

Minutes of the Meeting

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE REGIONAL ACCESSION NETWORK (ECRAN)

FINAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Date:

28 September 2016

Venue:

Thon Hotel Bristol Stephanie, Brussels, Belgium

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¹ *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.



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Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
8:30 – 9:00	Registration and welcome coffee	
09:00 – 09:15	Official Opening of the Steering Committee Meeting Objective of the meeting and approval of the agenda	Opening by Mr Nicholas Hanley, Head of Unit Bilateral and Regional Environmental Cooperation, DG Environment Introductory words by Anne Bergenfelt, International and Inter-institutional Relations DG Climate Action
09:15 - 10:45	Impact of ECRAN as regional capacity building platform vis-à-vis major environment and climate policy developments in the beneficiary countries	Beneficiary country presentations: Ms Elkida Sinani, Head of Unit, Programming of IPA funds and other donors Unit, Directorate of EU Integration and Coordination of Projects Ministry of Environment, Albania Ms Azra Rogobic Grubic, Senior Advisor, Department for Environmental Protection, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina Ms. Visnja Grgasovic, Head of Climate Change Unit of the Ministry of Environmental and Nature protection. Ms Jadranka Ivanova, Head of EU Department, SPO/IPA Coordinator, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Ms Anja Amidzic from the Ministry of sustainable development and tourism, Montenegro Ms Sandra Sprelic, EU Negotiation Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Serbia Mr Muhamet Malsiu, Head of Unit, Department for Environmental Protection, Ministry of Environment and spatial planning, Kosovo* Mr Organ Solak, Climate Change Expert, Ministry of Environment and Urbanization,



Time	Topic	Speaker
		Turkey
10:45 – 11:00	TAIEX support	Mr. Scot Bowen, DG NEAR, TAIEX Unit
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break	
11:15 – 11:45	ECRAN Cross- cutting activities <i>Achievements and lessons learnt</i> (Progress Monitoring, Compliance Checks, ECENA)	Mr. Mihail DIMOVSKI, Key Expert 1 Mr Ike van Der Putte, Key Expert 2 Mr. Imre CSIKOS, Key Expert 4
11:45 – 13:00	ECRAN Climate Action component <i>Achievements and lessons learnt</i> (Climate Policy; GHG Inventories and MMR; ETS; Adaptation) <i>Remarks from participants</i>	Mr. Imre CSIKOS, ECRAN Key Expert Ms. Monique VOOGT, WG ETS Mr. József FEILER, WG Climate Policy
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break	
14:00 – 14:45	ECRAN Environment component (1) <i>Achievements and lessons learnt</i> (Cross cutting: EU accession negotiation capacity building and peer reviews; Strategic Planning and Investments; Water, Environmental Assessments) <i>Remarks from the participants</i>	Mr. Martin SMUTNY, Key Expert 3 Mr. Mihail DIMOVSKI, Key Expert 1
14:45 – 15:15	ECRAN Environment component (2) <i>Achievements and lessons learnt</i> (Air quality; Waste; Nature; IED/Chemicals) <i>Remarks from the participants</i>	Mr. Mihail DIMOVSKI, Key Expert 1 Mr Ike van Der Putte, Key Expert 2 Mr. Martin SMUTNY, Key Expert 3
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee break	
15:30 – 16:00	NGOs Environment and Climate Forum <i>Achievements and lessons learnt</i>	Mr. Richard FILCAK, ECF NGO Coordinator Ms Natasa Djereg, NGO CEKOR, Serbia



Time	Topic	Speaker
	<i>Remarks from the participants</i>	Mr Tanay Sidki Uyar, NGO Kados, Turkey
1600 - 1645	<p>Latest environment and climate policy developments in the EU and future perspectives</p> <p>Future of the regional cooperation: discussion on the needs identified for the regional cooperation</p>	<p>Chaired by Mr Nicholas Hanley, Head of Unit Bilateral and Regional Environmental Cooperation, DG Environment</p> <p>Ms. Ivana MIJATOVIC CERNOS Policy officer, DG Climate Action</p> <p>Beneficiary countries</p>
16:45 – 17:00	Concluding remarks	<p>Ms. Maja Mikosinska, ECRAN Project Coordinator, Policy Officer DG Environment</p> <p>Ms. Ivana MIJATOVIC CERNOS Policy officer, DG Climate Action</p>



Opening of the Steering Committee Meeting/Objective of the meeting and approval of the agenda

The meeting was opened by Mr. Nicholas Hanley and Ms Anne Bergenfelt welcoming the participants to the ECRAN 5th and Final Steering Committee Meeting.

Mr. Henley emphasized the importance of the ECRAN project, and also the importance of beneficiary countries' assessment, thus continuation of the work is highly important. However, in relation to budgetary terms, DG NEAR is currently struggling with new priorities. Thus, there will be a break before the next project is launched. DG ENVIRONMENT has some idea of the follow-up, but countries' experience and recommendations are very appreciated, especially when establishing the areas where improvement is needed. The balance must be obtained between the regional process and more tailored bilateral support because some of the countries are closer to the process of starting negotiations, especially Serbia and Montenegro.

Ms. Bergenfelt from DG CLIMA added that it was important to continue this work because of the needs of both the beneficiary countries, and the EU. After signing the Paris Agreement in December 2015, challenges that occur regarding the implementation of the agreement is global issue, not just national or regional. It is very positive that all ECRAN beneficiary countries submitted their INDCs that need to be implemented now. Climate Change is not business as usual, and we must ensure to move towards green investments and green economy so we can fulfil the Paris Agreement targets.

Major environment and climate policy developments in the beneficiary countries

Albania

Ms Sinani stated that ECRAN strongly contributed Albania's efforts in fulfilling EU integration obligations which is currently absolute Albanian Government priority. However, in a small country with an economic transition such as Albania, environment still remains a challenge.

Representatives from the Ministry along with representatives of other Government agencies participated in ECRAN regional and national workshops. ECRAN contributed in the following issues:

- Strengthening of capacities for technical evaluation of strategic important documents;
- providing capacity building for addressing problems in transposition of EU directives;
- Revision of draft law on climate change was provided by ECRAN experts;
- Practical and technical training was provided to participants of National Environmental Agency to prepare GHG inventory and offering support for setting up the National Inventory System;
- National Adaptation team was established of representatives of ministries and agencies. In terms of adaptation ECRAN has provided assistance in the use of existing adaptation related tools
- Contributed in the strengthening of law enforcement and improvement of the exchange of experience and knowledge with EU member states;
- Strengthening capacity for relatively new established technical secretariat for water-related trans-boundary issues;

Albania is open to continue cooperation on all kind of information exchange in the scope of building administrative structures, adaptation strategies transposition of the EU directives, enforcement of law and sector policies.



