



Republic of Serbia
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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31st March 2016

Belgrade

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
– Mr Jerzy Bogdan PLEWA, Director General –

European Commission
Loi 130 08/188, 1049 Brussels

Subject: Submission of the Minutes of the first meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee for Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) for the years 2014-2020

Dear Mr. Plewa,

In the capacity of the Minister of Agriculture and Environmental Protection and Chairperson of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee, I herewith submit the Final version of the Minutes of the first meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee with supporting annexes for Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) for the years 2014-2020.

MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
AND ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

Snežana Bogosavljević Bošković, PhD

Enclosed:

- The Minutes of the first meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee for Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) for the years 2014-2020
- Agenda
- Copy of the List of the participants

Submit copy to: - Mr. Gerard Kiely, Head of Unit A5, DG AGRI

MINUTES IPARD II MONITORING COMMITTEE

Minutes No. 1

Minutes of the first meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee

11th February 2016/ Belgrade

I List of attendees:

The meeting was attended by the IPARD II Monitoring Committee (hereinafter: MC) Members and representatives of:

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection (hereinafter: MAEP);
2. Ministry of Economy;
3. Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure;
4. Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication;
5. Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government;
6. Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development;
7. Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs;
8. Ministry of Youth and Sports;
9. Ministry of Culture and Media;
10. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia;
11. Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia;
12. Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities;
13. Provincial Secretariat for Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management;
14. Serbian Cooperative Union;
15. National Association of Fruit and Vegetable "The Fruits of Serbia";
16. National Society for fruit production "Our fruit Serbia";
17. Farmers Association;
18. Association of Agricultural Producers "Club 100P plus";
19. Association of Agricultural Producers "Vojvodina agrar";
20. Rural Development Network of Serbia;
21. Serbian Milk Producers Association;
22. National Association of Milk Processors "SEDA";
23. National association "Rural tourism in Serbia";
24. Association of citizens "National LEADER Network";
25. National Association for the development of organic production "SERBIA ORGANICS";
26. IPARD Agency, MAEP (hereinafter: IA);
27. Ministry of Finance;
28. Audit Authority Office of EU Funds (hereinafter: AA);
29. European Commission (hereinafter: EC);

30. Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia;
31. Faculty of Agriculture, University of Novi Sad;
32. Faculty of Agronomy Čačak, University of Kragujevac;
33. Institute for Science Application in Agriculture;
34. Team for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction.

The meeting was not attended by the MC Members and representatives of:

1. Sector for Agricultural Policy, MAEP;
2. Directorate for Agricultural land, MAEP;
3. Sector for Environmental Protection, MAEP;
4. National Agency for Regional Development;
5. Minister without portfolio responsible for EU integration;
6. Faculty of Agriculture, University of Belgrade.

Result: 25 members/ alternates of 29 as total with voting right have been present. Quorum is reached and decisions could be taken.

Annex 1 to the Minutes: List of participants;

Annex 2 to the Minutes: Agenda.

II Outcome of the IPARD MC meeting

In relation of item 1 of the Agenda

The first meeting of the IPARD MC was opened by the chairperson, Minister of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Mrs. Snežana Bogosavljević Bošković, PhD.

Mrs. Snežana Bogosavljević Bošković welcomed the members of MC and representatives of the EC and Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia and emphasized the importance of the work of MC and its role. The Minister stated that establishment of the MC is great achievement and very important step in implementation of IPARD II programme.

Furthermore, she pointed out that for the first time representatives of associations of producers and processors are institutionally included in the field of agriculture and rural development in line with legal framework of EU. In the future period close cooperation will be achieved; representatives of associations will be included in negotiation process and in the process of development of new measures. Expected contribution from representatives is in terms of data collection, guidance and avoidance of double funding. Membership is privilege but also big responsibility due to the fact that all discussions have to be based on analytics as well as results.

