

TWINNING PROJECT FICHE

“Strengthening the capacities for effective implementation of the acquis in the field of nature protection”

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation/acronym	Meaning
BC PL	Beneficiary Country Project Leader
RTA	Resident Twinning Adviser
CFCF	Central Financing and Contracting Department within Ministry of Finance
ND	Nature Department
Birds Directive	Directive 2009/147 on the conservation of wild birds
Habitats Directive	Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora
EC	European Commission
EMERALD network	A non-binding programme set under the Bern Convention, aiming at establishment of “areas of special conservation interest” based on descriptive criteria similar to those for pSCIs
EU	European Union (currently 28 EU MS)
EU MS	Member State(s) of the EU
MoEPP	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
AE	Administration of Environment
Nature Directives	Common identification of both Birds and Habitats Directives
LNP	Law on Nature Protection
SDF	Standard Data Form, description of particular SCI, SAC and/or SPA in a binding format prescribed by the Commission Implementing Decision 2011/484/EU
UNECE	The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

1. BASIC INFORMATION

1.1 Publication reference: EuropeAid/ 138-738/IH/ACT/MK

1.2 Programme: IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building - National Programme for 2013(IPA/2013/024-109 (EC)

1.3 Twinning Number: MK 13 IPA EN 02 17

1.4 Title: Strengthening the capacities for effective implementation of the *acquis* in the field of nature protection

1.5 Sector: Environment, (Environment and Climate Change)

1.6 Beneficiary country: Beneficiary Country¹

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 Overall Objective(s):

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the administrative capacity for implementation of the nature protection *acquis* thus providing condition for protection of environment.

2.2 Project purpose:

The project purpose is to strengthen administrative capacities of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning/Administration of Environment for implementation of the nature protection *acquis*, through development of implementing legislation, provision of training and implementation of Nature Protection legislation.

2.3 Contribution to National Development Plan/Cooperation agreement/Association Agreement/Action Plan

This project relates to article 103 of the Stabilization Association Agreement, which mentions that “the Parties shall develop and strengthen their cooperation in the vital task of combating environmental degradation, with the view to supporting environmental sustainability”. It adds “Cooperation should focus on several priorities”, including “combating air pollution, environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment, continuous approximation of laws and regulations to Community standards”.

The project is directly linked with the measures identified in the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP 2). The need for getting closer to the EU legislation, as well as the implementation of the enacted legislation and secondary legislation is in line with the National program for approximation of the EU.

This project relates to the recommendations stipulated in the Second Environmental Performance Review Report (EPR), published by UNECE. The second EPR covers ten issues of importance to the country related to policymaking, planning and implementation, the financing of environmental policies and projects and the integration of environmental concerns into economic sectors, in particular the sustainable management and protection of water resources, pollution prevention and control, waste management, forestry, biodiversity and protected areas, and health and environment issues.

3. DESCRIPTION:

¹ As per Financing Agreement concerning the National Programme Transition Assistance and Institution Building – TAIB 2013 from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance under the Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component –entered into force on 19 December 2014

The candidate status received in December 2005, entitled the Beneficiary Country to receive Pre-accession Assistance through the IPA Instrument for all five IPA components. According to Article 64 of the IPA Implementing Regulation (EC) No.718/2007, assistance under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component is granted, among other areas, to the policy on protection of environment. The environment sector plays a key role in the Accession process. Environmental protection is a cross-cutting issue and one of the key *acquis* chapters in the process of negotiation with the EC which candidate countries need to close, before becoming EU member state.

In this perspective, the alignment of the national legislation with the EU requirements has started in accordance with the National Programme for Adoption of the *Acquis* (NPAA). In the area of environment, the NPAA is complemented by the National Environmental Action Plan² which identifies measures towards further transposition and implementation of the EU legislation.

The NPAA, in its Part 3-Ability to Assume the Obligations for Membership, Chapter 27 Environment (3.27), aims at further legal development and harmonisation with the environmental *acquis*, being one of the most challenging components to comply with and implement. In order to enable the timely and effective implementation of the harmonized legal framework, the administrative capacities of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and State Environmental Inspectorate need to be strengthened.

3.1 Background and justification:

Law on Nature Protection (LNP), transposing Birds (79/409/EEEC, amended Directive 2009/147/EC) and Habitats (92/43/EEC) Directives as well as obligations from international agreements in the field of nature protection, was enacted in 2004. During the last years several amendments have been made to the LNP, thus accomplishing its further alignment with the relevant EU legislation, mainly Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds and Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, CITES Regulation EC/338/97 and Zoo Directive (Council Directive 1999/22/EC).

Within the ongoing project “Strengthening the capacities for implementation of NATURA 2000” - Europeaid/136609/IH/SER/MK the new Law on Nature Protection shall be developed which will provide bases for issuing secondary legislation, the adoption of which will enable complete transposition.

There is an insufficient institutional capacity, resources and knowledge to develop secondary legislation and implement the requirements of EU Nature Directives.

The Law on Nature Protection is mainly implemented by the Department of Nature within the Administration of Environment.

The Nature Department (ND) within the Administration of Environment has the competence to deal with the issues related to nature protection. ND has a leading role within MoEPP in developing and implementation of nature protection legislation, and in management of nature protected areas. Namely, activities for the protection of nature in terms of preparing policies for nature protection, protection of biological and landscape diversity and protection and management of natural heritage and landscape biological diversity and natural heritage, are performed by ND which is composed of 4 Units: Natural Heritage Protection Unit, Protection and Management of protected areas and geo-diversity Unit, Biodiversity Unit and GMO Unit. Nature Department at the moment has 14 employees. Nature Department has limited number of trained staff according to the scope of work and obligations (implementation of the LNP and EU Directives to be transposed and implemented) which present one of the main constraint in this field.