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ms. Rogovic-Grubic stated that there were a lot of new developments in the country, regarding the subject. The following issues were presented:

- Major progress coordination mechanism was adopted and will include all stakeholders in the decision making process, including cantonal level, entities level, district level, and state level ministries in the sector of environment and climate action;
- Stabilisation and Accession agreement was ratified in June 2015, and latest EU membership application was submitted in February 2016 and was accepted in September 2016;
- Draft strategy for the environment and climate action acquis, is prepared for the state level, along with the action plans for the entities and district. Adoption of this strategy is precondition for IPA 2 programming since from 2014 the country not using IPA funds. In addition, adoption of coordination mechanism was pre required in order for Republika Srpska to work on the final draft of the strategy;
- Ratification process of Paris Agreement is in a final stage. But due to lack of IPA 2 funding, ECRAN project is the only ongoing IPA project with a huge mean. Beside the action plan for flooding which was adopted because of the recent floods, the only technical assistance received was through this project;
- Main problem still remains administrative capacity. Huge contribution of ECRAN project to BIH was the improvement of horizontal and vertical institutional coordination through each stage, even though nomination process of working groups. More than 100 people were nominated in working groups (WG), and also more than 100 people were involved in project monitoring report preparation. Also, more 100 civil servants participated in ECRAN trainings on both regional and national level.
- ECRAN, along with the ENVIS project, which relates to institutional strengthening of environmental sector, approximation strategy draft was prepared. WGs have been established in order to produce a final version of the strategy, which by adoption will ensure eligibility for IPA 2 funds;
- Specific investment plans for 4 directives were prepared along with the draft of environmental policy, adjusted by 7th EU Action Programme;
- Process of preparation of Project Monitoring reports for the environmental sector in the country was very valuable, and it was also appreciated by Directorate for EU Integration;
- Climate Change Adaptation and Low Emission Development Strategy was adopted;
- implementation of action plan for flood protection and river management that was approved on exceptional basis from IPA funds is ongoing;
- National workshops on energy balance and ETS organised within ECRAN was first ever to be organised in the country, and it provided better knowledge of best practices related to EU climate acquis;

Related to climate action, the country needs Paris agreement implementation strategy, close cooperation with EU and regional countries, more synergy and cooperation with different sectors as agriculture, energy, transport, public awareness, transfer of knowledge and ecology, renewable energies, adaptation measures, increased regional cooperation, creation of local climate action plans. Ms. Mikosinska added that it was very important to hear that ECRAN helped to boost coordination among different administrative units, which was very positive sign on top of the other technical developments.



Croatia

Croatia participated as a beneficiary country and also as experts within the project. Some of the activities in the cross-cutting working group were not corresponding to the state of play in the country, and thus were not implemented, in particular Progress Monitoring and Compliance Checks. Ms. Grgasovic emphasized other issues related to the project:

- Until the middle of the implementation of ECRAN project, Croatia participated as a beneficiary, while in the second half, Croatia provided experts that were engaged as active participants and also as organizers and hosts of workshops, training sessions and site visits. The experts were particularly involved in environmental inspection work. It was important for the workshop participants to receive a new MS experience in transposition and implementation of the EU legislation.
- the Training of Trainers (ToT) was successfully done and applied in the country;
- Even not as a beneficiary, ECRAN contributed to cooperation on the implementation of Espoo Convention in the region;
- The continuation of the project should ensure Croatia to be able to provide support in the region;
- Application of the ETS, GHG monitoring and low-carbon development strategy is in an advanced stage, and the project contributed to broaden knowledge of administration regarding these issues. Also, the adaptation strategy is in the process of preparation;
- Specific knowledge was improved in relation to the establishment of coordination with stakeholders, assessment, evaluation and ranking of adaptation measures;
- ECRAN workshops and trainings were attended by Croatian experts from various institutions, and the experts have a certain competence in relation to climate change. In this way, cooperation and development of skills were achieved;
- Dialogue between national authorities and civil society was raised.

Overall, all ECRAN beneficiaries gained useful knowledge that can be applied when planning strategic activities and the development of strategic documents related to low-carbon development and adaptation to climate change.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Ms. Ivanova emphasized that she was in communication with participants of ECRAN events from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and on behalf of all of them, she expressed gratitude to ECRAN secretariat, the Commission and all experts involved. Issues regarding the project were as stated:

- It was a great exchange of experience among the countries, mainly because since many of the beneficiary countries have the same problems and issues, and were able to find a practical way on how to implement legislation. Practical guidance was needed which was provided through various workshops under ECRAN;
- Focus and progress in EU accession are main tasks of the FYR of Macedonian Government, and by implementing ECRAN workshops, country officials were managed to focus more towards the integration, and envisage the most important issues that need to be addressed.
- Paris Agreement ratification started on a Ministerial, response from the Ministries has been waited;
- ToT was significantly useful since many practicalities were learnt, especially with study visits;



- Networking in inspection was very much appreciated, especially in the business point of view, since it was understood how environmental inspection provides support;
- Future cooperation is very much needed because of the vast benefits for the countries.

Ms. Ivanova stated that they would appreciate to be involved in the process of programming of the future activities, especially regarding nature, water inspection, climate change and EIA, since those are the most vulnerable issues in the countries. Ms. Mikosinska added that ECRAN was not only beneficial for the countries but also for the Commission since it provided insight into the situation and challenges in the countries on transposition and implementation of legislation.

Montenegro

ECRAN was very useful for Montenegrin administration dealing with environment and climate, as stated by Ms. Amidzic. The most relevant issues regarding the project are as follows:

- Improved knowledge and skills in strategic planning in the field of waste management and water quality;
- ECRAN was a great opportunity to discuss environmental acquis in EIA and SEA sectors, as well as in other policy assessments. One concrete example of improved implementation of SEA Directive was programme of exploration and production of hydrocarbons;
- Regarding nature protection, ECRAN workshops helped in better implementation of nature protection bylaws, and implementation of habitat directives was improved as well;
- In the process of preparation of the law on water, the country received significant help from ECRAN and TAIEX experts;
- Regarding climate change issues, from relevant ministries were attending the national and regional events, and the knowledge achieved helped them to increase productivity of their work;
- Regarding Paris Agreement, INDC was completed on time and submitted to UNFCCC with the help of ECRAN experts;
- Workshops and training regarding chemicals and industrial pollution helped participants to achieve better implementation of the law on chemicals;
- Great achievement was the adoption on National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan for 2016-2020, which is an opening benchmark for the initiation of negotiations on chapter 27;

The most important issues for Montenegro through new ECRAN project would be to continue chapter compliance.

