

**Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Serbia
2021 – 2027**

SCOPING REPORT

Ver.2



Zagreb, November 2021

Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.	INTERREG PROGRAMME 2021-2027	2
3.	KEY ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS RELEVANT TO THE CBC PROGRAMME	8
4.	ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT CONTENTS	12
5.	PROPOSAL OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE	13
6.	RELEVANT STRATEGIES, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES	14
7.	FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS.....	15
8.	QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPATION OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES IN SCOPING.....	19

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Explanation
EC	European Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
IPPC	Integrated Pollution and Prevention Control
MESD	Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development
MRDEUF	Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds
MS	Member State
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PO	Policy Objective
SEA	Strategic Environment Assessment
SO	Specific Objective
TF	Task Force
TL	Team Leader
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. INTRODUCTION

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a procedure carried out with the purpose to assess the likely significant effects on the environment which may arise out of implementation of a strategy, plan and programme (SPP). The objective of the procedure is to optimize the development proposed by an SPP, i.e. resolve the issues of cumulative effects, large-scale impacts, intersectoral and indirect impacts, which otherwise cannot be foreseen within the EIA procedures.

The objective of the SEA Directive (Art. 1) is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. Through SEA, the decision-maker is informed about the degree of uncertainty of likely impacts, consistency of objectives (both SPPs and environmental protection), sensitivity of the current environment and the range of available alternatives of the SPP under consideration.

The SEA procedure for the Interreg IPA CBC Programme Croatia – Serbia 2021-2027 was initiated by the adoption of the Decision on the commencement of the SEA procedure (CLASS: 910-06/21-01/1; File No. 538-10-3-1-1/433-21-5) of 11 November 2021.

Preparation of scoping report is not a formal requirement of the SEA Directive, rather it is recommended as an example of good practice, in order to inform the public in the early phase of planning on all the aspects of the environmental impact assessment to be carried out in the Environmental Report, and to take their comments into account in the appropriate manner.

The Interreg IPA CBC Programme Croatia – Serbia 2021-2027 objective is sustainable development of programme area through smart, green and socially innovative projects, as well as to encourage and support cross border cooperation to make the area more resilient to common challenges. These challenges include among others economic transition processes, climate change, and the long-term socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The key objectives and thematic concentration that are deemed most relevant and selected for the future of cross border cooperation are integrated in a strategic framework consisting of three policy objectives and 5 specific objectives, with appertaining indicators.

This scoping report shall outline the key characteristics Interreg IPA CBC Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021-2027, in light of environmental characteristics of the territory in which it shall be implemented, so as to ensure the information for decision-makers on the scope of the SEA Report. Based on this scoping report, a SEA Report shall be prepared with consideration of the significant impacts of the proposals and policies of the CBC Programme on the environment.

2. INTERREG PROGRAMME 2021-2027

The cross-border cooperation programme between Croatia and Serbia includes the eastern most part of Croatia and the north - western part of Serbia. The proposed programme area is identical to the one of the previous programming period 2014-2020 and is defined by NUTS 3 regions - counties in Croatia and Districts in Serbia. The area includes four counties in Croatia: Osječko-baranjska, Vukovarsko-srijemska, Brodsko-posavska, Požeško-slavonska and five districts in Serbia: North Bačka, West Bačka, South Bačka, Srem, and Mačva. The border counties on the Croatian side are Osijek - Baranja and Vukovar-Srijem counties, and on the Serbian side, West Bačka, South Bačka and Srem Districts. The problem settlement of not yet determined state border between Republic of Croatia and Republic of Serbia is the subject of bilateral negotiation process.

The programme area extends over 25.505 km² thus representing 18,4% of Croatian territory and 17% of Serbian territory. The northern part of the programme area borders with Hungary, while the southern Croatian and south-western part of the Serbian programme area borders with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The total population of the area is somewhere around 2,1 million people (based on estimates for the year 2019) which shows a rapid decline in population, which is more visible on the Croatian side of the programme - there is a decline in population by over 16%. When compared to the national decline in population, for the Serbian part of the programme this is more or less the same, but the Croatian side of the programme shows a significantly higher percentage than the national average. The data shows that the population number in both countries has also crossed over the symbolic line of under 7 million for Serbia, and nearly under 4 million people for Croatia. This clearly shows that the future programme should take into consideration the issue of demographic decline.

