

IN FOCUS

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 1st ECRAN Newsletter prepared by ECRAN Secretariat. The objective of this issue is to provide ECRAN stakeholders with start - up activities, events and topics covered by ECRAN and ECRAN related initiatives in the period October 2013 - March 2014.

1st ECRAN Newsletter brings to you the information about activities related to:

- ECRAN Environment component;
- ECRAN Climate Change component;
- ECRAN Horizontal component;
- ECRAN cooperation with other related initiatives;

The ECRAN Team

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1st Steering Committee Meeting;
- Environment Component – development of work plans and programmes, selection of pilot sites, Annual Meetings, regional capacity building;
- Climate Change Component – development of work plan, Annual Meeting, regional capacity building;
- Horizontal Component – development of work plans, Annual Meeting, Progress Monitoring 2014;
- Cooperation with related networks and initiatives;

STEERING COMMITTEE

ECRAN 1ST STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, (21 JANUARY 2014, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM)

1st Steering Committee was attended by ECRAN Focal Points nominated by each of the beneficiaries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey), the European Commission (DG Environment, DG Climate Action and DG Enlargement) and ECRAN project team.

During the meeting, Steering Committeemembers were:

- Provided with an overview of the start-up activities of ECRAN Project;
- Participated in a discussion and endorsement of the 2014 Work Plan for ECRAN activities;
- Introduced to the main elements of the newly established cooperation between ECRAN and EC TAIEX Unit.

ECRAN work plan for 2014 was adopted for three major components of the ECRAN programme:

- Environment
- Climate
- Horizontal

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Steering-Committee>

ENVIRONMENT COMPONENT

1ST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT WORKING GROUP (EAWG), (7 NOVEMBER 2013, ISTANBUL, TURKEY)

The 1st Annual meeting of the EAWG was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 7 November 2013, back-to-back with the International EIA Congress in Istanbul (08 – 10 November 2013) where ECRAN had a side event. Following items were discussed and agreed during the annual meeting:

- Introduction to the activities planned within the ECRAN project under the EAWG;
- Working modalities within the EAWG including requirements for nomination of participants to the events;
- Criteria for selection of SEA pilot site;
- Criteria for nomination of participants for planned ToT sessions;
- Cooperation with other working groups within ECRAN.

ECRAN side event at the International EIA Congress provided an opportunity to present to the wider audience the ECRAN work plan but also a detailed overview of the new EIA Directive (DIRECTIVE 2014/52/EU), and the opportunities and challenges it brings for transposition and implementation.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Environment/Environmental-assessment>
<http://www.ormansu.gov.tr/osb/AnaSayfa.aspx?sflag=tr>

¹<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/review.htm>

1ST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP NATURE, (10 DECEMBER 2013, PODGORICA, MONTENEGRO)

The 1st Annual Meeting of Nature Working Group was organised in Podgorica, Montenegro on 10 December 2013. During the meeting, ECRAN team provided NWG members with the:

- Overview of the NWG work plan for 2014;
- Selection criteria for Appropriate Assessments and Participatory Management Plan pilot sites
- Modalities for establishment on Regional Cooperation among Nature protected Areas (NPA);
- Approach for the upcoming Natura 2000 capacity assessment task.

The meeting was followed up with the process of pilot sites selection, screening of the pilot sites and planning of follow up workshops and practical work. The selected pilot sites agreed with the beneficiary countries are the following:

Appropriate Assessment pilot sites:

- 1) FYR of Macedonia (Tikveš nature reserve);
- 2) Serbia (reserves Okanj and Rusanda, Vojvodina province);
- 3) Turkey (Lake Tuz).

Participatory Management Plan pilot site:

- 1) Albania (NP Alps)

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Environment/Nature>

ENVIRONMENT COMPONENT

JOINT ANNUAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUPS, (29 JANUARY 2014, SKOPJE, FYR OF MACEDONIA)

The 1st Annual meeting of two Working Groups was held in Skopje on 29 January. Since coordinators of two WGs planned joint activities for 2014 and taking into account the general cross cutting nature of two WGs, the annual meetings of two Working Groups were combined so that national coordinators of two WGs could get familiar with the following:

- Strategic Planning and Investments and Waste Management work plans for 2014, focusing on assessment of strategic documents and preparation of meta plans for the countries, assessment of national waste strategies and action plans in line with the agreed methodology and preparation of joint workshops on economic analysis, tariffs and improvement of investment planning, further strengthening of the capacities of the competent authorities dealing with transposition and implementation of Waste Framework Directive;
- Working modalities, communication and cooperation.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Events/7>

1ST ANNUAL MEETING OF IED CHEMICALS WORKING GROUP, (30 JANUARY 2014, SKOPJE, FYR OF MACEDONIA)

The first Annual Meeting of IED/Chemicals working group was organised in Skopje, FYR of Macedonia on 30 January 2014. During the meeting the following items were discussed and agreed:

- Introduction of the activities planned within the ECRAN project followed by the discussion and adoption of the work plan for 2014;
- Working modalities within the IED/Chemicals WG including requirements for nomination of participants to the events;
- Cross-cutting nature of the IED/Chemicals WG;
- Cooperation with ECENA.