Serbia

Ms. Sperlic Milicevic presented the most important facts of implementation of ECRAN project in Serbia:

- ECRAN contributed to successful cooperation and networking among the beneficiary countries through creation of knowledge and best-practice sharing platform, building capacity for transposition and implementation of environmental legislation and supporting preparation for EU accession. Knowledge on EU accession negotiations has been improved and used for better preparation for the screening process;



- Regarding IED/Chemicals issues, the ECRAN workshops contributed to further building of knowledge related to EU chemical management system. Participants had the opportunity to share experiences and knowledge in the field;
- Site visits to waste management facilities enabled participants to share experience and best practices with experts from the EU, and also to better understand different waste management systems;
- A series of regional and sub-regional workshops were organised regarding nature protection, but also two expert missions to the country. Capacity for further implementation of Habitats directive was increased. Capacity of relevant institutions in Serbia for understanding and applying the Appropriate Assessment (AA) was strengthened and linkages between EIA and AA were established;
- Primary focus of the ToT in the country was regarding nature protected areas. The ToT national training in the area of EIA and SEA ensured qualified national trainers who were involved in a series of national workshops for the local governments' officials;
- ECRAN Air Quality Modelling Training in October 2015 greatly contributed to strengthening the capacity for applying modelling techniques;
- Participation of representatives from relevant institutions in Serbia to Water Management WG workshops was very important in terms of future river basin management plans and implementation of the programme of measures for Drina river but also for future sub-basins, but mainly in terms of transposition and implementation of Water Framework Directive;
- During workshops organised by ECENA WG for environmental inspectors, the participants gained important knowledge that will contribute to future activities;
- Main contribution of ECRAN regarding climate change issues are improvement of capacity and cooperation among stakeholders on national and regional level, and very important contribution for preparation of ETS and MMR policy and preparation of relevant institutions for implementation of the acquis.

However, exchange of knowledge and information of the countries in the region and the EU remains very important and it shall not end with the termination of ECRAN.

Kosovo*

Mr. Malsiu used the chance to thank everyone involved in the ECRAN implementation, since it was very useful for Kosovo* in both fields of environment and climate. The main issues in Kosovo* are:

- Progress Monitoring was very much appreciated and very valuable for future activities of the Ministry;
- Strategic Planning and Investment activities were very useful especially regarding cost estimates;
- Environmental assessment was very well implemented and very clear, and the group of participants to these workshops was very active during exercises and study visits;
- The country have been working on nature protection activities, especially in establishing cross-border cooperation;

Mr. Malsiu once again emphasized that all ECRAN activities were very useful.



Turkey

Mr. Solak expressed his gratitude to all people involved in the ECRAN project. The most important topics regarding the project in Turkey are:

- Capacity building organised for relevant institutions. These workshops were crucial, since they have improved capacity on environment and climate related issues, but not only for capacity building but for knowledge sharing among the countries and close cooperation among national institutions.

Ms. Mijatovic Cernos emphasized the importance of ratification of Paris Agreement for all countries, which are parties under the UNFCCC. The EU ambition is to ratify the Agreement by the next Conference of Parties (COP) meeting in Marrakesh in November. The implementation of the Agreement is going to be a huge task and will affect how investments are made in our economies. This will subsequently require ambitious reforms in all sectors, including energy, transport, industry, agriculture, among others. ECRAN was instrumental in assisting countries both on the policy and technical levels, and in raising climate awareness to prepare their INDCs under the Paris Agreement and to align their policies and legislation with the EU. The European Commission will continue supporting the region and providing assistance for the implementation of the Agreement and countries' commitments under it in the years to come.

ECRAN Cross-cutting activities

Progress Monitoring

ECRAN Team Leader Mr. Dimovski mentioned that Progress Monitoring (PM) is not a new activity, but it has been active for years, and it is not only important for the ECRAN project, but for the overall accession process. PM implementation guidance is set in the PM methodology and it has been updated over years. The guidance provides clear view of how the countries are measuring their progress.

The ECRAN experts were coordinating the PM activity on the beneficiary level and assisting the beneficiaries on the methodology. The PM itself involves very serious coordination level on governmental level, and it involves more than one competent authorities.

PMs are extremely useful for respective countries also for negotiation process and screening process for the Commission and their financial assistance and bilateral standing. Thus the biggest impact of PM is the increase of coordination, communication and exchange of information among all ministries and institutions responsible for transposition and implementation of EU environmental and climate acquis.

Legislative Compliance Checks

Overall objective of compliance checks is creation of a tool for identification of the compliance of national draft legislation with the particular EU Directive. Compliance checks were complementary for PM exercises. They enabled detailed check of draft national legislation. It was done on the demand basis of either European Commission (EC) or the country. So far, numerous compliance checks have been performed, particularly for Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Compliance checks provided better and timely implementation of EU legislation for draft legal acts. Within ECRAN, compliance checks were a tool for establishing more pro-active approach covering the legislative life-cycle.



Handbooks

Mr Dimovski stated that the objectives of the Handbooks for Environmental Legislation and Climate Change Legislation were to provide planning guide on the approaches and specific activities required to ensure the effective and legally compliant implementation of environmental and climate change legislations. The environmental handbooks just went through the 4th update, providing clear guidelines for candidate countries and potential candidates.

The handbooks will be published on ECRAN website and will also be sent to National Focal Points.

The handbooks can be download on

<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Horizontal-Activities/Handbook-EU-Climate-Acquis>

<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Horizontal-Activities/Handbook-EU-Environmental-Acquis>

Address from TAIEX

Ms. Mikosinska announced a speaker from DG NEAR, and also a colleague from GIZ because of the interest in the regional cooperation. TAIEX has been instrumental support to ECRAN and contributed significantly to ECRAN implemented activities.

Ms. Bowen, a Team Leader from TAIEX emphasized the importance of the support of colleagues from DG CLIMA and DG ENVIRONMENT as well to the ECRAN Secretariat to assist in EU aspirations, being the main part of DG NEAR.

TAIEX has assisted in approximately 160 TECRAN events. Funding was slightly separate from the funding of global project, and it has amounted to 3,416,000 EUR. In 2014 the budget started with 1,052,000 EUR, 2015 hit the highpoint of 1,500,000 EUR, and in 2016 so far 800,000 EUR. All of this funding is coming from IPA funds.

