

Cross-border region “Drina - Sava”

“Preparation for implementation of Area Based Development in the Western Balkans”

Minutes from the 9th Stakeholders' Group Meeting for "Drina-Sava" cross-border region



The project is financed by:



Nijemci, Croatia

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Minutes from the 9th Stakeholders' Group Meeting for the cross-border region of

"Drina-Sava"

20. November 2014.

Nijemci, Croatia

I. List of participants

The Ninth Stakeholders' Group Meeting for "Drina-Sava" cross-border region was attended by 30 participants, representatives of Stakeholders' Group from "Drina-Sava" region and SWG project team.

Annex1: List of participants

II. Agenda

November 20th, 2014. (Thursday)

09:00 - 09:30 Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering

09:30 – 09:45 Welcome speech

Mr. Ivica Klem, Mayor of Municipality Nijemci

09:45 – 10:30 Presentation of the results of Call for Project proposal

Mr. Aleksandar Damnjanovic, Regional Coordinator

10:30 – 11:15 Progress made regarding people to people actions –next steps

Mr. Aleksandar Damnjanovic, Regional Coordinator

11:15 - 11:45 Coffee break

11:45 - 12:15 Presentation of the project "Center for bird watching"

Ms. Dusanka Miscevic, Project Manager, Municipality Nijemci

12:15 – 12:45 Presentation of the results from Euroregia fair ,brochures ,and other events on the programme

Ms. Mirela Causevic , Technical Assistant

Mr. Nikola Niksic, vice president of the SHG "Drina-Sava"

Mr. Aleksandar Damnjanovic, Regional Coordinator

12:45 – 13:45 Discussion about next phase of ABDA programme

Ms. Irena Dzimrevska, SWG Head of Operations

13:45 - 14:00 Wrap up and Conclusions of the meeting

III. Minutes of the meeting

The 9th SHG meeting aimed at discussion about the progress made so far, as well as discussion about the future ABDA perspective.

The specific objective of the Ninth Stakeholders' Group Meeting held on 20th November in Parish center Nijemci, Nijemci Croatia was to present the results of Call for Project Proposals, progress made regarding people to people actions and next steps, to present results from participation at Fair EUREGIA 2014 in Leipzig 2014 and Brcko Trade Fair in Brcko District, as well as promotion of set of promotional material.

Topics discussed during the meeting:

1. Presentation of the results of Calls for Project proposals
2. Progress made regarding people to people actions and discussion about the next steps
3. Presentation of the results from Fair EUREGIA 2014, and other events on the programme
4. Promotion of set of promotional material
5. Discussion about future perspective of ABDA programme

1. Official opening

The meeting was opened and the participants were welcomed by Mr. Ivica Klem, Mayor of Municipality Nijemci who presented projects in which Municipality Nijemci participated.

2. Presentation of the results of Call for Project proposal

Mr. Aleksandar Damnjanovic, Regional Coordinator for "Drina-Sava" region presented the results from the Second Call of the ABDA Grant scheme which was opened in the period July 7th, 2014 - August 15th, 2014. The goals of this grant schemes were direct investments, investments for the improvement of the typical production processes, introduction of food safety and quality standards and innovations, as well as marketing and standardization for increasing competitiveness, investments for improvement of conditions of facilities and quality of services for tourists, strengthening links in a value chain of the agricultural/food/handicraft/touristic products/offer of the region, strengthening capacity and offer of tourism and services of the region and actions/investment for development of new economic activities in the region related to the value chain agriculture-food processing-tourism/ direct sales.

In total three project applications from the "Drina-Sava" cross-border region were received, worth a total budget of 51,180.99 EUR.

