



Minutes

Of the eighth meeting of the Monitoring committee of Operational Programme “Environment 2007 – 2013”

15th June 2010, 9:30 h, Capitol hall, Grand hotel Pomorie

The Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee of Operational Programme “Environment 2007 – 2013” and deputy minister of environment and water Mrs. Ivelina Vasileva opened the eighth meeting of the Monitoring committee of the programme. She welcomed the guests from the European Commission (EC), the members of the MC, as well as the other guests.

Mrs. Vasileva pointed out that despite the hard and full with challenges year, the OPE already has results – the first two major projects were approved by the EC. These are the projects for the water cycles of Vratsa and Gabrovo. Mrs. Vasileva added that the Programme has received its positive compliance assessment by the EC. She mentioned the successful implementation and the support from the partners, including EC, for the new approach in the water sector. Mrs. Vasileva cited the letter by the Director of DG Regio Mr. Dirk Ahner, in which he expresses the satisfaction of the Commission from the screening of the projects within the water sector. The corrective measures towards the non priority and ineffective projects were appreciated. The Deputy Minister mentioned the support of the Commission for the cancellation of financing of a group of technical assistance projects and a group of infrastructure projects in the water sector. The affected municipalities have agreed with that and the financial resource will be oriented towards projects compliant with the criteria.

As a result of these measures a financial correction by the EC is being avoided. In relation to this Mr. Ahner mentions in his letter that the certification of costs in the sector can continue, if compliant with the sound financial management principles.

Mrs. Vasileva also mentioned the simplification of progress reporting procedures.

In relation to the financial-economic conditions, the beneficiaries could receive 20% of advance payment.

Mrs. Vasileva mentioned the practice for keeping in touch with the beneficiaries by the reception days, held every Thursday. There are also monthly meetings with the municipalities, running infrastructure projects. Also the beneficiaries were trained during special trainings, organized by the Managing Authority (MA).

The Chairperson gave the floor to the representative from the EC, DG REGIO, Mr. Carsten Rasmussen. Mr. Rasmussen pointed out the heavy heritage left to the Minister – Mrs. Karadjova – in the sphere of European projects and the challenges in this respect. Mr. Rasmussen expressed appreciation for the help, provided by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and JASPERS.

Mr. Rasmusen pointed out that he expects clarification on the measures for strengthening the capacity of the MA and IB and how the ministry intends to hire more and qualified staff. He drew the conclusion from the performed screenings i.e. that the municipalities can't handle the management of the projects by themselves and the Ministry can assure the quality of the projects with the help of priority axis 4 – Technical assistance.

Mrs. Vasileva thanked Mr. Rasmussen and continued to the agenda of the meeting – approval of the Minutes from the Seventh meeting of the Monitoring committee. In relation to this the floor was given to the representative of the Unit of private economic enterprise. He said: “I do not agree with what is happening in summarizing of the statements made on the Seventh meeting. I raised the attention to the Communication plan and its ameliorations, presented on the meeting. I still do not agree that the real work should start in 2011 and end 2013. In my opinion the correspondence in my attempt to ameliorate to this was awkward. And the end was tragic. I think that we do not have to face a two-digit number of meetings in order to reach a serious level of summarizing of what is being herd here. Maybe not in vain, but I must say, I suppose, that all the colleagues are well-intentioned in what they are analyzing at the meetings, me as well. I want the case to be understood, the statement to be corrected in this part of the minutes and of course to have a better destiny this time, at the eighth meeting. Thank you!”

Mrs. Vasileva asked Mr. Yovev to send his comments in writing if they weren't. Mr. Rasmussen pointed out that the comments are being owned by their author and he proposed the minutes to be approved on the next meeting after revision.

The Chairperson of the MC accepted the proposal and again asked Mr. Yovev to send his comments in writing in order to be included in the text. He thanked for the help and said: “I will not do anything else in writing, because everyone who can follow the text, given in this summary of minutes and respectively the recording can see what it is about.”