There is an obligation to EU-tax payers to spend the funds wisely. However some problems did occur during the implementation of the ECRAN. One of the main problems that were faced was withdrawal of participants. Fortunately there are agreements with numerous hotels, thus if a participants withdraws before the event, TAIEX not charged for the accommodation for that participants and conference facilities. But unfortunately flight costs are not refundable. The attention needs to be drawn and hopefully in the future ECRAN project timing must be agreed more wisely in order not to lose funds for this reason. In addition, there is an understanding that in certain cases there are extraordinary circumstances when participants are not able to attend, and that is justified. This was main concern on providing assistance to ECRAN project.

Anyhow, TAIEX is very pleased to have a lot of good feedback in a manner of event organisation and handling. This feedback helped to improve the way of providing assistance.

Mr. Dimovski added that apart from cancelation of participants, the crucial impact of TAIEX was connection of the public administration from enlargement countries with MS, which is very important besides technical assistance. This is one step further in line with the accession process, and had not been provided before.

Mr. Csikos stated that ECRAN worked with certain budget, but was very good is that through the intense cooperation with TAIEX, a cascade of events was visible, and it would not have been possible without TAIEX.



The support was crucial, especially when numerous activities were required at the moment in order to keep the momentum on certain topics. In the following programmes, similar type of cooperation is recommended, in order to maintain effectiveness and efficiency of the work.

ECENA

The ECENA WG objective was to improve the ability of ECRAN beneficiaries to implement and enforce the EU environmental and climate acquis by increasing the effectiveness of inspection bodies and promoting compliance with environmental legislation. Short historical background of ECENA was provided by Mr. Van der Putte, stating that from 2013 ECENA was part of ECRAN, and until now, 5 out of 8 ECENA members of the beneficiary countries are also members of IMPEL. Negotiations were started with Serbia but continuation of the process is highly needed in order to integrate other countries as well.

The programme of the ECENA is to analyse networks, strengths and weaknesses as well as to analyse performance indicators agreed upon. Even having ECENA as a strong network, the greatest weaknesses are funding mechanism and administrative capacities. The activities under ECRAN are built under RENA results. Since the work of inspectors and permit writers has to be more coordinated and connected to other activities, it has been decided that ECENA under ECRAN should be of a cross cutting nature. There is an entire package of activities implemented, including trainings and site visits, country assessments, overview of new legislations, etc. Focus of ECENA was on 3 main issues:

- Training and exchange activities - A series of regional training courses have been carried out, aimed at capacity building and compliance with exchange of experience in the field of enforcement of legislation in IED< SEVESO, REACH/CLP, ETS< Waste, Water, Nature, Transfrontier shipment of waste (TFS) and PRTR. Representatives of a variety of authorities and other stakeholders participated in the programme including inspectors, policy makers, permit writers, customs, police and civil society representatives. The outcomes, evaluations and findings have been included in the reports published on the ECRAN website. Impacts of training and exchange activities include improvement of know-how on enforcement aspects of the legislation, better understanding of processes and required adoption in implementation and enforcement actions, and of practical consequences of legislation;
- Institutional and Methodological Development – This part was focused on implementation and improvement of risk based IRAM system. SO far, IRAM system is functional in Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. National trainings courses aimed at implementation have been given to Kosovo*, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Cross-cutting issues were handled both with involvement of inspectors and other stakeholders, by inclusion of the subject in regional trainings, and by having joint workshops with IED/Chemicals WG and Waste Management WG. With this, more harmonised system and methodologies in on inspection management was developed;
- Cross border enforcement – A series of practical trainings were organised on TFS on Serbo-Croatian boarder, harbour sites in Turkey and Montenegro, with a study visits to the harbours of Antwerp and Rotterdam. Attention was drawn to the increased participation of countries in IMPEL activities, supported by ECRAN, which will further improve exchange of experience, institutional development and cross- border cooperation. During the ECRAN period, Albania and Kosovo* became IMPEL members, while Serbia is in the process of negotiation.



It is clear that a regional approach in EU assistance programme as used in RENA and ECRAN is also needed for the future considering the needs of the beneficiary countries. Regional exchange of information provides essential information for important strategic decisions to be made on a national scale. Also in benchmarking and use of more harmonized systems a regional approach in exchange of information and training has proven its value. Without a continuation of this network, the consolidation of the know-how which is being shared between the inspectors and their organisations in the region will be endangered.

ECRAN Climate Component

Mr. Csikos presented the activities implemented under Climate Component in line with the work plan. The climate acquis is not only new subject to the beneficiary countries, but also for the EU with all the new legislation and directives.

From 2010 and RENA programme, ambitions were increased regarding engagement of candidate countries and potential candidates, and activities were shifted from sharing information towards more practical work. INDCs work was targeted, related to the Paris Agreement, MMR National Systems, climate adaptation and EU ETS trainings were conducted. ECRAN was the only project in the region dealing with EU ETS. Modelling work was targeted and outsourced in a way to enable public administration to understand it and apply it. That was one of the key objectives from 2010, to establish an adequate capacity of the institutions.

The entire Climate work under the ECRAN was focusing on Climate Change Law, including MMR, CCS Directive, Ozone depletion, EU ETS, RED Directive, F-gases, effort sharing decisions and transport sector., all in manner to go towards practically decarbonising economies. ECRAN climate component provided huge assistance to beneficiary countries, some of which include:

- Adaptation of F-gases and ODS legislation, assistance in preparing INDC, and revision of Climate Change Law in Albania;
- Assistance in preparing INDC in Montenegro;
- Promotion of submission of INDC by Serbia, with a high-level even in June 2015 with Serbian Ministers and High Commissioner Mr. Sefcovic;
- Pre-Paris COP meeting with all beneficiaries and the Commission;
- Improvement of Croatia's NIR;
- Achieved informal agreement between the entities in BIH to resolve inconsistencies on national energy balance in 2015;
- Preparation of national MMR projects on developing National Systems of all countries;
- Series of technical modelling trainings on Long Range Energy Alternatives Planning (LEAP), which is not being used in Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Turkey and Albania;
- Admission of regional experts to UNFCCC roster;
- Contribution to the establishment of implementation of MRV system in Serbia;
- Establishment of regional platform on adaptation.

Mr. Csikos concluded that a step forward was made by the countries. However, the regional cooperation should be continued in order not to lose the momentum and collapse what have been built so far.



