

## **ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT**

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



**2018**

## INTRODUCTION

The current Monitoring Report is prepared in accordance with:

SEA Report of the Interreg - IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - Serbia

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 Bulgarian legislation:**

- 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. № 8-5/2014 issued by the Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW) of the Republic of Bulgaria

### **Relevant Serbian legislation:**

- Law on Air Protection
- Law on Waters
- Law for Environment Protection
- Energy Law
- Law on Energy Efficiency
- Law on Nature Protection
- Law for Environment Protection
- Law on Waste Management
- Law on Tourism
- Law on Heritage Protection

## GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROGRESS OF THE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The Programme was officially approved on 30th of July 2015 with EC Decision № C (2015) 5444.

During 2016 an amendment of the INTERREG - IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - Serbia (the Programme) was performed concerning the establishment of baseline and target values of qualitative programme result indicators and does not influence the envisaged Programme priorities and activities, respectively does not require new SEA report and new Environmental statement by the MoEW.

Total of 41 subsidy contracts have been financed under the First Call for proposals of the Programme. Two subsidy contracts of were terminated, due to high risk identified on their overall implementation. 2 projects have been completed in 2017, and another 32 of them in 2018. In 2019 only 5 projects are in implementation phase.

## 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 1, since they lead to significant damages on the environment and in particular on Biodiversity .

Taking into consideration the above requirements, the Managing Authority TCM Directorate, MRDPW has included all of them in 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).

According to the provisions in GfA, in case of investment projects that envisage construction works, the applicants shall provide:

- **Either** Positive Environmental Impact Assessment (positive opinion from the relevant body), required by the national legislation (B4.4)
- **Or** Statement issued by the relevant body clearly stated that Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary (notary certified for Bulgarian partners and certified by the responsible administrative body - for Serbian partners).

*At application stage* all 15 projects approved for financing that envisaged construction works provided the requested documents issued by the competent environmental bodies (according to the respective national legislation) showing 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 "TOURIST ATTRACTIVENESS: Supporting the development of competitive tourist attractions achieved through cooperation, thus contributing to the diversification of tourist product(s) in the cross-border region" – 13 projects;
- SO 1.2 "CROSS-BORDER TOURISTIC PRODUCT: Capturing economic benefits from development of natural and cultural heritage in the border area through creating common cross-border touristic destination(s)" – 2 project;

- SO 1.3 “PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE NETWORKING: Capitalising the effect of cultural, historical and natural heritage tourism on border communities through common actions” – 0 project;
- SO 2.1 “SKILLS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Supporting the development of attractive environment for advancement of young people in the border region achieved through cooperation” – 10 projects;
- SO 2.2 “PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE NETWORKING: Promote cooperation initiatives for and with young people, thus enhancing mobility of young people across borders” – 2 projects;
- SO 3.1 “JOINT RISK MANAGEMENT: To prevent and mitigate the consequences of natural and man-made cross-border disasters” – 9 projects
- SO 3.2 “3.2 NATURE PROTECTION: Promoting and enhancing the utilization of common natural resources, as well as stimulating nature protection in the programme area, through joint initiatives across the border” – 3 projects.

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

INFORMATION ON THE CARRIED OUT THE SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARISED 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	+	1	11	0	0	It is expected the majority of projects under SO 1.1 to have rather neutral effect on the environmental issues concerning Air and Climate. Only one project foresees measures that could indirectly positively influence air and climate conditions through planting of high and low vegetation and changing park lights, which is expected to have a positive impact on the environment and reduction of air pollution.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	4	8	0	0	The majority of the projects will have neutral effect. Four projects foresee activities encouraging responsible behavior of the public in regard to biodiversity, fauna and flora. Promotion of tourism through entire project through natural protection and promotion of natural heritage.
	Water	+	1	11	0	0	Almost all projects will have neutral effect on Water issues. One project foresees a positive impact through the irrigation system installation.
	Soil	+	1	11	0	0	Almost all projects will have neutral effect on Soil related issues.
	Population and Human Health	+	2	10	0	0	Almost all projects will have neutral effect on Population and Human Health issues. Two projects will have a positive impact on issues of population and human health. Within one of the two projects, Cultural centre purpose will be protection of area that it is responsible for. One of the main functions of Centre will be waste management near touristic and cultural national and regional heritage.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	11	1	0	0	All projects under SO 1.1, except one, foresee activities which will have positive influence through measures for preservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage and landscape. Protection and rehabilitation of cultural and natural heritage. Project partners from both sides will promote cultural heritage that they have in this CBC region. Long term effect on raising awareness and improving partnership between these 2 regions. Through implementation of the projects, improvement of sustainable management. Informing inhabitants of these regions on natural heritage that they have and can protect. Through that the awareness will be raised and it will improve sustainability of tourism in this regions. Seminars for awareness raising and