In relation of item 2 of the Agenda

Mr. Gerard Kiely, Head of Unit DG Agri A5 Pre-Accession Assistance to Agriculture and Rural Development, pointed out that establishment and first MC meeting is a first very important step in the process of implementation of IPARD programme. Mr. Gerard Kiely recalled about the importance of agriculture for country's economy as well as the importance of IPARD II programme. On one hand, the purpose of IPARD II programme is to bring improvements of competitiveness of agricultural sector and quality of life in rural areas, and on the other hand IPARD II programme has as a purpose to strengthen administrative capacities and prepare the country for EU accession. Mr. Gerard Kiely stressed the urgency to speed up the preparation for the entrustment of budget implementation tasks. He underlined the fact that crucial work has to be done by the national authorities to ensure the funding is actually committed and spent in a transparent way; all this requires efforts of the Managing Authority (hereinafter: MA), IA, technical bodies, advisory services and recipients, and the MC members. Mr. Kiely underlined the importance of the work of the MC for the future implementation of the program and recalled about the principles of transparency and active role the members should have - it is expected from the representatives of MC to contribute in the collection/dissemination of information from/in the field.

EC representative recalled that all IPARD countries lost money because of lack of preparation and insufficient capacities and that Serbia should learn from challenges other countries have been confronted with. Potential obstacles should be identified and dealt with prior to implementation to reduce future decommitment risk.

Mrs. Snežana Bogosavljević Bošković thanked once again to all participants for support and cooperation that they are providing to the MAEP in the development of competitive, sustainable and efficient agricultural sector. Mrs. Bogosavljević Bošković ceded the moderation of working part to Mr. Dragan Mirković, Head of the MA and Deputy Chairperson of the MC.

In relation of item 3 of the Agenda

Mr. Dragan Mirković welcomed all the participants and specially guests from Brussels. He thanked to Mr. Gerard Kiely for his introduction speech, where he mentioned possible obstacles and provided recommendations.

Mr. Mirković announced active working part of the meeting. He provided information about appointments and changes of the members of MC. Three organizations (IA, National Society for fruit production "Our fruit Serbia" and National Agency for Regional Development) have sent letters referring to the changes of the members/ alternates due to the institutional or personal changes. Following activity is to amend Decision on the Establishment of IPARD II Monitoring Committee, No. 119-01-251/2015-03, dated 13th November 2015.

Furthermore, it is established the presence of a quorum, 25 members/ alternates with voting right have been present. Quorum is reached and decisions could be taken.

In relation of item 4 of the Agenda

Mr. Mirković pointed out that all the documents that are subject to approval have been sent to the members of MC for commenting in line with Rules of Procedures (hereinafter: RoP). Three organizations/ institutions have sent comments, and currently they are in the phase of consultations with the EC. After approval or rejection of the comments all members are going to be informed. Approved comments are going to be included in the documents. Amendments to the documents are going to be subject of forthcoming MC meeting.

Mr. Mirković stated that when it comes to the Agenda there were no comments received, consequently it was placed for the voting.

Decision No. 1

Agenda adopted by consensus

In relation of item 5 of the Agenda- Rules of Procedures of IPARD II MC

Mrs. Sanja Prodanović, Deputy Head of the MA, MAEP, stated that RoP of the MC is the second document to be considered and adopted by the MC.

Briefly, she presented content of the RoP: appointments and structure of the MC, Secretariat of the MC, responsibilities and tasks, functioning of the MC, participations at the meeting, voting, supporting bodies, drafting of minutes, follow up of the decisions and Code of conduct.

Following the presentation the floor was open for discussions.

Mr. Nenad Budimović, Secretary of the Association for Agriculture, food processing industry, forestry and water management in Chamber of Commerce of Serbia:

Article 17, paragraph 2, point 1 stipulates: "the members of the Committee may not engage in providing advice to legal or natural persons, nor be dependent on persons that could affect his/ her impartially in exercising his/ her functions as a member of the Committee, and must not use their membership to benefit or privilege for himself/ herself or for another person".

Considering that my every day work implies providing the advices, is it deemed as a violation of the RoP?

Mr. Dragan Mirković: Article 17, paragraph 2 refers to the private interest, and advices to be provided to the potential recipients of the IPARD funds. We are aware that as representatives of institutions you have to provide advices and information, we do not intent to restrict you in performing your duties.

Mrs. Ivana Stefanović Ristin, Association of citizens "National LEADER Network" had a question related to the Code of conduct, about the rule that refers to announcing and reporting on their web sites on MC meetings.

Mr. Dragan Mirković: All adopted documents of the MC meeting such as Minutes, RoP, Evaluation Plan, and later on reports on implementation of the measures are going to be public and posted on the web site of the MAEP. I would like to add that we are also rapidly working on preparation of IPARD site.