Climate Policy WG

Mr. Feiler presented activities implemented under Climate Policy Working Group. Activities were divided into 4 tasks:

1. Capacity building on modelling, scenario and tools - The thing that was missing in all countries in the region was modelling, which is able to support administrative capacity in focusing on the challenges of climate policies in the countries. Participants were able to see best examples from Romania, Greece, and Croatia;
2. Capacity building on selected climate acquis – regional training program on legislation in relation to cars and vans, renewables and fuel quality was conducted;
3. High level dialogues;
4. Practical hands on assistance on low-carbon policy and legislative development;

Each of the trainings conducted has been evaluated and confirmed that the training achieved its set goals and results, and contributed to improve understanding of and capacities on the training subject for at least 70% of the participants. The greatest achievement of the WG is the exchange of knowledge and approach to the discussed matter. Although, it needs to be mentioned that DG CLIMA provided very active support to the activities, making this part of the project more than just a project.

GHG Inventories and MMR WG

Ms. Csikos presented activities implemented under MMR and GHG WG. This cycle of ECRAN have been working on enabling of function of institutional arrangements and what is needed in the country. This was started by identifying and building a team from each country and providing technical training on energy, waste, AFOLU and IPPU. In long-term, there is an ambition to focus on data supply system which will be in function after establishing coordination with different organisations in order to provide accurate data on time. It is necessary to promote the work done under CERAN and also to establish cooperation with the Energy Community in the future. This WG was divided into 3 sub-groups:

- CRF 1 (energy training)
- CRF 2-6 (national systems);
- Other elements of MMR.

National Systems are used in framework under UNFCCC and they are responsible for provision of certain outputs, such as INDCs, NAMA, Air Pollution Policies and National Climate Policies. National systems need to be cross-sectoral, and include data from all relevant institutions, such as data on energy, transport, agriculture, and waste. Besides meeting UNFCCC requirements, National systems are necessary to meet EU requirements. Since MMR is a regulation and it does not to be transposed but directly applied, however it requires a set-up of a system that will allow complying with the regulation.

Under ECRAN, 6 regional technical trainings on GHG were organised and 3 National Systems trainings. Apart from the ECRAN experts, TAIEX experts from 12 MS were providing their experience in the implementation of MMR. ECRAN has set up an information sharing platform where experts from the beneficiary countries could find or request certain data, depending upon availability. On this portal, country action documents and best practice documents can be found.



During the work of MMR WG, all ECRAN beneficiary countries either started or improved GHG inventory work. Albania and Kosovo* established legal requirements, and along with Montenegro will follow-up National Systems through other donors and IPA funds.

ETS WG

Main aims of ETS WG were to provide essential regulatory building blocks and increase technical capacity for a well-functioning future national and/or regional ETS system, as explained by Ms. Voogt. Targeted participants of the ETS trainings and workshops were primarily future competent authorities, but also operators of installations, accreditation bodies, and potential verifiers.

The work was started with the explanations of the ETS Regulation and providing guidance materials. Experts from the EU countries that implement ETS were providing lessons learnt, but also providing experience from the verifier and operator's point of view. But the most important was provision of study visits and practical examples of how the work has been done.

Ms. Voogt provided an example of work for roadmapping. Example was provided to the participants of what a roadmap could contain. In order to discuss the elements, several groups of participants were made, with one expert, in order to discuss and work on issues and questions that were afterwards exchanged with other groups.

In the case of Serbia, the country is ready to start with monitoring and reporting. The ministry asked the operators to voluntarily submit their monitoring plans in order to start with the preparations for the process. Thus, we as ECRAN asked the Ministry to provide us with two the most complicated monitoring plans. A visit to the two plans was made by ECRAN experts and an experienced verifier. The entire plant was visited and the monitoring plan was discussed in details. The operators received guidance for better preparation of the monitoring plans, but the competent authority also received insight on how to better understand those plans. That was second in line of three workshops organised in Serbia, one for competent authority, second for the operators, and thirds for the accreditation body.

Strong progress of ETS was made in Bosnia. ECRAN was the first to propose ETS subject in the country. The country might need longer period of time for successful implementation of ETS, but the first progress has been made. Regarding Croatia, even though ETS was in place since 2013, Croatia is among better performing EU MSs. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is ready to start ETS implementation while Montenegro, Albania and Turkey have draft climate change laws with included ETS. Kosovo* is still on its first stage of climate change roadmapping.

ECRAN can be seen as an engine for further cooperation and providing actions to help formulate proposals for follow-ups. In order to maximise the effectiveness, it is important to keep combination of trainings to national authorities and other stakeholders.

Adaptation WG

Mr. Csikos presented activities implemented under Adaptation WG. This WG was focused on climate adaptation and in its last period on the Paris Agreement. As stated by Mr. Csikos, The Paris Agreement made us safer but not safe. If 2°C is to be achieved, adaptation is one of the important things that need to be done.



There is no EU legislation on adaptation, but there is EU Strategy with which the WG has been working on. The Strategy is focused on three priorities:

1. Promotion Action by MS;
2. Better informed decision-making;
3. Climate-proofing action.

ECRAN was focusing on encouraging the adaptation of the adaptation strategies, bridging knowledge gaps and relying on Adapt Tool. The tool was supported by European Environmental Agency and thus the entire Adaptation EG. The work itself was started with the letter from the Commissioner to the Ministries in order to appoint national adaptation teams working with ECRAN. Establishment of these teams was crucial for the continuation of the work, and steady teams made from different institutions was the best way to achieve it. Adaptation workshops were divided in steps A-D, where Step A consisted three workshops, step B consisted of two workshops, and steps C and D were independently conducted.

The evaluations of the different steps and trainings confirm that the training achieved its set goals and results and contributed to improved understanding of and capacities on the training subject. Croatia confirmed they apply methods learned from the ECRAN support for the National Adaptation Strategy. Other ECRAN beneficiaries confirmed the AST tool is or will be applied. However, the most valuable achievement is the establishment of National Adaptation Teams. With the new follow-up project, the countries are ready to continue previously started work.

In the further process, it should be considered to promote cooperation with Mayors Adapt and other existing networks, to broaden information sharing and exchange.

EU Accession Negotiations – Peer Reviews

As explained by Mr. Dimovski, the overall objective of strengthening capacities for accession negotiations on chapter 27 is to provide additional support to the beneficiaries in their efforts to further progress in the EU Integration process, through designated capacity building and peer review assessments. The activity was started with REAN programme and it continued with ECRAN. Peer reviews is an activity developed on the top of the progress monitoring, initiated by EC and designed to support a country in identifying the major problems in the implementation of selected EU legislation.