The Chairperson of the MC assured Mr. Yovev that his request will be taken into account and proceeded with the next item on the agenda and gave the floor to Mrs. Rositsa Bodurova, senior expert in Monitoring and Reporting Department in Cohesion Policy for Environment Directorate to present the Annual report for 2009 and the progress according to LOTHAR.

Mrs. Bodurova explained that the report contains information on the progress achieved in 2009, but also for activities in 2010. At first place the report explains information on the Programme implementation by priorities.

By the end of 2008 a procedure for development of river basin management plans with beneficiaries River basin directorates within the MOEW. In April 2009 the submitted project proposal was approved and the project is under implementation. The two announced procedures under Priority axis 1 for agglomerations over 10 000 P.E. and between 2 000 and 10 000 P.E. were cancelled in July 2009 due to unclear criteria. The changes in the legislation in the water sector and the recommendation to include economic effectiveness criteria led to the elaboration of the new Approach and methodology for management of Priority Axis 1 of OPE, approved at the Seventh meeting of the MC. Details on the performed screening and the consequent activities would be provided later at the meeting.

Mrs. Bodurova also announced that 33 contracts are under implementation under Priority axis 2 and their total amount is over 20 million leva. Two of the projects (Strazhitsa and Vidin) were cancelled. Three invitations were sent to the municipalities Sofia, Botevgrad and Pernik for construction of waste management systems. The project proposal for Sofia was submitted for approval in the EC. The reasons for the delay in the schedule for implementation of the priority axis are noted in the document and measures are taken in order to overcome those delays.

The progress of priority axis 3 was also presented. Projects under eight ordinances and sixteen contracts are under implementation within the procedure for preservation and restoration of biodiversity in the Republic of Bulgaria. In 2009 several procedures were announced – for development of NATURA 2000 Network; update of Rila National Park Management Plan, development of Bulgarka Natural Park Management Plan, development of Belasitsa Natural Park Management Plan and Update of Central Balkan National Park Management Plan. A Concept for management of the priority axis was developed and is subject of approval at the meeting.

12 ordinances of the Minister of environment and water were issued within Priority axis 4 in 2009 for the total amount of 3,8 million leva.

Mrs. Bodurova also presented the major projects – municipalities of Vratsa, Gabrovo and Sofia. The first two projects have been approved by the EC in December 2009 and February 2010 and the grant contracts are already signed. The project for Sofia municipality waste management system was submitted for evaluation to the EC after successfully passed the evaluation in the Intermediate body of OPE.

The report also contains information on the problems occurring the implementation of the Operational programme and also the undertaken measures in this respect. The problems are classified in three groups – related to the beneficiaries, related to the MA and IB's administrative capacity and other.

The report contains information also on the information and publicity measures.

Mrs. Bodurova announced also the implementation of OPE according to the prognosis in LOTHAR – contracted and paid amounts. Mrs. Bodurova ended her presentation thanking for the attention. Mrs. Vasileva gave the floor to the audience for questions and comments.

The floor was given to Mr. Valeri Natan, representative of DG REGIO, EC, who mentioned the early elaboration of the report that gave the Commission time to give comments and the MA to respond to them. He pointed out the completeness of the document. Mr. Natan expressed his concern for the low performance under Priority axis 2. He underlined again the necessity of strengthening the capacity of MA and IB and expressed his concern about the fact that despite the announced competitions, not all the vacancies were filled. He recommended more strategic activities in this respect, including structural changes. In relation to the cancellation of financing of waste collection equipment – he wanted to know are there any other alternatives to finance such activities. Mr. Natan also mentioned the lack of payments under priority axis 3, except the advance ones. He also noted the low contracting level under priority axis 2 and the high level of contracting within priority axis 1 (but contracts subject to future cancellation/withdrawal are included) according to LOTHAR.

Mrs. Vasileva pointed out that the comments are fully accepted and gave the floor to the Head of the MA to explain in details. Mrs. Kroumova agreed with the remark on priority axis 2 and explained that the projects are being followed. Invitations will be sent to municipalities of Burgas and Vidin and also to Malko Tarnovo (during the week from 21 to 25 this month).

