self-assessment on the expected environmental consequences of the envisaged project activities in regard to the six environmental issues (Air and climate; Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora; Water; Soil; Population and Human Health; Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape). For the purpose of the self-assessment the questionnaire in section 10.2 of the SEA Report was used and the results are compared to the expected consequences for respective Specific objective according to the SEA report.

The distribution of projects by Specific objectives (SO) under the Programme is as follows:

- SO 1.1 "Environmental protection and sustainable use of the common natural resources of the CBC area" – 11 projects;
- SO 1.2 "Prevention and mitigation of consequences of natural and man-caused disasters of cross-border dimension and impact" – 3 projects;
- SO 2.1 "Enhancing the tourism potential of the region through cooperation initiatives in better preservation and sustainable utilization of natural and cultural heritage" – 7 projects;

- SO 2.2 “Raising the competitiveness of the CBC region’s tourist offer” – 5 projects;
- SO 2.3 “Promoting cooperation among regional actors in the area of sustainable tourism” – 2 projects;
- SO 3.1 “Improving the competitiveness of regional businesses” – 17 projects

The table below presents a summarized information on the performed by the project beneficiaries self-assessment including where applicable any findings and measures undertaken for mitigation of the negative effects on the environment and human health.

DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECTS PER PRIORITY AXIS AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

PA / SO	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Expected consequences according to the SEA	Number of projects with expected				Comments / remarks / undertaken measures
			Positive (+) Environmental consequences	Neutral (0) Environmental consequences	Negative (-) Environmental consequences	Both positive and negative (+/-)	
PA 1 SO 1.1	Air and Climate	+	10	1	0	0	All Projects (except one) foresee activities that will have positive consequences in regard to Air and Climate issues which is in line with the expectations set in the SEA report. Projects aim to encourage the sustainable use of natural resources and reduce the CO2, through introduction of energy efficiency measure in public infrastructures.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	2	9	0	0	Taking into consideration that the majority of the projects envisage soft measures, the expected consequences to Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora is neutral. The envisaged project activities are related mainly to awareness raising through promotional campaigns encouraging responsible behavior of the public in regard to biodiversity and protection of the natural areas (including Fauna and Flora). In addition, capacity building workshops and events organized under the projects will contribute to changing people`s behavior in terms of energy saving.
	Water	+	4	7	0	0	Having in mind that almost half of the projects under this SO are soft ones, the expected effect is mostly neutral. Realization of projects will result in promotion of sustainable use of water resources on long-term period.
	Soil	+	4	7	0	0	Some of the projects will contribute to awareness rising on the possibilities for preservation of soil resources. The rest will have neutral effect on this

PA / SO	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Expected consequences according to the SEA	Number of projects with expected				Comments / remarks / undertaken measures
			Positive (+) Environmental consequences	Neutral (0) Environmental consequences	Negative (-) Environmental consequences	Both positive and negative (+/-)	
							environmental issue.
	Population and Human Health	+	3	8	0	0	Most of the projects will have neutral effect on Population and Human Health issues. It is expected that a few projects will contribute for increasing of public knowledge about the different kind of environmental pollution of air, water and soil that could prevent possible spreading of diseases among population.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	2	9	0	0	The majority of projects implemented under SO 1.1 will have neutral effect on this environmental issue. Only two projects foresee measures for promotion of responsible behavior of the public by increasing education and awareness on heritage and landscape preservation and protection and therefore positive influence on this topic is expected.
PA 1 SO 1.2	Air and Climate	+	1	2	0	0	There are only three projects financed under SO 1.2. One of them is expected to have positive effect on Air and Climate issue promoting a more environmentally responsible behavior.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	2	1	0	0	Two projects are expected to influence Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna issue and may have an overall positive effect on the protection of biodiversity and nature in the cross-border area.
	Water	+	3	0	0	0	All three projects foresee flood prevention measures which are expected to have a direct positive effect on the improvement of water bodies' ecological status.
	Soil	+	2	1	0	0	Two of the flood prevention projects may have a positive effect on the preservation

