



Opportunities
for better life

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME
"ENVIRONMENT 2007 - 2013"



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund
Cohesion Fund

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Minutes

Of the 12th meeting of the Monitoring committee of Operational Programme
"Environment 2007 – 2013"

1st June 2010,, Calista Grand Hall, Calista Spa Hotel

The Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee (MC) of Operational Programme "Environment 2007 – 2013" (OPE) and deputy minister of environment and water Mrs. Ivelina Vasileva opened the twelfth meeting of the Monitoring Committee. She welcomed the members of the MC, the guests, the beneficiaries as well as the guests from the European Commission and the media representatives.

Mrs. Vasileva pointed out that OPE is the only operational programme, directly related to the implementation of legislative commitments, that also influence the people and providing clean and secure environment and care for their health and safety.

Mrs. Vasileva gave the floor to **Mr. Zhivko Todorov**, mayor of Stara Zagora municipality in the context of the signing of contract between the Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW) and Stara Zagora municipality for construction and modernization of the water supply and sewerage network in the city.

Mr. Todorov welcomed everybody and said that the signing of the contract will lead to the construction of modern sewerage and water supply network, a step forward for the city and the municipality and it would lay new horizons for investments. Mr. Todorov shortly described the project: its value is over 40 MBGN, of which the grant aid is over 39 MBGN. The municipality will contribute with 1 MBGN, 7 MBGN is the national co-financing. 27 km of sewerage network and 2 km of water supply network will be constructed. The deadline for completing the construction works is 21 months (or 30 September 2014), the project should be completed by 31 December 2014. Mr. Todorov thanked everybody for the hard work and wished success to Mr. Mandmets' team. He said that without the financial aid from the European union such projects could not be accomplished.



NATIONAL
STRATEGIC
REFERENT FRAMEWORK
2007 - 2013



Ministry
of Environment and Water

The chairperson of the MC thanked Mr. Todorov for the words and said that Stara Zagora is an example for will, motivation, ambition and capacity for realization of such project and gave the floor to Mrs. Nona Karadjova, minister of environment and water.

Mrs. Karadjova welcomed the participants in the MC and made short review of the programme, underlining its importance for the protection and restoration of the Bulgarian nature and pointed out the social dimensions of the programme, with whose funds the country constructs infrastructure, dedicated for the next twenty or fifty years ahead. She pointed out the great amount of activities, conducted by the Managing authority (MA) and the Intermediate body (IB) of OPE, such as the regular practice to meet with beneficiaries, the start-up of the programming activities, the verification activities and the good partnership with the EC. Mrs. Karadjova presented the progress of the programme, she pointed out that there are 2,5 billion euro contracted, mainly in the water and waste sectors. The projects under evaluation are for around 2,9 billion euro. The total financial resource of the programme is 3,5 billion euro, therefore the financial deficit within the programme is around 2 billion euro. The analysis of the challenges and risks shows that part of the projects under implementation and a large number of the projects under evaluation will generate a great amount of costs in 2014 and 2015. Measures are taken in order to avoid making mistakes from the current programming period, into the next. The main goal is to obtain projects ready to be implemented in the beginning of 2014, unlike the current programming period, when the first projects were ready in 2010 and 2011. Minister Karadzova provides an overview of the past 2.5 years, indicating the overall reform of the Programme, the review of the projects in the water sector, the detailed guidelines for municipalities, the ongoing efforts by the municipalities. She noted that while taking the path of large scale reforms in the Programme the delay was expected, but it was the only true solution for the sound management. The Minister shared two new approaches for expansion of direct aid to projects from the Ministry. The first one will be implemented through JASPERS and is expected by the end of June 2012 to allow at least 10-20 municipalities to benefit from the expertise on the spot this line. The second approach, approved by the National Association of Municipalities in Bulgaria, is the passage of a limited number of projects under the direct management of the ministry, with the active cooperation of the municipalities. The last measure applies to municipalities with many projects which have difficulties to distribute their efforts between them. Another measure to be voted at the meeting is the launch of "quick" projects for recultivation of old municipal landfills. It is expected projects that are at an earlier stage of preparation at the moment, to be transferred as priority projects for implementation in next programming period. Projects are being prepared in the sectors of Biodiversity and Climate change. Minister Karadzova thanked all those who contribute to the implementation of projects that are important for nature, population and economy of Bulgaria and wished success to this forum.

Mrs. Ivelina Vasileva gave the floor to Mr. Renaldo Mandmets. Mr. Mandmets greeted the participants and pointed that the Bulgarian nature is very rich and the country has many things to protect now and in the future. He said that the Bulgarian Ministry of environment and water has made a lot of work and the one common thing in the new member states, the operational programme Environment is less financially performing operational programmes. The action plan prepared by the MoEW over a year ago is really good and noted that his country Estonia has faced almost the same problems. The key factor for success of the projects in his opinion is the personal, not the political commitment of the mayors, despite the size of the municipality. He also noted that the municipality of Stara Zagora has a strong and committed team. He mentioned some speculations in the press that the financial progress of OPE is not sufficient, and his comment is that OPE funding could be used only for