The Danube, Drava, Sava, and Tisa rivers are mostly navigable. In addition to rich agricultural soil, woodlands and fluvial-wetland plains, significant natural resources include oil and gas fields, clay, sand and gravel excavation fields, and areas of high biodiversity. The programme area contains one of the few mountains in the whole Pannonia plain: Fruška Gora (situated mostly in the Serbian part of the Programme area) and the mountain plexus of Papuk, Psunj, Krndija, Dilj and Požeška gora (Croatia). The programme area is presented in **Figure 1**.



Figure 1. Programme territory.

Based on the conclusions of the Territorial and socio-economic analysis of the Programme area and the outcomes of public consultations with the stakeholders, the following POs and related SOs have been selected and developed for the Interreg Programme:

Policy Objective 1 (SMARTER EUROPE):

- SO 1.1 Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

Policy Objective 2 (GREENER EUROPE):

- SO 2.2 Promoting renewable energy in accordance with Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/200119, including the sustainability criteria set out therein
- SO 2.4 Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system-based approaches

Policy Objective 4 (SOCIAL EUROPE):

- SO 4.5 Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family-and community-based care

**Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation
Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021 – 2027**

- SO 4.6 Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation

The overall strategic framework with appertaining actions and output and result s indicators are shown in the **Table 1**. The financial allocations appertaining to each programme priority represent a preliminary proposal only and are subject to change. They are used herein as potential indication of intensity of investment, i.e. intensity of likely impacts of a priority.

Table 1. Proposed list of output and results indicators per each programme priority/specific objective.

Programme Priority and financial allocation (%)	Specific objective - as per Regulation	Types of Actions	Output and results indicators
<p>PA1 – Cooperating for smarter programme area</p> <p>Financial allocation - 18%</p>	<p>SO 1.1 - Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting pilot lines, early product validation, certification, advanced manufacturing capabilities and technology transfer, including via science – business collaboration. Strengthening and modernising business support services (including small scale infrastructure) that could help with: trainings; marketing; developing and or implementing new services/products; using ICT and new technologies; implementing innovative solutions in business organisation and processes (blockchain, big data, cloud computing, Internet of Things, advanced manufacturing, robotics, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, etc.). Accelerating innovation and technology transfer (e.g., bio, green and circular economy, agriculture, food production, smart manufacturing, cultural and creative industries, skills development for smart specialization, and future digital technologies, etc.). 	<p>RCO 84 - Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects</p> <p>RCO 85 - Participations in joint training schemes</p> <p>RCO 87 - Organisations cooperating across borders</p> <p>RCR 104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations</p> <p>RCR 81 - Completions of joint training schemes</p> <p>RCR 84 - Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion</p>
<p>PA2 - Cooperating for greener and climate change resilient programme area</p> <p>Financial allocation - 40%</p>	<p>SO 2.2 - promoting renewable energy in accordance with Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/200119, including the sustainability criteria set out therein</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Development of joint solutions to increase the production of additional capacity for renewable energy (e.g. wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, etc.) Development and implementation of joint pilot actions that improve the integration of sustainable renewable energy sources in different sectors (e.g. building and construction sector, industry, agriculture, forestry etc.). Joint solutions, research and pilot actions on RES (e.g. circular solutions, use and reuse of sustainable materials), and raising awareness of general public. 	<p>RCO 84 - Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects</p> <p>RCO 116 - Jointly developed solutions</p> <p>RCR 104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations</p>

Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021 – 2027

	<p>SO 2.4 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development and introduction of joint solutions and systems for monitoring, prevention and management of potential risks (e.g. floods, wildfires, landslides, droughts, etc.). 2. Encouraging intersectoral/interstate cooperation in risk prevention and rapid response management through development and implementation of joint protocols, procedures, approaches and measures, such as infrastructure, response vehicles, equipment, shelters, etc. 3. Strengthening of institutional and expert capacities and raising awareness to address environmental issues, climate change and disaster risks reduction (e.g. workshops, methodologies, protocols, educational materials, joint training for civil protection units). 4. Development of cross-border risk assessment and disaster risk strategies for cross-border hazards such as droughts, floods, landslides, fires. 	<p>RCO 83 - Strategies and action plans jointly developed RCO 84 - Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects RCO 116 - Jointly developed solutions RCR 79 - Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations RCR 104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations</p>
<p>PA3 - Cooperating for healthier and more inclusive programme area</p> <p>Financial allocation - 17%</p>	<p>SO 4.5 - Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family-and community based care</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development and implementation of ICT solutions and (pilot) actions to support digitalization in health and social care. 2. Joint investments (including small scale infrastructure) and improving of health care and long-term care for vulnerable groups, with focus on children, elderly and disabled persons. 3. Cooperation activities to enhance resilience and effectiveness of health care service provision (e.g. high tech equipment for telemedicine, diagnostics, etc.). 4. Transfer of knowledge in the region through exchange of experience, awareness raising, and knowledge and capacity building through online and in-situ trainings in order to improve skills in the field of health care and social care (including primary care and family- and community-based care). 	<p>RCO 116 Jointly developed solutions RCO 85 - Participations in joint training schemes RCO 87 - Organisations cooperating across borders RCR 104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations RCR 81 - Completions of joint training schemes RCR 84 - Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion</p>
<p>PA4 - Cooperating for more sustainable and socially</p>	<p>SO 4.6 - Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing and implementing joint (pilot) actions to support diversification of the tourism by investing in lesser-known destinations and diverse forms of tourism (cultural, rural, agro, active tourism, etc.). 2. Developing and implementing innovative solutions, creating smart destinations, (e.g., through digitalisation, creative industries and creation of 	<p>RCO 77 - Number of cultural and tourism sites supported RCO 116 Jointly developed solutions RCO 115 - Public events across borders jointly organised</p>

<p>innovative tourism and culture</p> <p>Financial allocation - 15%</p>	<p>inclusion and social innovation</p>	<p>networks of stakeholders – hubs and platforms), and new services and products for specific targeted market segments (seniors, young people or people with disabilities).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Development and implementation of measures to protect, develop and promote cultural heritage and cultural services. 4. Support of social innovation in tourism and culture - development of existing or new tourism and culture businesses (emphasizing protection, development and promotion of natural heritage and eco-tourism). 	<p>RCR 77 - Visitors of cultural and tourism sites supported</p> <p>RCR 104 - Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations</p> <p>RCR 84 - Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion</p>
---	---	---	--

3. KEY ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS RELEVANT TO THE CBC PROGRAMME

The CBC Programme includes three Policy Objectives which cover four Programme priority axes corresponding to sectors of research and innovation; investments into environmental protection and risk management; enhancement of health services and sustainable tourism and culture. The Priorities have further been elaborated into specific objectives encompassing a series of actions, the greatest financial allocation (40%), i.e. the greatest impact, planning to be to actions aimed at fulfilment of specific objectives regarding renewable energy and climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention.

As a tool in identifying possibilities for priority, that is, specific objectives to generate impacts on the environmental components/topics as required by the Annex I of the SEA Directive, a preliminary assessment matrix was created as follows:

Table 2. Preliminary assessment matrix.

	Biodiversity	Soil	Water	Air	Climate and climate adaptation	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Human health	Sustainable resource management	Waste management
PA1 – Cooperating for smarter programme area; Financial allocation - 18%										
SO 1.1 - Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies										
PA2 – Cooperating for greener and climate change resilient programme area; Financial allocation - 40%										
SO 2.2 - Promoting renewable energy in accordance with Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/200119, including sustainability criteria set out therein										
SO 2.4 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches										
PA3 – Cooperating for healthier and more inclusive programme area; Financial allocation - 17%										
SO 4.5 – Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family and community-based care										
PA4 – Cooperating for more sustainable and socially innovative tourism and culture; Financial allocation - 15%										
SO 4.6 - Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation										

As it can be seen from the preliminary assessment, the specific objectives, i.e. appertaining activities which are likely to have significant impacts on the environment are as follows:

1. SO 2.2 - Promoting renewable energy in accordance with Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/200119, including the sustainability criteria set out therein

- a) Development of joint solutions to increase the production of additional capacity for renewable energy (e.g. wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, etc.)

**Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation
Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021 – 2027**

- b) Development and implementation of joint pilot actions that improve the integration of sustainable renewable energy sources in different sectors (e.g. building and construction sector, industry, agriculture, forestry etc.).
- c) Joint solutions, research and pilot actions on RES (e.g. circular solutions, use and reuse of sustainable materials), and raising awareness of general public.

2. SO 2.4 - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches

- a) Development and introduction of joint solutions and systems for monitoring, prevention and management of potential risks (e.g. floods, wildfires, landslides, droughts, etc.).
- b) Encouraging intersectoral/interstate cooperation in risk prevention and rapid response management through development and implementation of joint protocols, procedures, approaches and measures, such as infrastructure, response vehicles, equipment, shelters, etc.
- c) Strengthening of institutional and expert capacities and raising awareness to address environmental issues, climate change and disaster risks reduction (e.g. workshops, methodologies, protocols, educational materials, joint training for civil protection units).
- d) Development of cross-border risk assessment and disaster risk strategies for cross-border hazards such as droughts, floods, landslides, fires.

4. SO 4.6 - Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation

- a) Developing and implementing joint (pilot) actions to support diversification of the tourism by investing in lesser-known destinations and diverse forms of tourism (cultural, rural, agro-tourism, active tourism, health, etc.).
- b) Developing and implementing innovative solutions, creating smart destinations, (e.g., through digitalisation, creative industries and creation of networks of stakeholders – hubs and platforms), and new services and products for specific targeted market segments (seniors, young people or people with disabilities).
- c) Development and implementation of measures to protect, develop and promote cultural heritage and cultural services.
- d) Support of social innovation in tourism and culture - development of existing or new tourism and culture businesses (emphasizing protection, development and promotion of natural heritage and eco-tourism).

The positive impacts were identified in relation to the general enhancement of efficiency in resource use, direct effects of activities designed to reduce emissions, transition to green technology, and development of climate adaptation measures, primarily referring to disaster risk prevention.

**Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation
Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021 – 2027**

Likely negative impacts may be generated by implementation of RES technologies primarily on biodiversity, that is ornitofauna, bats and large carnivores, but also aquatic and terrestrial habitats due to loss of surface areas.

Even though the actual scope and more detailed characteristics of the potential interventions to be developed based on the CBC Programme are not available, by using the principle of precaution, it is proposed by this Scoping Report that the SEA Report focused on environmental factors which have been determined as of the most concern by the preliminary assessment, as follows:

- Biodiversity
- Climate and climate change
- Water
- Cultural heritage and landscape
- Human health

4. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT CONTENTS

The contents of SEA Report are specified in the Annex I to the SEA Directive, therefore the SEA Report shall comprise the said contents and any other information and requirements arising from the submitted opinions of authorities/persons defined by special regulations who participate in the scoping step (additional requirements).

The Environmental Report shall comprise the following chapters:

1. an outline of the contents, main objectives of the Programme and relationship of the Programme with other relevant strategies, plans and programmes;
2. the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and likely evolution thereof without implementation of the Programme;
3. the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
4. any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the Programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to special environmental protection legislation;
5. the environmental protection objectives established at international, Community and Member State level, which are relevant to the Programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;
6. the likely significant effects on the environment (secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative), including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;
7. the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the Programme;
8. an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;
9. a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring;
10. other information and requirements established during scoping in a separate procedure;
11. a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.

Following the results of the preliminary assessment on ecological network performed within the Appropriate Assessment procedure, the Decision was brought by the Croatian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Growth (CLASS: UP/I 612-07/21-37/259; File No.: 517-10-2-3-21-3) of 22 October 2021 that the CBC Programme is acceptable for NATURA 2000 ecological network and the Main Assessment on ecological network needs not be carried out.