There is a concern regarding three of the projects: Kocherinivo, Pazardzhik and Stara Zagora, which are unlikely to have a design ready by the end of the year. Mrs. Kroumova informed about measures to improve the capacity of the MA and IBs and added a few words about the idea of establishing a specialized unit responsible for preparation of project proposals. The topic is examined in detail in the presentation of priority axis 4.

Regarding the waste collection, it became clear that no alternative source of funding for the operation is being discussed and in Cost-benefit analysis, it can be treated as part of the municipality's co-financing. It was noted that the activity may be given to concession.

Regarding priority axis 3 was cleared that the real work within the contracts has begun in September 2009 based on receipt of advance payments and therefore no interim payments are approved at the time. Difficulties in assigning project activities come by the implementation of the Public procurement act and the Council of Ministers Decree 55/12.03.2007. Delays are registered also due to poorly prepared documentation.

Mrs. Kroumova cleared that the progress on priority axis 1 (according to LOTHAR) includes problem projects, but soon the members of the CN and the EC will be provided with actual rate of contracting.

The floor again was given to Mr. Yovev: "...I spoke earlier for this problem in relation to the approval of this minutes from the last meeting, that the analysis were not presented correctly and now I have the possibility to say that if this was done, or not done with such misunderstanding, we were not going to report in the progress at first place, as one of the reason for this programme not to happen. At first place, you place the guilt in the beneficiaries – I think you are wrong and when I speak, I will say it more directly that this communication programme is not working, it is not prepared well and if this has happened, we were not going to blame the beneficiaries. They should be facilitated in maximum." Mr. Yovev also mentioned that concrete measures should be taken regarding the delay of priority axis 2. He showed concern about the progress of priority axis 3 and pointed out the necessity of its development.

Mrs. Vasileva thanked for the sincere statement and explained that the mentioning of problems related to the beneficiaries aim to find a way to support them. She explained that the problems were not stated in priority, but by categories. Regarding the problems with Priority axis 3 – they are subject of discussion later in the agenda.

The floor was given to Mr. Arnaudov, representative of the Regional Council of the South-East planning region. On behalf of the National association of the municipalities of Republic of Bulgaria he presented a statement regarding the delays on the programme implementation and the threat of not meeting the deadlines within OPE, and in particular priority axis 1 and 2. He raised the attention to the two projects submitted by municipality of Tsarevo and expressed hope for receiving an invitation for one of them (Ahtopol). The mayor expressed his opinion that the connection between the municipalities and the ministries is still not good enough.

Mr. Arnaudov also mentioned that in his opinion the waste collection is much cheaper and of greater quality when performed by the municipality, compared to concessionaires. He asked for support by the state for the municipalities when performing the waste collection on their own.

The floor was given to Mrs. Kroumova, who underlined that the preparation of the projects is a bilateral process. She recalled that the requirements regarding the water projects had been announced by the end of 2009 and clarified that the projects can start even before they are formally approved.

Mrs. Vasileva specified that the town of Ahtopol, municipality of Tsarevo is one of the 124 agglomerations, which will receive a call for project proposal. She expects the invitation to be announced by the end of the week 21 – 25 June 2010.

The Head of the Managing Authority noted the readiness to adopt new ideas for improving the communication between municipalities and the Ministry. Mr. Arnaudov thanked and noted the intention of the municipality for cooperation.

Mr. Rasmussen thanked for addressing the issue of the capacity of municipalities in the Annual Report. He noted that nobody accuses municipalities, but this is a problem which must be discussed. Mr. Rasmussen added that the water companies are expected to be more active in project management, since they have experience in the management of the sector, and should continue to actively participate in the process on the basis of their technical competence. He added that support can be given by JASPERS and by technical assistance from ex-ISPA and stronger initiative on the side of the municipalities is expected in this respect. It is good that the problem is mentioned and resolutions will be expected in the next Annual Report.