Following project ideas from the "Drina-Sava" region will be financed:

- Innovative small business – bigger competitiveness of the region
- Three countries–one journey
- Trail of Progress

Mr. Zlatko Fruk, Agriculture household "Vrbanja" presented the project "Innovative small business – bigger competitiveness of the region" which goal is development and improvement of existing agricultural production processes. Partners in this project are: Agriculture household "Salih Badzic" Brcko (B&H), Agriculture household "Sladjan Pasic" Sremska Mitrovica (SER) and Agriculture household "Vrbanja" Vrbanja (CRO). Total budget which will be founded from SWG is 15.043,16 EUR. Investments per partner in the project are procurement of: cultivator, mobile chipper for biomass, pasteurizer and filling machine.

Mr. Nikola Niksic, Cluster "Sv.Dimitrije" presented the project "Three countries–one journey" which goal is establishment of an integrated approach to economic development - creating a solid connection between the partners throughout the value chain. Partners in the project are: Cluster "St.Dimitrije" from Sremska Mitrovica (SER), "Vocar" doo from Brcko (B&H) and SD Nedeljka Fruk from Vrbanja (CRO). Total budget which will be founded from SWG is 17.877,50 EUR. Investments per partner in the project are procurement of fair stands, promotional material, calibrator for prunes and procurement and installation of windows and doors.

Mr. Mario Dosen, LAG Bosutski presented the project "Trail of Progress" which goal is contribution to improving the competitiveness of the local economy through improvement of production processes and quality control. Partners in this project are: Agriculture Cooperative "Brka" Brcko (B&H), Beekeepers Association of Municipality of Nijemci "Grac" Nijemci (CRO) and Agriculture household "Konak Misic", Trsic (SER). Total budget which will be founded from SWG is 18.260,33 EUR. Investments per partner in the project are procurement: equipment for chocolate coating, beekeeping equipment, equipment for the kitchen and serving food.

Appendix 2: Presentation "Call for project proposal"

2. Implementation of "People to people" actions

Mr. Aleksandar Damjanovic, Regional Coordinator and Ms. Mirela Causevic, Technical Assistant presented the activities that have been financially supported under "People to people" actions in the "Drina-Sava" region. Some of the criteria for selection of actions that were supported are: economic impacts, environmental protection, participation of the private sector, funding and the possibility of branding the region..

- **Regatta Lim-Drina-Sava 2014:** Ms. Mirela Causevic, Technical Assistant presented the kayak-canoe and paddling regatta - a manifestation with international character which gathers experienced paddlers from ten European countries. 110 paddlers visited two cross border region "Drina-Tara" and "Drina-Sava". In this way the manifestation promoted both of the regions.
- **Mini fair of local products and offers:** Tomislav Jankovic, Vice Mayor of city of Sremska Mitrovica presented the Mini Fair which was hold during the Lim-Drina-Sava regatta in Sremska Mitrovica. Local food and drinks, high quality products such as honey or cheese, traditional meals, as well as innovative souvenirs from the region were presented at the fair. These events offer an opportunity for improving links among regional producers, service providers, participants of the regatta and the stakeholders group.
- **Trade Fair Brcko 2014:** Ms. Mirela Causevic, Technical Assistant "Drina-Sava" CBR presented the Trade Fair where members of the stakeholder group participated and which offered the opportunity of promotion and sale of local food, traditional products and souvenirs from the region.
- **Hajducko vece:** Darko Masic, Director of the Tourism organization of Municipality Bogatic presented the manifestation which was hold in Bogatic on several locations. The basic idea was through this manifestation to bring the spirit of traditional life in sence of traditions of the region, cloths, gastronomy of the "Drina-Sava" region and Mačva.
- **Honey Fair:** Mr. Dejan Stalovic, member of the City Council Loznica presented the Honey Fair. Goal of this manifestation was promotion of beekeeping as an economic sector in the "Drina-Sava" region. During the fair, producers of honey were presented with beekeeping equipment, bee products, medicinal herbs and teas. During the manifestation, lectures on beekeeping were hold, and women's associations presented their products.
- **International festival of plums and fruit brandies:** Mr. Nedzib Atic, Municipality of Ugljevik presented the festival which was hold in Ugljevik. Main goal of the festival was promotion of local products, and establishment of contacts with shopping centers and hoteliers in the region in order to establish cooperation between them.
- **Srem Film Fest:** Mr. Aleksandar Damjanovic, Regional Coordinator "Drina-Sava" region presented "Srem Film Fest 2" international festival of tourism and environmental movie which was hold in Sremska Mitrovica. In total 62 movies from 35 countries and five continents are shown.