5. PROPOSAL OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

This chapter presents the preliminary proposal of the contents to be analysed within the environmental baseline chapter. Having in mind the results of the preliminary analysis performed in the chapter 2 and the objective for the SEA to focus on key environmental issues, it is proposed by this Scoping Report that SEA Report focused on environmental factors which have been determined as of the most concern by the preliminary assessment, as follows:

Biodiversity

- Flora, vegetation and habitats
- Important Plant Areas (IPA)
- Map of terrestrial habitat types for the Programme area
- Map of terrestrial non-forest habitats for the Programme area
- Fauna
- Protected areas in the Programme area
- NATURA2000 sites in the Programme area

Climate and climate change

- Precipitation, wind, temperature
- Climate change
- Projection of greenhouse gas emissions per sector
- Hazards and risks of climate change in the Programme area
- Guidelines on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Water

- Hydrographic and hydrogeological characteristics of the area
- Water resources – surface watercourses, groundwater
- State of the water environment
- Managing flood risks

Cultural heritage and Landscape

- Historical overview and specificities of the area
- State of cultural heritage in the Programme area
- Types of landscape in the Programme area
- State of landscape in the Programme area

Human health

- Demographic data regarding the Programme area, population density characteristics, natural change in population, social and economic characteristics)
- Environmental vectors affecting human health (water, air, soil, noise)
- Light pollution
- Electromagnetic radiation
- Population, material and cultural goods and environmental risk assessment for the Programme

area

- Consequences of climate change significantly affecting the human health (frequency of heat waves, development of pathogens and disease transmitters, increase of injury due to floods/storms etc.).

Based on the characteristics of the current environmental aspects, special attention will be paid to those areas that will be the most significantly affected by the CBC Programme, including sensitive and vulnerable areas, protected areas, areas at risk of floods etc.

6. RELEVANT STRATEGIES, PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

This chapter gives an overview of the legislation, policies, strategies, plans and programmes which are considered for the purpose of identification of SEA environmental protection objectives, and internal compliance of the CBC Programme with them.

The relevant international legislation taken into consideration during the preparation of this preliminary scoping report includes as follows:

-
- UN Convention on Biological Diversity
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol
- Paris Agreement
- EU climate and energy package
- EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change
- European Green Deal
- EU Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)
- EU Habitat Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)
- Framework Water Directive (2000/60/EC)
- Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)
- Europa 2030 Strategy
- European Strategy for the Danube Region
- European Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region

Apart from liabilities undertaken by international treaties, the SEA Environmental Report shall consider the compliance of the CBC Programme with the relevant national strategies, plans and programmes, that is, it shall be analysed whether the objectives of the said documents have been integrated into the Interreg CBC Programme. Strategies, plans and programmes proposed to be considered are as follows:

- National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia

- National Strategy of Sustainable Development of the Republic of Serbia
- River Basin Management Plan 2016-2021 (OG 66/16)
- Sava River Basin Management Plan
- Plan for the air protection, protection of the ozone layer and climate change mitigation in the Republic of Croatia for the period 2013-2017 (NN 139/13)
- Energy Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 with an outlook to 2050 (OG 25/20)
- Energy Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia until 2025 with an outlook to 2030 (OG 101/2015)
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in the Republic of Croatia for the period to 2040 with a view to 2070 (OG 46/20)
- National strategy for the inclusion of the Republic of Serbia in the Kyoto Protocol clean development mechanism

7. FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a procedure carried out with the purpose to assess the likely significant effects on the environment which may arise out of implementation of a strategy, plan and programme (SPP). The objective of the procedure is to optimize the development proposed by an SPP, i.e. resolve the issues of cumulative effects, large-scale impacts, intersectoral and indirect impacts, which otherwise cannot be foreseen within the EIA procedures. The objective of the SEA Directive (Art. 1) is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. Through SEA, the decision-maker is informed about the degree of uncertainty of likely impacts, consistency of objectives (both SPPs and environmental protection), sensitivity of the existing environment and the range of available alternatives of the SPP under consideration.