Mrs. Vasileva assured the audience that the issue will be presented at the monthly meetings, chaired by Minister Donchev, in which also participate members of regional associations of municipalities, heads of Managing Authorities and the respective deputy ministers. She added that the question of the OP "Environment 2007-2013" must be examined individually, and technical expert level.

The floor was given to the representative of the Association of Municipal Environmental Experts in Bulgaria Asya Dobrudjalieva. She noted the objectivity of the Annual Report as well as improvement in the communication between the Ministry and municipalities, in particular by the introduction of reception day for consultations. In this regard, she proposed to develop a mechanism for tracking the results after these meetings. Mrs. Dobrudjalieva recalled the problem of co-financing by municipalities. She asked for more information about the solution for municipalities with cancelled projects, but which had already contracted their activities.

Mrs. Vasileva assured Mrs. Dobrudzhalieva that the proposal for tracking the results after the reception days will be taken into account. She added that the issues of co-financing are discussed at national level.

The floor was given to Mr. Rasmussen, who suggested Minister Donchev to organize one-day workshop in September 2010 on which to discuss the capacity of municipalities. He added that it is possible that JASPERS, and the Ministry of Finance to be represented there. Examples from other countries can be examined as well. He expressed disappointment on not addressing to the funds under the loan agreement with European Investment Bank. According to him, this completely depends on political will in the country.

Mrs. Vasileva thanked for the comment, thus the discussion has finished, and Annual report on OPE for 2009 was adopted by consensus.

A short break was announced.

The meeting continued with the second and the third item on the agenda - presentation of the results of the implementation of priority axis 4 and the Strategic Plan for Technical Assistance for OPE. The Head of Programming, Partnership, Information and Publicity Department in the Managing Authority Mrs. Emel Mehmedova briefly presented the implementation of the technical assistance within OPE. She explained the role of priority axis 4, and activities funded in this relation. Up to the beginning of June 2010 there are 25 projects

in implementation, 20 are completed, 4 are under evaluation, and 4 were cancelled or withdrawn. The total budget for the projects is about 10 million of which were about 4 million contracted, about 1.5 million are reimbursed in the budget of the Ministry of Environment and Water. Mrs. Mehmedova noted that interdepartmental working group was created that aims to analyze the experience of other member-states and to identify problems in implementing the technical assistance under the Operational Programmes in Bulgaria. On this basis, the working group should come up with solutions to improve the implementation of funds provided for technical assistance. An overall evaluation of the needs of MAs will be made and also a summary of estimated expenditure by the end of the programme. Mrs. Mehmedova presented the proposed changes in the Strategic Plan priority axis 4.

The chairperson of the Monitoring Committee gave the floor to Mrs. Dobrudzhalieva. She proposed that the sum, dedicated to training for beneficiaries to be increased and the activities associated with the development and dissemination of information materials on paper to be limited. In this sense, she added that the information presented on the website of the OP is very useful and complete. Mrs. Dobrudzhalieva also proposed the public procurement procedures under priority axis 4 to be published on the website of the OPE. She asked for more information for the information center for OP "Environment 2007-2013".

In response, the chairperson of the MC expressed her support the idea of publishing the public procurement procedures on the OPE website and noted that on the MOEW site procedures under the limits for tender procedures are also published.

The floor was given to Mr. Rasmussen, who agreed that the estimated amount of trainings for beneficiaries is relatively small, but explained that this was due to the low absorption and that lead to the reduction. He added that there is no obstacle the budget to be increased if needed.

Mrs. Kroumova confirmed the above and noted that trainings have already been conducted in March 2010, adding that a series of new trainings is envisaged and they will become regular. With regard to the Information Center, Mrs. Kroumova cleared that this is an idea that overlaps with this initiative "Reception days", making it unnecessary currently. She agreed to reduce the quantity of paper materials to the required minimum.