Training targets were developed for the prioritised training areas that will function as the starting point for the organisation of the programme, and they include four modules:

- Module 1: General introductory model on procedures with the focus on REACH specifics, SIEF, chemical risk assessment and safety report, CLP general development including site visit to the selected pilot IPPC/Seveso Installation (May 2014);
- Module 2: Module on REACH/CLP/IED procedures focusing on REACH IT IUCLID, REACH/CLP obligations and requirements, Human Health Risk Assessment, classification of chemicals, REACH/IED practical cases including site visit to the selected pilot IPPC/Seveso installation. (December 2014);
- Module 3: Technical aspects of REACH/CLP/IED with the focus on exposure scenarios, PBT and vPvB, Environmental Risk Assessment, HHRA, REACH IT IUCLID, REACH/IED practical cases including site visit to the selected IPPC/Seveso installation (May 2015);

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- Module 4: REACH/CLP EU accession elements, downstream consequences and inter-linkages with the focus on practical experience in accession, tools and guidance including a site visit (December 2015).

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Environment/Chemicals>



1ST ANNUAL MEETING OF WATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP, (10 FEBRUARY 2014, ISTANBUL, TURKEY)

The first Annual Meeting of Water Management Working Group took place in Istanbul, Turkey on 10 February 2014. During the meeting CRAN team presented to the members of the WMWG the following

- Activities planned within the ECRAN project under the Water Management Working Group (WMWG);
- Working modalities within manner within the WMWG including requirements for nomination of participants to the events;
- Criteria for selection of pilot sites and training topics;
- Cooperation with other related ECRAN Working Groups.

During the meeting it has been agreed that the WMWG activities in 2014 and beyond will be focused on the following:

- Further strengthening of the capacities of the competent authorities dealing with transposition and implementation of WFD;
- Assistance in the development of transboundary River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs);
- Capacity building on economic-financial analysis and cost recovery combined with ECRAN Strategic Planning and Investments Working Group.

Meeting was followed up with the process of nomination and selection of cross border pilot site that will be used for provision of support in the development of River Basin Management Plan for the selected topic. The process resulted with the Drina River Basin selected as the pilot site with support being provided to the development of Programme of Measures selected as the priority topic.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Environment/Water>

ENVIRONMENT COMPONENT

REGIONAL TRAINING ON THE ROLE OF PLANNING DOCUMENTS IN APPROXIMATION PROCESS AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PROCESS FOR CHAPTER 27, (18-19 MARCH 2014, PODGORICA, MONTENEGRO)

The training took place in the period 18-19 March 2014 in Podgorica, Montenegro, being one of the beneficiary countries that has finalised the Screening Meetings with the EC and is currently investing efforts to close the opening benchmark set in the screening report published by the EC in December 2013.

As it was assessed during implementation of RENA activities, countries during last several years did elaborate many planning documents that guide transposition and implementation process. At the same time, as screening process of the acquis or investment planning process shows, countries still face problems when required to establish deadlines for actions, priorities activities and indicate related costs.

Regional Training on the Role of Planning Documents was used to set the background for follow up activities in assessing national situation in the region and preparation of meta-plans (roadmaps) for development of necessary planning documents for EU accession process.

The training enabled exchange of experience with new Member States experts (Croatia, Slovenia, Romania, Lithuania and Portugal) on planning documents on EU accession and negotiation process, and preparation for screening process, which already took place for Montenegro and is scheduled for Serbia to take place in September and November 2014.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Events/12>



CLIMATE COMPONENT

ECRAN CLIMATE COMPONENT 1ST ANNUAL MEETING, (9 DECEMBER 2013, VIENNA, AUSTRIA)

The 1st Annual Meeting of Climate Component with ECRAN Climate Coordinators was held in Vienna on 9 December 2013. During the meeting, participants were introduced to the overall Climate work plan and detailed work plan for 2014, modalities for further capacity building and practical work building on the results achieved under predecessor project Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA).

In order to further promote climate issues in the ECRAN beneficiaries, National Climate Coordinators were provided with a questionnaire in order to identify the national stakeholders relevant for the ECRAN Climate Work Plan that was adopted during the meeting.

