

STANDARD TWINNING LIGHT PROJECT FICHE

1. Basic Information

1.1 Programme: IPA 2011

1.2 Twinning Number: HR 11 IB EN 02 TWL

1.3 Title: Strengthening the expert knowledge and technical capacity of all relevant institutions for Ecological Network Impact Assessment (CRO ENIA)

1.4 Sector: Nature protection

1.5 Beneficiary country: Croatia

2. Objectives

2.1 Overall objective:

Environmental and nature protection in the Republic of Croatia improved through strengthened capacity for implementation of the EU *acquis* in the field of Habitats and Birds Directives.

2.2 Project purpose:

Croatian institutions supported in conducting expert work related to Ecological Network Impact Assessment (ENIA)¹ in order to ensure more efficient implementation of the existing legislative framework (Habitats Directive) in line with the best EU practices.

2.3 Contribution to Accession Treaty/ Relevant National Documents:

On 1 July 2013 the Republic of Croatia became a member of the European Union according to the **Accession Treaty**. Likewise, the Republic of Croatia became a Party to the Treaty on European Union, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community. In the Accession Treaty there is no transitional period for nature protection since such transitional period is not allowed under the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) and Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive).

The new **Nature Protection Act (NPA)** of 2013 fully transposes in national legislation all provisions of the EU nature directives.

Current **Strategy and Action plan for the Protection of Biological and Landscape Diversity of the Republic of Croatia (2008)** in the overview of the state of biological and landscape diversity and the state of the nature protection system in the Republic of Croatia (Chapter 1.4) states that: "There is a prevailing trend towards the loss of biological and landscape diversity, which is globally caused by the following reasons: excessive exploitation of natural resources, introduction of alien species into ecological systems, construction of infrastructure which leads to habitat loss and fragmentation (roads, power plants, water management structures, etc.), agricultural activities (melioration, expansion of agricultural lands or neglect of grassland

¹ ENIA is equivalent to Appropriate Assessment (Article 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive) in Croatian legislation.

surfaces), environmental pollution (soil, water, air), urbanisation and global climate change.”

Establishment of the instrument for the Nature Impact Assessment of projects, plans and programmes is envisaged through the following strategic guidelines: “8.5.3 Train regional and local governments for implementation of the Nature Impact Assessment; 8.5.4 Improve the level of public awareness of the importance of the Nature Impact Assessment and the ecological network Natura 2000.”

Moreover, the following activities were envisaged: “8.5.3.1 Conduct training of regional and local governments and other stakeholders with a view to making them capable of implementing the regulations concerning the Nature Impact Assessment as an independent procedure, and as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment; 8.5.4.1 Prepare and ensure availability of informative and educational materials about the Nature Impact Assessment and the ecological network Natura 2000.”

Nature Protection Act (2013) states that proposal for the **Report of the State of Nature in the Republic of Croatia (RSN)** is created every 5 years by **State Institute for Nature Protection (SINP)** as a head expert institution for nature protection. SINP analyses the state of nature in the past period, and submits the RSN to **Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection (MENP)**, which forwards it to the Government and Parliament. This Report also serves as the basis for development of **Strategy and Action Plan for Nature Conservation** (the equivalent of the Strategy and Action plan for the Protection of Biological and Landscape Diversity of the Republic of Croatia from NPA of 2005).

Analysis of the state of Nature for Republic of Croatia 2008 – 2012, published on the SINP web site, which is the basis for RSN, indicates the need for improvement of ENIA procedure through continuous strengthening of institutional and expert capabilities of involved bodies and institutions and development of guidelines and manuals.

The Analysis has also identified certain activities, in particular related to development and maintenance of the infrastructure such as energy production, water management and traffic (road and navigation) and also some aspects of agriculture (melioration) which present a significant pressure on the biodiversity (including species of EU importance) and also make up significant portion of demands for ENIA procedures in all stages. The proponents of such projects are largely public bodies and public enterprises such as agency responsible for water management, agency responsible for inland navigation, State electric power enterprise, State directorates for roads, public enterprise for highways, public forest enterprise or counties. By gaining proper information and understanding in relation to ENIA these bodies will be more efficient in preparation of project documentation and thus ease their access to EU funds which have strict prerequisites in relation to assessment of impact to Natura 2000.

This Twinning light project will strengthen administrative capacity of national institutions for conducting expert work in the area of nature protection concerning provisions of the Habitats and Birds Directives, more specifically for proper implementation of Appropriate Assessment (ENIA) as defined by Article 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats directive.

3. Description

3.1 Background and justification:

Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) of 21 May 1992 has main aim to ensure the restoration or maintenance

of natural habitats and species of Community interest at a favourable conservation status. Thus it is necessary to designate special areas of conservation in order to create a coherent European ecological network (Natura 2000) including sites classified as special protection areas pursuant to Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive). According to Article 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive, Appropriate Assessment must be carried out for any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on the site in view of its conservation objectives. If a plan or project must be carried out in spite of negative assessment due to imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) and no alternative solutions exist, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected and inform the Commission thereof or obtain Commission opinion in the case of priority species.

Article 6.3 states that a plan or project cannot be approved unless it has been established by Appropriate Assessment, that it is not likely to have significant negative impacts on the habitats and species for which the given Natura 2000 site was designated (no adverse impact on the site ecological integrity). Article 6.3 also establishes a case by case approach in project assessment, which excludes formation of list of specific types of projects or activities which are to be subjected to an assessment. Appropriate Assessment has to give a clear and legally binding answer if significant negative impact on Natura 2000 site exists and if doubts remain, it should rely on precautionary principle in favour of nature. Appropriate Assessment is primarily an ecological assessment characterized by expert approach and based on scientific data relating to ecology and distribution of habitats and species for which site was designated as well as information about potential impacts of a given project. It requires assessment of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts plans and projects.

