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**CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM**

**CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

**TO LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS**

**FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM**

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| **Project** | **CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM**  implemented by the **Ministry of Environmental Protection** under funds from the **French Development Agency** |
| **Objectives of the call** | Select two pilot Local Self-Governments (LSGs) to which international and local technical assistance will be provided for the identification of climate priority needs and projects (adaptation or mitigation) |
| **Support to be provided to the selected LSGs** | * Preparation of a local Climate Action Plan (either focusing on adaptation or mitigation) * Diagnosis of municipal finance to provide recommendations to facilitate climate change investments at local level |
| **Estimated duration of the support** | October 2021 to March 2022 |
| **Deadline for submission of the letter of interest and the detailed application form by the LSGs** | 28/09/2021 |

# **Introduction**

For some years now, the impacts of climate change have been increasingly felt in Serbia, especially on a local level. Indeed, there is a clear rise of extreme weather events such as heat waves, droughts, extreme cold, storms, etc. The adoption of the Law on Climate Change, on March 2021, is therefore a key milestone for the national climate road map. In the long term, the latter will aim to put in place a system to limit greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and strengthen climate adaptation. Thus, positive effects will be expected, as much on public health as on the economic development of the country.

Local Self Governments (LSGs) will have a key role to play to integrate the climate change component in local policies, strategies and plans, together with reducing GHG emissions and adapt their development to a more resilient path and growth. This will be a key challenge to stimulate the contribution of LSG units to the national environment and climate change agenda.

To achieve this, greater attention and understanding of the different climate issues will be possible through the provision of the different methodological tools necessary to integrate these issues into the programs and activities of the LSGs and local working groups.

This is an opportunity for cities to seize the climate issues and define their own path of ecological and climatic transition which can only be beneficial for them but also for society.

# **Background information on the Cities and Climate Change Program**

The Cities and Climate Change Program, implemented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and funded by the French Development Agency, supports the Government of Serbia into its effort for a more sustainable green growth and urban development.

The Cities and Climate Change Program, which has started with the entry into force of the Law on Climate Change, aims to strengthen climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives at both national and local levels in Serbia.

As part of this program, a Technical Assistance is provided to **support two pilot Local Self-Governments in the identification of climate priority needs and projects** (adaptation or mitigation) that will strengthen urban resilience and reduce GHG Emissions at local level. The preparation of local climate action plans will therefore contribute to improve quality of the environment and rational the use of natural resources while looking at urban and socio-economic profiles of the cities/municipalities.

The preparation of these plans is an opportunity to empower the Serbian Local Self-Governments, their stakeholders and communities to define and engage a local climate roadmap.

Such return of experience will participate to further replicate this initiative in other cities / municipalities in Serbia.

The overall objectives are therefore to:

* Facilitate the articulation between the national commitment on climate change and urban development at local level,
* Empower the LSGs on climate change challenges,
* Strengthen the integration of climate issues and challenges in relation to LSG’s future development (spatial plan, socio-economic profile),
* Identify and prioritize actions to be implemented in short and medium terms at local level,
* Draw lessons from these 2 experiences to facilitate replication in other cities / municipalities in Serbia.

# **Description of the support to be provided to the two pilot Local Self-Governments**

**The objective of the call is to request the interest of the Local Self-Governments and select two pilot LSGs to be part of the program. A support provided through a Technical Assistance funded by the French Development Agency will be made available to the two selected LSGs for the preparation of a local climate action plan and the conduction of a diagnosis on municipal finance.**

The support to be provided by a team of international and national experts will include the following activities as described below.

* **Preparation of a local climate action plan**

To facilitate learning experiences and draw lessons for other cities and municipalities in Serbia, it is envisaged to select:

* + One Local Self-Government for the preparation of a climate adaptation plan,
  + One Local Self-Government for the preparation of a climate mitigation plan.

The LSG will be able to indicate in its application form its willingness to be supported in the preparation of either a Climate Adaptation Plan or a Climate Mitigation Plan.

