

Strategic Environmental Assessment for IPA CBC programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina Montenegro 2014-2020

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Contact to the	DVOKUT ECRO d.o.o.
consulting service	Trnjanska 37, Zagreb
provider	tel. +385 1 6114 867
	fax. +385 1 6155 875
	www.dvokut-ecro.hr

Director Marta Brkić	
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GLOSARY

Term or acronym	Definition	
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation	
IPA	The EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance	
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	
SEA Directive	Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001	
on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.		
Scoping Determination of scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment		



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Scoping Report

This document outlines key characteristics of the proposed IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro for the programming period 2014-2020 (hereafter CBC HR-BiH-MNE 2014-2020) which is available at the state of initiation of the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) for this programming document.

The document provides information for relevant environmental authorities in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in order to obtain their advice on the scope of the SEA study. The SEA study should be elaborated - based on the decision of the Managing Authority - by mid September 2014.



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2 DETERMINING THE SUBJECT OF THE PROGRAMME TO THE SEA

2.1 The outline of the programme

The scoping document is prepared for 3 draft (25 July 2014) of the CBC HR-BiH-MNE 2014-2020.

IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 covers the territory of borders between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, between Croatia and Montenegro and between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In other words, programme area covers NUTS III regions (or equivalent) which on the Croatian side includes 12 counties, on the side of Bosnia and Herzegovina 95 municipalities and on the side of Montenegrin border 10 municipalities. This amounts to total of 87,453.95 km2 of programme area with 5,587,836.00 inhabitants.

2.2 Objectives and areas of intervention

The IPA CBC Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 builds on the following Thematic Priorities (TP) which are in line with issues identified as well as with development goals set out in relevant national strategy papers:

- Employment, labour market, social inclusion, health (TP 1)
- Environment, risk prevention and energy production (TP 2)
- Tourism and cultural and natural heritage (TP 4)
- Competitiveness and SME development (TP 7)

The selected Thematic Priorities have been translated into four priority axes, which reflect the needs and challenges as identified in the situational analysis of the programme area. For each Thematic Priority one or two specific objectives (SO) were then defined. The seven SOs indicate specific changes that the IPA CBC Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 intends to reach.

2.3 Sectors that the programme covers

As stated above, the programme covers four thematic objectives with logically corresponding sectoral interventions that are outlined below. For each of use, we have highlighted in those interventions that may possibly have adverse environmental impacts in red colour (those that warrant increased attention are marked in **bold**) and those interventions with the likely positive impacts in green colour (those that warrant increased attention are marked in **bold**). Other interventions - all the rest of text not highlighted in red or green - are not likely to have significant environmental impacts.



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Priority Axis 1 / THEMATIC PRIORITY 1: Employment, labour market, social inclusion, health

Priority Axis 1 Objective: To contribute to building efficient and effective labour market and to enhance social inclusion as well as social and healthcare

Budget: 7.500.000,00 EUR

Specific objectives	Expected results	Type of actions
Specific objectives 1.1. To improve facilities for employment by developing capacities and skills of the programme area	Expected results 1.1 Improved facilities for employment due to developed capacities and skills in the programme area and strengthened cooperation between relevant stakeholders	Type of actions - Developing and implementing lifelong learning programmes that aim to provide programme area inhabitants the possibility to gain knowledge / experiences / qualifications in line with the labour market needs. - Supporting education on self-employment, entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship including related advisory programmes for entrepreneurship start-ups - Developing and implementing activities related to vocational rehabilitation (reintroducing people to work) including small scale infrastructure and equipment. - Pilot employment initiative projects including volunteerism, addressing common employment potentials of the programme area. - Supporting cross-border networks in order to enhance social dialogue. - Networking of institutions in order to enhance social entrepreneurship including support to business counselling and setting-up of social enterprises. - Activities aiming to increase contacts and cooperation of students, graduates, educational and vocational institutions with potential employers in public and private sector including organisation of joint job fairs/roundtables/ promotional events and campaigns. - Training programs, awareness raising campaigns /fairs etc. for recipients of social care in order to encourage them for their involvement/active role in social entrepreneurship.
		order to encourage them for their involvement/active role in social entrepreneurship Providing support to vulnerable groups (such as youth, disabled, elderly, women, minorities, inactive people, etc.) in order to enable them with access to employment through developing
1.2. To improve services in the area of public health and social welfare sector	1.2 Improved services in the area of public health and social welfare sector	 and implementing related education programmes. Providing support to public health institutions in promoting healthy lifestyles and disease prevention. Providing support to public health institutions in improving accessibility and effectiveness (e.g. small infrastructure and equipment), including related pilot projects. Implementing ICT solutions in order to improve public health and social care services. Networking of organisations (e.g. social care services, family centres, health care institutions, education institutions, etc.) in order to create joint activities for enhancing accessibility to social services. Awareness rising activities in promotion of different types of services available for vulnerable groups.