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							education to participants of these seminars.
PA 1 SO 1.2	Air and Climate	+	0	2	0	0	Projects financed under SO 1.2 are not expected to have any effect on Air and Climate since activities influencing air and climate issues are not included in any of the projects.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	0	2	0	0	Projects under SO 1.2 are not expected to have any effect on biodiversity, fauna and flora since none of the projects include any activity influencing biodiversity, fauna and flora.
	Water	+	0	2	0	0	Project under SO 1.2 are not expected to have any effect on Water since these projects don't include any activities influencing Water issues.
	Soil	+	0	2	0	0	Projects financed under SO 1.2 are not expected to have any effect on that issue since it does not include any activities influencing Soil issues.
	Population and Human Health	+	0	2	0	0	Projects financed under SO 1.2 are not expected to have any effect on that issue since it does not include activities influencing population and human health.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	2	0	0	0	Projects under SO 1.2 are expected to have a positive effect on cultural/natural heritage and landscape issue. Adventure tourism, promoted through one project, is built around various nature-friendly activities such as hiking, biking, ballooning, horse-riding, etc, and strongly related with the local natural resources. Another project has a positive effect on the protection of cultural heritage in terms of preserving the gastronomic heritage, the specificity of the cuisine of the cross-border region through registration - certification trademarks for specific traditional food products, through education/trainings that will preserve the recipes and specialties of the cuisine of the cross-border region.
PA 1 SO 1.3	Air and Climate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Water	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Soil	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Population and Human Health	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PA 2 SO 2.1	Air and Climate	+	2	7	0	0	Specific objective 2.1 is focused on youth's skills and entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is expected the projects to have

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			Positive (+) Environmental consequences	Neutral (0) Environmental consequences	Negative (-) Environmental consequences	Both positive and negative (+/-)	
							mainly neutral effect on environmental issues (including Air and Climate). Only two projects foresee measures that could indirectly positively influence air and climate conditions, i.e. procurement of vehicle for transportation of children to the training hall that will cover European standard for emissions EURO 6, and thus reduce the air emissions.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	0	0	9	0	0	Specific objective 2.1 is focused on youth's skills and entrepreneurship. It is expected the projects to have neutral effects on environmental issues (biodiversity, fauna and flora).
	Water	0	1	8	0	0	Specific objective 2.1 is focused on youth's skills and entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is expected the projects to have mainly neutral effect on environmental issues (including water). One project is related to reduction and prevention of water pollution and by that improvement of ecological and chemical status of waters. Due to the vicinity of Danube river, one of the most important tasks of the authorities is to maintain the territories clean in order to prevent the risks of water pollution. Pollution of the Danube river in the section where was implemented can lead to pollution of the Danube flow which can be considered a national thread. The activities under this project are one of many measures taken in order the risks of waste pollution to be prevented and mitigated.
	Soil	0	0	9	0	0	Specific objective 2.1 is focused on youth's skills and entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is expected the projects to have neutral effect on environmental issues (including Soils).
	Population and Human Health	+	0	9	0	0	All projects are expected to have neutral effect on that environmental issue.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	0	0	9	0	0	Specific objective 2.1 is focused on youth's skills and entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is expected the projects to have neutral effect on environmental issues (including on cultural/natural heritage and landscape).
PA 2 SO 2.2	Air and Climate	0	0	2	0	0	Both projects that are financed under SO 2.2 include activities related to establishment and development of youth networking initiatives (soft measures). Therefore the expected consequence to these environmental issues is neutral.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	0	0	2	0	0	It is expected for both projects to have neutral effect on that issue since no activities addressing biodiversity, fauna and flora are foreseen.