PA / SO	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Expected consequences according to the SEA	Number of projects with expected				Comments / remarks / undertaken measures
			Positive (+) Environmental consequences	Neutral (0) Environmental consequences	Negative (-) Environmental consequences	Both positive and negative (+/-)	
							of soil functionality, especially in urban dimension.
	Population and Human Health	+	2	1	0	0	Having in mind that flooding causes material damages, and is a source for potential spreading of diseases, two of the flood prevention projects foresee to have positive influence on Population and Human Health
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	1	2	0	0	Projects under SO 1.2 are expected to have neutral or even positive effect on the Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape issues through measures for sustainable management & planning of natural landscape
PA 2 SO 2.1	Air and Climate	+/-	1	6	0	0	The implementation of all projects under SO 2.1 is expected to have mainly neutral (or even positive) effect on Air and Climate issues.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+/-	0	7	0	0	None of the projects is expected to have neither positive nor negative influence on Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora issues.
	Water	+/-	2	5	0	0	Two out of seven projects may influence positively the Water issues mainly with increased awareness about sustainable use of water resources. The rest of the projects are expected to have neutral effect.
	Soil	+/-	0	7	0	0	None of the projects approved for financing under SO 2.1 will change neither positively nor negatively soil conditions.
	Population and Human Health	0	1	6	0	0	All projects (except one) are not expected to have any influence on Population and Human Health conditions.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage	+/-	5	2	0	0	The majority of projects include activities



PA / SO	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Expected consequences according to the SEA	Number of projects with expected				Comments / remarks / undertaken measures
			Positive (+) Environmental consequences	Neutral (0) Environmental consequences	Negative (-) Environmental consequences	Both positive and negative (+/-)	
	and Landscape						directly addressing natural and cultural heritage protection including responsible public behavior and thus they will have positive effect on those issues.
PA 2 SO 2.2	Air and Climate	0	0	5	0	0	All five projects under this SO 2.2 envisage soft measures focused mainly on sustainable tourism development and do not influence Air and Climate issues.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	0	1	4	0	0	All five projects under this SO 2.2 envisage soft measures focused mainly on sustainable tourism development and do not influence Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora issues.
	Water	0	0	5	0	0	All five projects under this SO 2.2 envisage soft measures focused mainly on sustainable tourism development and do not influence Water issue.
	Soil	0	0	5	0	0	All five projects under this SO 2.2 envisage soft measures focused mainly on sustainable tourism development and do not influence Soil issue.
	Population and Human Health	0	0	5	0	0	All five projects under this SO 2.2 envisage soft measures focused mainly on sustainable tourism development and do not influence Population and Human Health issues.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	0	1	4	0	0	Four out of five projects under this SO 2.2 envisage soft measures focused mainly on sustainable tourism development and do not influence Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape issues.
PA 2 SO 2.3	Air and Climate	+	0	2	0	0	Two people-to-people projects are financed under this SO and they aim at promotion of alternative forms of tourism. Therefore these two projects will have

PA / SO	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Expected consequences according to the SEA	Number of projects with expected				Comments / remarks / undertaken measures
			Positive (+) Environmental consequences	Neutral (0) Environmental consequences	Negative (-) Environmental consequences	Both positive and negative (+/-)	
							neutral effect on Air and Climate issues.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	1	1	0	0	One of the projects may influence positively Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora issues through promotion of alternative and responsible tourism with focus on natural conservation.
	Water	+	0	2	0	0	Both projects do not envisage activities related to Water issues and respectively will not influence in any way that issue.
	Soil	+	0	2	0	0	Both projects do not envisage activities related to Soil issues and respectively will not influence in any way that issue.
	Population and Human Health	0	0	2	0	0	Both projects do not envisage activities related to Population and Human Health issues and respectively will not influence in any way that issue.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	2	0	0	0	Both projects will influence positively the cultural/natural heritage and landscape issues mainly through awareness raising campaigns.
PA 3 SO 3.1	Air and Climate	+	3	14	0	0	Three out of seventeen projects are expected to have positive impact on Air and Climate issues through the envisaged activities related to organic farming. The rest of the projects under this SO include soft measures which do not influence in any way air and climate conditions.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	4	13	0	0	4 projects related to organic production and forestry will have positive effect on biodiversity, fauna and flora issues. The rest of the projects under this SO include soft measures which do not influence those issues.
	Water	+	2	15	0	0	2 projects are expected to have positive

PA / SO	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Expected consequences according to the SEA	Number of projects with expected				Comments / remarks / undertaken measures
			Positive (+) Environmental consequences	Neutral (0) Environmental consequences	Negative (-) Environmental consequences	Both positive and negative (+/-)	
							effect on Water issues. The rest of the projects under this SO include soft measures which do not influence in any way water resources.
	Soil	+	3	14	0	0	3 projects related to organic farming will influence positively the sustainable use of soil resources. The rest of the projects under this SO include soft measures which do not affect in any way those issues.
	Population and Human Health	+	5	12	0	0	5 projects may have positive effect on Population and Human Health issues. The rest of the projects under this SO include soft measures which do not influence in any way those issues.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	2	15	0	0	Two of the projects under this SO will encourage environmental friendly behavior towards preservation of cultural/natural heritage and landscape related issues. The rest of the projects are will not influence in any way those issues.