The assessment of likely significant effects of the CBC Programme implementation shall be conducted in conformity with the best practice methodology¹. The applied methodology is generally accepted and is based on identification of impacts through analytical matrix, then comparing the activities of the Programme (in lines) to the previously established environmental protection objectives (in columns).

¹ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2012.). Resource Manual to Support Application of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment. UNITED NATIONS New York and Geneva
The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (2001.). International Workshop on Public Participation and Health Aspects in Strategic Environmental Assessment. Szentendre, Hungary.
Strategic Environmental Assessment. - Practice-Orientated Training for Policy Makers, Administration Officials, Consultants and NGO Representatives
Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment". European Commission DG Environment. Undated.
Andreas Sommer (2005.). Strategic environmental assessment: From scoping to monitoring. Content requirements and proposals for practical work. Hallein.
Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment, 2013.

Environmental protection objectives indicate the desired direction of change of state and are formed for every environmental factor in relation to local specificities and issues. They present the basis for testing the effects of the Programme on the environment, that is, it is to be concluded whether the objectives of the Programme contribute to achieving the selected environmental protection objectives or not. The objectives defined for strategic environmental assessment are derived from environmental protection documents adopted on the international level, European Union level, national and regional level, and from the overview of the environmental baseline and the environmental problems established by the experts preparing the Environmental Report. The objectives are accompanied by environmental protection indicators, that is the criteria used for monitoring the achievement of objectives and impact of the plan on the development of the environment.

The assessment of impacts shall consider the type and scope of the planned interventions in relation to the planned location of their implementation. The environmental baseline shall be used to define sensitivity of the area, and the described likely development of the environment without the implementation of the Programme, that actually represents the zero alternative, shall be used as a reference point for the assessment. The significance of the impacts shall be determined by expert opinion, based on the sensitivity of the area in dependence of the nature of the planned activities, that is, pressures, and the magnitude of change. The said process takes into account the duration, spatial scope and the intensity of the impact, where possible. The selected tool for the presentation of impacts is analytical matrix which identifies the interventions of the Programme with likely negative impacts on the environment.

Sensitivity of the receptor is a characteristic defined through 1) existing regulations and guidelines, 2) societal value (economic, social and environmental) and 3) vulnerability for the changes. It is assessed in its current state before the occurrence of any changes arising from the Programme implementation. The overall sensitivity of the receptor is established so that the highest protection and societal values are considered, which are then adapted according to the vulnerability. The Table below describes the sensitivity categories to be used in assessment.

Very high	The receptor is protected by law and is very valuable for the society and it is very likely it shall be endangered even by lesser impacts of the proposed development.
Moderate	Regulation sets recommendations or reference values for an object in the impact area, or the project may impact an area conserved by a national or an international program. The receptor has a high societal value or is protected by law, but has low vulnerability to change.
Low	Few or no recommendations which add to the conservation value of the impact area, and no regulations restricting use of the area (e.g. zoning plans).

Magnitude of change describes the characteristics of the changes likely to be caused by the Programme. Magnitude of change is a combination of 1) intensity (expressed by unit of measurement and compared to reference value) and direction of change, which may be positive (green) or negative (red), 2) spatial extent (where applicable) and 3) duration of the impact, including reversibility of change. Magnitude of change is assessed irreverently of the sensitivity of the receptor to proposed changes. In the

**Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation
Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021 – 2027**

assessment of magnitude of change, intensity should be taken as a starting point, and then adapted based on the spatial extent and duration to obtain an overall estimate. The Table below describes the magnitude of change to be used in assessment.

High	The proposal has beneficial effects of high intensity and the extent and the duration of the effects are high.
Low	An effect is positive and observable, but the change to environmental conditions or on people is small.
No impact	No change is noticeable in practice. Any benefit or harm is negligible.
Low	An effect is negative and observable, but the change to environmental conditions or on people is small.
High	The proposal has harmful effects of high intensity and the extent and the duration of the effects are high.

