



VIESOSIOS POLITIKOS IR VADYBOS INSTITUTAS
PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

**EUROPOS SĄJUNGOS STRUKTŪRINIŲ FONDŲ
PARAMOS PANAUDOJIMO POVEIKIO IR
REZULTATYVUMO APLINKOS SEKTORIUJE
VERTINIMO**

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2008 m. liepos 1 d. paslaugų teikimo sutartis Nr. SESFP8-2 tarp Lietuvos Respublikos aplinkos ministerijos ir Viešosios politikos ir vadybos instituto, veikiančio jungtinės veiklos sutarties pagrindu su Aplinkos apsaugos politikos centru

Vilnius, 2008 m. gruodžio 10 d.



The evaluation, ordered by the Ministry of Environment¹, was carried out by Public Policy and Management Institute in cooperation with its partner, Centre for Environmental Policy.

The objective of the evaluation is to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the use of support under measure 1.3 of the Single Programming Document (SPD) 2004-2006 in the environmental sector as well as the current and expected changes in this area and to present findings and recommendations regarding a more purposeful and effective use of financial support in 2007-2013.

On the basis of this objective and the evaluation tasks enumerated in the technical specifications, the following results envisaged in the specification as well as additional results were achieved:

1. The situation in the environmental sector and its changes in 2003-2008 were analyzed in the areas financed under the SPD measure 1.3:
 - drinking water supply and wastewater management;
 - management of past pollution and clean-up of polluted areas;
 - establishment and management of protected and non-protected areas;
 - strengthening of environmental monitoring, enforcement and prevention capabilities;
 - promotion of environmental awareness raising and education of the population.
2. The relevance of the SPD measure 1.3 was evaluated;
3. The efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the implementation of the SPD measure 1.3 was evaluated in all the aforesaid areas of activity;
4. Compliance of the SPD measure 1.3 with the horizontal priorities was evaluated;
5. Examples of good practice projects under the financed areas of activity were identified and described;
6. Compatibility of the measure with other SPD measures and other European Community financial instruments was evaluated.

Rationale and methods of evaluation

In order to evaluate the effectiveness and especially the impact of the SPD measure 1.3 on the basis of the classical public policy cycle model and the logical policy impact model, a special model for the assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the implementation of the environmental policy was developed. In accordance with this model, assistance relevance and efficiency first need to be evaluated in order to determine the effectiveness and impact of the implementation of measure 1.3. The outcomes and impact depend not only on the use of EU structural assistance, but also on external factors. Therefore, external factors, on which adequate use of human and financial resources (efficiency), achievement of the set objectives (effectiveness) and project impact (see table 2) depend, were identified.

The evaluation employed a mixed qualitative-quantitative method of investigation, encompassing different techniques: secondary source analysis, indicator and monitoring information analysis, financial data analysis, surveys of beneficiaries and water management companies that benefit from the project outcomes, interviews and an analysis of separate areas of activity. Due to the specificity of information activities, the effectiveness and impact of the projects aimed at raising environmental awareness and

¹ Service provision contract No SESFP8-2 of 1 July 2008 between the Ministry of Environment of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Public Policy and Management Institute, acting in accordance with an agreement on joint activities with the Centre for Environmental Policy.

environmental education are examined using a separate methodological approach covered in annex 9 of the report.

Evaluation of the environmental situation

The activity areas financed by structural funds reflect the main priorities of environmental protection, although they are related with projects of a much smaller scale, compared to the ones financed from the Cohesion Fund.

Drinking water supply and wastewater management

One of the main environmental protection goals is rational use of water resources and their protection from pollution. All drinking water in Lithuania is supplied from groundwater sources. The reserves of groundwater sources in Lithuania are rich and they should be sufficient to satisfy all future needs. However, quality water is centrally supplied to only approximately 73 per cent of the population. The situation is similar in the sphere of wastewater management: although wastewater management has been a priority in Lithuania for a long period of time and the volumes of wastewater treatment are constantly growing, only 62 per cent of household wastewater are centrally collected and treated. Moreover, the accessibility of water services differs greatly between urban and rural areas. In villages, only 30-40 per cent of the population enjoy central drinking water supply systems. The problem of wastewater sludge management persists. Particularly important is also the management of surface (i.e. rain and snow) wastewater, which received attention only in the recent years. In order to implement the environmental and health care requirements and ensure universally accessible services, institutional restructuring of the water services sector as well as major investments are required.