If there are significant negative impacts of the plan or project on the site in the view of sites conservation objectives and integrity they have to be mitigated through appropriate measures (mitigation measures) below the level of significance or an alternative solution for implementation of project has to be found. Article 6.4 sets up conditions for derogations, that permits even some plans or projects with established adverse effects to be implemented, due to IROPI, if no alternative solution exists, and an adequate compensation for the loss affecting Natura 2000 site is found.

By becoming the EU Member State, Croatia formally took over the responsibility for designating, managing and protecting Natura 2000 and responsibility for any deterioration of the target features of Natura 2000 sites. There is an urgent need to develop all appropriate measures for protection of biological diversity in Croatia and to incorporate these measures into all economic activities that use or have impact on natural resources. Therefore, an effective enforcement of ENIA procedure is necessary to ensure that further investments will not produce any significant deterioration of Natura 2000.

Provisions of the Habitats and Birds Directives were transposed into Croatian legislation² in 2005 by NPA of 2005, however, full transposition regarding Natura 2000 was finalised through current NPA (2013) and Regulation on Ecological Network (2013) in the frame of Croatia's accession to the European Union.

NPA reflects requirements of Article 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive through ENIA procedure which is divided in three stages:

- Pre-assessment (Screening);

² Please refer to Annex 2. List of relevant legislation.

- Main assessment (Appropriate Assessment);
- Establishment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI).

Pre-screening is the implicit informal selection process which precedes ENIA as a legal procedure. Namely, any plan or project likely to have an impact on ecological network either individually or in combination with other plans or projects has to be submitted to ENIA procedure but there is no obligation to assess wide range of projects for which that is not the case.

Regarding the assessment of projects in the first stage of ENIA procedure - pre-assessment or screening, a project proponent submits the "idea solution" for a project. This project is approved if on the basis of elementary project characteristics, taking account the precautionary principle (which is relevant to all stages of ENIA) significant negative impacts concerning conservation objectives and integrity of Natura 2000 site can be excluded. If that is not possible, the project proceeds to the main assessment. The main assessment study (ENIA study) assesses the project impacts and their significance for conservation objectives and integrity of ecological network site. If necessary, mitigation measures that will reduce the negative impacts below the level of significance are proposed and the project is approved. If significant negative impacts that cannot be mitigated remain, and there is no alternative solution, the project is rejected. Such project may be implemented only if it passes the procedure of establishment of IROPI with approval of compensatory measures that should ensure coherence of ecological network.

The purpose of division of ENIA in three stages is rationality and efficiency of procedure. Projects for which likelihood of impacts on ecological network can be excluded on the basis of a smaller set of data, which is the case for majority of submitted projects, are approved through simpler and shorter process while other projects (a minority) have to be analysed through ENIA study.

Further details of the ENIA procedure are defined in the Ordinance on the appropriate assessment of the impact on the ecological network (OG 146/2014).

MENP has jurisdiction over ENIA procedure; however its implementation is divided between MENP and County Administration Offices (CAO), which are established in each Croatian county. MENP conducts ENIA procedure for all projects for which it conducts the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure or assessment of the need for EIA procedure as prescribed in the Environmental Protection Act and Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment or for projects planned in the area of National Park, Nature Park or Special Reserve.

CAO conduct ENIA procedure in cases where CAO conduct EIA procedure or assessment of the need for the EIA procedure as prescribed in the Environmental Protection Act and Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment or for projects planned in the area of Regional Park, Nature Monument, Significant Landscape, Park Forest and Park Architecture Monument as well as projects which are planned in sites which are not protected areas.

SINP has an important role in ENIA procedure. As the expert institution it gives mandatory expert opinions in all stages of ENIA procedure upon request of administrative bodies (MENP, CAO) and these expert opinions serve as the basis for MENP and CAO decisions. In the screening stage SINP provides opinion if the main assessment (ENIA study) is needed for submitted project. In the main assessment stage SINP evaluates ENIA studies as regards quality of expert work and validity of conclusions about impacts on the ecological network as well as compliance of assessment with provisions of EU nature directives as transposed in Croatian legislation.

Selection of projects that need to enter ENIA procedure (pre-screening) is done by CAO and MENP in the course of other permitting procedures or upon the initial contact by the proponent. Moreover, in the second stage of ENIA procedure (main assessment) CAO and MENP also communicate with proponents and authorised companies which are preparing the studies.³

Public Institutions (PI) are established for national parks, nature parks and on the county level for protected areas within certain county and in specific cases on the level or municipality or protected area of other designations. As managers of Natura 2000 sites they are informally consulted by public bodies and project proponents; however they do not formally take part in ENIA procedure.

Fully consistent enforcement and implementation of ENIA procedure has been hindered by the limited institutional capacity and the gaps in the expert knowledge and skills on central and local level. Since ENIA expert work in Croatia started in 2008 there is need to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the past period and to propose improvement through expert guidance documents for ENIA procedure and specific types of the projects as well as to disseminate this information to the stakeholders and public.