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	Water	0	0	2	0	0	It is expected both projects to have neutral effect on that issues since no activities addressing water resources are foreseen.
	Soil	0	0	2	0	0	It is expected both projects to have neutral effect on that issues since no activities addressing quality of soil are foreseen.
	Population and Human Health	0	0	2	0	0	It is expected both projects to have neutral effect on that issues since no activities addressing Population and Human Health are foreseen.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	0	0	2	0	0	It is expected both projects to have neutral effect on that issues since no activities addressing Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape are foreseen.
PA 3 SO 3.1	Air and Climate	+	8	1	0	0	One project under SO 3.1 is expected to have neutral effect on this issue. Eight projects will have positive effects on air and climate issues. Joint risk management activities and those related to forest fire prevention will have a strong and direct positive effect on air quality in the broad areas. Measures include: Specialized firefighting vehicles and equipment with Euro norm 6 which guarantees lower levels of exhaust emissions and reduction of air pollution; Trainings, school visits, public awareness campaigns in fire prevention and treatment; Supply of equipment for cleaning dumpsites; Cleaning illegal dumpsites in order to reduce the risks and prevent forest any other type of fires related to waste; Demonstrational cleaning of two landfills in Vidin and two landfills in Zajecar will attract the attention of different age and target groups to eco, clean and safe lifestyles. The events will demonstrate the importance of clean territory and the program impact in front of different target groups and stakeholders and will stress the importance of responsible behavior related to waste and respectively fighting climate change.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	9	0	0	0	The implementation of all nine projects under SO 3.1 will influence positively on biodiversity, fauna and flora through measures for reducing the risk of extinction of the river/forest fauna and flora, public awareness campaigns, trainings. It is expected through projects to reduce and prevent further risks related to ingestion of non-degradable waste by animals and by reduction and prevention of spread of the waste from the dumpsites protection of the environment and the biodiversity in the region. The cleanings of dumpsites serve as a demonstration

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							of the huge dimensions of waste problem in the region to raise the awareness and promote the importance of responsible behavior related to waste in order of environment protection and protection of biodiversity and natural areas.
	Water	+	6	3	0	0	Six projects will have a positive effect on water resources through implementation of measures for sewage treatment and prevention of water pollution, while for 3 projects it is expected to have a neutral impact. Implementation of the projects is related to reduction and prevention of water pollution and by that improvement of ecological and chemical status of waters and preservation of natural mechanical, chemical, biochemical and hydrology processes in the river system. Expected is building protective systems and facilities, measures related to the spatial planning of the territory, regular cleaning of river beds and their maintenance in conditions of natural conduction and increasing the readiness to prevent or reduce the negative consequences from floods, through population awareness, preparation and planning of rescue activities. The supply of specialized flood prevention equipment contributes to the protection of the environment, the strengthening of the riverbed and the state of rivers to prevent natural disasters.
	Soil	+	5	4	0	0	Five projects will have positive effect on soil preservation. Those projects will contribute to preservation of soil functionality in cases of fires and floods through preventive measures which will be made possible due to provision of the specialized equipment for fire and flood fighting. Soil pollution in the region is often related to waste. For that reason implementation of the projects aims to reduce and prevent those risks and to attract the attention of citizens and stakeholders to the issues of waste management and cleaning in relation to soil protection.
	Population and Human Health	+	6	3	0	0	It is expected that six projects will have positive effects on population and human health in cases of fires and floods since the specialized equipment for reactions in such cases and prevention of flood will be supplied and the skills of professionals and the awareness of all stakeholders will be improved during the project implementation through the envisaged activities. Promotion of responsible behavior and