In consistency with its priorities, reflected in the strategic documents, in order to establish sound management of protected areas, it is of the essence for the MoEPP to establish efficient national biodiversity monitoring system and to further approximate its legislation. In addition it is of prior

² NEAP I and II have been developed to date. The NEAP II is in advanced stage of implementation.

importance to strengthen the capacity of MoEPP and other relevant institutions in protection and management of nature and biodiversity.

Material and human capacities in the Nature Department are insufficient; capacities of the entities responsible for the management of protected areas are insufficient in terms of adequate expert staff; no specific technical expert body for nature protection has been established.

Under the Law on Nature Protection, laws proclaiming twelve areas for protection have been adopted, as well as bylaws concerning protection, collection of wild plants, fungi and animals and trade therein, valorization of natural heritage, management of protected areas and record keeping for the purpose of nature protection. With reference to the implementation of the national legislation, progress has been made in the segment of developing management plans for protected areas.

Through this twinning project, under its part on nature, draft management plans will be prepared for two selected Pilot protected areas that are of conservation interest to EU (potential future NATURA 2000 sites) and trainings for their implementation. Workshops and seminars will be organized for the key target groups (institutions, National parks, local communities, managers, NGOs, private sector). Stakeholders' involvement plan will be prepared.

National biodiversity monitoring methodology and program for national monitoring will be developed.

3.2 Linked activities (other international and national initiatives):

The twinning project is connected with the following on-going or recently completed projects and activities and will present their upgrading or it will require close cooperation with the on-going ones. There are no overlaps with the linked activities (projects).

1. TITLE: STRENGTHENING THE ECOLOGICAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM

Project funded by: UNDP/GEF

Duration: 2008-2011

Description: The main objective of this project was to strengthen the management effectiveness of country's protected area system. The project aims was to design natural protected area system and to improve institutional capacity for protected area management.

The project assisted the MoEPP to implement the legal requirements of the LNP regarding protected area system establishment and planning. In the framework in this project studies for re-valorisation and management of four areas (Kanjon Matka as Monument of Nature, Tikvesh as Strict Natural Reserve, mountain Jasen as a Multiple Area and mountain Belasica were prepared. Proposal of representative network of protected areas and proposal of areas for conservation were prepared.

In addition National Biodiversity Information System (NBIS) was developed with WEB application and with possibility to be update in future.

2. TITLE: THE EMERALD NETWORK

Project funded by: Bern convention

Duration: 2002-2008

Description: National Emerald Network was prepared which includes 35 identified areas and covers about 29% of the national territory of the beneficiary country. The Emerald Network is considered as the very first step on the way to the identification of potential NATURA 2000 sites. The aim of this project was completion of the Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest in six States of South Eastern Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and the beneficiary

country, and was continuation of the work on Emerald Network in the West Balkan countries delivered by the Council of Europe and the national teams through the first phase pilot projects (funded by the CoE) and the second phase, realized in cooperation with the European Environmental Agency (EEA) and the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD) funded by the EEA CARDS grant. The overall objective of the project was completion of the Emerald network in the West Balkan countries and production of the final database, with the following outputs:

1. Continuation of the work concerning the distribution per bio-geographical region and populations in each country of all species and habitats of Resolutions Nos. 4 and 6 of the Bern Convention and Annex I of the Habitats Directive.
2. Continuation and finalisation of the work concerning the distribution maps of selected species and habitats in the Geographical Information System (GIS).
3. Sites database for all the sites to be listed with all ecological data filled in.
4. Digital boundaries for all sites listed in GIS.
5. Final Emerald database completed and delivered to ETC/BD for checking and integration into the European database.
6. Final report delivered to EEA.

3. TITLE: REVISION OF THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND PREPARATION OF THE 5TH NATIONAL REPORT TO CBD

Project funded by: UNEP / GEF

Duration: 2013 - 2015

Description: Draft National Strategy for Biological Diversity with Action Plan was prepared in 2014/15 Within the project the Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity was developed.

4. TITLE: ACHIEVING BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION THROUGH CREATION AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS AND MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY INTO LAND USE PLANNING

Project funded by: GEF/UNEP

Duration: 2016-2020

Description: The project will develop and demonstrate strengthened conservation of biodiversity through expansion and better management practices of protected areas and by mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in the land use planning. Through doing so, the project will also contribute directly and significantly to the conservation of endemic, threatened and valuable species as living resources that provide ecosystem services sustainability and equitably, which constitute part of UNEP Medium Term Strategy for Ecosystem Management Sub Programme (2014 – 2017). As a result of this project, conservation of biodiversity in beneficiary country will be strengthened from many different angles, which will contribute to overall sustainability of the country's development. This results will also allow UNEP and GEF to showcase that conservation of biodiversity could be strengthened through expansion, better management, and mainstreaming of biodiversity into land use planning, as it would be a pioneering project of this scale and impact in the region.

5. TITLE: STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NATURA 2000 - EUROPEAID/136609/IH/SER/MK

Project funded by: EU

Duration: 2016-2017

Description: The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, as a Key Beneficiary, throughout the EU Program IPA TAIB 2011, is currently implementing the Project “Strengthening the Capacities for Implementation of Natura 2000”. One main objective of this project lays on strengthening the administrative capacities for implementation of EU nature protection legislation (NATURA 2000).

