

Helpful tool for “tuning” ENV.net project: Reading of 2013 Progress Report for Serbia and Strategy by ENV.net Serbia Team

Key words

Group 1 : civil society organizations, empowered civil society, Dialogue between decision makers and stakeholders , Public awareness, public participation and consultation process

Group 2: sustainable growth, synergies between environment and economy, emissions to air /air quality , waste management , environmental governance , climate change, protected areas, water management, chemicals management, environmental impact assessment, integral pollution and prevention control (industrial emissions)

Group 3: implementation of adopted legislation, Intra- and inter-institutional cooperation, proper functioning of the core institutions, coordination of sectoral policies

Group 4: the skills gap, education and training

Civil society

“The accession process needs to be inclusive, with **strong involvement of civil society throughout.**”

“A stronger role for civil society is key, as are cross-party platforms for EU integration and further progress with electoral, parliamentary and public administration reforms.”

“**Civil society organizations** continued to play an important role in social, economic and political life, and in promoting democratic values. The sector continued to grow.”

“Civil society and citizens and particularly young people are too **often marginalized** from day to day politics. **Dialogue between decision makers and stakeholders needs to be further developed.** An **empowered civil society** is a crucial component of any democratic system.”

“The Commission will also continue to support capacity building of civil society, including the Civil Society Facility, and provide an enhanced role to civil society in the strategic programming of IPA II.”

General related issues

“The Commission started the screening of the *acquis* in September and looks forward to the first inter-governmental conference on Serbia’s accession by January 2014 at very latest, once the Council has adopted the negotiating framework.”

“It is essential that these countries intensify reforms to return to **sustainable growth...**”

“The Commission fully supports..., including the **Regional 2020 Strategy.**”¹

Regional 2020 strategy is centered on a set of development pillars, and among them is: **sustainable growth**. Sustainable growth pillar enhance **synergies between environment and economy**.

Logical flowchart of sustainable growth pillar is having 2 dimensions: resource efficiency (with sectors: energy, transport, **environment** and natural resources) and competitiveness.

Objectives and targets for sector **environment** are:

- Decrease SO₂ and PM **emissions** per unit of thermal electricity below EU IED threshold and CO₂ intensity to the (tCO₂/TPES) OECD average
- Reduce volume of **waste** to landfills to below 250 kg per capita per year
- Improve **environmental governance** by full implementation of Aarhus and LRTAP Conventions
- Adaptation to **climate change** and increase in **protected areas** (as envisaged in NATURA 2000 framework) and forestation rates over maximal rates from 1980 s.

It is noted that regional integral **water management** framework agreement should be ratified and implemented.

“**Public awareness: researchers, whistle-blowers, media and other agencies should be actively supported and their findings considered and given ample publicity**”

¹ South East Europe 2020: Jobs and prosperity in European Perspective, RCC, 2013

“The Commission underlines a number of key challenges: economic governance and competitiveness, the rule of law, the functioning of institutions guaranteeing democracy, fundamental rights, and overcoming the legacy of the past”

Among the *economic criteria* for accession are programs “in the areas of industry, competition, internal market, **research, education**, transport, energy and **environment**.”

“Looking ahead, Serbia should redouble its efforts to align with the EU acquis with particular attention to the effective **implementation of adopted legislation**. In particular, Serbia will need to intensify efforts towards alignment in the fields of **water, waste management, air quality and nature protection** and towards market opening, unbundling and cost reflective tariffs in energy sector.”

“The implementation of the **EIA Directive** needs to be improved, as regards particularly the **public consultation process**.”

“Full alignment with the **Waste** Framework Directive is yet to be achieved. New investments in the area of waste should focus more on waste separation and recycling.”

“Progress in **hazardous waste management** has been impeded by the cancellation of the previously applied system of product charges.”

“...the absence of a national **water** protection strategy.”

“The current practice of having separate water and waste permits is not in line with the requirements of the IPPC Directive. **Linkages between EIA and IPPC** need to be strengthened and their synergies exploited. Capacity at central and local level for issuing IPPC permits is insufficient. **Intra- and inter-institutional cooperation needs to be established**.”

“**The public participation** foreseen in the integrated permitting process needs to be significantly enhanced.”

“Serbia needs to re-instate a sound legal basis for **chemicals management**.”

“Regarding **climate change**, the country does not yet have a comprehensive countrywide climate policy or strategy.”

(Climate change) “**Awareness rising** at all levels and relevant initiatives need to be further intensified.”

(Climate change) “**Inter-institutional cooperation and coordination, and the capacity** in the area, need to be improved.”

“**Implementation of the existing legislation** needs to be improved and related capacity maintained.”

“Considerable efforts are required to adopt a more strategic approach for the country, align with and implement the EU climate *acquis*...”

“Environmental **radioactivity monitoring** at national level has been temporarily suspended due the lack of financial means.”

“Serbia still needs to adopt a national strategy for **radioactive waste management** and prepare an action plan for the decommissioning of its research Reactor A at Vinca. “

Institutions

“Countries aspiring to join Union need to establish and promote from an early stage the **proper functioning of the core institutions** necessary for securing the rule of law.”

“The proper functioning of core institutions is vital, whether the national parliament, the government or the public administration.”

“The countries also need to find an appropriate balance between central, regional and local government that best supports implementation of reforms and the delivery of services to citizens.”

“The government’s General Secretariat needs to be further strengthened to contribute to greater **coordination of sectoral policies** and effectiveness of policy making. Too often, sectoral ministries take policy decisions relating to EU standards in isolation.”

“The Environmental Protection Fund ceased to exist in October² and its budget and functions have not been re-established elsewhere in the administration. This has a negative impact on protection measures, particularly measures on protected fish species.”

² 2012

Other related: education, infrastructure and others

“With a view to reducing **the skills gap** and improving education systems, the Commission will continue developing the Western Balkan platform on **education and training**.”

“The gap between supply and demand of skilled workforce remains and education system continue to educate a workforce that does not necessarily correspond to the needs of economy.”

“The education strategy is ambitious but its implementation is challenge.”

“Training needs to be given more importance in professional development.”

“The reform of the vocational education profiles (VET) system, which does not match labour market needs, has yet to be fully carried out, notably regarding systemizing new pilot programs in VET schools.”

“Developing human and physical capital in rural areas and further adoption of EU standards in the agri-food sector will contribute to the competitiveness of the regional agriculture sector.”

“The informal sector is a significant challenge.”

“A strategy for Agricultural and Rural Development has yet to be adopted.”

“Public administration reform is vital, including professionalization and depolitization of the civil service.”

“Serbia continues to need significant investment to improve and upgrade its physical infrastructure, which has been neglected for many years.”