Mrs. Ivana Stefanović Ristin: Please clear, could "National LEADER Network" after the meeting post general information about the meeting been held?

Mr. Dragan Mirković: Dissemination of general information yes, but not discussions related to the specific sectors and topics. Once again, all materials are going to be public, posted on the site of the MAEP.

In the forthcoming minutes Mr. Mirković opened voting for the RoP.

<u>Decision No. 2</u>

RoP adopted by consensus

In relation of item 6 of the Agenda- Presentation of the IPARD II programme 2014-2020

Mr. Dragan Mirković stated even though most of the participants are familiar with IPARD II programme of the Republic of Serbia, it is crucial to understand the methodology, to connect and achieve close and active cooperation, which is very important when it comes to development of new measures and overlapping in the financing.

Mr. Mirković briefly presented legal, strategic and political framework of agricultural policy in Serbia. The Strategy of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Republic of Serbia 2014-2024 defines strategic goals, while National Programme for Agriculture (hereinafter: NPA) and National Programme for Rural Development (hereinafter: NPRD) are prepared in order to elaborate in detail strategic goals and measures that will provide their achievement. Mr. Mirković pointed out that all measures, included in the national programmes, are prepared in line with EU frame. In addition, Sector for Rural Development of MAEP (hereinafter: SRD) has developed IPARD programme as well. Beside the expected financial effect, the purpose of IPARD programme is to prepare the country for the EU accession. IPARD programme should contribute to improvement of competitiveness and achievement of the EU standards, while NPRD is oriented to small producers.

Furthermore, SRD was intensively working on local programs for agriculture and rural development and implementation reports, in cooperation with Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities. Measures supported by local authorities were not coherent, often changed

depending on local needs and some of them were without effects. In regards to IPARD the goal was to create clear, transparent system in order to avoid double funding. When it comes to complementarities between National, local programmes and IPARD II programme, Mr. Mirković underlined that in the future period, and after accession the aim is to have only one programme for rural development. Preparation of the programme should start in 2018 as foreseen by the Action Plan.

In forthcoming minutes Mr. Mirković explained potential barriers in absorptions of IPARD funds. The first obstacle is related to administrative capacity. To overcome this potential problem, on the basis of previous audits missions, Action Plan was developed. The second obstacle refers to National and EU standards. For full implementation it is necessary to have sufficient capacities and fulfill technical conditions.

Furthermore, before the first calls are launched it is necessary to find solution for pre-financing of the investments by recipients. In communication with commercial banks we are trying to inform them about eligibility criteria and potential recipients. Problems are related to very strict rules and procedures when it comes to risk assessment. Therefore, priority is to develop credit lines suitable for potential recipients of IPARD in cooperation with international financial organizations, such as EIB. It is crucial to avoid high interest rates, a poor capital assessment and alignment of potential IPARD recipients in the very risky group.

Last but not the least, transfer of knowledge; in the previous period SRD was working on involvement of Advisory services, Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities and local self-governments with the purpose of undertaking the information role. Also, as it was mentioned, associations as members of MC will be included in the process of collection/dissemination of information from/in the field.

Furthermore, Mr. Mirković presented overview of the IPARD structure, measures of IPARD II programme and specific eligibility criteria, aid intensity and EU contribution as well as ineligible costs.

In relation of item 7 of the Agenda- IPARD II programme – State of play

Mr. Dušan Brajković, Assistant Minister, National Fund, Ministry of Finance, presented legal framework for functioning of the system for management of the instrument of pre-accession assistance for rural development and stated that all agreements and legal documents with the EC are adopted, while inter-institutional agreements are to be signed in the forthcoming period.

Mr. Brajković stressed that the greatest significance of the IPARD program is reflected in the fact that the IPARD is the only programme visible on the level of recipients. In the previous period active cooperation between internal institutions within the IPARD structure took place. As a result of work in December 2015 request for entrustment of budgetary implementation task (accreditation package) was sent to the EC. Thus, one of the preconditions for opening of

Chapter 11 in negotiation process is fulfilled. Further steps are related to the EC audit, announced in May 2016, and hopefully the positive results are going to be achieved as well as finalization of the accreditation process.