Activities are implemented within this project:

- Activity I: Harmonization of the national legislation with EU directives,
- Activity II: Designation of at least seven Natura 2000 sites according to Birds and Habitat Directives,
- Activity III: Development of GIS system for Natura 2000,
- Activity IV: Strengthening the administrative capacity,
- Activity V: Public awareness campaign for Natura 2000.

3.3 Results:

The project shall provide advisory support to the MoEPP/Administration of Environment/ Nature Department for preparation of common draft management plans for two protected areas that are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential future NATURA 2000 sites) and preparation of two Studies for valorization/revalorisation of nature values of protected areas.

The Twinning’s aim, which should be jointly achieved by the MS and BC Twinning partners, is strengthening the administrative capacity for implementation of Nature Protection legislation including as well implementation of EU Nature directives through further development of implementing legislation and nature management documents.

The project shall provide also advisory support and presentation of the best practises and methodologies for developing of National Biodiversity Monitoring Program.

The mandatory results to be achieved are:

Component 1:

Strengthened capacities for preparation of draft management plans for natural protected areas which are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential future NATURA 2000 sites).

Based on the ongoing project “Strengthening the capacities for implementation of NATURA 2000 - Europeaid/136609/IH/SER/MK” seven natural sites will be selected as potential NATURA 2000 sites. Next step for these natural sites is developing of management plans. The twining project goals is to develop at least two draft management plans for natural sites which have different ecosystems and functions.

The mandatory result shall be achieved through the achievement of the following intermediary results:

1. Strengthened capacities for preparation of management plans for natural protected areas (Potential future NATURA 2000 sites);

Measurable indicators:

1. Two common Draft Management Plans for natural protected areas prepared that are of national and EU interest for conservation;

2. Approximately 20 people trained for preparation of common management plans for natural protected areas and EU interest for conservation;

3. Minimum 2 public consultation workshops held for presentation of the two Draft Management Plans of two natural protected areas and EU interest for conservation;

4. *One training curriculum for preparation of common Management Plans for natural protected areas and EU interest for conservation prepared.*

Component 2:

Strengthened capacities for preparation of studies for valorisation of nature values (including field data gathering and updating of Data standard form) of natural protected areas which are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential future NATURA 2000 sites).

Based on the ongoing project “Strengthening the capacities for implementation of NATURA 2000 - Europeaid/136609/IH/SER/MK” the studies of valorisation/reference will analyse existing gaps of knowledge on habitats and species that need to be subject of further field research.

Based on the above-mentioned gap analysis, the Twinning partner will identify species and habitat types and their groups with the least gaps in knowledge for which field data gathering would be feasible and meaningful within the time-frame of the project. For later stage of the project shall update the National Information System for Biodiversity, Natura 2000 Gis data base and shall include or updated Data Standard Form for Natura 2000.

For preparation of the studies of valorisation of nature values of protected areas also existing land-use practises have to be considered and included in the preparation of these studies. It is essential to identify the impact of land-use on the conservation status of habitats and species and define good practises.

The mandatory result, which should be jointly achieved by the MS and BC Twinning partners, shall be achieved through the achievement of the following intermediary results:

1. Strengthened capacities for preparation of studies for valorisation including field data gathering and update Standard data form of nature values for natural protected areas which are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential future NATURA 2000 sites).

Measurable indicators:

1. Minimum 6 field data gathered and monitored for species and habitats organized for national and EU interest for conservation and update Natura 2000 GIS data base, Standard data form and National Information System for Biodiversity.

2. Two Studies for valorization of nature values which are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential NATURA 2000 sites) developed;

3. Approximately 20 people trained for preparation of Studies for valorisation including field data gathering and filing the Data Standard Form for Natura 2000;

Component 3:

Strengthened capacities for developing monitoring methodology for monitoring national biodiversity and preparation of National biodiversity monitoring program for national monitoring.

The purpose of monitoring is detecting trends in biodiversity and further recommending effective measures to be undertaken in order to preserve natural values and biological diversity. The national biodiversity monitoring needs to consider the commitments to the Convention of Biodiversity (CBD) as well as the relevant EU Nature Directives, because the Beneficiary Country is known as biodiversity hotspot and is rich of endemic species that are not included in the annexes of the Habitat Directive.

Furthermore it has been shown that involvement of the wider public in monitoring activities has strong effects on awareness among population, local actors and biodiversity itself. The mandatory result shall be achieved through the achievement of the following intermediary results:

1. Strengthened capacities for preparation of monitoring methodology for monitoring of national biodiversity and for preparation of National Biodiversity monitoring programme;

Measurable indicators:

- 1. Draft National monitoring methodology and protocols for min. 20 habitats, min. 20 species and min. 20 birds with assessment of conservation status developed;*
- 2. Approximately 20 people trained for monitoring methodology of biodiversity and for preparation of biodiversity monitoring programme;*
- 3. Draft National Biodiversity Monitoring Programme for next 5 year prepared;*
- 4. Draft National Biodiversity Monitoring Methodology tested on minimum two selected national protected area and EU interest for conservation;*
- 5. Minimum 2 (two) public consultation workshops held for presentation of draft methodology for monitoring of national biodiversity and for preparation of draft National Biodiversity monitoring;*

Component 4:

Further transposition and strengthened administrative capacities for implementation of Nature Protection legislation.