Since MENP and CAO are in direct contact with proponents (investors and private companies performing ENIA procedure), they have to be familiar with the expert and ecological aspects of ENIA methodology in all stages of ENIA procedure. In the pre-screening their capacities are crucial in order to determine which projects need to enter the screening stage of ENIA procedure and to give appropriate guidance and advice to proponents concerning screening stage and associated documentation as well as the main assessment stage and corresponding ENIA study. PI also need to be educated since ENIA might refer to the sites of ecological network within their responsibility. As institutions responsible for management and supervision of ecological network sites within their area of competence, PI may provide valuable information to SINP, MENP and CAO as well as proponents of projects and consultants, being in many cases first "on the spot" informal point of contact for ENIA.

MENP, SINP, CAO and PI still need to improve specialized expert knowledge based on the best EU practices on all stages of ENIA and in particular on assessment of specific types of the projects which due to the size or character of the intervention in environment often have significant impacts on ecological network (i.e. hydropower development, water management, road traffic, inland navigation). The needed knowledge relates to identification and assessment of significance of possible impacts in relation to Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive, possible methods of avoidance and mitigation of impacts (technologies and approaches used in EU) as well as possible approaches in compensation in accordance with Article 6.4 of the Habitats Directive. Since ENIA is essentially an expert process, capacity building of technical skills and expert background on EU nature directives is essential for their effective enforcement by involved public bodies on national and local level.

The above mentioned lack of expert skills and technical knowledge will be addressed by this IPA 2011 Twinning light project that will provide valuable methodological tools such as Technical Manual and the white papers and that will enhance capacities of public bodies up to the phase of the inspection supervision of projects compliance with EU nature directives in different investment situations.

³ Authorised companies which perform expert tasks related to ENIA and EIA procedures are authorised by MENP in line with the Ordinance on Conditions for Granting Approval for Legal Persons to Conduct Expert Tasks in the Field of Environmental Protection (2010).

Technical Manual will provide guidelines on how to select projects that need to enter ENIA procedure (pre-screening), how to select projects that need to be submitted to main assessment (screening) and which information about the project is necessary in the screening phase. It will set standards and provide guidelines for preparation and evaluation of studies for main assessment (ENIA studies) in accordance with best EU practices. It will also explain role of alternative solutions within ENIA, provide guidelines how to establish IROPI and define and evaluate compensatory measures.

The white papers should relate to specific types of larger projects with potential of impacts on Natura 2000 (generally mostly related to energy, infrastructure and other public projects). These projects may be in the area of water management, energy (i.e. including small power plants, accumulations and dams), roads development and improvement, inland navigation development and maintenance and agriculture (i.e. melioration projects). The final selection will be based on the structured interviews with involved bodies and analysis of the selected ENIA on national and regional level. The white papers should provide overview of potential impacts (based on EU experiences) and their significance, as well as overview of mitigation measures and alternative solutions with emphasis on the habitats and species of EU importance present in Croatia and general characteristics of Croatian Natura 2000 sites. The white papers should include case studies of particular projects from EU Member States and will be used by SINP, MENP, and CAO for better completion of their role within ENIA and as source of information for PI and stakeholders.

3.2 Linked activities:

IBRD 8021-HR loan of the World Bank “EU Natura 2000 Integration Project – NIP”

The project started in May 2011 with the implementation period of 5 years. Main goals of the project are: (i) supporting the national parks, nature parks and County Public Institutions (CPIs) for management of protected natural resources in the implementation of the objectives of the European ecological network Natura 2000 in investment programs, (ii) capacity building for monitoring biodiversity and reporting on measures taken under the EU requirements, and (iii) the introduction of the program to include a wider group of stakeholders in the process of managing Natura 2000 network. Furthermore, NIP provides support to capacity building of public institutions to prepare projects financed from the EU structural funds. NIP project will not include trainings on ENIA procedure.

IPA 2008 "Development of Habitat Types Database (CRO Habitats) as Part of Nature Protection Information System (NPIS)"

This framework project started in September 2012 and finished in March 2014. The project contributed to establishment of a single information platform that allows storing and exchanging data and provides an easy access to the database through a web user interface, for efficient monitoring, reporting and preparing impact assessment studies for plans, programs and projects on the ecological network (implementation of Article 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive). The quality and data availability concerning habitats and ease of access is a platform for efficient performance of ENIA.

IPA 2010 "Strengthening Capacities for Strategic Environmental Assessment at Regional and Local Level"

This service project started in October 2012 and finished in February 2014. The purpose of the project was to strengthen the capacity for strategic environmental assessment at the regional and

local level. Project activities included training and education of employees of the relevant administrative authorities for environmental protection and County Administration Offices and development of guidelines and procedures manual. Trainings covered the main stages of the process of strategic environmental assessment: screening, defining areas of work, assessment, decision-making and public participation. On the job trainings were provided through practical work on the latest documents submitted to the Strategic Environmental Assessment procedure.

IPA TAIB 2009 "Capacity Building for Preparation of Management Plans and Strengthening of Nature Protection Inspection for Proposed Natura 2000 Sites"

The project started in November 2011 and finished in April 2013. The project results included: preparation of draft management plans for six Natura 2000 sites, establishment of monitoring programs, establishment of a national information system for nature protection inspection and procurement of equipment for the inspection and Public Institution (PI) ranger services. The overall project consisted of three projects: Twinning light project (no. HR/2009/IB/EN/01TL with Austria as Twinning partner), technical assistance and supply.