Mr. Žarko Radat, Director of the Directorate for Agrarian Payments (hereinafter: DAP), IA, MAEP, briefly introduced the participants with state of play in the IA, the prospects and plans for launching the first call for proposals. Regarding legal background, in November 2015 DAP was officially appointed as the IA. When it comes to administrative capacities, Mr. Radat explained that the current number of staff is 64 engaged as permanent staff and 35 persons short-term contracted. Furthermore, Ministry of Finance approved additional employment of 103 persons. Employment will be conducted in two phases, in the first 43 ppl and in the second 60 ppl. Consequently, one of the findings of external audit, insufficient number of employees, was recognized as a serious obstacle and will be thus overcome.

Mr. Radat stressed that IA has conducted self-assessment process in March 2015, and that the process of external audit was carried out in the last quarter of the same year. Thus, accreditation package was submitted by NAO to the EC in December 2015 and audit mission form Brussels is announced in May 2016. Mr. Radat pointed out that intention is to launch the first calls for proposals after accreditation of IPARD structure which is expected in the third quarter of this year.

Internal procedures of the IA, as a part of the accreditation package are developed in a way that enables delegation of duties between sectors without any overlapping and in line with agreements. The IA is working on setting up of an efficient system, without any barriers, in order to achieve the common interest.

Mr. Slobodan Živanović, Head of the Group for Rural Development Planning, MAEP, presented MA procedures related to programming, amendments to the programme, calls for proposals and List of eligible expenditure.

Mr. Živanović explained that changes of the IPARD programme could be based on the results of monitoring and evaluation process, recommendations of the EC, MA, IA and MC, Annual Implementation Report, changes in national legislation, etc.

Second programming procedure that was presented refers to the Plan of calls for proposal. Mr. Živanović underlined that Group for programming within SRD have to prepare the Plan until 1st December and submit it to the EC and IA for approval. The plan should include timeframe as well as budget per measure.

Third procedure is related to the List of eligible expenditure, which is currently in the phase of consultation with the EC, and will be available soon.

In forthcoming minutes, Mr. Živanović presented NPRD 2015-2020, measures, potential recipients and demarcation criteria between NPRD and IPARD II programme.

As he stated, few measures supported through NPRD are also supported through IPARD programme, like investments in the physical assets of agricultural holdings. Demarcation is provided through different eligibility criteria. Furthermore, some of investments that are ineligible for IPARD programme, such as purchase of live animals, are allowed in the NPRD. Additionally, sectors that are excluded from IPARD programme are supported in national, e.g. eggs, beekeeping and aquaculture.

Diversification of the rural economy is supported in both programmes with different sub measures. IPARD programme supports rural turizam, while NPRD supports traditional crafts, improvement of competitiveness of the processing sector, etc.

Rural infrastructure, as rural development measure, is within the competence of the Directorate for Agricultural land of MAEP.

Creation and transfer of knowledge have two instruments that refer to development of advisory service work and implementation of different projects.

NPRD also includes agri-environment-climate measure, development of forestry in rural areas, preparation of local rural development strategies - Partnerships for Territorial Rural Development (LEADER approach), risk management - insurance of crops, fruits and animals.

Mr. Živanović underlined that a big difference in comparison to the previous national programme is that risk management is now presented as rural development measure and included in NPRD.

In relation of item 8 of the Agenda- Information on controls (IA/ AA)

Ms. Tatjana Pavlović, Internal auditor, DAP/ IA, MAEP, explained self- assessment process of IA, conducted from March to Jun 2015, as well as external audit conducted from September to December 2015. The most important issues as well as actions to be undertaken by IA are:

- Reaching ISO 27002 Standard,
- Number of employees for accreditation,
- Establishment of legal framework for implementation of IPARD II programme,
- Cooperation with technical bodies,
- Establishment of an appropriate system for controllability and verifiability of investment costs.

Mr. Slobodan Karanović, Director of AA presented institutional framework. AA was established in 2011 as a Governmental office, not as a separate institution. Problems that have arisen at the beginning refer to administrative capacities, only 5 employees at that time, and legal framework that was not in accordance with the framework of EU. As a consequence, EC

suspended IPA – TAIB National Programme 2013. Today, when it comes to administrative capacities, AA employs 17 well trained auditors. Working load analyses (hereinafter: WLA) shows the request number of 200 working days for IPARD for 2016 or 5 auditors, 600 working days for 2017 and 600 working days for 2018. Furthermore, Mr. Karanović announced audit of IPARD system in 2016.