- **International Trade Fair Brcko 2014:** Ms. Mirela Causevic, Technical Assistant "Drina-Sava" CBR presented the Trade Fair Brcko 2014 which was attended by members of the stakeholder group of two CBR "Drina-Tara" and "Drina-Sava". The event offered the opportunity of promotion and sale of local food, traditional products and souvenirs from the regions.
- **"Circle of friendship - International cycling marathon in the Drina-Sava region":** Mr. Zeljko Novakovic, President of the cycling club "St.Nikolaj" presented the marathon which main goal was promotion of tourism offer of the "Drina-Sava" region, encourage economic development of the region through the use of accommodation and local products in rural areas, attending and promoting natural beauty and famous sites, introduction to the cultural and traditional values, connecting and achieving cooperation and promotion of cycling as an alternative way of transportation and recreation.

Mr. Aleksandar Damnjanovic, Regional Coordinator invited the present at the meeting to apply with their ideas for people to people actions. The possibilities for financing new proposals will be investigated.

Appendix 3: Presentation "People to people actions"

3. Presentation of the project "Center for bird watching"

Ms. Dusanka Miscevic, Manager at the project presented the project which was approved as part of the 3 Call for grants under the Regional Competitiveness Operational Programme 2007-2013, which the EU co-finances in 81,75% or 999.835,84 EUR. Goal of the project is growth and development of tourism oriented towards the development of SMEs and job creation in Municipality Nijemci and Vukovar Sylvania County. The project implementation period is 18 months. Some of the activities of the project are: construction of access roads and equipping center for bird watching, procurement of equipment, connecting roads with cycling routes, children's playground, and education, and installation of solar panels to power the luminaries.

Appendix 4: Presentation "Center for bird watching"

4. 4. Presentation of the results from Fair EUREGIA 2014 and other events on the programme

Mr. Nikola Niksic, Vice President of the stakeholder group of the "Drina-Sava" region and Ms. Mirela Causevic, Technical Assistant CBR "Drina-Sava" presented Euregia 2014 which was hold for the ninth time and provided an attractive platform for sharing knowledge and ideas for presentation of innovative ideas, concepts, research findings and best practice examples for local and regional development, as well as, provided opportunities for exploring the opportunities for establishment of cooperative ventures and new partnerships. Participation at this fair was organized by the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) within the EU funded project: "Preparation for implementation of the Area Based Development (ABD) Approach in the Western Balkans – 2nd phase", and host organization Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), commissioned by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Four cross border region participated: "Drina-Tara", "Prespa", "Sharra" and "Drina-Sava" at the Knowledge Market "Sharing experiences in cross border and transnational cooperation between South Eastern and Central Europe" organized within the Euregia 2014. The aim of the presentation on the EUREGIA 2014 Fair -Knowledge Market was an exchange of experiences in cross-border and transnational cooperation (sustainable tourism, linking tourism and regional products, regional marketing and green value chains) and discussion on cooperation potentials between the regions which are present at the event, as well as other interested representatives of other regions.

SWG representatives visited thematic stands in order to obtain new information and to establish new contacts. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) organized a study visit to Nature Park Dübener Heide where examples of good practice of LAG Dübener Heide and projects financed through LEADER were presented.

It was announced that SWG and its regions will participate at the International Tourism Fair in Belgrade in February next year.

Some of the experiences from the study tour held in November in Ireland were presented to stakeholder group

Appendix 5: Presentation on Euregia

5. Promotion of set of promotional material

Set of promotional material (General brochure, Accommodation and Restaurants, Gastronomy, Routes and Tours, Attractions) was presented to the stakeholders. The material will be distributed to the stakeholder group on the upcoming period.