IPA 2007 TAF "Development of faunistic and speleological databases (CRO-fauna and CRO-speleo)"

This service project was implemented from January 2011 until October 2012. It aimed at improving biodiversity data acquisition, organization and availability, as the basis for efficient implementation of Natura 2000, particularly regarding monitoring of Natura 2000 network and assessment activities in relation to Article 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitats Directive. Specific assignment of the project was development of faunistic database CRO-fauna and speleological database CRO-speleo as integral parts of Nature Protection Information System (NPIS). The project activities were not fully accomplished due to termination of the project. The remaining activities refer to full implementation of the database and collection and input of the existing data. They are being implemented by SINP through other projects, in particular through the mentioned NIP project. The resulting publicly available database will have synergic effects with this IPA 2011 Twinning light project since availability of quality biodiversity data is the basis for expert work in relation to ENIA.

IPA 2007 TAF "Identification and Setting-up of the marine part of Natura 2000 network in Croatia – Marine Natura 2000"

This service project was implemented from November 2010 until December 2011 by SINP as the beneficiary. Project aimed at the identification of the marine part of Natura 2000 network with the main goal – detailed program of work for finalizing marine Natura 2000. The project contributed to the proposal of marine Natura 2000 by identifying potential Natura 2000 sites which list will be amended and finalised in the upcoming period.

UNDP-GEF COAST "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Dalmatian Coast through Greening COASTal Development"

This service project was implemented from February 2007 until March 2013 by UNDP. SINP was one of the beneficiaries of the project and provided input for two components of the project: the first component was related to integration of the ecological network (Natura 2000) in the coastal area management, physical plans and sustainable use and the second component included, development of the general Manual with guidelines for implementation of Appropriate Assessment procedure and valorisation of the COAST project area concerning biological and landscape diversity, with respect to the assessment of the acceptability of planned locations for wind power plants.

This IPA 2011 Twinning light project will go one step further based on the results of COAST project, which was focused on project assessment on general level and physical planning in coastal area based on wind plant case study. Furthermore, Croatian Natura 2000 network was

established in 2013 introducing significant changes in the ENIA process which now more strictly adheres to requirements of Habitats and Birds Directive and permits full implementation of EU standards.

Protected Areas Management System (PAMS)

This project was financially supported by the Government of Norway and implemented by the Ministry of Culture (which was responsible also for nature protection at that time) from 2007 until 2009. Project resulting in creation of the new nature protection web portal and training on how to use and develop PAMS data base for the representatives of the MoC (NPD), SINP, public institutions (PIs) and county public institutions (CPIs) responsible for management of protected areas and natural values. Phase II ended in the second phase of the project extended to establishing the system for county public institutions administering protected areas and establishing the nature protection web GIS portal.

Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem

This was a pilot-project for Croatian marine protected areas“ (MedPan) implemented from 2008 until 2013. The project objectives were to support the public institutions for the management of marine protected areas (MPAs) in the development of their management plans; strengthening the capacity of these institutions; enhancing networking of these and other relevant institutions through integrating them into the MedPAN and AdriaPAN networks.

The project partners were Ministry of Culture, State Institute for Nature Protection, and the public institutions for the management of the national and nature parks with marine areas - Brijuni, Telašćica, Kornati, Lastovo archipelago and Mljet

CARDS 2002 “Capacity building of the State Institute for Nature Protection”

This service project was implemented from November 2005 until November 2006. Project contributed to strengthening negotiation position in the field of nature conservation and subsequent compliance with EU Habitats and Birds Directives. In the scope of this project, a network of different stakeholders in nature protection was developed and cooperation agreements initiated. Moreover, management plans for two proposed Natura 2000 sites were developed and the general concept of the NPIS and management of existing databases were developed. Based on the recommendation of this project SINP implemented a project aimed at establishing the CRO-Fauna database, as a unique database and platform for processing all data on fauna, collected by relevant institutions. National Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (NBMP), established through the LIFE 2002 project, was further developed through this CARDS 2002 project.

LIFE 2002 project “Building up National Ecological Network as a part of the Pan-European Ecological Network and NATURA 2000 (CRO-NEN)”

This project was implemented from December 2002 until May 2005. One of the aims of the project was to prepare the proposal of the National Ecological Network which consisted of areas important for species and habitats threatened on the national and European level, with GIS database of networks’ sites as a part of the Pan-European Ecological Network and the EU Natura 2000.

PHARE 2005 “Institutional Building and Implementation of NATURA 2000 in Croatia”⁴

This project consisted of service and supply component and it was implemented from January 2008 until July 2009. The purpose of the project was to support the Croatian Institutions in the harmonization of the EU Habitats and Birds Directive, as well as to assist the implementation of

⁴ <http://www.natura2000.hr/home.aspx?langID=2>.

Natura 2000 Network in accordance with the national legislation and the EU environmental *acquis*. The project included preparation of two management plans for the proposed Natura 2000 sites. One of the results was the enhanced capacity of SINP and other relevant authorities for carrying out ENIA procedure and the requirements for Appropriate Assessments under Articles 6.3 and 6.4 of the Habitat Directive. Brochure on Nature Impact Assessment was prepared in this project. The PHARE 2005 project enhanced the capacity of SINP and other relevant authorities by acquiring basic knowledge for carrying out ENIA procedure when the EU legislation was first implemented 7 years ago and the general brochure on Nature Impact Assessment was prepared.

This IPA 2011 Twinning light project will build upon PHARE 2005 project results and further increase specific knowledge of all stakeholders, especially of stakeholders on regional and local level (CAO, PI) on ENIA procedure and potential impacts of specific types of projects in Croatian setting.