Within the ongoing project “Strengthening the capacities for implementation of NATURA 2000 - Europeaid/136609/IH/SER/MK” short and long term training plan shall be developed/update for strengthening the administrative capacity for implementation of NATURA 2000. With this project Twinning partner will continue with implementation of the developed training plan.

The mandatory result shall be achieved through the achievement of the following intermediary results:

- 1. Strengthening administrative capacity for implementation of the Nature protection legislation with functional analysis;*

Measurable indicators:

- 1. Assessment and written recommendations with developed plan for strengthening administrative capacity for implementation of EU nature directives / Nature Protection Legislation prepared which includes aspects related to: organizational structure, communication, staff, qualifications, training, equipment, stakeholders’ involvements, etc.*
- 2. Min. 4 draft secondary legislation developed based on the Law on Nature protection related to implementation of EU Nature directives;*
- 3. Approximately 20 people trained for different topics related to the implementation of NATURA 2000;*
- 4. Stakeholders’ involvement plan for implementation of NATURA 2000 prepared;*
- 5. Min. 3 brochures for different stakeholders for implementation of NATURA 2000 prepared.*

3.4 Activities:

In its proposal, the MS will propose the activities it considers more appropriate to achieve the results listed above.

The Twinning project aims to introduce and share EU wide best practices in connection with EU legislation and specific needs of the Beneficiary Country in the field of nature protection. The Twinning project will be implemented in close co-operation between the partners aiming to achieve the mandatory results in sustainable manner.

The set of proposed activities will be further developed with the Twinning partners when drafting the Twinning work plan, keeping in mind that the final list of activities will be decided in cooperation with the Twinning partner. The components are closely interlinked and need to be sequenced accordingly.

The Twinning assistance will be provided in the form of know-how transfer, and will be delivered through the activities that will indicatively include:

a) Advice and coaching sessions/on-the-job trainings: Coaching and advice activities will be the predominant type of activity. The MS experts will train and advice the BC experts from the participating institutions to improve the methods and procedures and strengthen the capacities related to implementation and harmonisation of EU legislation and best practices in the field of nature protection. Also exchange of experiences for preparation of management plans for protected areas.

b) Seminars and workshops: The Twinning project will involve the organisation of several seminars and workshops for vertical transfer of knowledge from the central to the local level, using and sharing the expertise of MS experts and the experience of the BC administration.

c) Study visit: Two Study visits for approximately 10 people will be organised for the representatives of the institutions involved in the project from the beneficiary country to the Member State institutions, for exchange of good practices for implementation of NATURA 2000 and experience in connection with implementation of nature legislation.

d) Legal acts, Guidelines, Manuals, procedures: The Twinning partner if necessary will review and propose new legal acts for change, and/or Guidelines and amendments to existing national legislation for monitoring of biodiversity which regulates the area of Nature protection in line with the Acquis and EU best practice, as well as propose more effective procedures. This task will be done in close cooperation and consultation with Beneficiaries.

e) Development:

The Twinning partner will propose and provide assistance and guidance and experiences for preparation of management plans and study of valorization of nature values . Also Twinning partner will propose and provide assistance for strengthened institutional capacities for Biodiversity monitoring on minimum one selected protected area.

3.5 Means/ Input from the MS Partner Administration:

The project will be implemented in the form of a twinning contract between the Beneficiary country and an EU Member State. Details of implementation shall be agreed during the preparation of the work plan. The implementation of the project requires one Project Leader with responsibility for the overall coordination of project activities, one Resident Twinning Adviser responsible for management and implementation of project activities foreseen, and pool short-term experts within the limits of the budget. It is essential that the team have sufficiently broad expertise to cover all the areas included in the project description.

The interested Member State institution shall include in its proposal the CVs of the designated Project Leader and Resident Twinning Adviser. The details of implementation of the Twining project will be agreed upon/during the preparation of the work plan.

3.5.1 Profile and tasks of the Project Leader

Qualifications and skills:

- High-ranking official of a Member State administration or equivalent staff;
- At least a University degree³, preferably in field of environmental science or any other discipline related to this project or equivalent professional experience of 10 years in public administration;

³ For reference on equivalent qualification see: EPSO website-Annex 1 (http://europa.eu.int/epso/on-line-applications/pdf/guide-1242-171104_en.doc)

- At least 3 years of relevant experience in a MS public administration in the field of EU nature protection;
- Fluent knowledge of spoken and written English language.

Tasks:

- Conceive, supervise and coordinate the overall preparation of the project;
- Coordinate and monitor the overall implementation of the project including coordination and direction of the MS TW partner;
- Co-ordinate MS experts' work and availability;
- Communicate with the beneficiary, CFCD and EUD;
- Ensure the backstopping functions and financial management;
- Guarantee the successful implementation of the Project's Work Plan;
- Co-chairing the regular Project Steering Committee meeting with the Beneficiary Country Project Leader;
- Prepare operative side letter, prepare and draft interim, quarterly and final report.

Beneficiary Country Project Leader (BC PL)

The BC Project Leader will act as the counterpart of the MS PL and will ensure close cooperation in the overall steering, co-ordination and management of the project from the beneficiary side. He/she will support the Twinning project team in organizational and technical matters and will also coordinate the Project Steering Committee (PSC) on behalf of the BC. The role of the BC PL and the MS PL are complementary.

3.5.2 Profile and tasks of the RTA

One RTA will be appointed and he/she will be located in the premises of the MoEPP in the Beneficiary country.

The secondment of the Resident Twinning Advisor (RTA) will last for 21 months, during which he/she will be responsible for the direct implementation of the project under the overall supervision of the MS Project Leader.

