



Ministry of Environment
EU Funds Department

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Minutes

from the 14th Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Operational Programme Environment, held on 14 November 2013 in Slovanský dům, Na Příkopě 22, Prague 1

Attendees: as per the attached attendance sheet

Meeting agenda:

1. Opening and approval of the agenda of the 14th Meeting of OPE MC
2. Discussion about the draft OPE Implementation Progress Report for the period from 1 April 2012 to 30 September 2013
3. Discussion about the Analysis of OPE Disposable Resources
4. Discussion about investment intensive projects
5. Discussion about proposed changes of OPE
 - Discussion about, and approval of, the OPE Programme Document and the OPE Implementation Document
 - Implementation of the OPE Communication Plan and annual Communication Plan of Activities for 2014
 - Financial Plan of the Draw Down of the OPE Technical Aid
 - Indicative Annual OPE Evaluation Plan for 2014
6. Information on the preparation of the OPE Programming Period 2014-2020
7. Miscellaneous
8. Conclusion

1) Opening and approval of the agenda of the 14th Meeting of OPE MC

The meeting was opened by OPE MC *Chairwoman*, *Ing. Radka Bučilová*, the Deputy to the Minister for the EU Funds Section, Economy and the Environmental Policy, hereinafter only *the Chairman*, who welcomed the present members and the representatives of the European Commission, and introduced the new members of OPE MC, who are:

- *Ing. Jan Slavík, Ph.D., Department of the Evaluation of Effects on the Environment and Integrated Prevention, MoE,*



- *Ing. Antonín Weinert, CSc.*, a representative of the capital city of Prague, Chairman of the Council for the Infrastructure and Environment, MHMP,
- *Mgr. Daniel Havlík*, Deputy Governor of the Moravian and Silesian Region, the Association of Regions of the Czech Republic,
- *Mgr. Petr Binhac*, the Government Office of the Czech Republic,
- *Ing. Karel Kříž*, the Czech Union of Conservationists,
- *Ing. Josef Stehlik*, the Association of Czech Farmers.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the members of the OPE MC agreed that decisions shall be taken based on the consensus and if it cannot be reached, a vote shall be taken. The council constituted a quorum since 29 members/representatives of the total of 47 were present. In the course of the meeting, the state further changed with the arrival and departure of members of the OPE MC, the council constituted a quorum during the whole time of the meeting.

The Chairwoman acquainted the attendees with the major items of the meeting agenda, nobody applied objections.

The agenda of the 14th Meeting of the OPE MC was approved by the present members.

Christos Gogos (EC) welcomed new members of the OPE MC and expressed a wish that the course of the OPE MC shall be constructive and helpful..

In the introductory information, *the Chairwoman* briefly introduced the present development of the OPE. She mentioned the increase in the administrative capacities in connection with the acceleration measures, the announcements of the so-called quick turnaround calls, which were announced on the basis of the need to make sure that in addition to their acceptance these calls will be evaluated, administered and actually implemented. At present, particularly due to such quick turnaround calls, a total of 96% of the financial resources has been allocated. She also mentioned considerable cuts of the time limit for the submission of RoPD. Other measures implemented within the acceleration include continuous weekly draw-downs of financial resources, whereby, besides others, the assignment No. 3 of the last meeting of the OPE MC was accomplished. *The Chairwoman* also informed the OPE MC members about the establishment of a one-way call centre at the National Environmental Fund (NEF) in order to accelerate and increase the volume of payments at the end of this year.

2) Progress Report on the OPE Implementation for the period from 01/04/2013 to 30/09/2013

Ing. Vít Šumpela (MoE) informed the OPE MC members on the contents and conclusions of the Implementation Progress Report for the last monitored period and on the reconstruction of the individual operative and administrative procedures, which contributed to the acceleration and increase in the drawing.. He mentioned the weakening of the Czech crown and the