Soil, groundwater and surface water pollution levels

Sources of concentrated pollution of soil and groundwater are widely scattered around Lithuania. In order to reduce pollution of this type rationally and effectively, it is first of all necessary to have sufficient information about the current situation of technogenic load, the level of subsoil contamination, geological-hydrogeological conditions, their interrelations and interaction patterns. This process of evaluation is gradually gaining momentum.

The quality of surface water, reflected by the concentration of organic substances, nitrogen and phosphorus compounds in rivers, lakes, the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic coastal zone is one of the sustainable development indicators specified in the currently proposed update of the Sustainable Development Strategy. Based on the data of the Environment Protection Agency, high concentrations of nitrogen compounds in river water have been recorded primarily in agricultural districts of central, northern and south-western Lithuania. These territories are also distinguished for high concentrations of phosphorus compounds.

Major issues of the system of protected areas

The main issues of the system of protected areas in Lithuania owe to the appearance of private land property in protected areas as well as to the lack of experience of regulating the activities of private persons and institutions and insufficient institutional capacities at the administrations of protected areas. Apart from that, insufficient funding of the activities in protected areas, failure to ensure compliance with the prescribed regime of protected area protection and use, insufficient formation of recreational infrastructure in national and regional parks represent those problems that require assistance. The distribution of protected territory area by categories is another sustainable development indicator of the proposed Sustainable Development Strategy.

The system of environmental monitoring and control

The laboratory of the Environment Protection Agency, which is subordinate to the Ministry of Environment, is the main constituent of the environmental laboratories. This laboratory provides methodological guidance to eight other Environmental Protection Agency laboratories based in regional environment protection departments. The main strategic environmental protection control institution, the State Environmental Protection Inspectorate, is also directly subordinate and accountable to the Ministry of Environment. The inspectorate coordinates and oversees the activities of regional environment protection departments and state environmental protection control officers, also organizes and conducts operational, targeted and complex inspections of the activities of regional environment protection departments. These environmental system institutions face increasingly tough European Union (hereinafter referred to as "EU") requirements as regards their performance as well as a growing number of controlled objects and performed functions. However, their facilities are not always sufficient to achieve high-quality results.

Public awareness of environmental issues

The level of public awareness of environmental issues is rather low in Lithuania. An Eurobarometer survey² in 2008 ranked Lithuanians as the least informed in Europe of environmental issues. Lower awareness may also mean that environmental issues are not the most important topics on Lithuania's public agenda. In addition, the position of environmental organizations is rather weak in Lithuania. An important change in the activities of non-governmental environment protection organizations was a decrease in the support received from international donors – the United Nations Development Programme terminated such support to these organizations after Lithuania joined the EU. Meanwhile, a comparable national funding source has not been created, and the said source has been replaced by structural funds' assistance.

Relevance evaluation

Relevance in this evaluation is defined as compliance of the measure objectives and tasks set in the programming documents with the strategic Lithuanian and EU documents, also their clarity and practicability. Relevance evaluation also covers assessment of the measure's selection criteria.

The areas of activities financed from the resources of EU structural funds reflect the main priority of environmental protection. Both in the SPD programming period and at present, the main efforts in the environment protection area are aimed at the implementation of EU legal requirements, especially in the areas of drinking water and wastewater treatment and establishment of protected areas. The objectives and tasks in all the sectors in question coincide with Lithuania's national priorities. Thus, the programming documents envisage essentially suitable objectives of the SPD measure 1.3.

