

**Report from the workshop “Development of Climate Change Policies in the context of International and EU accession processes“, Hotel Zira, Belgrade, 15 December 2014.**

The workshop titled “Development of Climate Change Policies in the context of International and EU accession processes“, organized by the United Nations Development Program and the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, was held on 15 December in the Hotel Zira in Belgrade. The Conference which was attended by over 90 representatives of state institutions, the professional public and civil society organizations, was opened by Steliana Nedera, Deputy Resident Coordinator of the UNDP in Serbia and Stana Božović, state secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection. The workshop was financially supported by funds of the Global Environmental Fund, as one of the activities within the project “Second National Communication of the Republic of Serbia under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change”.

During the introductory statements, the significance of strengthening capacities to support implementation of international commitments was emphasized, as well as commitments resulting from the process of accession to the EU in the field of climate change.

A general agreement was reached that in recent years significant progress has been made in establishing the institutional and strategic-legal framework in this field, although the major challenges are still ahead.

Deputy Resident Coordinator of UNDP in Serbia, S. Nedera, pointed to the significance of project and program support that the UNDP has been providing under the auspices of the Global Environmental Fund to the Government of Serbia in achieving its commitments resulting from the relevant international agreements, primarily the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Ms Nedera emphasized that the support to fulfilling international obligations is at the same time support to Serbia in harmonizing its legislation with the relevant EU legislation, especially in the field of climate change.

Danijela Božanić, Head of Department for Climate Change in the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection stressed that the activities of state institutions and all stakeholders in the field of climate change are not just about fulfilling legal obligations but also a process of ensuring benefits and achieving sustainable development of the society at large. The representatives of the Ministry presented the progress that has been made in terms of harmonization with the EU *acquis*, especially in the field of establishing and GHG emissions monitoring and reporting system, establishing a system of emissions trading in Serbia, and intentions for future harmonization with the new EU strategic framework for 2020 and 2030. The participants also heard about the content of the GHG Inventory, which is managed by the Serbian Environmental Protection Agency.

A separate session within the workshop was dedicated to the preparations for the Second National Communication and the First Biennial Updated Report under UN Framework Convention of Climate

Change. Both of these documents are developed with the support of the UNDP and with the financial assistance of the Global Environmental Fund.

State secretary Stana Božović emphasized that timely and proper fulfillment of commitments under international documents is among the key state objectives, adding that the workshop in Belgrade was an opportunity for the general public to hear about the status of preparations of the Second National Communication and the First Biennial Updated Report under the UN Convention. She expressed her conviction that these documents, which are to be finalized during 2015, will provide a clear picture of the current GHG emissions, and a vision of development for Serbia in the mid-term and long-term period. Workshop participants heard that the Government of the Republic of Serbia recognizes the significance of the topic and has established the National Council for Climate Change in November 2014.

The workshop participants were also addressed by the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, H.E. the Ambassador Dragan Županjevac, who emphasized the significance of coordinated approach to climate change policies in the context of sustainable development. This is especially so since the Republic of Serbia since the beginning of 2014 is chairing the UN Economic and Social Council, which is in charge of coordinating global policies in the said fields. He pointed to the key role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in processes of international relevance and reminded the participants that a representative of the Ministry attended and represented the interests of Serbia at the recently held Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Lima. In this context, he reminded the gathering that the Republic of Serbia, on its way to EU membership, needs to fulfill its international commitments, including those regarding GHG emissions in accordance with the EU strategic targets for 2030.

During the working session, participants had an opportunity to learn in more detail about the observed climate changes and climate scenarios for the region of the Republic of Serbia, which indicate without doubt the long-term and regional non-balanced reduction of precipitation and increase of average annual temperatures. Prof. Vladimir Đurđević of the Meteorological Institute in this context presented the negative effects of anticipated climate changes on key sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, water management, and forestry. A more detailed overview of negative effects, as well as opportunities for adaptation measures for individual sectors will be presented within the document Second National Communication of the Republic of Serbia under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Prof. Aleksandar Jovović from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Belgrade presented key opportunities and scenarios related to mitigation measures, especially the waste sector which was used as an example. It was mentioned once again that the energy sector is the biggest GHG emission contributor. A more detailed analysis of mitigation measures in the context of climate change for the Republic of Serbia will be presented in the two reports under the Convention after a more detailed processing of emission data from the Inventory.

Near the end of the workshop an analysis was presented regarding the opportunities for financing of adaptation and mitigation measures in the key sectors. In this context detailed suggestions were presented for investments from national and local budgets, international and EU assistance, as well as loans from international financial institutions and the private sector. Related to this, a framework was presented of financial and legislative subsidies and mechanisms which exist in the countries of the region and in the Republic of Serbia with improvement prospects.

The workshop participants were also informed about the results of the project “Low Carbon Development in South East Europe” (LOCSEE) implemented with EU funds by relevant state authorities of the countries in the region.

Some of the recommendations put forward in the final discussion include:

- The need to produce detailed cost-benefit analyses of adaptation and mitigation measures in the context of climate change
- The need to undertake a review of and identify priorities of adaptation and mitigation measures in the context of climate change
- Better utilization of all funds available to the Republic of Serbia until membership in the EU
- Involvement of all stakeholders in climate change policy making at national level
- The need for new and innovative projects and programs in the field of renewable energy utilization and energy efficiency, as well as in the transport sector (for instance, comprehensive awareness raising about energy/emission efficient driving - “green driving“).