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Priority Axis 2 / THEMATIC PRIORITY 2: Environment, climate change, risk prevention:

Priority Axis 2 Objective: To protect the environment, improve risk prevention and sustainable energy

production

Budget: 12.500.000,00 EUR

Specific objectives	Expected results	Type of actions
2.1. To promote	2.1 Improved	- Awareness raising activities, information campaigns and education and training
and improve	protection of	concerning environmental and natural resources protection.
environment and	natural resources	- Developing and implementing joint environmental management initiatives. For example:
nature protection	and management	development of joint management plans for nature protected areas, protection of natural
through natural	systems for risk	resources, monitoring and exchange of data, biodiversity and geo-diversity maps,
resources	prevention	conservation of natural habitats.
protection and		- Improving and upgrading the procedures and operations of public utility companies
management		involved in water supply, waste water treatment and solid waste collection.
systems for risk		- Actions upgrading small scale infrastructure and equipment including elaboration of
prevention		project documentation for future investment projects.
		- Improving protection systems (from fire, flood, draught) through for example:
		- Establishing joint networks for development and implementation of joint plans.
		- Cross-border measures and tools for reducing the risk of natural disasters.
		- Implementing joint interventions in case of accidents and natural disasters and
		establishment of joint emergency centres, including small-scale infrastructure and
		equipment.
2. 2. To promote	2.2. Increased	- Transfer of knowledge (awareness raising), exchange of experience and capacity building
and enhance	capacities and	on the utilization of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency.
utilization of	improved	- Elaboration of joint studies and documentation on (the utilization of) renewable energy
renewable energy	infrastructure for	resources and energy efficiency.
resources and	utilisation of	- Developing and implementing joint pilot projects in energy efficiency and renewable
strengthen energy	renewable energy	energy resources.
efficiency	resources and	- Investing in joint infrastructure on sustainable energy production and energy efficiency.
	application of	- Joint incentives in order to improve legal framework in the area of renewable energy
	energy efficiency	resources and energy efficiency (e.g. analyses, comparisons, recommendation,
		local/regional action plans etc.).



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Priority Axis 3 / THEMATIC PRIORITY 4: Tourism, cultural and natural heritage

Priority Axis 3 Objective: To encourage tourism and to preserve cultural and natural heritage

Budget: 15.000.000,00 EUR

Specific objectives	Expected results	Type of actions
4.1. To strengthen and diversify the tourism offer	4.1 Strengthened and diversified tourism offer in the programme area	 Developing, promoting and branding of joint tourism niches and products including developing joint tourism activities and diversification of tourism offer (inclusion of other sectors e.g. agriculture, organic food supply, handicrafts and other local products, culture, sustainable transport, etc. in order to develop projects in ecotourism, hunting, rural, mountain, excursion, cultural, adventure, religious, nautical, conference, health and wellness and spa tourism. Joint incentives of integrating culture, nature and leisure activities into tourism offer Developing complementary services in tourist offer valorising natural and cultural potentials of the programme area. Promoting and introducing (international) certifications and standards, in order to improve the quality of tourism providers and their services. Support to development and improvement in destination management capacity building in tourism sector (e.g. by developing destination management skills and focusing on quality (e.g. standardisation) and integration of offers, tourist destination development, management, marketing and promotion). Cross-border networking of institutions in tourism sector, including establishment of clusters. Developing innovative offers and services using ICT and other technologies (e.g. GPS routes, booking systems). Developing and improving small-scale tourism infrastructure such as: walking paths,
4.2. To enable a better	4.2 Improved management and	 cycling routes, hiking, riding trails, signposting, visitor centres, etc. Valuating, preserving, restoring and reviving (e.g. animation of site) cultural, historical and natural heritage e.g. UNESCO and other historical and cultural sites and landscapes,
management and	sustainable use of	including enabling or improving access to them.
sustainable use of	cultural and	- Enabling joint cultural cooperation initiatives including creation of joint cultural events
the cultural and	natural heritage	such as cultural festivals, cultural exchanges, joint theatre performances or
natural heritage		joint/traveling exhibitions."
		- Training programs in quality assurance systems and different types of standardisation
		(e.g. ISO certification, etc.) on cultural and natural heritage.
		- Investments in certification including training, equipment supply but also small scale
		infrastructure on cultural and natural heritage.