Qualifications and skills:

- Be a national of a Member State of the European Union;
- Be a civil servant or equivalent staff seconded to work within departments/units/structures related to EU Nature protection;
- At least a University degree⁴ preferably in field of environmental or nature law, or any other discipline related to this project or equivalent professional experience of 10 years in public administration;
- At least 3 years of experience in MS administration in the environmental field with an emphasis on EU Nature protection;
- Active knowledge of English language;

⁴ For reference on equivalent qualification see: EPSO website-Annex 1 (http://europa.eu.int/epso/on-line-applications/pdf/guide-1242-171104_en.doc)

3.5.3 Profile and tasks of the short-term experts

Other specialist staff will be made available by the Twinning Partner to support the implementation of activities. Specific and technical matters not directly covered by the Resident Twinning Advisers can be taken over by a pool of short-term experts within the limits of the budget. The detailed expert input shall be established when drawing up the twinning work-plan.

Qualifications and skills of short-term experts:

Short-Term Experts will:

- Have a University-level degree⁵ preferably in environmental and natural science or similar area relevant to the project or equivalent professional experience of 10 years in public administration,
- Be civil servants or equivalent staff seconded to work within departments/units/structures related to Nature Protection and NATURA 2000,
- Minimum 3 years of practical experience in implementation of institutional aspects targeted by the Twinning Contract in field of nature protection related to NATURA 2000,
- Be fluent in English, both oral and written.

More specifically, the Short-Term experts will:

- Prepare and implement specific tasks based mainly on practical cases and experience in compliance with their mission description and in accordance with Project activities;
- Provide practical expertise/advices to relevant staff for execution of different tasks related to the project;
- Assist in key tasks, e.g. in the field of drafting legislation, administrative capacity building and practical experience for preparation Draft Management Plans, Studies for valorization of nature values, and Monitoring methodology for biodiversity and assessment of conservation status, implementation of NATURA 2000, etc;
- Address cross-cutting issues.

3.5.4. Profile and tasks of the RTA assistants

3.5.4.1 RTA Assistant:

The RTA will be provided with a full-time RTA assistant acting as an assistant for technical and organizational support. The assistant will be contracted according to Twinning rules and paid from the Twinning budget. The assistant will be selected through an open call. The role of RTA Assistant is to support the RTA in the project management. In addition, the assistant will be responsible for organisation of meetings, seminars etc. and their logistics as well as for providing translation and interpretation services on a daily basis.

3.5.4.2 Full-time translator / interpreter:

A full-time translator / interpreter will be selected through an open call. The full-time translator / interpreter will be involved in all necessary project activities (training sessions, translation of project documents/reports and materials, organizational activities, etc.). The role of the translator / interpreter will be to provide translation and editing as well as interpretation services to the Twinning project in general.

4. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

⁵ For reference on equivalent qualification see: EPSO website-Annex I (http://europa.eu.int/epso/on-line-applications/pdf/guide-1242-171104_en.doc)

The Contracting Authority for this Twinning project is Central Financing and Contracting Department within the Ministry of Finance.

4.1 Beneficiary institutions

Main beneficiary and coordinator of the project will be Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. The Administration for Environment/ Nature Department within the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning is responsible for provision of the available staff to maximize the benefits from the services provided in this project, coordination and implementation of the project in Beneficiary Country.

Other beneficiary institutions of the project will be the Public Institution of 3 National Parks (Mavrovo, Galicica, Pelister) and municipalities who are responsible for management with protected areas.

The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning will be directly responsible for co-ordination and management of the project from the beneficiary side and will support the Twinning project team in organizational and technical matters.

4.2. Co-ordination mechanisms between institutions

A project Steering Committee (SC) will be established at the beginning of the project comprising senior representatives of the Beneficiary Institution, the Delegation of the European Union, the Secretariat for European affairs and the Central Financing and Contracting Department within the Ministry of Finance, and will be co-chaired by the MS PL and BC PL.

The SC will monitor, supervise and co-ordinate the overall progress and implementation of the project. The SC will provide guidance for the different components of the project, will define priorities, approve and monitor budgets and approve the results.

4.3. Reporting requirements as per Art 6.4 of the Twinning Manual

Reports will follow the templates of Annex C4 of the Common Twinning Manual. In addition to these formal reporting stages, the twinning partners are obliged to inform in writing the Contracting Authority as well as the final beneficiary – Department for Nature of the action of any critical aspects or conditions of project implementation, or any amendments/modifications necessary within the budget.

All reports must be produced in the English in electronic and hard copy. These reports shall be signed by both Project Leaders. Each report must be presented in electronic format one week prior to the Steering Committee meetings and in two hard copies to the following addresses:

Central Financing and Contracting Department

Ministry of Finance

“Dame Gruev” 12, 1000 Skopje

The final versions should incorporate any comments and discussions during the Steering Committee meetings.

5. BUDGET

The project will be implemented through a Twinning Contract estimated at a maximum of EUR 1.100.000 out of which IPA contribution will amount to EUR 1.050.000 while national contribution will amount to EUR 55.000.

Twinning Contract	Total (EUR)	IPA Community contribution		National Public contribution	
		EUR	%	EUR	%
	1,100,000	1,045,000	95	55,000	5

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

In addition to the IPA and National co-financing as part of the Twinning Contract amount, as a rule, all twinning contracts must provide additional co-financing on the side of the Beneficiary Institution (Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning), for the purpose of covering costs not covered under the project budget as per Twinning manual, point 5.13, as follows:

- Direct and indirect cost of the Beneficiary administration, civil servants and national private experts working for the project;
- Travel by the beneficiary officials from their capitals to a MS or between MS;
- Organization of seminars/ workshops/ trainings (incl. hall rental, printing seminar materials and other logistical support).
- Facilities for the Member State experts: adequately equipped office space; telephone; e-mail services; fax; photocopiers; computer; internet access; secretarial support; access to information.