First ECRAN peer review started in October 2014 in Serbia, covering topics of water, nature management, air quality, chemicals and IPPC. It was a very broad and complex exercise executed by experts from Romania, Bulgaria and Austria. Stakeholder in the peer review included competent authorities, local government, industry, NGOs, public enterprises, national parks and protected areas administration, and chambers of commerce. The results of the peer review complemented the progress monitoring, but they also provided clear view of the gaps and issues related to implementation of legislation.

The peer reviews increased internal coordination, communication and exchange of information among the ministries and responsible institutions, and it provided first-hand experience on the peculiarities on the EU accession negotiation process through experience of EC and EU MSs representatives. Peer Review exercise performed for Serbia, prior to the screening meeting in 2014, has enabled the country officials to better prepare for screening meetings and provide the EC with the most relevant data and information in order to close the screening phase of negotiations.



Ms. **Rechbauer** asked **how** other countries were approached with regards that Serbia was the most advanced one. However, Mr. Dimovski answered that peer review was done only for particular country upon request, other countries were not involved. Peer review outcome is not publically available, and it is performed by the request of either EC or the country.

ECRAN Environment Component

Strategic Planning and Investments WG

Mr. Dimovski presented activities implemented under Strategic Planning and Investment WG. This WG aimed at supporting beneficiaries in the process of improvement of strategic planning, enhancement of regional cooperation and information sharing on environmental investment issues as a key element of the approximation towards EU. Activities of this WG were divided into four sub-tasks:

- Annual WG Meetings;
- Strategic Planning – provision of country specific discussions and meta plans for development of necessary planning documents for EU accession process, provision of regional training on the role of planning documents in approximation process for chapter 27, and two joint workshops with Waste Management and Water Management WGs;
- Cost Recovery and Tariff Setting – conducted two trainings on financial analysis on cost recovery, and organisation of national round-tables on cost recovery, financial flow, structure of costs and other financial principles;
- IPA Capacity Building – provided regional training on the IPA 2 regulation and its implementation principles.

The activities of this WG improved regional cooperation among environmental authorities and raised awareness on the implications that national legislation has on various environmental investments aspects. Moreover, all these activities have a cross-cutting nature and had contact with other WGs.

Water WG

Water Management WG covers water sector acquis, which is the most complex for transposition and implementation, as stated by Mr. Dimovski. Number of activities were implemented but in a very participatory manner from all ECRAN beneficiary countries. Activities were designed in a way that participants were active with completing their homework prior to the workshops. The activities were divided into four sub-tasks:

- Annual WG Meetings;
- Assistance in the development of transboundary River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) – Drina was selected as a pilot river basin for this sub-task. Program of Measures (PoM) were identified along with the supporting methodology under Water Framework Directive (WFD). Draft Drina RBMP was elaborated, followed by the delivery of screening workshop and a study visit;
- Economic Analysis in accordance with WFD – Cost recovery through water pricing was selected as a training topic. The most cost-effective measures were developed for Drina PoM, followed by a screening templates and case studies prepared by the countries;



- WFD and Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) – provision of capacity building on approaches for MSFD implementation, and WFD and MSFD objectives and overlaps.

These activities raised awareness on the implications that national legislation has on various water aspects. Informal network of water management regional experts was established as well as with the experts from EU MS such as Croatia, Romania, France, Spain and Slovenia. Moreover, the countries have improved their capacity in establishing RBM and PoMs.

Air Quality WG

Mr. Dimovski presented the impacts of Air Quality WG activities. WG implemented activities under three sub-groups:

- Annual WG Meetings;
- Training Needs Assessment – development of Air Quality Training Needs Questionnaire and Report on the Air Quality Training Needs;
- Preparation and Delivery of designated training programme – on the topics of Air Quality, NEC Directive and air quality modelling. These trainings were very prices, focused and tactical.

Activities under the WG increased knowledge of the participants on the methods for determination of the assessment regime and on the methods for delimitation of zones and agglomerations according to the Air Quality Directive.

Waste Management WG

Ms. Dimovski stated that Waste Management WG provided support to the beneficiaries in the process of transfer from landfilling of waste to extensive systems for source separation, secondary separation, extended recycling capacities, treatment of biodegradable waste in order to reflect EU requirements on waste management. Activities were implemented under three sub-tasks:

- Annual WG Meetings;
- Review of national waste management plans – review National Waste Management Strategy Policy Paper and draft Waste Management Plan 2014-2020 in Montenegro, and review of Strategy of Kosovo* on Waste Management 2013-2022 along with the Plan on Waste Management 2013-2017;
- Preparation and delivery of designated training programme - Transposition and Implementation of Waste Framework Directive, Strategic and Investment Planning in Waste Sector, Cost recovery in waste sector, Remediation of the Landfills in the context of the regional waste management. Study visit was conducted in Liege, Belgium in March 2016 in order to demonstrate best practices inefficient waste management systems and tools.

These activities triggered preparation of relevant strategic documents in Serbia and Montenegro, related to reduction of Regional Waste Management Centres and developing source and secondary separation. Moreover, these activities assisted countries in reviewing their waste management planning and strategies.

Ms. Mikosinska asked about the Waste Management WG, and how the review of National Waste Management Plans led to step forward regarding implementation. This was not imposed to the countries but rather requested, and it was requested by Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo*. There are no set criteria on how to make a review, but there is guideline on how to develop waste management plan. It was a useful activity to go through these plans and see whether these plans were developed in line with the



requirements. Mr. Malsiu added that the review of National Waste Strategy for Kosovo* was very useful for the start of the internal reviews of master plan and strategy.

Another question was put on regarding Drina RBMP. As mentioned before, it is a pilot programme, activity designed in a way that through developing RBMP, and the countries would go through the whole process on how to develop RBMP, which was the most important thing during this activity. It also provided beneficiaries support from TAIEX experts from new MS. It is a real example on how multi-country approach contributes on strengthening national capacities.

Environmental Assessments WG

Ms. Smutny presented activities implemented under Environmental Assessment WG under four sub-tasks:

- Annual WG Meetings;
- Implementation and Monitoring of SEA Directive – Support was provided to two SEA pilots, SEA for offshore hydrocarbons exploitation and production programme in Montenegro, and SEA of General National Territorial Plan of Albania. ECRAN support led to improved quality of SEA, and increased understanding of SEA role. In Montenegro, the pilot started in early 2014 and is still in operation. In Albania, the SEA team followed the scoping workshop organised by ECRAN which highly improved their SEA practice;
- Other Environmental Assessment – two regional workshops were held on SEA/EIA and AA, one study visit was organised in Czech republic on SEA/EIA and WFD, and three regional workshops on selected sectors were held, for hydropower, spatial planning, and industry. Workshop on hydropower was held in Slovenia along with a site visit where participants were able to see examples of hydropower plans development on Sava river;
- Training of Trainers (ToT) – Three regional ToTs were organised from September 2014 to September 2016, along with seven national trainings supported by ECRAN and TAIEX experts. With this activity, group of trainers was created in each country, and they were able to develop trainings in their countries.