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Priority Axis 4 / THEMATIC PRIORITY 7: Competitiveness and SME development

<u>Priority Axis 4</u> Objective: Enhancing competitiveness and development of business environment in the

programme area

Budget: 10.000.000,00 EUR



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3 DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS

3.1 Environmental effects at regional and transboundary level

Positive effects

The draft OP proactively aims to promote sustainable development. The chapter 6.1 highlights that sustainable development is one of the key issues for this cross border program because its territory rich in natural and cultural resources has a vast potential to improve the cross-border environmental protection, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster resilience and risk prevention and management. There is also a strong need for this improvement as has been identified in the situation analysis and SWOT.

Therefore the largest budget is reserved for Priority Axis 2, which is completely focused on sustainable development. Priority 2 is not only focusing on biodiversity and environmental protection, risk prevention and risk management and improved management of water, waste and waste treatment but also on energy efficiency and renewable energy. Operations will have to show clearly how they contribute to the results indicators of Priority Axis 2

- % of hotspots with remediation plans in use
- km2 covered by improved management systems
- % Increase of energy collected though renewable resources in total energy collected in 3 countries

Furthermore sustainable development is addressed in all four Priority Axes. Operations will have to indicate in the application form how they contributed to sustainable development. This will enable the programme to monitor if:

- 75 % of operations is positively contributing to sustainable development
- 20 % of operations is having its main focus on sustainable development

During the selection procedure, two questions are going to be to be asked - where appropriate for interventions in all Priority Axes:

- to what extent is the operation contributing to the realization of the EU2020 goals of sustainable development (e.g. decrease of greenhouse gas emissions, the increase in energy efficiency and in renewable energy production)?
- To what extent will the operations stimulate a sustainable development?

For Priority Axis 1 - which focuses on enhancing efficient and effective labour market, social inclusion and improved healthcare — this could be for example through an increase in green jobs, supporting green entrepreneurship and green business principals in general, incorporating elements of sustainability in healthcare and other social sector interventions.



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For Priority Axis 2 – which focuses on protecting the environment, improve risk prevention and sustainable energy production - all operations will have to address sustainable development, e.g. through environmental protection, energy efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster resilience and risk prevention and management.

For Priority Axis 3 – which focuses on encouraging tourism and preserving cultural and natural heritage – this could for example be through clearly sustainable tourism operations which are not only stimulating economic development but also clearly protecting the cultural and/or natural heritage and/or the environment.

For Priority Axis 4 – which focuses on enhancing competitiveness, development of business environment and investment – this could be for example through green entrepreneurship, business focused on sustainable development, preventions of investments with considerable negative environmental and climate effects and overall sustainability of the investment.

Adverse effects

As evident from the proposed sector interventions outlined in chapter 2.3., the draft OP will likely achieve overall positive environmental impacts. Most of the interventions proposed will have either positive impacts or will have no impacts on the environment. Only two interventions that may have adverse impacts that warrant increased attention have been identified:

- Developing and implementing joint pilot projects in energy efficiency and renewable energy resources.
- Investing in joint infrastructure on sustainable energy production and energy efficiency.