AA will, hopefully in September 2016, have new legal form and required organization.

Discussion

Mr. Gerard Kiely: Question for the IA. Currently you have 64 permanent employees and 34 casually. Hopefully, in the forthcoming period you will have additional 43 employees, how that put you in the terms of WLA?

Mrs. Tatjana Pavlović: WLA for 2015 shows that 200 employees are necessary in the IA. Analysis of work load is done per call, not per year. In the forthcoming period we are planning to develop WLA per year with all horizontal issues, such as Risk management, included.

Mr. Gerard Kiely: Do you plan to keep 35 short-term contracted as a part of permanent staff?

Mrs. Tatjana Pavlović: They will have opportunity to apply, and if I may say they are in advantage due to the fact that they have required knowledge and experience.

Ms. Dana Repede, IPARD Program Manager for the Republic of Serbia, DG AGRI: My question refers to the Protocols that you are mentioning in every Progress Report. In July 2015 you stated that they are ready to be signed. Considering the fact that it didn't happen, my question is what are the bottlenecks?

Ms. Jelena Mitevski, Harmonization of Management and Control System under IPA, Department for EU funds Management, Ministry of Finance: The Protocol with the Treasury is signed (November 18, 2015), another one with the National Bank of Serbia (hereinafter: NBS) is prepared and ready to be signed. There are some open issues that refer to interest rate and other fees. Currently, we are negotiating with NBS. After closure of the negotiation process we are planning to open NBS account for all programmes, including IPARD.

Ms. Dana Repede: That is compulsory for the entrustment and for the audit mission planned in May 2016.

Ms. Jelena Mitevski: We are aware that there is one Protocol left to be signed. Hopefully, it will be signed soon as possible.

Mr. Gerard Kiely: As I understood there are some difficulties between MA and IA regarding Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter: MoU). Furthermore, at the beginning of the meeting you mentioned MoU with delegated bodies, which is very urgent. For example, when it comes to the measure diversification (agri- tourism) delegated body is outside of the Ministry, it

is very important that they are on board. The problem in the other countries was planning commission and issuance of the permissions from the local authorities, due to the fact that they don't understand the need, and again they are outside of the Ministry. Please inform us about the situation in Serbia, because that can be a huge gap.

Mr Mirković: Regarding legal frame it is important to find solution in the case of appeal, due to the fact that MA and IA are part of the same institution. In that view we have initiated certain actions. In order to find solution and avoid possible gap we have to discuss this issue on the level of the Ministry and Sector for legal affairs of DAP/ IA.

When it comes to the technical bodies, especially Directorates within the Ministry, in the past two years we discussed this issue. It is very sensitive topic, particularly when it comes to animal products, taking into consideration very strict requirements and standards. Several times we had a meetings regarding issuing of documents which prove that recipients have fulfil the standards.

As in most of the cases technical bodies are under the authority of regional and local inspectorates, transfer of knowledge regarding documents and check lists could be done easily.

Furthermore, there are few standards in jurisdiction of local authorities. We hope that there are no bottlenecks due to the fact that during the promotions of the programme we indicated the need of active communication between recipients, trough associations and organizations, and local self-governments.

Regarding touristic inspection, categorization and the fulfilment of requirements for tourism we are partially harmonized with EU, also we have tradition in rural truism, thus we don't expect any problems in that field.

Ms. Dana Repede: You don't see bottlenecks?

Mr. Mirković: Last year several times were discussed with technical bodies about MoUs. Very soon we expect finalization of all MoUs, including one between IPARD operating structure.

Mr. Kiely: Question regarding announced elections and a new Government, can the elections interfere?

Mr. Mirković: No, because Decree and by-laws, which regulates appointment of responsible institutions, SRD as MA and DAP as IA, are adopted. The elections are not going to influence the implementation of the programme due to the fact that allocation of functions and responsibilities is established and furthermore, involvement of the Minister and State Secretaries is not significantly present in the operational part of the process.