The floor took Mr. Natan, who noted that the strategic plan for technical assistance is meaningful, but he clarified that an agreement with the MA was reached to provide a more detailed expenditure plan year by year. He recalled that a more strategic approach is required by the Ministry of Environment and Water in relation to structural changes in the programme implementation. It was noted that part of the significant amount for financing the necessary human resources can be used to establish a Task Force to participate in the preparation of project proposals. Mr. Natan suggested that by the next session of the Monitoring Committee the Managing Authority should have come up with a decision regarding the format and staffing of this special Task Force and present it to the MC members. He recommended more quality-analytical information about the real effect of the performed activities.

Mrs. Kroumova assured Mr. Natan of the implementation of the recommendation and added that the issue is being processed. Mrs. Kroumova expects that the Technical Unit, responsible for project preparation will be part of the plan. The indicative deadline for creation of the concept is around a month.

Mrs. Vasileva also supported the idea and proposed the changes in the Strategic Plan for voting. The document was approved by consensus by the members of CN.

The chairperson of the MC continued with the next item on the agenda and gave the floor to Mrs. Desislava Lazarova - Junior expert in "Management and evaluation of the

program – to present the Concept for Management of priority axis 3 of the Operational Programme “Environment 2007 – 2013”. She presented the main objectives of the concept i.e. improvement of the management of the priority axis; support for the restoration and preservation of species and habitat within the framework of the national ecological network and to provide financing for the measures that are priority in terms of compliance with deadlines for implementing Natura 2000. The already announced procedures under the priority axis were presented, as well as the types of projects, subject of funding. Mrs. Lazarova informed for the forthcoming calls in July 2010 - for the development of management plans for protected areas for birds that do not overlap with protected areas for habitats. She noted that comments received on the document are summarized and are provided to the members of the MC.

The floor for comments was given to Prof. Valko Biserkov representative of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), who focused on the project "Mapping of habitats and species", whose implementation is delayed. Explaining its dependence on the realization of two other projects - for purchasing of equipment and establishing an information system – Prof. Biserkov expressed concern that the project will be implemented in low quality because of the delay of the other two. He called for a special attention to the project in this regard. Professor Biserkov proposed the help of BAS in developing similar projects in their part for the purchase of equipment.

Mrs. Vasileva said that the comments will be taken into account, but noted that it is a tender and it is out of the discussed concept.

The floor again was given to Mr. Valentin Yovev, who mentioned: not that it completes the Concept, but I think that we will be on the right way if we connect the concept to this interdisciplinary as I may call it, although not completely right, connected to relation with other programmes. I mean your programme and the Rural development programme. In our documents that we are examining today, it is related only with what we have put as activities under priority axes 1 and 2, but I think that in this relation the actuality is even bigger and we should find the cross points between OPE, in particular priority axis 3 and in this case the Rural Development programme. I know that it is hard to accomplish this having in mind that there are two ministries involved, but it is at the same time one Bulgaria, so in the philosophy on the basis that it will be developed, but I think we can start it here. In a document of mine, sent to the ministry over a year ago, lost and unfortunately not found, I have said in brief what is not done within the Rural development programme, what in my opinion is related to what is happening in our operational programme. It comes to European regulations, to complying with national standards that are not met, and sincerely the mapping of the zones is the most pleasant part of what should happen. There is also another part, related with finding the philosophy and policy, and the will for its realization and I think that it should be reflected and also it is the right moment to start searching cross points with other programmes. This is the place where we should embrace the Ministry of Environment. Thank you!”

Mrs. Vasileva also thanked for assessing the significance of the place of MOEW. She assured that a dialogue between the respective deputy ministers in relation to the axis 3 is ongoing. An understanding is reached to nominate a joint group of both ministries aiming to develop terms of reference and to approve the products resulting from completed consultant jobs.

Mrs. Kroumova added that the Managing Authority of OPE participates in European Network of MA for the Environment (ENEA) and in the framework exchanges experience

with Managing Authorities of other countries. Integration of the theme of environment in all policies is planned.