A question arises as to whether these interventions may lead to significant impacts that could not managed through more detailed studies on project-level)such as EIA, or standard types of permits related to environmental matters that are already in place in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro) and whether SEA is actually needed. In the view of the author of this report, the none of impacts is likely to be significant effects based on the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects stipulated in the Annex II of the SEA Directive.

In this regard, it is proposed to undertake a simplified form of SEA and focus it on providing suggestions for detailed planning of each of the intervention in order to reduce possible risks and maximize their environmental benefits.

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3.2 Characteristics of the affected territory

The programme area covers NUTS III regions in the cross border territory of Croatian – Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegron border. The programme area covers 18,312 of km² and has a population of approximately 2.3 million persons.

On the Croatian side, programme area includes 4 Counties on the north-east of Croatia (NUTS III regions): Osječko-baranjska, Vukovarsko-srijemska, Brodsko-posavska and Požeško-slavonska.

On the Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegron side, programme area covers 5 districts on north-west of Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro (NUTS III regions): North Bačka, West Bačka, South Bačka, Srem and Mačva district.

Out of Croatian part of programme area, Osječko-baranjska has the biggest size and the biggest population. Out of Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegron programme area, Bačka district has the biggest size and is also the most populated. The programme area is mainly rural with a number of small and medium towns. The two largest urban centres are Osijek in Croatia and Novi Sad in Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro.

3.3 Characteristics of the environmental effects of the programme

The SEA will consider the following key issues of concern:

- Biodiversity and Landscape
- Flooding (and droughts),
- Sustainable energy

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4 DEFINING THE SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

4.1 Relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives

Partnership Agreement (HR) identifies main funding priorities for the ESI fund for Croatia for the period 2014-2010. These are:

- Innovative and competitive business and research environment
- Promoting energy efficiency, renewable energies and protecting natural resources
- Sustainable and modern transport and network infrastructure
- Enhancing labour market participation and quality of the education system
- Active inclusion and reduction of poverty
- Supporting the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of public administration and judiciary

Indicative Strategy Paper for BA identifies main funding priorities in the following areas:

- Democracy and management
- Rule of law and basic rights
- Competitiveness and innovation, local development strategies
- Education, employment and social policies

Indicative Strategy Paper for ME identifies main funding priorities in the following areas:

- Democracy and governance
- Rule of law and fundamental rights
- Environment and climate action
- Transport
- Competitiveness and innovation
- Education, employment and social policies
- Agriculture and rural development
- Regional cooperation and territorial cooperation

4.2 Identified environmental problems

The draft OP outlines the following key environmental strengths and weaknesses of the study area as follows:

Strengths

- Diverse environment, landscape richness and richness of natural resources in general.
- Water richness in the programme area (rivers, lakes and sea).



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- Biodiversity in the programme area with many species and habitats where some world endangered species and habitats are very well preserved.
- Protected areas preserved and well managed.
- Existing wind farms in Croatian programme area.
- A large part of the programme area is covered by forests.
- Montenegrin significant potential in generating energy form renewable energy resources (up to 33,4% of total primary energy generation).
- High number of UNESCO protected sites.
- High number of nature protected sites.

Weaknesses

- Programme area is not fully aligned with European standards in waste-water and waste treatment with somewhat better situation in Croatia as a Member State.
- Management of existing environmental "hot-spots" in need for improvement in all 3 countries.
- Existing mine-suspected areas in the programme area.
- Insufficient investment in solid waste management.

Opportunities

- The border region has a potential for increasing production of renewable energy especially from agricultural waste and forest residues (biomass), geothermal, solar and wind energy (Mediterranean, Dinaric and Pannonia basin areas).
- Programme area has a potential and need for joint management and prevention of natural disasters due to shared high risk in areas of flood, droughts, natural disasters and fire.
- Programme area has a potential and need for joint management and initiatives in the areas of forestry and water management.
- Energy efficiency awareness rising among public and relevant stakeholders in the programme area.
- Awareness among public and relevant stakeholders on environmental protection and the need for organized waste management.
- Sustainable agricultural and forestry production in accordance with the principles of sustainable soil management.
- River Sava and inland waters in general have potential to be used in combination with railway transport as an alternative to the currently dominant road transport network.