JASPERS (Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions) provides advice to 13 countries that joined the European Union in 2004, 2007 and 2013 (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovak and Slovenia) as well as to Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia during project preparation in order to improve the quality of the major projects to be submitted for grant financing under the Structural and Cohesion Funds and accelerate the absorption of the available funds. Among its activities the JASPERS provides council how to harmonise a planned project with EU legislation in the field of environmental protection including the provisions of the EU nature directives.

The IPA 2011 Twinning light project will contribute to JASPERS initiative by strengthening capacities of public bodies as well as public enterprises in processing and preparing documentation for major projects (i.e. infrastructure) through workshops, preparation of manuals and white papers.

3.3 Results:

Result 1: Technical Manual for pre-screening and ENIA (screening, main assessment and IROPI with compensatory measures) developed.

Indicators of achievement:

- Analysis of the relevant expert documentation on national and county level related to pre-screening and all stages of ENIA procedure (e.g. selected screening reports, main assessment studies or chapters within EIA) in order to identify expert and technical weak points and gaps conducted and corresponding report prepared;
- Technical Manual for pre-screening and ENIA (screening, main assessment and IROPI with compensatory measures) developed, translated to Croatian language and published on SINP web site.

Result 2: White papers regarding selected types of projects with the purpose to improve quality of ENIA, in particular in relation to infrastructure projects and other public projects prepared.

Indicators of achievement:

- Analysis of previous national cases in which ENIA procedure was conducted in order to determine the most frequent (relevant) cases for which additional recommendations (white papers) should be provided and corresponding report prepared;

- At least 3 white papers (non-binding recommendations that aim to facilitate decision making) regarding selected types of projects with the purpose of improving quality of ENIA, in particular in relation to infrastructure projects and other public projects prepared, translated to Croatian language and published on SINP web site.

Result 3: Capacity of SINP and other stakeholders in conducting ENIA procedure enhanced through trainings on specific expert topics and training of trainers.

Indicators of achievement:

- Training needs analysis (TNA) for employees from MENP, SINP, CAO and PI regarding implementation of ENIA procedure conducted and TNA report prepared;
- Training plan and materials prepared, including training of trainers (ToT) plan and materials;
- At least 5 regional workshops conducted on specific expert topics regarding ENIA procedure and specific types of the projects identified within the white papers for at least 100 participants (in total) from MENP, SINP, CAO, PI and other relevant public bodies/enterprises from sectors identified in the white papers;
- On-the-job training for at least 6 SINP employees conducted with the purpose of acquiring first-hand experience and exchange of best practices in implementation of ENIA procedure;
- Training of trainers on expert topics in conducting ENIA procedure for at least 5 employees from MENP, SINP, CAO and PI conducted;
- Evaluation of the performed trainings conducted and evaluation report with long-term training programme prepared.

3.4 Activities:

Member State is kindly requested to develop activities in the submitted proposal which are needed in order to achieve the results stipulated in the fiche.

Two visibility events will be organized in the course of the implementation of the project; Kick-off meeting at the start of the implementation and the Final meeting at the end of the implementation of the project activities.

3.5 Means/ Input from the MS Partner Administration:

MS Project Leader may participate in the project also as the short-term expert (STE) and in this case the MS Project Leader should satisfy requirements stipulated in the fiche for both the Project Leader and the relevant STE profile.

3.5.1 Profile and tasks of the Project Leader

Profile of the Project Leader

Requirements:

- University level education or equivalent professional experience of 10 years in the field of biology and/or ecology
- 6 years of experience in nature protection

- Working level of English language
- Proven contractual relation to public administration or mandated body, as defined under Twinning manual 5.4.5
- Computer literacy
- Experience in project management

Assets:

- Experience in organization of trainings
- Experience in nature protection related to Appropriate Assessment

Tasks of the Project Leader:

- Participation in Steering Committee meetings
- Project reporting
- Ensuring backstopping and financial management of the project in the MS
- Support and coordination of all activities in the Beneficiary Country
- Overseeing and co-managing the implementation of the project in cooperation with the Project Leader from the Beneficiary Country
- Coordination of MS experts work and availability
- Organization of visibility events (kick-off and final event)
- Ensuring sound implementation of the project activities

3.5.2 Profile and tasks of the short-term experts

Profile of the Short-term experts

Requirements:

- University level education or equivalent professional experience of 8 years in the field of biology and/or ecology
- 3 years of experience in practical application of legislation on Appropriate Assessment
- Proven contractual relation to public administration or mandated body, as defined under Twinning manual 5.4.5
- Working level of English language
- Computer literacy

Assets:

- Experience in preparation of Appropriate Assessment studies
- Experience in assessment or evaluation of Appropriate Assessment studies
- Experience in conducting trainings

Tasks of the Short-term experts:

- Conducting analysis of relevant expert documentation and preparing corresponding report
- Preparing Technical Manual for pre-screening and ENIA
- Conducting analysis of national cases and preparing corresponding report
- Preparing the white papers
- Conducting TNA, preparing TNA report, training plan and materials
- Conducting trainings, including on-the-job training
- Conducting evaluation of trainings and preparing long-term training programme

Note

The pool of experts should include:

- At least one short-term expert who in addition to the profile requirements has experience in conducting trainings.

4. Institutional Framework

Main beneficiary of the project is State Institute for Nature Protection (SINP) [<http://www.dzzp.hr/eng/>]. SINP is the central, national level government public institution responsible for expert work in nature conservation in Croatia financed mainly through the State budget. SINP has in total 55 employees. Section for Assessment of Impact on Nature that will be directly involved in the implementation of the project has 6 employees. Established in 2002, SINP performs a number of activities with the aim to ensure the long term maintenance and enhancement of nature in Croatia by high quality expert work. SINP provides expert support to MENP, protected areas management authorities (PI) and other administrative bodies (i.e. CAO) on advisory level.