The Table below is used in the assessment of significance, with the positive effects marked in green, and the negative in red. Since the most relevant dimensions for characterization of impacts depend on the type of impact, discretion from the expert is required, so the decisions are accompanied with respective explanations.

Impact significance		Magnitude of change				
		High	Low	No change	Low	High
Sensitivity of the receptor	Low	Low	Low	No impact	Low	Low
	Moderate	High	Low	No impact	Low	High
	High	High	High	No impact	High	High

Regarding the likely transboundary impact of the CBC Programme implementation, the document is cross-border in both nature and scope, its aim being to have cross-border impacts. Therefore, the impacts of the activities/objectives in the SEA Report will be considered as transboundary by default, and consultations will be held in all three participating countries. The SEA Report will also analyse the likely transboundary impacts on the territories not included in the CBC Programme – so far there is no reason to assume that there will be cross-border impacts on Serbia, Slovenia or Albania.

Pursuant to the *Environmental Protection Act* (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19) of the Republic of Croatia, Appropriate Assessment is carried out for strategies, plans and programmes which individually or together with other strategies, plans and programmes have a likely negative impact on conservation objectives and integrity of the ecological site area. Pursuant to the *Nature Protection Act* (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19 and 127/19) and the *Environmental Protection Act* (OG 80/13, 15/18, 14/19, 127/19), at the request of the Managing Authority, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development brings a Decision whether the Main Assessment of the Programme is to be conducted. Following the results of the preliminary assessment on ecological network, the Decision was brought (CLASS: UP/I 612-07/21-37/259; File No.:

**Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation
Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021 – 2027**

517-10-2-3-21-3) of 22 October 2021 that the CBC Programme is acceptable for NATURA 2000 ecological network and the Main Assessment on ecological network needs not be carried out.

8. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARTICIPATION OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES IN SCOPING

In order to facilitate participation of the public concerned, the following questionnaire was prepared which is proposed to be sent to public authorities participating in the scoping phase along with the Scoping Report and the CBC Programme objectives and Programme summary. The participating bodies are asked to fill in the information regarding the existing state of environmental factors (exp. biodiversity, flora and fauna) or environmental loads (exp. waste; energy) under their competence and current problems and conflicts from their field of expertise, for the part of the programme territory under their jurisdiction. In addition, they are invited to indicate or identify likely impacts they assume the activities proposed by the CBC Programme may have on environmental factors under their competence. The questionnaire is therefore conceived as guidance through potential topics and aims at identification of existing environmental problems in the entire area under consideration, so that the focus of the assessment would remain on the key environmental issues.

GENERAL INFORMATION:	
Organization / Institution:	
Address:	
Contact person:	
Management sector:	
CURRENT STATE OF ENVIRONMENT:	(fill out for field of expertise and area under competence only)
EXISTING PROBLEMS AND LIKELY MAJOR IMPACTS:	(fill out for field of expertise and area under competence only)
Overexploitation:	
Insufficient infrastructure:	
Traffic:	
Road	
Rail	
Air	
Sea / Inland	
Energy infrastructure:	
Energy production:	
Energy transmission:	
Use of RES:	
Gas lines, oil lines, water supply, drainage (passing through the area under consideration)	
Economic activities:	
Agriculture	
Fishery	
Forestry	
Industry	

**Preparation of Strategic Environmental Assessment Report for the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation
Programme Croatia-Serbia 2021 – 2027**

Exploitation of mineral resources:	
Tourism:	
Other (If YES, add other economic activities of relevance and major impacts)	
Invasive and allochthonous species:	
Hunting / overhunting or overharvesting:	
Plant succession:	
Disappearance of traditional use of land/traditional landscapes:	
Forest fires:	
Land use change:	(if YES, define: permanent or temporary, for exp. from agricultural land to building land or forest land to agricultural land)
Illegal building:	
Impact of line infrastructure:	
Suspected hazardous area (SHA)	
Environmental contamination	
Waste / illegal dumps:	
Wastewater (waste water from settlements, agriculture...)	
Air contamination:	
Noise:	
Climate change: (list existing environmental problems or hazards which result from climate change)	
Other: (if YES, fill out)	(if YES, fill out)