In relation of item 9 of the Agenda- Plan of visibility and communication activities (hereinafter: PVCA)

Mr. Dragan Mirković: PVCA for the IPARD II Programme is prepared in line with the IPA II legal base. The Plan will aim at: increasing the awareness of the general public about the role of EU contribution to the rural development in Serbia, ensuring transparent information on the opportunities provided by IPARD II Programme for all the target groups, making visible results achieved through the assistance provided by IPARD II.

Responsible bodies for preparation and implementation of PVCA are MA and IA. In line with the defined objectives the Plan focuses at the following target groups: potential and recipients of the IPARD II support, sector stakeholders, support services and general public.

Mr. Mirković also presented activities planned to be undertaken in 2016 as well as allocation of budget per activity. The planned activities are: preparation and distribution of printing materials, preparation of TV and radio spot, Guide for applicants for the First Call for Proposals, training materials and delivery of training for the advisory services, training of the MA and IA staff on communication and presentation skills, information events, traveling WS/seminars for target groups, web site of the IPARD II programme, publications, newspaper articles, etc.

Discussions

Ms. Dana Repede: My question is related to the project preparation. Are advisory services going to be involved in the project preparation or only in communication plan?

Mr. Dragan Mirković: Advisory services are continuously involved in our work and coordination of all activities related to the communication plan performs SRD.

Mrs. Sanja Prodanović: I would like to add that Advisory Service in the Annual programme for the previous year had two modules of trainings related to IPARD. First one was conducted in July, when IPARD programme, general and specific criteria were presented to advisers as main partners. Second module was carried out in November, in the frame of the Twinning light project, when they were introduced with application forms and business plans. Furthermore, in the forthcoming period advisers are going to be trained not only for promotion but also for preparation of documents/ applications.

Mr. Dragan Mirković: Advisory service needs are defined and included in the ToR that is sent to the Ministry of Finance thus, realization of technical assistance is expected soon. They are also included in the medium-term plan and programme of advisory services work.

In relation of item 10 of the Agenda- Technical Assistance Action Plan (hereinafter: TAAP)

Mrs. Sanja Prodanović presented TAAP and introduced participants with legal base, goals, beneficiary and aid intensity for TA measure as well as allocation of TA budget per activity.

Mrs. Sanja Prodanović explained that TA measures aims to help in the implementation and monitoring of IPARD program, as well as its subsequent changes. Beneficiary of the support from Technical Assistance measure is MA. The aid intensity, expressed as a share of public support in the eligible cost amounts up to 100%, while the rate of EU contribution is 85%.

TAAP is prepared for 2016 and the main activities are: organization of the MC meetings, support to adequate flow of information and publicity, translation and interpretation, training and visits of MA staff, evaluations of the Programme, preparation of measures in the Programme to ensure their effectiveness, including those measures whose application is foreseen at a later stage (LEADER, AE), establishment and operation of a national RD network, purchase of necessary software, hardware, specialized and office equipment, and materials, engagement of short term experts.

In relation of item 11 of the Agenda- Evaluation Plan (hereinafter: EP)

Ms. Verica Lazić, Senior adviser for evaluation of the effects of rural development measures, MAEP, has presented the EP. The objectives of the EP are to examine the progress of the IPARD II programme in relation to its goals by means of result and, where appropriate, impact indicators, improve the quality of the IPARD II programme and its implementation, examine proposals for substantial changes to the IPARD II programme, and prepare for interim and ex-post evaluation.

The actors involved in the in implementation of the Plan are: MA, MC, the Evaluation Steering Committee, the IA and independent evaluators.

Ms. Verica Lazić stated that development of the EP has taken into account any relevant recommendations of the Ex-ante evaluation of the IPARD 2014-2020. Evaluation activities will show the progress, impact, achievements, effectiveness, efficiency and importance of the IPARD II programme for the rural development in Serbia. Evaluation activities will ensure an adequate analysis of the Programme contribution to the objectives.

The priority will be given to the following activities: a review of data availability for common context indicators and assessment of weaknesses and gaps in data collection, building up evaluation capacity within the MA and IA, establishment of the Evaluation Steering Committee, barriers to absorption and administrative simplification, strengthening the advisory capacity, the assessment of the established monitoring and evaluation system in IA/ MA and further development of the system, preparation of new measures and interim evaluation of IPARD 2014 - 2020.