exchange rate difference, which might eventually negatively influence the whole process. He confirmed that in accordance with the conclusions of the last MC, the OPE opened a call within PO3 and informed about the intention to reallocate disposable resources to quick turnaround calls within PO3. He summarised the main problems of the implementation – failure to announce calls in 2011 caused insufficiency of projects to be implemented, the late start of the construction season and other implementation complications caused a slow draw-down and a risk of failure to meet the n+2 and n+3 rule; the change in the approach of the MoF to secure co-financing of regions and subsequent necessity to secure resources from the MoE's chapter caused trouble with securing the co-financing, a lowered availability of financial resources as a result of the absence of co-financing by regions and long decision-making processes on the part of other authorities (the Office for the Protection of Competition (OPC), the Tax Office (TO), etc.) He also stated the positive points – shortening of evaluations of the individual groups of projects in Call 49 and Call 50 and an easier administrative procedure in the case of a change of the applicant. All in all, it may be concluded that the acceleration and optimisation processes have a comprehensive positive effect on the effectiveness of process management and are now the good news for the future operational programme.

Ing. Jaroslav Michna (MoE) presented the Analysis of OPE Disposable Resources, savings within the operational programme and the possibility of reallocations between the individual priority axes. He also mentioned the intervention by the Czech National Bank (CNB) and the subsequent change of the exchange rate, the issue of floods and shortening time for accepting medium-term decisions. The support of measures with an estimated short term of implementation, lower investment costs and continuous reallocation of savings to the key priority axes should be preferred. He also pointed out the long time between the issue of the Registration List (RL) and the Decisions on the Provision of a Grant (DoPG) and the overall long time for the issue of the DoPG for large projects.

Mgr. In his presentation, *Martin Kubica (NEF)* presented investment intensive projects. These projects exceed the amount of CZK 100 million. He pointed out the differences between these projects and the individual or large projects. There are presently ca. 117 investment intensive projects and they account roughly for one half of the whole allocation of the operational programme. He also mentioned the establishment of the Department of Investment Intensive Projects at the NEF in order to optimise the administration of these projects.

After the presentations, the contribution to the discussion followed concerning the current state and further development of the programme.

Jaroslav Perlík (SMO ČR) raised a question concerning the current state of the ZEVO Chotíkov project. *Mgr. Martin Kubica (NEF)* replied that this project has been submitted to the EC for approval.

These questions were answered within the summary reaction.



Christos Gogos (EC) recommended that the MA fixes a time schedule for the most important projects for the determination of the key states in the projects implementation (conditions of the tenders, dates of the commencements of contracts for final beneficiaries). He pointed out the need to focus on the implementation and completion of projects and shortening the time between the RL and DoPG. In addition, he expressed a positive feeling of the completed work and the overall efforts.

Ing. Šárka Fojtíková (MMR-NOK) raised a proposal on the evaluation of the actual impact of the acceleration measures and the action plan on the drawing. She proposed the comparison of allocations within intermediate programmes. She also raised a question about a potential analysis of the change in the exchange rate in connection with the implementation.

Ing David Sventek, MBA (NUTS II Moravia and Silesia) raised a question regarding automatic cancellation of liabilities, the so-called re-commitment and potential impacts on the budget of the Czech Republic. Another question concerned the time for the processing of a payment request and the risk of discrepancies arising from the accumulated payment requests in the last weeks.

JUDr. Tomáš Novotný, Ph.D. (NUTS II Central Bohemia) requested a specification of a realistic estimate of returned financial resources. He also recommended the preparation of time schedules according to the most successful project for similar projects in the given area so that adjustments could be made of the individual implementation stages.

Julia Sokolovičová (the Government Council for NNGOs) raised a question concerning the method of the communication with the EC regarding the application for the transfer of financial resources from the OPE to OPD. She also raised a question regarding the call within the PO3 concerning energy savings for public buildings. She proposed announcing block grants for “small” projects in cooperation for instance with AOPK. Then the MA's obligation to administer a large number of projects of such a type would be cease to exist.

Mgr. Daniel Havlík (the Association of the Regions of the Czech Republic) raised a question concerning the method of financing of Call 50 within PP3.

Ing. Vít Šumpela (MoE) and Mgr. Martin Kubica (NEF) responded in summary to the questions of the OPE MC members.

The impacts of the exchange rate on the implementation may not be as predicted at this moment, the exchange rate of the Czech crown has not been clearly determined. After the determination of the influence of the CNB's intervention, the progress of drawing of financial resources in November and December 2013 shall be decisive.