SUMMARY of the expected consequences on the six environmental issues based on the answers provided by the Lead partners in the Compatibility Check Sheets

TOTAL	Air and climate	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	Water	Soil	Population and Human Health	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape
+	15	10	11	9	11	13
-	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>0</b>	30	35	34	36	34	32
+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0

**SUMMARY** of the environmental answers from the submitted by Lead partners Compatibility Check Sheets:

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES</b> (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	<b>Environmental questions / indicators</b>	<b>Answers / Comments</b>
Air and climate	Will the projects have an effect on the reduction of air pollution?	The strongest positive effect on reduction of air pollution is expected to be achieved through the successful implementation of the projects activities under SO 1.1, related to environmental protection, such as: proper waste management and reducing of waste, reduction of energy production from fossil fuels, introduction of energy efficiency measures in public infrastructures, etc. The rest of the projects do not have any or have neutral influence on the reduction of air pollution.
	Will the projects have an effect on the reduction of the GHG emissions?	It is expected projects under SO 1.1 to have a positive effect on the reduction of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Those projects are promoting sustainable use of common natural and energy resources, environmental protection and reducing the CO2 emissions related to public infrastructure. The rest of the projects do not have any or have neutral influence on reduction of GHG emissions.
	Will the projects have an effect on the support of environmentally friendly transports?	None of the projects approved for financing under the first Call envisage activities related to transport infrastructure, therefore no effect on the support of environmentally friendly transport is expected.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of forest fire fight management and prevention?	Projects under SO 1.2, in which activities related to forest fire prevention are envisaged, will have a strong and direct positive effect on the promotion of forest fire fight management and prevention.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of responsible behaviour of the public by involving the citizens into fighting climate change?	Capacity building workshops and events foreseen within projects under SO 1.1 and SO 1.2 will contribute for changing public behavior to sustainable energy use and climate change issues.
Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	Will the projects have an effect on the preservation of biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems and their services?	The majority of projects do not foresee activities related to preservation of biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems and respectively will not have any effect on that. Only few of them under SO 1.1 and SO 1.2 are expected to have some positive long-term effect on preservation of the existing ecosystems in the targeted area.
	Will the projects have an effect on the decrease in loss of biodiversity?	None of the projects foresees activities related to the decrease in loss of biodiversity and respectively will not have any effect on that issue.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Environmental questions / indicators	Answers / Comments
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of responsible behaviour of the public by involving the citizens in protecting biodiversity and natural areas?	Public awareness workshops and events foreseen within the projects under SO 1.1 will contribute for changing public behavior to protecting biodiversity and natural areas.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of tourism that would ensure high degree of nature conservation?	None of the projects envisage activities related to high degree of nature conservation through tourism promotion and respectively will not have any effect on that issue.
Water	Will the projects have an effect on the improvement of ecological and chemical status of water bodies?	There are some projects (under SO 1.1) showing indirect positive influence on ecological and chemical status of water bodies.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of water resources?	Three projects (under SO1.1 and SO 1.2) will have a long-term effect on the promotion of sustainable use of water resources by implementation of joint actions for floods prevention and awareness-raising campaigns.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of sustainable tourism towards water resources preservation?	One project (under SO 1.1) is expected to have an effect on the promotion of sustainable tourism towards water resources preservation through awareness-raising campaigns.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of responsible behaviour of the public by involving the citizens into sustainable water use?	Three projects (under SO 1.1 SO 1.2 and SO 2.1) will have a positive effect on the promotion of responsible behavior of the public by involving the citizens into initiatives concerning sustainable water use.
Soil	Will the projects have an effect on the preservation of the soil functionality	The majority of projects will have no effect on the preservation of soil functionality. Only two projects (under SO 1.2) are focused on flood protection measures and are expected to have a positive effect on preservation of the soil functionality.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of soil resource	None of projects envisage activities addressing sustainable use of soil resources and thus are not expected to show any effect on that.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable tourism towards land preservation?	None of projects envisage activities addressing sustainable tourism towards land preservation and thus are not expected to show any effect on that.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of responsible behaviour of the public by increasing education and awareness on soil protection?	Concrete actions envisaged in projects under SO 1.1 and SO 1.2 stimulating responsible public behavior on risk management and environmental protection by awareness raising and training initiatives will indirectly promote soil protection.
Population and Human Health	Will the project have an effect on the reduction of	Taking into account that floods cause material damages and are a