The following expenses are also to be covered with the project funds:

- Visibility Costs and
- Audit certificate cost.

The project will be located in the premises of the MoEPP which will also ensure providing the Member State experts with the documents necessary for project implementation.

The twinning partner (project beneficiary) shall provide all available assistance to solve unforeseen problems that the Member State twinning partner(s) might face.

6. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Implementing Agency responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting

The Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) will be the Contracting Authority and will be responsible for all administrative and procedural aspects of the tendering process, contracting matters and financial management including payment of project activities, upon conferral of management. The Head of CFCD will act as the Programme Authorizing Officer (PAO) of the project.

Contact person

Mrs. Radica Kocева (PAO)

Head of Central Financing and Contracting Department

Ministry of Finance

“Dame Gruev” 12, 1000 Skopje

6.2 Main counterpart in the BC, including contact person and contact details.

Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning will be the leading beneficiary institution while the Head of Department for EU will act as a SPO.

Contact point:

Ms. Jadranka Ivanova (SPO)
Head of Department for EU
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning

BC Project Leader

Mr. Vlatko Trpeski
Head of Nature Department
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning

Resident Twinning Adviser counterpart

Ms. Sasko Jordanov
Head of Unit
Nature Department
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning

6.3 Contracts

The project shall be implemented through one (1) Twinning contract.

7. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (INDICATIVE)

7.1 Launching of the call for proposals:

The estimated date for the launching of the call for proposals is: January 2017

7.2 Start of project activities:

The estimated date for start of project activities is: September 2017

7.3 Project completion:

The project implementation period (without duration of the work plan) is 21 months after the commencement date of the Project .

7.4 Duration of the execution period

The overall execution period of the Twinning project is 24 months with an implementation period of 21 months. (The execution period of the contract shall enter into force upon the date of notification by the Contracting Authority of the contract signed by all parties, whereas it shall end 3 months after the implementation period of the Action) .

8. SUSTAINABILITY

The main contribution of this project will be the strengthening of the capacities of the beneficiary institutions in the field of nature protection management and their sustainable management of protected areas in relation of NATURA 2000.

The capacities of the Department of Nature within the Administration of Environment, a body within the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning will be strengthened for performing preparation of management plans of protected area, studies for valorization of natural values of protected area as potential NATURA 2000 sites. It will as well contribute to better monitoring of the biodiversity in the beneficiary country.

The capability of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning shall be strengthened to provide more reliable and competent analysis as support to the decision making process in relation to environmental policy of the Beneficiary Country in particular in nature protection.

The capacity of the National parks shall be strengthened to provide higher quality of monitoring of nature heritage and better management of their protected areas.

The project activities will also increase the capabilities of the National Parks as a one of the main stakeholders in the project in assessment preparation of study for valorisation and preparation of management plan.

Improved capacities for implementation of environmental legislation and introduction of environmental standards will positively impact the overall sustainability of development in the country, while the improved capacities to develop EU compliant legislation and regulations will have a positive impact on the EU accession process.

The Member State Twinning partners shall transfer their best practices and know-how necessary to achieve the mandatory results to the Beneficiary administration. Staff benefiting from trainings shall transfer knowledge through subsequent training to their colleagues. Moreover and at the end of the implementation period a lesson learnt seminar will be held to disseminate the results and the best practices acquired and to foresee future relevant activities.

9. CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

9.1 Equal Opportunities and non-discrimination

The training activities may include a specific component to train the ministerial staff in the implementation of the Government Gender Strategy, while reference will be made to the EC Programme of Action for the mainstreaming of gender equality in community development cooperation (2001-06). An output of this training component will be to assist the beneficiary to implement an 'internal gender assessment' to identify areas where it could improve its internal performance vis-à-vis gender.

9.2 Environmental considerations

The project is directly related and contributes to environmental improvement. It affects the environment positively, since it refers to improvement of the nature protection by supporting the implementation national law and EU directives.

9.3 Support to minorities and vulnerable groups

The twinning partners in formulation the proposal and implementation the contract shall ensure respect of Ohrid Framework Agreement, and "Race directive" 2000 (200/43/EC of 29 June), which has an important impact on employment (incl. vocational training, working conditions, social protection etc.) and is also a crucial aspect of the acquis. Also, the training activities will include a specific component to train beneficiary staff in the different aspects of mainstreaming minority and vulnerable groups in programme and project development as well as monitoring and evaluation.

9.4 Civil Society development and dialogue

Civil society issues will be taken into consideration of such issues where relevant and appropriate in the project.

9.5 Good governance, with particular attention to fight against corruption

The Government is strongly determined to fulfil all criteria needed for EU accession and membership, and all the necessary actions are being taken to reach the aim. Through transparent policies and involvement of different stakeholders in the process of policy design the accountability and responsiveness vis-a-vis the citizens will be being strengthened.

9.6 Communication and publicity

All requirements to ensure the visibility of EU financing will be fulfilled in accordance with R. (EC). N. 718/2007⁶.