Threats

- Increasing frequency of flood, droughts, fire and other natural disasters due to climate change.
- Administrative burden for introducing new plans in renewable energy sector.
- Sea and water pollution (sea accidents, ballast water from vessels).
- Vulnerability of the programme area to both man-made and natural disasters.



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4.3 Baseline information

The draft OP states that the natural environment of the programme area is considered to be one of the key elements of economic and social capital driving of development but the degree of environmental protection in all programme countries is still lower than in other developed EU countries.

A certain number of **environmental hot spots** has been detected in the programme area due to the chemical, petrochemical, machinery manufacture, metallurgical, food and oil industries and increased pollution levels in certain parts.

A key feature of the environment in the northern part of the programme area is that for a large part of its length the border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina is constituted by the river Sava. The river is a defining and common feature and any environmental issues linked to the Sava clearly require joint action.

Key feature of the **southern part of the programme area is Adriatic Sea with its highly sensitive marine ecosystem**. Coastal areas are also characterized by a high degree of biodiversity, sensitive habitats and ecosystems. Both, Adriatic Sea and coastal areas play significant role in the development of economy, cultural and social life of the programme area. In this sense, Adriatic Sea should be given special attention in terms of its use and conservation.

Lack of equipment for the purification of urban and industrial wastewater and solid waste represent serious environmental risks with irreversible consequences related to significant economic and social consequences.

Due to rich rainfall and relatively well-preserved water resources, the programme area has good quality and abundant underground and surface waters. Richness and quality of water resources represent one of the most important comparative advantages of the whole area. Significant challenges are related to the protection of biodiversity, nature and landscape of the sea and coastal zone. Responses to these challenges should be sought through the protection of especially valuable habitats and through an integrated management of the whole area.

Energy indicators in programming area are showing lack of available energy resources and production capacities, but there are favourable conditions for renewable energy production from geothermal energy, hydro energy, solar and wind.

Programme area as the world in general is in growing trend of natural disasters in recent years due to its climatic and seismic conditions. Most serious damages are related to floods, droughts and fires. North-east of Croatian and North of Bosnian and Herzegovinian programme area as the south part of these two countries along river Neretva are at risk of floods, while the functionality of the flood protection system is still to reach its highest level. Coastal part of programme area is under influence of climate change as much as other parts



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however in relation to specific elements of this climate change high temperatures and long-lasting severe droughts this area is more than ever susceptible to open air. Fire-fighting system in these parts of programme area is not on the satisfactory level as well and it has to be improved.

4.4 Methods of the assessment

The SEA report will be prepared in accordance with the EC-endorsed "Handbook on SEA for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013" which represents a primary reference material for undertaking SEA which is still valid and remains recommended for the programming process 2014-2020. The handbook has been endorsed in 2006 by the two concerned directorates of the European Commission (DG Regional Development and DG Environment) as advisory material that is still being recommended for applying the SEA Directive within the programming of EU Structural Funds¹.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/SEA%20Guidance.pdf



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5 STRUCTURE OF THE SEA REPORT

The SEA Report will address all items specified in the Annex I of the SEA Directive. It will include the following items:

Executive summary

(j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the headings below.

Introduction

(a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;

Environmental baseline

- (b) (b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;
- (c) (c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
- (d) (d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;

Relevant environmental objectives and appraisal of the proposed strategy pursued in the programming document

(e) (e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;

Expected likely significant environmental effects, proposed mitigation measures and monitoring arrangements

- (f) the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;
- (g) (g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;
- (h) (h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;
- (i) (i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring;

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6 SEA PROCEDURE

6.1 Consultations

The Managing Authority for the IPA CBC HR-BiH-MNE 2014-2020 wishes to have the SEA report completed in mid-September 2014 and provide it for consultations to the public and relevant environmental authorities in accordance with national legislative requirements in both Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

7 EXPECTED ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ON THIRD COUNTRIES

As outlined in the chapter 3.1, the proposed CBC HR-BiH-MNE 2014-2020 will likely achieve overall positive transboundary impacts and is not expected to have any significant adverse transboundary impacts that would warrant attention.

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