Legal obligations of SINP include, among others, responsibility for standardisation and effectiveness assessment of protected areas and ecological network (Natura 2000) sites management, capacity building for effective site management, expert work in connection with nature impact assessment process (Appropriate Assessment according Article 6.3 of Habitats Directive), development and function of a Nature Protection Information System (NPIS) and implementation of project and programmes in the field of nature protection.

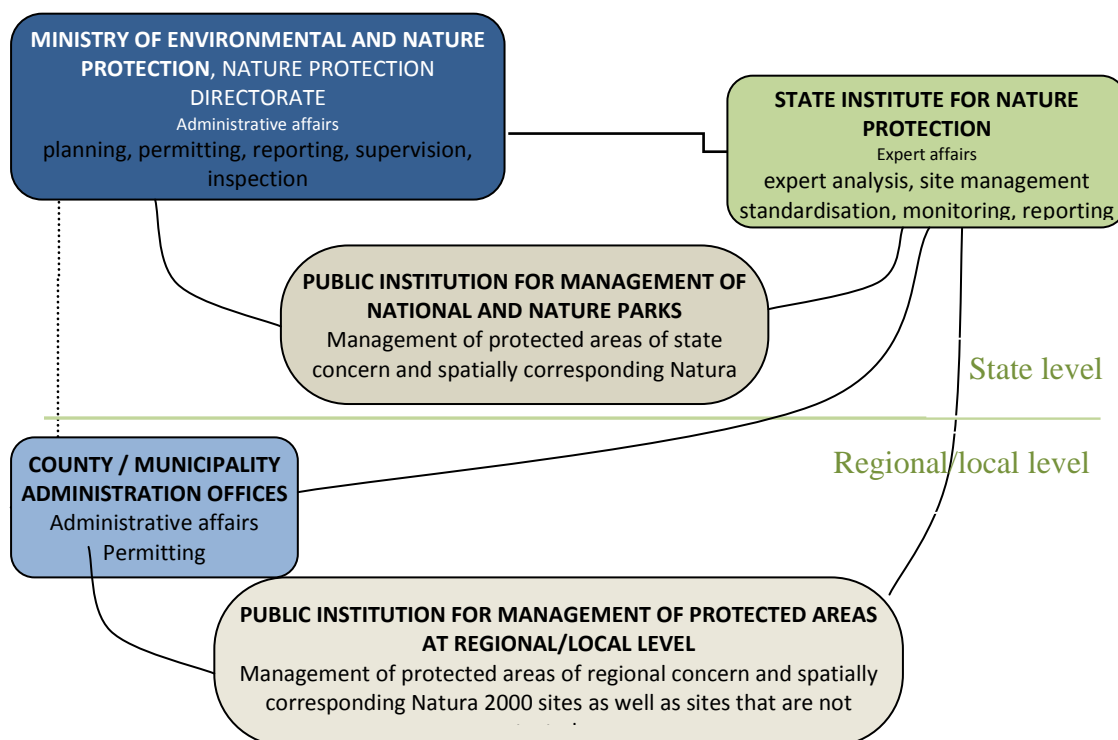
Other important beneficiaries of this project are as follows:

Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection (MENP) is the central body that performs administrative and other tasks related to implementation of environmental impact assessment as described in the Environmental Protection Act and Nature Protection Act. Pursuant to the Regulation on the Internal Organisation of MENP [<http://www.mzoip.hr>], the Nature Protection Directorate was established as a responsible unit for administrative affairs in the nature protection field.

County Administration Offices (CAO) in 20 Croatian counties and the City of Zagreb are competent bodies for determining whether a planned project could have a significant impact on the environment and shall decide on the need for environmental impact assessment as described in the Environmental Protection Act, Nature Protection Act and Regulation on Environmental Impact Assessment.

Public Institutions (PI) for management of protected areas are competent to give informal advice in all stages of the ENIA procedure as managers of particular sites. For management of national and nature parks and spatially corresponding ecological network sites (Natura 2000), Government has established 19 public institutions (PI) and 21 county public institutions (CPI) for management of protected natural values.

Institutional framework of nature conservation in Croatia



The results of this project will not lead to change of the institutional framework as described.

Two Steering Committee meetings will be held for the purpose of reviewing the progress made under the project as well as to discuss results achieved and/or problems occurred. The first Steering Committee meeting will be held during the third month of project activities implementation in order to discuss and comment the draft start-up report. The second Steering Committee meeting will be organised during the last month of the implementation period of the Action to discuss the draft final report.

It should be noted that the participation of the Member State Project Leader in Steering Committees meetings has to be combined with expert missions in case the Member State Project Leader is also a short-term expert in the twinning light project. If the Member State Project Leader is not short-term expert in the twinning light project then his visits to Croatia, (one visit every three months) as part of his overall task to ensure coordination and political steering of the project, should be organised at the same time as the two Steering Committee meetings of the project.

The exact participants of the Steering Committee meetings will be defined during the implementation of the project, but will at least include the following members:

- BC Project Leader
- MS Project Leader
- CFCA Project Manager
- MRDEUF Sector Manager

The beneficiary is committed to provide all necessary infrastructure such as office space and

desktop computers with internet connection for experts, venue for holding seminars and workshops, and to ensure the necessary local staff/experts inputs.