Environmental Assessment WG contributed to better regional cooperation between SEA and EIA competent authorities by providing a platform for informal communication among the countries involved, and contributed to better regional cooperation between environmental authorities. Capacities built will enforce legal requirements stipulated by the national SEA/EIA legal framework that had been enhanced.

Ms. Ivanova added the experience from her country. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has a licensing system for EIA/SEA experts. A project supported by Dutch Government was addressing both the administration and experts involved in preparation of SEA/EIA reports. It provided a mechanism to improve their capacity and to teach what the administration is expecting. Also, it is important to involve local authorities even though that the decisions made on central level.

Ms. Smutny added that it is necessary to continue support on real cases as with the two SEA pilots. The same can be applied for EIA which is also more complicated because of the involvement of private investors.

Nature WG

As. Mr. Smutny explained that Nature WG was mainly focusing on Natura 2000 and Appropriate Assessment (AA). Activities under this WG were implemented through four sub-tasks. The fifth sub-task



should have been Regional Cooperation among protected areas, however due to synergies with Dinaric Parc Association, the task was replaced by regional workshops on illegal logging and CITES. The sub-tasks are as follows:

- Annual Meetings;
- Natura 2000 and AA- implemented under three steps:
 - Pilot AA – Implementation of AA at three pilot sites in Serbia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The AA in Serbia was the only real one in terms of real potential future Natura 2000 with proposed gas pipeline project;
 - Regional training – on the process of designation of potential Natura 2000 sites;
 - Assessment of readiness for Natura 2000 – establishing on how far is each country from completing Natura 2000. The assessment was implemented by TAIEX expert with provision of recommendations for future steps;
- Design and Delivery of Regional Awareness Raising programme – four workshops were organised under this sub-task on the following topics:
 - Practical aspects of Natura 2000 Management;
 - Nature Protection and Tourism;
 - Timber Illegal Logging;
 - CITES;
- Participatory Management Plan – a pilot site in Albania was selected on how to prepare Protected Area Management Plan. This was the first time local communities in Albania had an opportunity to express their opinion, and that opinion was integrated in the Management Plan. However, Albanian Government decided to postpone the adoption of the plan due to the process of hydropower plants development in the region.

The most valuable impact in the region is increased knowledge on the EU legal framework regarding AA and better understanding of steps needed to establish Natura 2000.

Ms. Mikosinska was pleased to see a lot of AA examples, even with the challenges in the region. It would be a good thing to have a scope for extending hypothetical cases to the real cases, or try to make the best use of them. Mr. Dimovski added that Natura 2000 guideline is currently under review, and new one will be of great help.

IED/Chemicals WG

Mr. Van der Putte presented activities under IED/Chemicals WG. Apart from

- Annual WG Meetings;
- Capacity building on compliance with chemical legislation, with emphasis on REACH/CLP linked to EID – enforcement of REACH and CLP is a range of actions that national authorities initiate to verify the compliance of the duty holders with REACH and CLP Regulations. The IED is a successor of the IPPC Directive and it tends to minimise pollution from various industrial operations. Within the scope of regional cooperation and assistance in transposition and implementation of EU environmental legislation, the specific objective of this activity is to provide assistance in strengthening the institutions and building capacity in complying with the EC Chemicals legislation. Emphasis is placed on the REACH and CLP Regulations, interlinked with the Industrial Emissions Directive as these are covering major chapters in chemicals legislation and industrial pollution



control. The training was set into four modules, conducting a 3-day regional trainings including a site visits to industrial or chemical facility in Montenegro, Albania, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Tis WG contributed to Insight in the obligations of manufacturers in the EU and importers of chemicals to the EU, downstream users, authorities and enforcement, and increased know-how on aspects of the REACH/CLP legislation.

Via ECRAN, Albania has asked TAIEX's assistance for REACH and CLP related issues, and subsequently could implement it on a national scale. The TAIEX expert missions (2014- 2015) have provided assistance to the Albanian Ministry of Environment on the compliance checking of the following draft legislation prepared. The Law "On chemicals management" prepared under TAIEX Expert Missions with the support of ECRAN Project, has been approved by the Albanian Parliament on 17th March 2016. In Albania, based on the new law requirements, a new Chemicals Office, dealing with Chemicals and Industrial Accidents is established in the Ministry of Environment.

Combination of theory and site visits provided insight in consequences of implementation of legislation. The importance of cross-cutting issues led to the understanding of cooperation needs between the authorities in implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation.

Considering the transposition and implementation of relatively new legislation, with specific reference to REACH and CLP, more basic courses are needed in some countries in the region, where transposition and implementation is still at an initial stage. In REACH/CLP, as with other legislation (WSR) the involvement and cooperation of different authorities is required in enforcement.

ECF NGO

Mr. Filcak presented activities performed under ECF NGO part of ECRAN. Cooperation among civil society and EC originated in 1999, and at the time representative of civil society was Margot Wallstrom, currently a Minister of Foreign Affairs in Sweden. ECF gathered 21 NGOs organisation from 8 beneficiary countries, and the activities were implemented under four sub-tasks:

- NGOs selection and engagement – very important tasks since the NGOs would be representing the entire region;
- Design and implementation of NGO capacity building – two conducted trainings on EU and Enlargement and on Climate Change, and participation on Green Week in Brussels in June 2015, where participants had direct connection with policies and people of different approaches to environmental protection and climate change policies. Under this tasks, participants from ECF were attending national and regional WGs workshops and trainings;
- Preparatory Meetings – two rounds of preparatory meetings were held in 2014 and 2015, 15 meetings in total. The countries were able to meet different stakeholders from the government, academia and business;
- Annual Meetings – two Annual Meetings were held. Second Annual Meeting in March-April 2016 was done in cooperation with EU Economic and Social Committee, with Mr. Toni Vidan who is both member of the Committee and a member of ECF.

ECRAN provided platform for the effective work of ECF, along with training and capacity development for ECF members. Stakeholder's dialogue was initiated, connecting civil society with EU, regional and national level.