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Environmental questions / indicators	Answers / Comments
	diseases caused by natural hazards?	prerequisite for spreading of diseases, some projects under SO 1.2 (addressing flood protection measures) have a positive indirect influence on Human health.
	Will the project have an effect on the promotion of controls of environmental related health risks and hazards?	None of projects envisage activities addressing promotion of controls of environmental related health risks and hazards and thus are not expected to show any effect on that.
	Will the project have an effect on the promotion of risk prevention and management of natural and man-made disasters?	All projects under SO 1.2 addressing risk prevention and management of natural and man-made disasters will have positive effect on that issues.
	Will the project have an effect on the promotion of sustainable waste management to protect human health?	Three projects (two under SO 1.1 and one under SO 3.1) envisage promotional campaigns for sustainable waste management.
	Will the project have an effect on the promotion of environmentally-responsible behavior of the public by involving the citizens into the solution of environmental problems?	All projects under SO 1.1 and SO 1.2 include awareness raising activities aiming at involvement of citizens into initiatives addressing different environmental related issues.
Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	Will the projects have an effect on the protection and rehabilitation of cultural and natural heritage?	All projects under SO 2.1 and SO 2.3 include activities directly addressing natural and cultural heritage protection including responsible public behavior and thus they will have positive effect on those issues.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable management and planning of cultural and natural landscape?	The majority of projects do not include activities directly related to promotion of sustainable management and planning of cultural and natural landscape and are expected to have neutral effect on that.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of natural resources towards sustainable tourism?	Most of the projects under PA 2 are expected to increase the capacity of local communities for sustainable tourism development through promotion initiatives for protection of natural and cultural resources.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of responsible behaviour of the public by increasing education and awareness on heritage and landscape preservation and protection?	The information campaigns foreseen to be undertaken by all projects under PA 2 will raise awareness of the cultural heritage for tourism development and in that respect will contribute to increasing the public awareness on heritage and landscape preservation and protection.

**INFORMATION ON THE MEASURES CONCERNING MONITORING AND CONTROL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME**

The table below provides summarised information on the level of achievement of the SEA indicators under the Programme as presented in section 10.1 of the SEA Report. Taking into consideration the fact that the subsidy contracts were signed in October 2016 and no implementation of activities has started by the end of the year, the annual achievement of the SEA indicators for 2016 is “0”.

ID	Indicator (name of indicator)	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Annual Value							Source of data		
				2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		2023	
OI 1.1.1	Number of supported investments for improving the environmental conditions in the programme region	Number	15	0									AIRs
OI 1.1.2	Number of nature protected areas addressed by supported interventions	Kilometres	5	0									AIRs
OI 1.2.1	Number of supported joint mechanisms for environmental protection, promotion of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources	Number	5	0									AIRs
OI 1.2.2	Number of institutions/organizations involved in environmental related activities	Number	20	0									AIRs
OI 1.2.3	Number of participants in environmental related trainings and campaigns	Number	300	0									AIRs
OI 1.3.1	Supported investments for improving disaster management and risk prevention	Number	5	0									AIRs
OI 1.3.2	Supported investments for adaptation and mitigation of climate change consequences	Number	5	0									AIRs
OI 1.4.1	Supported joint mechanisms for disaster management and risk prevention and for promotion of climate change awareness	Number	3	0									AIRs