10. CONDITIONALITY AND SEQUENCING

10.1. Conditionality

The following conditionality predetermines the project:

- 1) Appointment of counterpart personnel by the beneficiary before the launch of the project;
- 2) Allocation of working space and facilities by the beneficiary for the Twinning partner before the launch of the tender process;
- 3) Organization, selection and appointment of members of working groups, steering and coordination committees, seminars by the beneficiary as per work plan of the project.

10.2. Sequencing

Key milestones will be:

- Approval of the Twinning project fiche;
- Completion of the selection of the twinning partner;
- Signature of the Twinning Contract, including the Twinning Work Plan;
- Commencement of the implementation of the twinning (inter alia, the arrival in the country of the resident twinning Advisor);
- End of the implementation period;
- Submission of the final report.

⁶ _ See. Article 62 and 63. of R. (EC). N. 718/2007

ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

1. Logical framework matrix in standard format (compulsory)

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR: Strengthening the capacities for effective implementation of the acquis in the field of nature protection.		Programme name and number: National Programme under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building for 2013 CRIS number:	
		Contracting period expires two years from the date of the conclusion of the Financing Agreement	Execution period expires two years from the final date for contracting Disbursement period expires one year from the final date for execution of contracts.
		Total budget : 1 100 000	IPA budget: 1 045 000
Project purpose The project purpose is to strengthen administrative capacities of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning/Administration of Environment/ Nature Department for implementation of the nature protection acquis, through development of implementing legislation, provision of training etc. and	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions

<p>implementation of Nature Protection legislation.</p>			
<p>Component 1 Strengthened capacities for preparation of draft management plans for natural protected areas which are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential future NATURA 2000 sites).</p>	<p>Component 1 Measurable indicators: 1. <i>Two common Draft Management Plans for natural protected areas prepared that are of national and EU interest for conservation;</i> 2. <i>Approximately 20 people trained for preparation of common management plans for natural protected areas and EU interest for conservation;</i> 3. <i>Minimum 2 public consultation workshops held for presentation of the two Draft Management Plans of two natural protected areas and EU interest for conservation;</i> 4. <i>One training curriculum for preparation of common Management Plans for natural protected areas and EU interest for conservation prepared.</i></p>	<p>Approved reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of counterpart personnel by the beneficiary before the launch of the project; - Staffing of units receiving support is sufficient to implement the project activities; - Allocation of working space and facilities by the beneficiary for technical assistance before the launch of the tender process; - Organization, selection and appointment of members of working groups, steering and coordination committees, seminars by the beneficiary as per work plan of the project; - Appointing the relevant staff by the beneficiaries to participate in training activities as per work plan; - Cooperation with National Parks

<p>Component 2</p> <p>Strengthened capacities for preparation of studies for valorisation of nature values (including field data gathering and updating of Data standard from) of natural protected areas which are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential future NATURA 2000 sites).</p>	<p>Component 2</p> <p><i>2. Min. 6 field data gathering and monitoring for species and habitats organized for national and EU interest for conservation and update Natura 2000 GIS data base, Standard data form and National Information System for Biodiversity.</i></p> <p><i>2. Two Studies for valorization of nature values which are of national and EU interest for conservation (potential NATURA 2000 sites) developed;</i></p> <p><i>3. Approximately 20 people trained for preparation of Studies for valorisation including field data gathering and filing the Data Standard From for Natura 2000;</i></p>		
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<p>Component 3</p> <p>Strengthened capacities for developing monitoring methodology for monitoring national biodiversity and preparation of National biodiversity monitoring program for national monitoring</p>	<p>Component 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Draft National monitoring methodology and protocols for min. 20 habitats, min. 20 species and min. 20 birds with assessment of conservation status developed;</i> 2. <i>Approximately 20 people trained for monitoring methodology of biodiversity and for preparation of biodiversity monitoring programme;</i> 3. <i>Draft National Biodiversity Monitoring Programme for next 5 year prepared;</i> 4. <i>Draft National Biodiversity Monitoring Methodology tested on minimum two selected national protected area and EU interest for conservation;</i> 5. <i>Minimum 2 (two) public consultation workshops held for presentation of draft methodology for monitoring of national biodiversity and for</i> 		
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<p>Component 4</p> <p>Further transposition and strengthened administrative capacities for implementation of Nature Protection legislation.</p>	<p><i>preparation of draft National Biodiversity monitoring;</i></p> <p>Component 4</p> <p><i>1. Assessment and written recommendations with developed plan for strengthening administrative capacity for implementation of EU Nature Directives / Nature Protection Legislation prepared which includes aspects related to: organizational structure, communication, staff, qualifications, training, equipment, stakeholders' involvements, etc.</i></p> <p><i>2.Min. 4 draft secondary legislation developed based on the Law on Nature protection related to implementation of EU Nature directives;</i></p> <p><i>3.Approximately 20 people trainings for different topics related to implementation for</i></p>		
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	<p>NATURA 2000;</p> <p>4. Stakeholders' involvement plan for implementation of NATURA 2000 prepared;</p> <p>5. Min. 3 brochures for different stakeholders for implementation of NATURA 2000 prepared</p>		
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions
<p>In its proposal, the MS will propose the activities it considers more appropriate to achieve the results listed above. The set of proposed activities will be further developed with the Twinning partner when drafting the Twinning work plan, keeping in mind that the final list of activities will be decided with the Twinning partner.</p> <p>Preliminary activities have been identified as follows:</p> <p><i>a) Advice and coaching sessions</i></p> <p><i>b) Seminars and workshops</i></p> <p><i>c) Study visit</i></p> <p><i>d) Legal acts, Guidelines, Manuals,</i></p>	<p>- Twinning contract</p>	<p>Total EUR 1.100.000 (EUR 1,045,000 IPA and 55.000 national contribution)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of counterpart personnel by the beneficiary before the launch of the project; - Staffing of units receiving support is sufficient to implement the project activities; - Allocation of working space and facilities by the beneficiary for technical assistance before the launch of the tender process; - Organization, selection and appointment of members of working groups, steering and coordination committees, seminars by the beneficiary as per work plan of the project; - Appointing the relevant staff by the beneficiaries to participate in training activities as per work plan; - Cooperation with National Parks - Availability of co-financing.