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							adequate reactions of professionals and public bodies in cases of fires and floods and their prevention through organization of seminars, elaboration of joint action plan for management of risk situations, roundtables on raising awareness among stakeholders on common risk management. The projects will affect the reduction of diseases caused by natural hazards though reducing and preventing risks related to air, water and soil pollution by waste and prevention and reduction of risks of disasters (droughts, floods, forest fires etc.) related to waste, prevention and mitigation of the consequences of man-made cross-border. The construction of a retaining wall in the river will limit future contamination dangerous to human health. The cleanings of dumpsites promote environmentally-responsible behavior of the public by involving the citizens into the solution of environmental problems. Regular cleaning of river beds and the maintenance of normal and natural water conduction.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	5	4	0	0	Four out of 9 projects will have no direct influence on cultural/natural heritage and landscape issues. Five projects will have a positive effect on cultural/natural heritage and landscape through significant limitation of the river body pollution, through urbanization of the town center and thus tourist attractiveness, through restoring landscape in its natural form by retaining the riverbank of retaining walls.
PA 3 SO 3.2	Air and Climate	+	3	0	0	0	All three projects under SO 3.2 will positively influence the air and climate conditions through implementation of waste management measures and measures for reducing the level of air pollution caused by harmful emissions. Measures that will be undertaken are reduction of air pollution, by avoiding the accumulation of biodegradable waste; Environmentally friendly transport – new ecological waste collecting vehicle; Trilingual Joint action plan for prevention of air pollution; Lower level of landfilling and reduction of harmful emissions in the air; Promotion of use of public transport; Promotion of composting of biodegradable waste; Reuse and turning of agriculture manure into compost which will reduce methane and CO2 emissions.
	Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	+	2	1	0	0	One project is not expected to have impact on biodiversity,

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							fauna and flora. Two projects will have positive effect on biodiversity, fauna and flora through preservation of environment and cleaner soil, water and air and supporting environment protection. Measures/activities establishment of hatchery for the recovery of populations of endemic fish species, study on endangered fishes and biodiversity condition, construction of educational camp on the protection of biodiversity and river species „ECO MOUNTAIN CAMP“, supply of special equipment for exploring of flora and fauna, research and protection programme for rare river species, use of compost on the agriculture territories which will contribute natural fertilization of the lands and increase of microorganisms' biodiversity, increase the immunity of the plants, thus supporting the natural habitats and rich biological diversity.
	Water	+	2	1	0	0	One project under SO 3.2 is expected to have neutral effect on this issue. Two projects will have positive impact on water by envisaging actions for decrease of the pollution of underground waters; Support of the use of chemicals and pesticides in the agriculture; Development of joint action plan for prevention of soil, air, water and for waste management.
	Soil	+	3	0	0	0	The actions foreseen in all three projects are expected to have positive effect on protecting/improving soil conditions. It is envisaged to preserve soil functionality through avoiding the municipality waste lodgments; school training campaigns about the municipal wastes and their collection and disposing; Production of compost that will impact the soil functionality, its physical and chemical structure and enrichment; Composting of biodegradable waste and use of compost will contribute in long term to improvement of the quality and functionality of the soil.
	Population and Human Health	+	3	0	0	0	All three projects will implement measures to prevent spreading of diseases and pollution thus having a positive effect on population and human health through optimization of the systems for organizing and collecting household waste to the regional landfill and prevents the establishment of unregulated landfills by promotion among the local community; School campaign and information campaign among the community about the waste disposing, thus developing an environmentally-

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							responsible behavior among the local community. The use of compost will contribute to production of cleaner, safe, organic food and reduction of diseases caused by consumption of contaminated food. The use of compost significantly decrease the risk of erosion, thus contributes to prevention of floods and other man-made disasters, involving citizens in general measures for sustainable waste management/bio-waste reuse.
	Cultural/Natural Heritage and Landscape	+	2	1	0	0	Two projects under SO 3.2 are expected to have a positive effect on cultural/natural heritage and landscape by promoting responsible environmental-friendly behavior of the local communities through information and public awareness campaigns that are expected to result in preservation of natural heritage in the cross-border region and by development of joint action plan for prevention of soil, air and water in cross border region and through construction of educational camp on the protection of biodiversity and river species. Promotion of composting of bio-waste and production of compost will have significant positive effect on the behavior of the local communities regarding biodiversity enrichment and natural areas protection. One project under SO 3.2 is expected to have a neutral effect on this issue.