The Local climate adaptation/mitigation plan is envisaged as a “take for action” guideline that will contribute to build city-wide climate resilience and low-carbon development. It should indeed be seen as a tool to deploy and guide future investments towards resilience and low-carbon activities that could be scalable and/or be used as references for other cities / municipalities in Serbia.

The preparation of the climate action plan will be carried out in three stages:

* In the case of the **climate adaptation action plan** :

1. Diagnosis on climate risks and vulnerability assessment,
2. Organization of a local stakeholders’ workshop to present the vulnerability assessment and identify adaptation priorities,
3. Definition of the local adaptation plan describing short, medium and long term actions.

* In the case of the **climate mitigation action plan** :

1. Diagnosis on GHG Emission
2. Organization of a local stakeholders’ workshop to present the diagnosis and define a common low-carbon transition scenario.
3. Definition of the local mitigation plan describing short, medium and long term actions.

* Both plans will be covered by a **Strategic Environmental Assessment**.
* **Diagnosis of municipal finance**

In parallel of the preparation of the local climate action plan, the Technical Assistance will carry out a diagnosis on municipal finance (including sources and investment capacity of Public Utility Companies - PUCs).

The diagnosis will be the basis to propose recommendations for the establishment of financial mechanisms at national level to facilitate climate change investments at local level.

***The support to be provided at this stage does not include allocation of funds for the implementation of the actions included within the Climate Action Plans, neither the implementation of recommendations for improving climate investments at local level.***

# **Conditions for participation and modalities of applications**

The public call, organized by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, is a competitive process and the selection of the two pilot local self-governments will be made through the evaluation of the submitted application forms.

**The Local Self-Governments willing to apply should**:

1. Have a population above 40 000 inhabitants,
2. Submit an **official written document** (Appendix 1 – Letter of Interest) confirming its readiness to participate in the Cities and Climate Change Program and facilitate the preparation of the climate action plan and the diagnosis on municipal finance. The LSG is not expected to provide any financial contribution to the Technical Assistance.
3. Submit **an application form** (Appendix 2 – Application Form)expressing its motivations, needs and capacities. The LSG can indicate its willingness to be supported in the preparation of either Climate Adaptation Plan or a Climate Mitigation Plan.

[**The Letter of Interest**](https://www.klimatskepromene.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/EN_Call-to-LSGs_Appendix-1_Letter-of-Interest_v02-09.docx) **and the** [**detailed application**](https://www.klimatskepromene.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/EN_Call-to-LSGs_Appendix-2_Detailed-Application-Form_v02-09.docx) **form should be submitted by 28/09/2021. The documents shall be sent by email to** [**Jelena.Perovic@ekologija.gov.rs**](mailto:mailtoJelena.Perovic@ekologija.gov.rs) **by the 28th of September.**

# **Criteria for selecting the two Local Self-Governments**

The support will be provided to 2 Local Self-Governments. The criteria should ensure the impact of the project on the wider territory of Serbia.

The selection will be made on the basis of the following criteria in order to assess the willingness and readiness of the LSGs to participate to the Program.

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| **Capacities** | * Internal organization of the LSGs |
| **Motivation** | * Added value the local climate plan could bring to the territory * Consistency with other development plans, on-going projects and commitments on environment and climate challenges |
| **Needs and data availability** | * Recent climatic risks or events faced by the cities |
| **Data availability** | * Readiness to commit and ability to deliver relevant data on:   + Climate and natural risks   + Energy balance   + Municipal Finance |

The two selected local self-governments will be notified by electronic email within 5 days after the final decision.

# **Indicative timeline of the support**

The timeline for the planned support is planned as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| 14/09 | Publication of the public call |
| 28/09 | Deadline for submitting the letter of interest and the detailed application form |
| Mid-October | Final decision - Evaluation of the application  Notification to the two selected pilot Local Self-Governments |
| October 2021 to March 2022 | Implementation of the support to prepare the local climate action plan |