

## EU Assistance in the field of Environment under IPA I

Overall, the European Union allocated more than €80 million under IPA I assistance (2007-2013) to help the country cope with environmental challenges.

### Water sector

The EU support in the water sector mainly includes infrastructures to protect the environment and all related activities: preparation of the project documentations, construction, supervision of works, capacity building at local and central level, identification of future needs and development of tariff system.

The main objective is to have clean rivers and good service provided to the citizens by improving municipal wastewater collection and treatment and reducing the negative impact on water quality, nature and health.

Infrastructure projects include rehabilitation and extension of sewerage systems and construction of waste water treatment plants (WWTPs). We are currently constructing WWTP in Prilep, Strumica, Kichevo and Radovish municipalities. We are currently extending and rehabilitating the sewerage network in Prilep, Berovo and Kumanovo. We are also providing capacity building support in the local public utilities companies in order to provide a better service to the citizens by:

- Improving the operations of water utilities through improved business planning, operations and revised tariffs ensuring efficiency, affordability and cost recovery
- Improving the capacity of water utilities to manage their businesses and to make investments in improved services
- Improved relations between consumers and service providers
- Greater accountability of water service providers through improved information management



### Air Quality

Over the past and recent period, the EU has been a strong supporting partner to the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning in the area of air quality. The air quality sector due to its complexity and horizontal effect on other sectors has been recognized as an area which requires strong assistance and EU partnership.

Some of the actions financed by the EU in this field are the following:

- 13 out of 17 monitoring stations were provided for the State Automatic Air Quality Monitoring System,
- A software for integrated air quality management system which improved the reporting and the availability of reliable air quality data;
- Web portal for following air quality in real data format;
- Programme for reduction of pollution and improvement of ambient air quality and action plan for protection of the ambient air quality for municipality of Bitola;
- Support in harmonization of national legislation with relevant EU Directives including amending the Law on Ambient Air Quality and development of several implementing legislation regarding air quality and emissions;

The current area of EU support aims to:

- Strengthen the capacities of the central and local inspectorates in performing their duties in air quality area,
- Strengthen capacities for the central environmental laboratory in the field of air quality measurements, emission measurements and chemical analyses related to air pollution, as well to
- Develop strategy for the health impact assessment of air pollution, developing a basic health impact assessment methodology and prepare plan for establishing bio-monitoring regarding air pollution in the country,
- Provide equipment for air quality management.

The assistance provided in this area aims to contribute to the improved air quality in the country in the long run.



### Waste Sector

The EU support in this area is focused on establishing integrated self-sustainable waste management system on regional level. The overall benefit of the EU assistance in this domain is to improve the quality of the daily life of the citizens through reducing the environmental pollution from the waste generation and its improper management.

Northeast and East regions are the first two regions that have expressed interest in using EU funds for improving their waste management in compliance with the EU standards in this area, and four others ( Southwest, Vardar, Skopje and Pelagonija region) eventually also become beneficiaries of the EU funds in this sector. The targeted regions are assisted in preparation of Regional waste management plans, Strategic Environmental Assessment and all necessary planning and technical documentation for developing mature investment projects for provision of priority infrastructure facilities for waste management centres and required equipment and vehicles for waste collection and transfer. The EU will also consider financing of the closure of non-compliant landfills in North-east and East regions.