OI 1.4.2	Number of institutions/organizations involved in initiatives related to risk prevention and management	Number	10	0									AIRs
OI 1.4.3	Number of participants in trainings and campaigns in the field of risk prevention, (including marginalized communities and other vulnerable groups)	Number	300	0									AIRs
OI 2.1.1	Number of cultural and historical touristic sites reconstructed / restored / covered by conservation and protection actions	Number	25	0									AIRs
OI 2.1.2	Length of new or reconstructed or upgraded access roads to natural, cultural and historic tourism sites, cycling routes and walking paths	km	5	0									AIRs
OI 2.1.3	Number of newly built or reconstructed or upgraded tourist related facilities and attractions	Number	10	0									AIRs
OI 2.1.4	Number of created/reconstructed facilities for disabled people for access to or in the supported touristic sites	Number	5	0									AIRs
OI 3.1.1	Supported investments for improving the competitiveness of businesses in the programme region	Number	5	0									AIRs
OI 3.1.3	Number of participants (split into men and women) in supported training and qualification initiatives	Number	150	0									AIRs
OI 3.2.1	Supported initiatives for economic development and investment promotion	Number	10	0									AIRs



## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (IF ANY)

From the result of the self-assessment carried out by beneficiaries, it could be summarized that *none of the projects will have negative effect on any of the six environmental issues*. Due to the fact that only 15 out of the 45 contracted projects envisage construction works, most of the beneficiaries' answers show that their projects will have neutral environmental consequences.

The impact on the different environmental issues is expected to be achieved mainly through measures as follows:

- Most favourable **air and climate** conditions are foreseen to be obtained through the envisaged under SO 1.1 “Environmental protection and sustainable use of the common natural resources of the CBC area” activities, especially with focus on: reduction of air pollution (GHG emissions); sustainable use of energy resources and promotion of responsible behavior of the public. Those projects will contribute to increasing of public knowledge about air pollution and mitigation climate changes. In addition they will stimulate the creation of responsible behavior of the general public towards nature protection. The projects under the rest of the Specific objectives will have neutral influence on the air and climate conditions.
- The expected positive effects on **population and human health** is linked mainly to the results from the implementation of the projects under SO 1.1. and SO 1.2 while the rest of the projects show neutral influence on the reduction of diseases. Projects under PA 1 will contribute to increasing of public knowledge about the different kinds of environmental pollution of air, water and soil. They will stimulate the creation of responsible behavior of the general public towards controls of environmental related health risks and hazards.
- As regards **Water** issues, all projects except those under SO 1.2 will have a neutral or no effect on the ecological and chemical status of water bodies and resources. The implementation of the three projects under SO 1.2 will ensure a strong positive influence on the water quality by reducing the GHG emissions in long terms. In addition the envisaged promotional activities concerning sustainable use of water resources are expected to influence indirectly the quality of life in the CBC region, as well as the ecological status of the water bodies.
- In reference to the influence of the projects on **Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora**, most of the projects activities will have neutral effect as they do not include direct interventions in nature protected sites since they foresee mainly promotional and capacity building measures such as training courses for conservation and preservation of natural heritage. The expectations are that these activities will stimulate and encourage the responsible behavior of the participants and general public involved.
- Regarding **Soil issues**, most of the projects will have neutral effect on the preservation of the soil resources. The projects under SO 3.1 aiming to enhance organic production will have positive effect in conservation of soil composition through crop rotation and use of natural soil fertilizers. The development of organic farming practices will contribute to the promotion of sustainable use of soil resources.
- **Cultural/Natural heritage and landscape** will be positively influenced through the implementation of investment activities under PA 2 addressing conservation and restoration of cultural and natural sites. In

addition the planned soft measures promoting cultural and natural heritage (including training courses, cultural fairs/events, informational materials, etc.) will inform the general public on the possible ways for preservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage.

Following the recommendations given in the Environmental statement, no activities such as "safari" hiking, "off-routes" tracking for monitoring of rare and endangered species" are envisaged in the contacted projects. In addition the proposed investments are in line with the relevant national legislation for the respective type of construction works (including those related to development of tourism concerning their conformity with the recreation capacity of the territory and a proper waste water treatment.

**As a general conclusion it could be summarised that projects under PA 1 are those expected to have positive effect on five of the environmental issues with the exception of Cultural/Natural heritage and landscape where the strongest positive effect is expected to be obtained by the implementation of the projects under PA 2. Projects that include awareness raising activities show most significant positive influence to all six environmental issues and related questions.**

**All recommendations laid down in the Environmental Statement, issued by the Ministry of Environment and Water of Bulgaria, were strictly followed on every stage of the application, evaluation and selection of projects for funding under INTERREG-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.**

**Given the above it can be concluded that at the present moment no corrective measures have to be foreseen since all projects are in conformity with the SEA report expectations and none of them will have a negative effect on any of the six environmental issues.**