5. Budget

Strengthening the expert knowledge and technical capacity of all relevant institutions for Ecological Network Impact Assessment (CRO ENIA)	IPA Community Contribution	National Co-financing	TOTAL
Twinning Light Contract	90% 170 000 EUR	10% 18 889 EUR	188.889,00 EUR

The total amounts of the IPA Community Contribution and National Co-financing stipulated in the above table represent the total maximum amounts and therefore, they may be reduced at the level of the Twinning light contract, while the relevant ratio (percentages) should be maintained as fixed.

The co-financing requirement foreseen under IPA will be considered fulfilled according to the provision of the relevant Financing Agreement.

Interpretation costs will be reimbursed from the budget only for the purpose of workshops and seminars, up to 7% of the Contract amount can be used for translation and interpretation purposes.

Provisions for visibility costs and expenditure verification costs should be included in the budget.

6. Implementation Arrangements

6.1 Implementing Agency responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting:

Central Finance and Contracting Agency (CFCA)

Ulica grada Vukovara 284

10000 Zagreb, Croatia

Ms Nataša Mikuš Žigman, Director

Phone: +385 1 4591 245

Fax: +385 1 4591 075

E-mail: procurement@safu.hr

Twinning Administrative Office

Central Finance and Contracting Agency

Ulica grada Vukovara 284

10000 Zagreb, Croatia

Ms Nirvana Sokolovski, Twinning NCP

Phone: +385 1 4591 245

Fax: +385 1 4591 075

E-mail: twinning@safu.hr

6.2 Main counterpart in the BC:

Senior Programme Officer (SPO)

Mr Matija Franković, Director
State Institute for Nature protection
Radnička cesta 80/7
10000 Zagreb, Croatia
Phone: +385 1 5502 900
Fax: +385 1 5502 901
E-mail: matija.frankovic@dzzp.hr

BC Project Leader

Mr Neven Trenc, Head of Section
Section for Assessment of Impact on Nature
State Institute for Nature protection
Radnička cesta 80/7
10000 Zagreb, Croatia
Phone: +385 1 5502 928
Fax: +385 1 5502 901
E-mail: neven.trenc@dzzp.hr

6.3 Contracts:

It is envisaged that the Project will be implemented through one Twinning light contract, with a maximum amount of 188.889,00 EUR.

6.4 Reporting:

The Start-up Report will cover first two months of the contract and will be submitted during the third month. The Start-up report should:

- Clearly define the aims and purpose of the aid provided by the project,
- Give detailed description of the content of particular parts of the project,
- Work out in detail the activities carried out and the results achieved,
- Work out in detail all modifications agreed with the beneficiary institution,
- Review difficulties met during the implementation of the project and measures that were undertaken for their removal,
- Provide all findings obtained in the meanwhile and preliminary conclusions, and
- Contain a general plan of activities for the implementation of the remained duration of the project.

The Final Report shall be submitted within three months upon the completion of the project activities and in any case within the legal duration of the project, and it should contain the following:

- Complete review of all activities carried out by MS experts during the implementation of the project,
- Achieved progress concerning each activity,
- Summary of all project results, with particular emphasis on mandatory results,
- Estimation of the project impact compared with the project aims and measures of the achieved progress,
- Identification of all important problems met during the implementation of the contract and solutions that have been applied,

- Lessons drawn from the project, and
- Recommendations for further steps in future projects.

The reports must be endorsed and countersigned by the beneficiary, who may make additional comments.

Reports shall be submitted to State Institute for Nature Protection, the Central Finance and Contracting Agency, the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds and the concerned service of the European Commission in a form of 3 hard copies and an electronic version. All reports should be written in English.

6.5 Language:

Working language of the project is English.

7. Implementation Schedule (indicative)

- 7.1 Launching of the call for proposals: 1Q 2015
- 7.2 Start of project activities: 2Q 2015
- 7.3 Project completion: 4Q 2015
- 7.4 Duration of the execution period (number of months) - 9 months; the execution period will end 3 months after the implementation period of the Action (work plan) which will take 6 months.

8. Sustainability

Combining transfer of knowledge on performing ENIA procedure and practical experience, this Twinning light project will result with development of the Technical Manual on ENIA procedure as well as with the white papers for SINP for selected types of the projects.

The project will ensure not only the furthering of knowledge about the best practice but also the improvement of skills needed for the production of the impact assessment studies, conducting the screening and main assessment procedure. Long-term training program for conducting future trainings will be used for trainings following the end of the implementation of the project. In addition, trained trainers on expert topics in conducting ENIA procedure will further disseminate the obtained knowledge once the project is finished, thus ensuring sustainability of the project results.

9. Crosscutting issues

Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the project will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

10. Conditionality and sequencing

N/A

ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

1. Logical framework matrix in standard format
2. List of relevant legislation

Annex 1. Logical framework matrix in standard format

Strengthening the expert knowledge and technical capacity of all relevant institutions for Ecological Network Impact Assessment (CRO ENIA)		Programme name and number: IPA 2011	
State Institute for Nature Protection (SINP)		Contracting period expires: 3 years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreement	Disbursement period expires: 4 years following the end date for contracting
		Total budget: 188.889,00 EUR	IPA financing: 170 000 EUR (90%) National co-financing: 18 889 EUR (10%) ⁵
Overall objective	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	
Environmental and nature protection in the Republic of Croatia improved through strengthened capacity for implementation of the EU acquis in the field of Habitats and Birds Directives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures gained more efficiency and harmonized with the relevant principles of the acquis Increased number of conducted ENIA procedures and administrative measures issued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MENP reports County Administration Office reports Relevant EC reports 	
Project purpose	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
Croatian institutions supported in conducting expert work related to Ecological Network Impact Assessment (ENIA) in order to ensure more efficient implementation of the existing legislative framework (Habitats Directive) in line with the best EU practices.	Technical Manual for pre-screening and ENIA developed. White papers for selected types of projects prepared. Capacity of SINP and other stakeholders increased. Long-term training programme prepared.	Final Project Report Twinning light project documentation (Technical Manual, White papers, training plan, training materials, etc.) List of participants on trainings Training evaluation reports	Efficient cooperation and co-ordination of the principal actors. Organizational, technical and infrastructure capacities necessary for completion of the project. SINP and representatives of other stakeholders available for project implementation and participation at workshops.