4. Discussion about next phase of ABDA programme

Ms. Irena Dzimrevska, SWG Head of Operations presented achievements related to the realization of ABDA in the "Drina-Sava" region, from establishment of the Stakeholder Group. In the late 2011 the work of creation of program of economic development of the "Drina-Sava" region began, by performance of basic analysis of the region's potentials, on which a strategic framework was developed. Some of the result of the ABD activities are:

- The local partnership in the form of local structure – Stakeholder Group (SHG) is operational in the “ Drina - Tara”, “Drina - Sava”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” cross-border regions;
- Programmes for economic development through intensive cross-border cooperation in “ Drina - Tara” , “Drina - Sava”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” cross-border regions have been prepared in close cooperation with SHG and the documents are delivered to EC DG ELARG;
- Project Management Unit – Secretariats of SHG for coordination of the activities on a regional level are established in all four regions. All offices have two staff members: Regional Coordinator and Technical Assistant;

- Operational Protocols and rules and procedures for functioning of the SHG are developed and accepted by the Stakeholder Groups in both regions;
- General Communication and Publicity Strategy and Action Plan for ABDA grant scheme is developed;
- SWG Manual of Rules and Procedures is up-graded in the preparatory phase for 4-pillar assessment and accreditation.
- Set of promotional material (general promotional brochure, routes and attractions, gastronomy, accommodation and dining..) have been prepared;
- Eighteen international people to people actions for promotion of natural, cultural heritage and tradition are supported (e.g. Raspberry Day, Drina-Sava- Lim Regatta, Pet – recycling event, etc.);

Ms. Irena Dzimrevska presented the results of the ABD Grant Scheme, under which nine projects are approved in two regions ("Drina-Tara" and "Drina-Sava") , which involve 28 partners with budget allocation of 147.128,00 EUR

European Commission developed Multi-Country Indicative Strategy Paper 2014-2020 where Area Based Development Approach (ABD) and the Standing Working Group (SWG) are included.

Also letter from Commissioners Ciolosh and Fule were sent to NIPACs and Operating Structures and Contracting Authorities of IPA Cross-Border Cooperation programmes in which they pointed out that it is necessary to give priority to projects developed under the ABD approach.

Due to changes in the approach to the management of the IPA, approach towards large-scale projects or funding operations through large Financing Institutes and Facilities like World Bank, the approach to regional institutions was changed.

SWG will be operational in a future and will continue to be the platform of the Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The question is what will be the future approach towards implementation of ABDA, because currently financial resources for ABDA within IPA II are not allocated. Operational structures are established and Programming documents were sent to EC but still official feedback is not received. SWG will continue discussions with NIPAC's and EU Delegation Delegations related to possibilities of inclusion and funding of ABDA priorities identified with the Programme for economic development of "Drina-Sava", and other cross-border regions .

Instead of organizing donor conference donors will be approached directly, as suggested by Project Steering Group..

During the Agricultural Policy Forum 2014 as a platform for international dialogue on policy settings and perspectives of common interest to agricultural policy makers and stakeholders held from 15th-16th October in Kopaonik, Serbia agenda was formulated which among others recommends the following :

- To continue capacity development activities enhancing the ABD approach
- To search for alternative funding, incl. IPARD and the CBC programmes
- To establish cooperation with other regional initiatives for joint activities
- Urge the Ministries of Agriculture to include the ABD principles in national rural development policies.



Appendix 6 : Presentation Area Based Development Approach (ABDA) in the Western Balkans

All stakeholders agreed that the activities of the Stakeholder Group of "Drina-Sava" , the Project Management Unit in "Drina-Sava", as well as activities of SWG- within the ABDA programme should be continued.

Prepared by:

Mirela Causevic, Technical Assistant in the "Drina-Sava" region