In the reply to the question regarding PP3 it was stated that the acceptance of applications for Call 50 ends on 29 November 2013 and with respect to the interest a bank shall be created from the submitted projects. *Ing.* In this respect, *Jaroslav Michna* stated that the final decision should be made until the beginning of the construction season. Until that time, the ability



of applicants to meet the schedule of the implementation of their projects primarily in PP1 needs to be sensitively analysed. Only then reallocations may be considered.

Ing. In their statement, *Vít Šumpela* jointly with *Martin Kubica* revised already mentioned steps completed within the acceleration of the programme and their impacts on the drawing and also with reference to the presentation of *Ing. Jaroslav Michna* they described all factors influencing the difficult determination of predictions of drawing.

Once the questions had been answered, the OPE MC members adopted a resolution “The MC assigns to the MA to continue in the steps arising from the analysis of OPE disposable resources”.

The MC members also acknowledged the submitted Progress Report on the OPE Implementation for the period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013. The Committee members shall receive the Progress Report on the OPE Implementation along with the minutes.

Christos Gogos (EC) proposed to prepare brief information regarding the conclusions and recommendations of all the attendees from the discussion about the Progress Report on the OPE Implementation regarding the working procedures and acceleration of the programme and circulate them to the OPE MC members.

The Chairwoman promised to send the information to the OPE MC members.

3) Change of the OPE Programme Document and the OPE Implementation Document

Ing. Petr Kolečka (MoE) informed the OPE MC members on the adjustment of the amount of the resources from PP8 to PP4 reallocated to OPD in the amount of EUR 16,086,532. Also, there was a change in the terminology regarding the built-up area (at the initiative of the MoRD) and the system of the calculation of the time limit for granting an aid. In connection with the amendment of the Budgetary Rules Act, there has been a change in financing (GAs) government authorities and state-funded organisations (SFOs) and state-owned enterprises. Also, the method of the calculation of the EU's contribution with respect to the total eligible expenditures has changed. *Ing. Kolečka* thanked the OPE MC members for the approval of the previously submitted changes in the “per rollam” form.

No questions were raised in the discussion. *The Chairwoman* put the proposal of the changes of the OPE Programme Document regarding the transfer of the financial allocation from PP8 to PP4 in the amount of EUR 16,086,532 to the vote. The OPE MC assigned to the OPE MA to send to the EC without delay the proposed revision of the OPE Programme Document taking this change into consideration. Also, the OPE MC assigned to the MA to send to the



MC members the approved versions of the Programme and Implementation Document along with the minutes.

The OPE MC discussed the presented document and adopted the following resolution:

“The OPE MC approves the change of the OPE Programme Document regarding the transfer of the financial allocation from PP8 to PP4 in the amount of EUR 16,086,532. Also, the OPE MC assigns to the OPE MA to send to the EC without delay the proposed revision of the OPE Programme Document taking this change into consideration.”

“The OPE MC approves the changes of the OPE Implementation Document.”

“The OPE MC assigns to the MA to send to the MC members the approved versions of the PD and ID along with the minutes of the meeting.”

4) Implementation of the OPE Communication Plan and annual Communication Plan of Activities for 2014

Ing. In the second part of his presentation, *Petr Kolečka (MoE)* acquainted the attendees with the annual Communication Plan of Activities for 2014. He informed about the fact that the publication of reports and calls in daily papers and in the *Priorita* magazine was part of the promotion and communication activity. The aforesaid call centre, which has been established at the NEF, is another significant activity.

Christos Gogos (EC) made a remark regarding informing broader public. He highlighted the obligation of the beneficiary of the aid to inform the public on the projects co-financed by the EU and satisfy the specified requirements for the publicity of the completed projects. *The Chairwoman* promised to draw applicants' attention to this fact.

There were no more contributions to the discussion, *the Chairwoman* put the annual Communication Plan of Activities for 2014 to the vote.

The OPE MC adopted the resolution “The OPE MC approves the the annual Communication Plan of Activities for 2014”.