The floor was given to Mrs. Madlena Stanimirova from the Executive Environment Agency (EEA), who welcomed the establishment of a Concept for Management of priority axis 3. She expressed her satisfaction with the fact that this document has found a way the Agency to become a beneficiary under the OPE, which made possible the implementation of national surveillance programme of the national biodiversity that had not been possible due to lack of financial and human resource.

Mrs. Kroumova thanked for the cooperation of colleagues from EEA and non-governmental organizations participated in the working group that has coordinated this document.

In absence of any other comments, the Chairperson of the Committee proposed the Concept for the management of the Axis 3 for voting. The document was approved by consensus by the members of MC.

Mrs. Vasileva continued with the last agenda item and gave the floor to Mrs. Kroumova to present the results of the review of projects under priority axis 1 and information about the upcoming procedure. The head of the Managing Authority explained that it was a review of 156 contracts for technical assistance in the water sector and 29 infrastructure contracts for infrastructure projects in water sector. She explained that the procedures used broad criteria, poorly defined requirements for the design mode, and minimum technical requirements for the investment projects. This led to the approval of many projects that are not strategic and not effective enough. She pointed out that poor financial management is another reason to proceed with this review. The reasons for the corrective measures are described in article 98 which entitles the MA to impose adjustments in cases of non-compliance or faults.

The main findings for the infrastructure projects were the following:

1. Some of the projects foresee too large water supply component, and the focus of OPE is the construction of the necessary sewerage infrastructure in compliance with Directive 91/271/EC for wastes water treatment.
2. Part of the projects are for agglomerations under 10 000 P.E., that are not priority in respect of the above-mentioned directive.
3. Some of the projects lack scenarios for project implementation.
4. There is no explanation for some of the components in the project proposal.
5. The prices for P.E. are relatively high.

Technical assistance projects findings:

1. Lack of concretization of activities and the scope of the projects.
2. Great deviations in the prices for similar activities that led to creation of reference values for activities.
3. Part of the projects is not in priority.
4. Some of the projects need optimization of the design scope.

The findings led to the issue of Decision № 72/26.02.2010 of the Head of the MA, which stipulates the withdrawal of funding for 5 infrastructure contracts, and 32 technical assistance contracts. For projects at advanced stage that cannot be terminated a national funding is in a search. Measures to reduce costs are taken. The corrective measures are discussed with the EC and a great part of the contracts are already annexed. Currently the

process of annexation of the contracts for technical assistance and infrastructure is in a run and is almost completed.

The new procedures are planned to be announced in the week from 21 to 25 June 2010. The draft invitations are published on OPE website. The focus is on agglomerations above 10 000 PE. There are procedures for both infrastructure projects and projects for technical assistance. The provision of grants would be on a direct basis, and consultation and prior agreement of the documentation will be provided. The deadline for applications will be running (until the resource is depleted). The evaluation of proposals will take place every two months. There is a possibility to correct the proposals in the evaluation process. A publication of the final requirements for the preparation of investment project will happen soon.

An analysis of the financial resources is planned in 2011 in order to find out for what activities it would be sufficient. Technological schemes and requirements for agglomerations of less than 10 000 PE, are being developed currently.

Ms. Kroumova thanked for the attention and gave the floor to the audience for comments.

Mrs. Vasileva thanked the team who worked on the review. She noted that a new stage begins, which should start the elaboration of high quality projects leading to successful implementation. She thanked for the assistance and support the representatives of the European Commission and the EIB for the review the projects. She also thanked the representatives of JASPERS, the CCU to the Council of Ministers and other managing authorities.

Mrs. Kroumova took the floor to answer to the question of Mrs. Dobrudjalieva in relation to the projects proposed for withdrawal of funding, namely, that contracts will be annexed to extend the contract until it is clear how they are going to be funded.