In forthcoming minutes Mr. Dragan Mirković open floor for voting.

Decision No. 3

PVCA adopted by consensus

Decision No. 4

TAAP adopted by consensus

Decision No. 5

EP adopted by consensus

In relation of item 12 of the Agenda

Mr. Mirković proposed November 2016 for the second meeting of the IPARD II MC. Proposal was accepted by all MC members. Agenda of the second meeting as well as all supporting documents are going to be delivered to the members of MC on time and in line with the RoP.

Discussions

Mr. Radivoj Nadlački, Association of Agricultural Producers "Vojvodina agrar": For which of the four measures, foreseen in the first phase of implementation of IPARD programme, is planned accreditation? Which measures are part of the accreditation package that is submitted? Furthermore, how do you plan to support measures if they are not accredited in this phase but also excluded from the NPRD?

Mr. Dragan Mirković: Accreditation package covers all four measures. Analyses of work load are done for all four measures in line with actual intensity, depending on available funds and other factors. Regarding second question, amendments to the national rulebooks, in order to be in line with new NPRD, are going to be done when it is certain that IPARD programme will be implemented. Goal is not to prevent use of national measures if launching of the calls of proposals for IPARD is not certain.

Mr. Radivoj Nadlački: When do you plan the public debate of National Programme for Agriculture and National Programme for Rural Development 2015-2020? As representatives of association of producers we would like to contribute to the quality of the named programmes.

Mr. Slobodan Živanović: In the previous period we had public debate regarding NPRD, and we expect to be adopted very soon. Please, send us your proposals for amendments or suggestions and we will take them into consideration in the first changes of the programme. When it comes to the NPA it is not in the jurisdiction of the SRD but Sector for Agricultural Policy of the MAEP.

Mr. Radivoj Nadlački: If the measures are accredited and call of proposals launched a huge number of applications could be expected, due to the fact that there is a great interest for mechanization. What concerns me, is the possibility that eligible recipients for IPARD, but not

for NPRD, could be left without any financial support for rural development in 2016 due to the fact that it will take time to process all the applications.

Mr. Dragan Mirković: Taking into account dynamic of controls and other procedures we expect few or no payments for this year. Thus, even potential recipient of IPARD can apply for the national measures this year. Purpose is to avoid double financing and to set up control mechanisms. As long as launching calls of proposals is not certain there will not be restrictions in this regard. Considering the dynamics of applying for the national measures it is unlikely to be any gaps in financial support.

Mr. Vojislav Malešev, Association of Agricultural Producers "Club 100P plus": In Serbia it is very common situation that within one family exist more than one agricultural holding. Do you consider them as associated or separate entities/ recipients?

Mr. Dragan Mirković: Each agricultural holding is registered in the Registrar of agricultural holdings, has its own ownership and investment. Answer is, one agricultural holding one recipient.

Mr. Žarko Radat: It was the case before, every holder can apply. Mutual trade is not permitted in order to avoid financial frauds.

Mr. Dragan Mirković: In the forthcoming period we are going to discuss about details, application forms and clear doubts in order to avoid flexible interpretation of legal acts.

III Summary of conclusions

Conclusion	Monitoring Committee	Following activities
Appointments of the members/ changes of the members	Information	Amendment to the Decision
Adoption of the Agenda	Agenda adopted by consensus	
Adoption of the RoP of the MC	RoP adopted by consensus	Procedure of signing of the RoP, acting in accordance with the procedures
IPARD II programme	Information	
IPARD II programme- State of play	Information	
Controls (IA/ AA)	Information	
PVCA	PVCA adopted by consensus	Procedure of signing of the PVCA, acting in accordance with the Plan
TAAP	TAAP adopted by consensus	Procedure of signing of the TAAP, acting in accordance with the Action Plan
EP	EP adopted by consensus	Procedure of signing of the EP, acting in accordance with the Plan

SIGNITURES:

CHAIRPERSON


 Mrs. Snežana Bogosavljević Bošković, PhD
 Minister of Agriculture and Environmental Protection



FOR THE SECRETARIAT OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEE

Prepared by:


 Ms. Tijana Mrinković, IPARD MC Secretary

Approved by:


 Deputy Chairperson
 Mr. Dragan Mirković, Head of the Managing Authority