It was agreed that ECRAN Climate activities will be implemented through the structure consisted of the following four Working Groups:

- Wg1: Climate policy development and building climate awareness;
- WG2: National inventory systems and the EU Monitoring MMR;
- WG3: GHG Emission Trading System;
- WG4: Adaptation to Climate Change.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Climate>

WORKSHOP OF WORKING GROUP 1 CLIMATE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING CLIMATE AWARENESS ON REGIONAL CAPACITY FOR DEVELOPING LOW EMISSION STRATEGIES AND MODELLING (LAUNCH WORKSHOP), (23 JANUARY 2014, ZAGREB, CROATIA)

The 1st workshop of the Climate component was held in Zagreb, Croatia, with the objective to address the issue of development of concrete climate policies with GHG emission reduction targets in the context of EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package and the expected 2030 Climate and Energy Framework. This workshop was the first regional event that launched regional exercise on the development of climate policies and planning converging with the EU acquis in the ECRAN beneficiaries.

The workshop targeted the following topics:

- The launching of the regional ECRAN exercise on modelling and climate policies;
- Familiarising the participants with the EU 2030 framework for climate and energy policies and the supporting role of modelling;
- An insight of the EU Energy, Transport and GHG Emission Trends until 2050;
- An introduction to modelling for climate policy;
- Introduction to mitigation Scenario development and model Member States (The Netherlands, Slovenia, Hungary);
- Provision for an initial assessment of the mitigation scenario modelling capacities in the ECRAN beneficiaries;
- Discussion the strengths, weaknesses and needs in the ECRAN beneficiaries.

The idea is to combine bottom-up training programme targeted at the relevant authorities, and top-bottom approach of National High-level seminars that will be based on priorities, needs and circumstances of each beneficiary.

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These events will include communication and awareness-raising on informing on the EU 2030 climate policies and the climate change impacts in the region (including the 5th IPCC Assessment Report as well as the World Bank's "Turn down the heat" - reports).

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Events/6>

ECRAN CLIMATE WORKING GROUP 2 GHG INVENTORY SYSTEMS AND EU MMR

1st ECRAN MMR workshop: Regional training on GHG Inventory development process with a focus on the energy sector, (5-7 March 2014, Zagreb, Plomin, Koromacno, Croatia)

The workshop was held Zagreb, Croatia (1st day) and on site at a power plant (Plomin – 2nd day) and cement plant (Koromačno – 3rd day) in Istria/Croatia.

The workshop was focused on utilizing the Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, the IPCC Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories and elements of 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, for the fuel combustion activities and fugitive emission from fuels.

National Systems' requirements for estimation of GHG emissions are provided under the UNFCCC, including:

- Inventory Planning
- Inventory Preparation
- Inventory Management

The training was developed as a follow-up of the activities on the monitoring mechanism implemented in the framework of RENA, the so called "MMD Exercise". The main purpose of the exercise was to start developing better knowledge and capacity and in gradually improving/increasing the technical and institutional ability of the RENA countries to prepare submissions of the National Inventory Reports in the framework of the MMD.

The exercise concentrated on improving the process of the preparation of sound inventories towards a full and harmonised combustion fuel sector GHG inventory using the appropriate guidelines and tools. The focus was on the CRF fuel combustion activities 1A.

HORIZONTAL COMPONENT

ACTIVITY 1.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE FORUM)

Environment and Climate Forum (ECF) has been incorporated in ECRAN as a part of horizontal component. Its overall aim is to build and strengthen civil society involvement in the environment and climate area in ECRAN beneficiary countries through institutional strengthening and information exchange on the EU environmental policy and developments in the enlargement policies.

Between October 2013 and January 2014, ECF NGO team work was focused on the development of technical materials for opening the call for applications (ToR for participating NGOs, Selection Criteria, and Application Form); call for interest publishing (January 2014) and collection of applications.

Selection process was conducted by the EC based on the agreed and published criteria. In March 2014, 21 NGOs were selected for participation in the ECF through rigorous and accountable selection process.

In order to minimize any potential impact of the delay, preparation for TNA, other activities and kick off meeting started early before the call announcement during this reporting period.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/ECF/What-is-Environment-and-Climate-Forum>

ECENA 1ST ANNUAL MEETING, (31 JANUARY 2014, SKOPJE, FYR OF MACEDONIA)

1st Annual Meeting of ECENA was held in Skopje on 31 January 2014, with the objective to present the overall work plan for the period 2013 – 2016 and detailed work plan for 2014 with specified dates and locations for planned events. During the meeting it has been agreed that ECENA will follow and build on the results achieved under predecessor project RENA. Hence the activities of ECENA will be focused on capacity building, exchange of experience with EU MS and related initiatives and practical work. The activities will be implemented through the following set of tasks:

- Task 1: Regional training IED, cross cutting issues and common inspection;
- Task 2: External Country Assessment;
- Task 3: IRAM/easy tools;
- Task 4: Compliance REACH/CLP;
- Task 5: Trans Frontier Shipment;
- Task 6: Inspection in other policy areas;
- Task 7: Other related networks.