**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
+	14	15	10	9	11	20
-	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>0</b>	23	22	27	28	26	17
+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0

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

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Environmental questions / indicators	Answers / Comments
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 3.1 and SO 3.2, related to environmental protection with focus on risk management, such as: forest fire prevention and management, floods and droughts prevention and management, reducing air pollution through lower level of landfilling (waste management), etc. The rest of the projects do not have any significant direct impact 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 for projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 to have a positive effect on the reduction of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Those projects are focused on early detection and fast extinguishing of fires (i.e. prevention of quick spreading of GHG emissions, reuse of agriculture manure, waste management, landfills cleaning, etc.) 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 3.1, 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 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?	All projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 are expected to have positive long-term effect on preservation of the existing ecosystems in the targeted cross-border region. Projects foresee activities related to preservation of biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems, research and analysis of preserving biodiversity, models and methods of local and regional biodiversity preservation of rare and protected species.
	Will the projects have an effect on the decrease in loss of biodiversity?	Projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 will have effect on the preservation of biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems through more effective fire prevention and rescue measures in case of floods and landslides.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of responsible behavior of the public by involving the	Communication and visibility activities, as well as public debates, round tables and public awareness campaigns foreseen within the projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 will contribute

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (for which the environmental consequences are appraised according to Directive 2001/42/EC)	Environmental questions / indicators	Answers / Comments
	citizens in protecting biodiversity and natural areas?	for changing public behavior to protecting biodiversity and natural areas. Promotion of composting of bio-waste and production of compost that will have significant positive effect on the behavior of the local communities regarding biodiversity enrichment and natural areas protection is one of the measures.
	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 direct effect on that issue.
Water	Will the projects have an effect on the improvement of ecological and chemical status of water bodies?	The strongest positive effect on ecological and chemical status of water bodies is expected in projects under SO 3.1, through measures for decrease the pollution of underground waters, elaboration of action plan for better waste management, improvement of sewage treatment, etc.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of water resources?	Projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 will have a long-term effect on the promotion of sustainable use of water resources by implementation of joint actions for floods prevention, reduction and prevention of water pollution, the strengthening of the riverbeds and the state of rivers to prevent natural disasters and awareness-raising campaigns.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of sustainable tourism towards water resources preservation?	None of projects envisage activities with effect on the promotion of sustainable tourism addressing water resources.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of responsible behavior of the public by involving the citizens into sustainable water use?	Projects envisage activities with direct effect on the water resources preservation through awareness-raising campaigns.
Soil	Will the projects have an effect on the preservation of the soil functionality	Projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 are expected to limit the process of soil erosion and to preserve soil functionality through reduction of forest fires. In addition, one project under SO 3.2 addressing landfilling issues will lead to enrichment of soils physical and chemical content and microorganisms.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of soil resource	One project under SO 3.2 focused on composting of biodegradable waste will have direct impact on this issue.
	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 behavior of the public by increasing education and awareness on soil protection?	Concrete actions envisaged in projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 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 and fires cause material damages and are a prerequisite for

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	diseases caused by natural hazards?	spreading of diseases, all projects under SO 3.1 (addressing flood, fires and disasters protection measures) have a positive 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 directly 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 3.1 and 3.2 addressing risk prevention and management of natural and man-made disasters and nature protection will have positive effect on these issues. The majority of projects envisage information campaigns for responsible behavior and adequate reactions of professionals and public bodies in cases of fires and floods.
	Will the project have an effect on the promotion of sustainable waste management to protect human health?	One project under SO 3.2 removing existing dumpsites will have a direct effect on this issue with improving the overall level of environmental conditions and will help protecting citizens' health.
	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 3.1 and SO 3.2 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 1.1 and SO 1.3 include activities directly addressing natural and cultural heritage protection including responsible public behavior and thus they will have positive effect on those issues. In addition some projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 include activities indirectly addressing natural heritage protection.
	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. Seven projects under SO 1.1 include activities that will positively influence cultural landscape.
	Will the projects have an effect on the promotion of sustainable use of natural resources towards sustainable tourism?	Most of the projects under PA 1 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 behavior 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 PA1 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 gives summarized information on the level of achievement of the SEA indicators under the Programme as presented in section 10.1 of the SEA Report. Given the fact that at the time of the preparation of this report 18 subsidy contracts are in process of final site visits and approval of final Progress reports, below is included only the information for completed projects. The values will be available in the 2018 Annual Implementation Report (AIR).