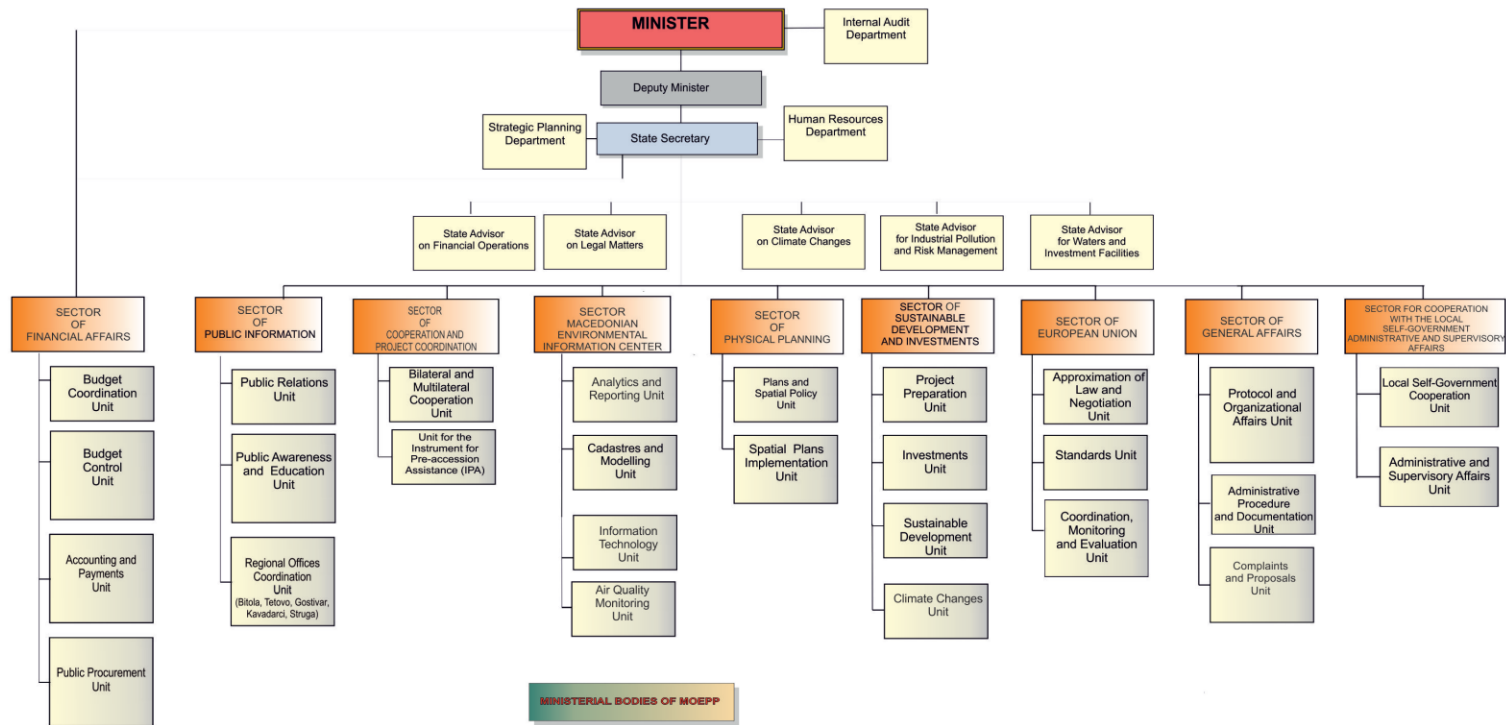
<u>procedures</u>			
<u>e) Development</u>			

2. List of relevant Laws and Regulations (optional)

- Law on Environment (“Official Gazette No. 53/05, 81/05, 24/07, 159/08, 83/09, 48/10, 124/10, 51/11, 123/12 and 93/13);
- Law on Nature Protection (“Official Gazette No. 67/04; 14/06; 84/07; 35/10; 47/11; 148/11; 59/12, 13/13, 163/13 и 41/14, 146/15, 39/16 и 63/16);
- According to Law on Nature Protection following secondary legislation related to Habitat and Birds Directive were adopted:
 - Lists on determining strictly protected wild species and protected wild species (*Official Gazette* no.139/11),
 - Lists of affected and protected wild species of plants, fungi, animals and their parts (*Official Gazette* no.15/12),
 - Rulebook on nature protection records (*Official Gazette* no.102 /12),
 - Rulebook on the content of the Study of protected areas valorization or re-valorization (*Official Gazette* no.26/12) and
 - Rulebook on the content of protected areas management plan and annual programmes for nature protection (*Official Gazette* no.26/12).

3.Reference to relevant Government Strategic plans and studies (may include Institution Development Plan, Business plans, Sector studies etc.) (optional)

4. Output report from IPA Project “Strengthening the capacities for implementation of Natura 2000”



MINISTERIAL BODIES OF MOEPP