Due to the cross cutting nature of ECENA and IED/Chemicals Working group, these WG will cooperate tightly in order to avoid overlapping of activities.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.ecranetwork.org/Events/9>

HORIZONTAL COMPONENT

PROGRESS MONITORING 2014

The purpose of the Progress Monitoring (PM) in preparation for accession is to provide an updated, comprehensive overview of the current situation in the beneficiary countries concerning the status of transposition and implementation of the environment and climate acquis as well as identifying the progress achieved on yearly basis in each of the beneficiary countries. In February 2014, Progress Monitoring exercise following the calendar year 2014 has been launched by the EC in cooperation with ECRAN. The exercise started with the development of amended ToCs and IQs and provision of assistance to the beneficiaries on the progress monitoring methodology, providing comments on the received filled in ToCs and IQs. Draft PM reports will be delivered by ECRAN to the EC and the beneficiary countries in July 2014 while final reports are due in October 2014.

ECRAN RELATED NETWORKS AND INITIATIVES

EC AND IFI ENVIRONMENT WORKSHOP (22 NOVEMBER 2013, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM)

The EC/IFI environment workshop is an annual event organized by the IFI Coordination Office as part of its work programme on policy and strategy issues relevant for EC and IFI cooperation in the Western Balkans, particularly in the context of the Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBIF). The meeting provides an informal discussion forum for the EC, IFIs and representatives of relevant initiatives and projects working on the environment sector in the Western Balkans. As usual, this meeting provided an opportunity to exchange information on the latest developments in the work of the EC and IFIs in the Western Balkans in the environmental and climate change field. This year the meeting was opened up to the country units in DG Enlargement.

During the meeting ECRAN team presented the established ECRAN structure and work plan.

11TH IMPEL GENERAL ASSEMBLY, (10-11 DECEMBER 2013, VILNIUS, LITHUANIA)

IMPEL General Assembly Meeting was organised by Environmental protection Agency and IMPEL Secretariat in Vilnius on 10-11 December 2013. The main aims of the meeting were to:

- Discuss the progress of implementation of Environmental Law;
- Discuss the Network's development and implementation of new proposals;
- Familiarise with the 2014 goals of European Commission regarding Environmental Law;
- Analyse Network's activities in 2013;
- Address 2014 IMPEL budget.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT NETWORKS: CONCEPTS, IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS, (13-14 NOVEMBER 2013, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM)

In cooperation with the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE), the Flemish High Council of Environmental Enforcement (VHRM) organized an international conference on Environmental Enforcement Networks: concepts, Implementation, and Effectiveness. The conference had the purpose to explore the potential advantages and challenges of environmental compliance and enforcement networks. It assessed the criteria for determining a networks' effectiveness from a theoretical perspective and examine the practical cases where networks have delivered measurable compliance and enforcement benefits in practice.

ECRAN team participated at the Conference to present the ECENA work plan and explore options for further cooperation and synergies.



ECRAN RELATED NETWORKS AND INITIATIVES

3RD THEMIS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, (12-13 MARCH 2014, SKOPJE, FYR OF MACEDONIA)

The 3rd Executive Committee (EXECOM) meeting of the Themis Network took place in Skopje in the period 12 – 13 March 2014.

The Executive Committee meeting objectives were the following:

- Public launch of the Themis Network publications “SEE Environmental Outlook” and the “Environmental Networking Handbook” and, based on those publications, have a dialogue on the main environmental issues, priorities and bottlenecks that affect the region and its countries;
- Debate and strengthen partnerships and synergies in the region to ensure a greater outreach and sustainability of the Themis Network results. Those partnerships include INECE, IMPEL, INTERPOL, and other ADA funded Initiatives like ENVSEC, the ILECU Network and BIRN, etc;
- Debate the external evaluation report performed on the implementation of the 2012-2013 work plan, focusing on its relevance, rationale, strong and weak points;
- Debate the lessons learnt in light of the external evaluation report recommendations for further improvement;

- Debate and approve a Work Plan for 2014-2016, taking inspiration from and respecting previous deliberations of the Executive Committee, especially the 2013, which already approve the main directions of work.

ECRAN team participated at the meeting to present the ECENA work plan and explore options for further cooperation and synergies.

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