⁵ The total amounts of the IPA Community Contribution and National Co-financing stipulated in the above table represent the total maximum amounts and therefore, they may be reduced at the level of the Twinning light contract, while the relevant ratio (percentages) should be maintained as fixed. The co-financing requirement foreseen under IPA will be considered fulfilled according to the provision of the relevant Financing Agreement.

Results	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
Result 1: Technical Manual for pre-screening and ENIA (screening, main assessment and IROPI with compensatory measures) developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Analysis of the relevant expert documentation on national and county level related to pre-screening and all stages of ENIA procedure (e.g. selected screening reports, main assessment studies or chapters within EIA) in order to identify expert and technical weak points and gaps conducted and corresponding report prepared; •Technical Manual for pre-screening and ENIA (screening, main assessment and IROPI with compensatory measures) developed, translated to Croatian language and published on SINP web site. 	Annual reports of the Beneficiary institution Final Project Report Twinning light project documentation (Technical Manual, White papers, training plan, training materials, etc.) List of participants on trainings.	Adequate cooperation among competent ministries and relevant institutions. Adequate BC experts appointed to participate in the project. SINP and representatives of other stakeholders available for project implementation and participation at workshops. Good cooperation and coordination among project stakeholders.
Result 2: White papers regarding selected types of projects with the purpose to improve quality of ENIA, in particular in relation to infrastructure projects and other public projects prepared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Analysis of previous national cases in which ENIA procedure was conducted in order to determine the most frequent (relevant) cases for which additional recommendations (white papers) should be provided and corresponding report prepared; •At least 3 white papers (non-binding recommendations that aim to facilitate decision making) regarding selected types of projects with the purpose of improving quality of ENIA, in particular in relation to infrastructure projects and other public projects prepared, translated to Croatian language and published on SINP web site. 		
Result 3: Capacity of SINP and other stakeholders in conducting ENIA procedure enhanced through trainings on specific expert topics and training of trainers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Training needs analysis (TNA) for employees from MENP, SINP, CAO and PI regarding implementation of ENIA procedure conducted and TNA report prepared; •Training plan and materials prepared, including training of trainers (ToT) plan and materials; •At least 5 regional workshops conducted on 		

	<p>specific expert topics regarding ENIA procedure and specific types of the projects identified within the white papers for at least 100 participants (in total) from MENP, SINP, CAO, PI and other relevant public bodies/enterprises from sectors identified in the white papers;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •On-the-job training for at least 6 SINP employees conducted with the purpose of acquiring first-hand experience and exchange of best practices in implementation of ENIA procedure; •Training of trainers on expert topics in conducting ENIA procedure for at least 5 employees from MENP, SINP, CAO and PI conducted; •Evaluation of the performed trainings conducted and evaluation report with long-term training programme prepared. 		
Activities	Means	Specification of costs	Assumptions
Activities to be implemented correspond to the activities developed in the selected MS proposal.	Analysis, consultations, preparation of documentation, trainings, workshops, on-the-job training.	188.889,00 EUR	In line with the assumptions for results.
			Preconditions: N/A

Annex 2. List of relevant legislation

EU

- Treaty of accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union between the Kingdom of Belgium, Republic of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Kingdom of Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Republic of Estonia, Ireland, Hellenic Republic, Kingdom of Spain, French Republic, Italian Republic, Republic of Cyprus, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania, Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, Republic of Hungary, Republic of Malta, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Republic of Austria, Republic of Poland, Portuguese Republic, Romania, Republic of Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Republic of Finland, Kingdom of Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (EU member states) and the Republic of Croatia Council Directive (OJ L 300, 9.11.2013)
- 92/43/EEC of 21st May 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992)
- Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive). (OJ L 20, 26.1.2010)

Republic of Croatia

- Law on Ratification of the Treaty of accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union between the Kingdom of Belgium, Republic of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Kingdom of Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Republic of Estonia, Ireland, Hellenic Republic, Kingdom of Spain, French Republic, Italian Republic, Republic of Cyprus, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania, Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, Republic of Hungary, Republic of Malta, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Republic of Austria, Republic of Poland, Portuguese Republic, Romania, Republic of Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Republic of Finland, Kingdom of Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (EU member states) and the Republic of Croatia (OG, International Agreements No. 2, 28th March 2012)
- Nature Protection Act (OG 80/13)
- Nature Protection Act (OG 70/05, OG 139/08, OG 57/11)
- Regulation on Ecological Network (OG 124/13)
- Strategy and Action plan for the protection of Biological and Landscape Diversity of the Republic of Croatia of (OG 143/08)
- Environmental Protection Act (OG 80/13)
- Regulation on environmental impact assessment (OG 61/14)
- Ordinance on conditions for granting approval for legal persons to conduct expert tasks in the field of environmental protection (OG 57/10)
- Ordinance on the appropriate assessment of the impact on the ecological network (OG 146/2014)