The floor was given to Mr. Rasmussen, who evaluated the work of experts on the review of projects in water sector, and the cancellation of the two procedures last year. He highlighted the lack of capacity in municipalities to prepare proposals. Mr. Rasmussen noted the role of MOEW in the strengthening of that capacity by building up a unit for project preparation. He added that Bulgaria has avoided the imposition of significant financial correction, imposing its own limitations in the environment sector. He put an emphasis on improving the capacity of municipalities and was expressed gratitude to the Ministry for the work.

Thus, the discussions were over and the Chairperson of the MC proceeded to closing the meeting. Mrs. Vasileva thanked the participants for their active positions, as well as the organizers of the event, the interpreters and closed the meeting.

List of participants:

From the Monitoring Committee:

1. Mrs. Ivelina Vasileva – Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee and deputy minister of environment and water
2. Mrs. Malina Kroumova – Director of “Cohesion policy for environment” Directorate, MOEW

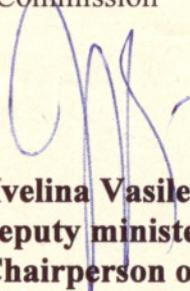
3. Mrs. Yoana Hristova – Director of “EU funds for environment” Directorate, Ministry of environment and water
4. Mr. Dobromir Vasilev – “Operational programme Technical assistance” directorate, Council of Ministers
5. Mrs. Lyubka Lazarova – Executive agency for fisheries and aquaculture
6. Mrs. Lilyana Pavlova – Ministry of regional development and public works
7. Mrs. Iliana Lazarova – Ministry of finance, “ Economic Analysis and forecasting” directorate
8. Mrs. Nadya Genova – Central Coordination Unit, Council of Ministers
9. Mrs. Yvette Baeva – “Economic and social policy” directorate, Council of Ministers
10. Mr. Hristo Yovkov – “Strategic planning and governance” directorate, Council of ministers
11. Mrs. Dalila Fakirova – “Coordination of EU and international financial institutions issues” directorate, Council of Ministers
12. Mr. Georgi Terzov – “Water management” Directorate, Ministry of environment and water
13. Mrs. Svetlana Bozhkova – “Waste management” directorate, Ministry of environment and water
14. Mrs. Stela Todorova – “Nature protection” directorate, Ministry of environment and water
15. Mrs. Mariana Ilieva – “Earth resources and mineral resources” directorate, Ministry of environment and water
16. Mrs. Madlena Stanimirova – “Monitoring of the environment” directorate, Environmental executive agency
17. Mr. Peter Petrov – Ministry of interior
18. Mr. Rumén Ruménov – National statistical Institute
19. Mr. Plamen Stefanov Regional Council for Development of North-West planning region
20. Mrs. Ralitsa Angelova – on behalf of Mr. Dimitar Alexandrov, Regional Council for Development of North-East planning region
21. Mrs. Irena Petkova – on behalf of Mr. Krasimir Zhivkov, Regional Council for the Development of South-West planning region
22. Mr. Petko Arnaudov - Regional Council for the Development of South-East planning region
23. Mr. Valentin Yovev – Union of private economic enterprise
24. Mrs. Yuliana Yankova – Confederation of the Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria
25. Mrs. Emilia Dimirova - *Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Bulgaria*
26. Mrs. Keti Koynakova – Confederation of trade “Podkrepa”

27. Mrs. Asya Dobrudzhalieva – Bulgarian association of municipal environmental experts
28. Mr. Valko Biserkov – Bulgarian Academy of science
29. Mr. Kiril Tashev – Executive forestry agency

Observers:

30. Mrs. Sashka Dimitrova – on behalf of Mrs. Vesela Dzhilizova, National fund Directorate, Ministry of finance
31. Mr. Doncho Ivanov - Alliance of the united NGO “Vitosha -2002”
32. Mr. Valeri Natan – DG REGIO, European Commission
33. Mr. Carsten Rasmussen - DG REGIO, European Commission
34. Mrs. Stavroula Pelekasi - DG REGIO, European Commission
35. Mrs. Milena Novakova - DG ENVIRONMENT, European Commission

Approved by:



**/Ivelina Vasileva –
deputy minister and
Chairperson of the MC/**