Ms. Djereg from CEKOR NGO from Serbia represented the members of ECF. She mentioned that ECF's recommendations were submitted to Ms. Madalina Ivanica in June 2015. The forum is appreciating support from DG Environment and this kind of cooperation benefits all. Ms. Djereg added several issues raised within the forum:

1. Support of continuation of this process of dialogue with NGOs is more than necessary. However, they would prefer to be an independent smaller project and not part of big ECRAN or other project. Or in the case of a larger project, it should be enabled to be present from the beginning in defining ToR. For more efficient work, the same team of NGOs should remain, thus there will be continuity, stronger capacity and stronger influence. National activities and cooperation with other national NGOs and other national stakeholders should be strengthened. The ECF somehow gathered the regional network of the best environmental NGOs in the region and more national advocacy activities and campaigns and as regional network activities should be provided. NGO work within this forum was financially supported by providing travel expenses and cost affiliated issues, but the working time of NGOs was not covered. We support NGOs from Croatia should stay as observers in future NGO forum;
2. Broader and stronger cooperation is a must. They would like to enhance our cooperation with the EU parliament, as it is seen as, but also improve cooperation and information exchange with national ministries. The problem is that civil society is still not often recognized and appreciated as relevant stakeholder. In the next period, civil society should be involved in the set of activities such as ministerial conferences, early evaluation of forum and delivering recommendation, regular annual meetings with the parliament, meetings with the EC;
3. During AM, NGOs should be more involved with the preparation of agenda. Also ambassadors of our national missions in Brussels should be considered as well.

Ms. Djereg recommended to have better oversight and transparency of involvement of future ECRAN experts of creation of national strategies, policies and project assessment. Just as an example, in Montenegro, the Green Home NGO raised great concerns about the transparency and tasks of the ECRAN group of experts regarding one of the investments projects of oil and gas exploration of shore. The project was assessed by ECRAN as acceptable and it created a concern. Now relevant ministry representatives use the argument that this project is accepted by ECRAN experts presented to EU commission bodies and received approval.

Overall, there is a very slow development in catching up with European environmental standards. They wanted to emphasize their position of unacceptable national energy policies which are pushing for coal-power plants in the region, and to unbelievable 578 HPP larger than 1MW hydropower plants. They also criticised regional development strategy developed under Energy Community, because it was paying little attention to environmental and public health concerns, as well as to social factors. More support to the countries is needed, in order to change energy strategies, having in mind long-term goals in order to ensure appropriate investments leading to decarbonisation and sustainable use of renewable resources.

Mr. Vidan from Green Action in Croatia is representing ECF in European Economic and Social Committee, the major EU advisory bodies. Being observer on behalf of Croatian NGOs, he expressed gratitude to NGOs from candidate countries and potential candidates to stressing their attitude to keep Croatian representatives in the process as observers. On behalf of Croatian environmental NGOs, there is also a will to stay in the process and hope to contribute to enlargement. Environmental NGOs from the region should consider of organising a dialogue with EU institutions as a very important support of the work. It is a unique chance to get inside environmental and climate policies, which are giving environmental NGOs to break



their debates on national policies. Mr. Vidan said that he succeeded to start being more actively involved in this process and provide logistical support to these meeting, and also contribute communicate official letter of giving high priority of continuation of this organising dialogue as a part of strengthening role of civil society in enlargement process.

EU is recognising the importance of acting role of civil society in enlargement process, and what should be ensured is smooth transition to the next phase of a dialogue of environmental NGOs of candidates and potential candidates.

Mr. Hanley stated that DG Environment have a strong commitment with working with NGOs. Side meetings with NGOs are preferable before meeting the governmental officials in the region countries. DG Environment is aware of NGOs desire on independence, but it will be reflected in further discussions. There is a general interest with candidates and potential candidates to continue this dialogue. Thematic areas of concern should be further discussed. One of the difficulties however, is that the budget is being squeezed, but since Madalina is coming back, there will be continuity of people working on this.

Closing Remarks

Ms Mijatovic Cernos stated that now that the Paris Agreement has been adopted, its implementation will be the Commission's priority in the years to come. For the IPA beneficiary this will be very demanding in terms of capacity but also in terms of fundamental reforms it will require. In line with that the Commission will continue to provide technical assistance to the countries. Naturally, this will be reflected in the way new technical assistance projects (IPA 2016 Action and IPA 2017 Action) are designed. She announced that the Financing Decision for the IPA 2016 Programme was adopted, and would enable continuation of climate action work with the region. This will be done through a smaller regional project continuing in a similar manner of what was done in the ECRAN in terms of topics, further supporting beneficiary action on: climate policy and climate legislation, MMR and ETS. It will also reflect the current legislative proposals that are being tabled in the EU. The new legislative package is in the process of preparation and will allow for implementation of the EU 2030 Framework on Climate and Energy Policy and the EU commitments to the Paris Agreement.

Since 2015, the EU ETS Directive has been under revision, but in July the European Commission has also proposed strengthened acts on; effort sharing for sectors not covered by the ETS, one on land use and land use change as well as on the new monitoring and reporting rules for climate and energy as well as the low emissions mobility strategy. In November, new proposals on directives on energy efficiency and renewable energy will be presented. For instance, the EU MSs are, in close cooperation with the EC, working on their National Action Plans on Climate and Energy, in order to enable a coherent and consistent implementation of targets under the EU 2030 Framework.

These new developments will be reflected in a new 2016 project especially through the high level dialogues and raising climate awareness, but also through the technical work to support further development of MMR and ETS, CLIMA has also proposed a multi-annual regional project under the 2017 IPA Programme, currently under discussion.

Mr. Hanley added that the discussion is to continue multi-annual regional programme. Situation with two separate programmes is still not final. At the moment, biodiversity issues are maintaining high profile. Also, there is tendency to include maritime issues, so further discussion with DG MARE is needed.



The Commission is being asked to evaluate in a very serious way of what have or not have been achieved with the ECRAN. Selection must be made in terms of which topics will maintain. By all means, there is also an option to reinforce more bilateral work, but not throw away the regional cooperation, since not all the countries can be treated the same way, which depends on their process towards transposition and implementation of the legislation.

Mr. Januszewski stated that since Energy Community was mentioned, in October 2016 the environmental part should be included in the treaty. Also in October 2016, there is a meeting focusing on hydropower sector. There has been some concern about the movement in some countries regarding their policies and strategies, which express some sort of misbalance. It cannot be rejected that some countries have a huge potential for hydropower, but environmental impact assessment must be in focus in these scenarios, in order to ensure the balance of variety of interests, as added by Mr. Hanley. Also, all countries should contact DG NEAR through national institutions and provide proposal and suggestions for further work and cooperation.

As concluded by Mr. Januszewski, finalisation of ECRAN should not be considered as the end, but as the start of the next round.