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	Total number of reconstructed/restored cultural and historical touristic objects in the eligible border area	Number	15	0	0	0							AIRs
OI 1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractiveness	Number	15	0	0	4							AIRs
OI 2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, and training and information facilities	Number	15	0	0	6							AIRs
OI 3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	Number	6	0	0	1							AIRs
OI 3.1.2	Purchased specialised equipment related to disaster management	Number	10	0	0	1							AIRs
OI 3.1.3	Total number of supported interventions / investments related to risk prevention	Number	5	0	0	0							AIRs
OI 3.1.4	Total number of people participated in risk prevention and management training activities	Number	600	0	0	31							AIRs
OI 3.1.5	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	Persons	580000	0	0	36282							AIRs
OI 3.1.6	Population benefiting from forest fire protection measures	Persons	520000	0	0	36282							AIRs
OI 3.2.1	Protected areas/Natura 2000 sites in the border region with EU conform management plans	Number	5	0	0	0							AIRs
OI 3.2.2	Total number of joint interventions, addressing the preservation and restoration of CBC ecosystems, as well as preservation and improvement of the quality of soils, air and water.	Number	12	0	0	2							AIRs
OI 3.2.3	Education and awareness raising joint initiatives, in the field of preservation and protection of natural heritage, biodiversity and landscape	Number	15	0	0	2							AIRs
OI 3.2.4	Capacity building initiatives, trainings, exchange of experience and know-how in the field of sustainable use of natural resources	Number	15	0	0	4							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 both negative and positive effect*. Twenty one out of the 39 contracted projects envisage construction works and 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 favorable **air and climate** conditions are foreseen to be obtained through the envisaged under SO 3.1 “JOINT RISK MANAGEMENT: To prevent and mitigate the consequences of natural and man-made cross-border disaster” activities with focus on: forest fire prevention and risk management, 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** are also logically linked mainly to the expected results from the implementation of the projects under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2, while the rest of the projects show neutral influence on that. Taking into account that floods, fires and illegal dumpsites are a prerequisite for spreading of diseases, Projects under PA 3 will have a positive indirect influence on human health. They will stimulate the creation of responsible behavior of the general public towards controls of environmental and man-made related health risks and hazards.
- As regards **Water** issues, all projects except those under SO 3.1 and SO 3.2 will have a neutral or no effect on the ecological and chemical status of water bodies and resources. The implementation of four projects under PA 3 (2 under SO 3.1 and 2 under SO 3.2) will ensure a strong positive influence on the water quality by reducing the pollution of water caused by floods and landfilling. In addition the envisaged promotional activities indirectly influence responsible public behavior on sustainable use of water resources.
- 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 activities under PA 3 indirectly affect the preservation of biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems through fire and rescue measures, as well as waste management related activities.

- Regarding **Soil issues**, most of the projects will have neutral effect on the preservation of the soil resources. One project under SO 3.2 will include measures for better waste management in the cross-border region which are expected to have a positive effect on the soil functionality by effective control on the illegal dumpsites.
- **Cultural/Natural heritage and landscape** will be positively influenced through the implementation of investment activities under PA 1 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 development of tourism; nature and cultural protection and restoration; waste management, etc.) and a proper waste water treatment.

**As a general conclusion it could be summarized that projects under PA 3 are those expected to have positive effect on 5 of the environmental issues with the exception of Cultural/Natural heritage and landscape where the strongest positive effect is to be obtained by the implementation of the projects under PA 1. Projects that include joint risk management and nature protection measures show most significant positive influence on 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 in every stage of the application, evaluation and selection of projects for funding under the Interreg-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - Serbia.**

**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.**