5) Indicative Annual OPE Evaluation Plan for 2014

Ing. Petr Kolečka (MoE) also presented the Indicative Annual OPE Evaluation Plan for 2014. He informed about the projects that had been completed in this year and also about the projects planned for 2014. The Analysis of the Administrative Intensity of the OPE Implementation was one of the most important projects. The members of the OPE MC had been informed about the conclusions of this analysis already at the previous ordinary meeting of the OPE MC. The medium-term strategy of the air protection in the Czech Republic, which



is being implemented at the present time, and the project focused on the specialist support of the mitigation of the flood risks, in the aid area 1.3 – Limiting Flood Risks – is another important evaluation. At present, the SEA evaluation is performed in the environmental area, whose outputs shall be used for the operational programme in the period 2014-2020. He informed the Committee members that NOK MMR raised questions with respect to the reference for the meeting and promised to take them into consideration in the version that the MC members shall obtain along with the minutes.

Christos Gogos (EC) raised a question regarding the schedule of the medium-term strategy of the air protection in the Czech Republic.

Ing. Jiří Hurdálek (MoE) stated in the reply that the medium-term strategy of the air protection is at the implementation stage in the Czech Republic. The situation analysis and proposal of measures are being prepared now. The first draft of the National Programme for Limitation of Emissions in the Czech Republic was prepared this September. Analyses for the development of subsequent programmes at the level of zones and agglomerations are also being prepared. These documents shall be used also for the new programming period 2014-2020.

With respect to the fact that there were no questions within the discussion, *the Chairwoman* put the Indicative Annual OPE Evaluation Plan for 2014 to the vote.

The resolution “The OPE MC acknowledges the Indicative Annual OPE Evaluation Plan for 2014. Also, it assigns to the OPE MA to include the MoRD’s comments obtained on 11 November 2013 in this plan and send the supplemented version of the plan to the MC members along with the minutes” was acknowledged by the OPE MC members.

6) Financial Plan of the Draw Down of the OPE Technical Aid

Mgr. Reda Ifrah (MoE) presented the administration of PP8. At present, the activities focus primarily on the preparation of the operational programme in the period 2014-2020 and financing projects within the OPE.

Christos Gogos (EC) raised a question regarding the increased

number of employees stated in Annex No. 9 of the Progress Report on the Implementation.

Mgr. In his response, *Martin Kubica (NEF)* stated that the adopted personnel measures regarded the acceleration of the operational programme and securing sufficient administration of projects e.g. in the legislative and economic department. This concerns measures of a temporary character due to an increased volume of administration.

The Chairwoman put the Financial Plan of the Draw Down of the OPE Technical Aid to the vote.



The resolution “The OPE MC approves the Financial Plan of the Draw Down of the OPE Technical Aid for 2014” was approved by the MC members.

7) Information on the preparation of the OPE Programming Period 2014-2020

Ing. Světlana Svitáková (MoE) presented the up-to-date progress of the preparation of the programming period 2014-2020 and mentioned the fact that the Programme Document is regularly discussed at the internal working group of the MoE and also at the external working group, the so-called “Platform 2014-2020”, where this document is carefully evaluated by the MoRD NOK. The priority axes are being specified. The third version of the operational programme shall contain 6 priority axes. The strategy of adjusting to the change of the climate in the conditions of the Czech Republic.

JUDr. Tomáš Novotný, Ph. D. (NUTS II Central Bohemia) proposed in the discussion about this item to include the priority axis focused on ecological innovations to the programme being prepared.

This proposal was acknowledged.

8) Conclusion

In conclusion, *Christos Gogos (EC)* thanked for helpful discussion, suggestions and for the whole meeting.

The Chairwoman summarised the course of the meeting, thanked the members for their participation in the 14th meeting and closed the OPE MC.

The expected date of the next ordinary MC meeting:

June 2014

Recorded by: Bc. Petra Procházková Peřinová, OFEU MoE

Verified by: Ing. Jaroslav Michna, Director of the OPE Projects Management Department, authorised by the office of the Chief Director of the Section of EU Funds, Economy and Environmental Policy

Approved by: Ing. Radka Bučilová, the Deputy to the Minister for the EU Funds Section, Economy and the Environmental Policy



OPERAČNÍ PROGRAM
ŽIVOTNÍ PROSTŘEDÍ



EVROPSKÁ UNIE
Fond soudržnosti
Evropský fond pro regionální rozvoj

Pro vodu,
vzduch a přírodu