Drinking water supply and wastewater management

The water supply and wastewater management sector is one of the most rigidly regulated EU environmental areas. During the SPD implementation period, the requirements of the main EU directives were transposed into national law. Support was extended to the development of water services in residential areas with less than 500 residents. In small residential areas, the availability of water supply and especially wastewater treatment services is far below standard. Moreover, the water they use is often in breach of the quality requirements. Therefore, provision of support to the

² European Commission. Attitudes of European citizens towards the environment. Special Eurobarometer issue 295. March 2008.

development of water services in minor residential areas is very justifiable. The selection criteria for projects in this sphere were in principle aimed at the assessment of project efficiency and measured project investment in the capacities to be created in a sufficiently detailed manner. However, the indicators also set certain quality criteria, for instance, as regards the permissible fluorine concentration in water or project implementation in a karst region etc.

Identification of past pollution and its areas, and their clean-up

The main strategic documents that may be regarded as a legal basis for cleaning polluted areas were also adopted towards the end of implementation of the SPD projects. During the said period, an inventory of potentially polluted areas was not performed and the priorities of cleaning the most severely polluted areas were not established. The selection criteria were formulated pursuant to the legislation then in force, with primary attention to the environmental impact of projects. However, these criteria were not completely adapted to the specific character of projects to be funded.

Establishment and management of protected and non-protected areas

The tasks set in the field of protected and non-protected area establishment and management are achievable, clearly and accurately defined and directly related to the measures funded. The most strenuous efforts in this area of activity are directed towards the implementation of the requirements imposed by the Directives on Birds and Habitats. According to the data of the European Commission, the need to establish special protection areas (SPA) for birds in Lithuania is significant compared to other European Union member states, therefore extending support to this area was very justifiable. Projects in this area were developed in accordance with the Programme for Protected Area Planning and Management, which provided a sufficient framework for planning. However, as the benefits and quality assessment criteria did not apply to this area of activity, the programme may be improved by defining the project tasks and envisaged results in a more detailed (quantitative) manner.

Reinforcement of environmental monitoring, control and prevention

The objective of the activity area of strengthening environmental monitoring, control and prevention was in agreement with the strategic documents of Lithuania and the EU. The projects were necessary to address the issues of lack of equipment and inadequate infrastructure at the institutions of the Lithuanian environment protection system, which became especially relevant due to the increasingly strict EU requirements regarding the performance of these institutions. However, the programmes, which served as the basis for project development, failed to set out the objective and tasks in sufficient detail and to express them in quantitative terms, and no comparison of the current situation and the measures to be financed was offered.

Environmental awareness raising and environmental education

The objective of the activity area of environmental awareness raising and environmental education of the Lithuanian public shows that publicity activities are understood as a public policy measure complimentary to the other measures. The main strategic document based on which support was granted to this activity area was the Programme for the Promotion of Environmental Awareness Raising and Environmental Education of the Lithuanian Population. The objective defined therein was not detailed by lower-level objectives and created an opportunity to finance a wide range of awareness raising and educational activities. Publicity activities under this programme were not coordinated with public policy instruments of a different type. The project selection criteria revealed certain thematic priorities that were not defined in programme documents, however their choice is not completely clear. Secondly, the criteria did not stimulate competition

and did not encourage project content quality, i.e. it was rather easy to prove compliance with all the selection criteria.

Evaluation of efficiency

In accordance with the standard definition of efficiency, if better results in quantitative or qualitative terms cannot be achieved using the available financial and human resources, such a measure should be deemed to be efficient. Evaluation of the SPD measure 1.3 efficiency encompasses a financial data analysis, an analysis of investment area distribution and cost efficiency, as well as an evaluation of the measure's administration system.

According to the data of a project operator survey, without the support from EU structural funds the financed projects would not have been implemented at all (67.7 per cent) or would have been implemented only partly. The continuity of their outcomes will also heavily depend on further funding from the EU or the State budget. Compared to the total share of EU structural funds' support allocated to this area and in the opinion of the employees responsible for the formation of the environmental policy, a larger share of the support could have been allotted to water and wastewater management projects. Other activity areas received the optimum amounts of assistance.

Projects with the smallest budgets were carried out within the environmental awareness raising and education activity area. Due to the relatively heavy administrative load falling on small-scale projects, limited own financial resources and insufficient experience (especially as regards public procurement organization) in implementing projects of a similar type, the implementation of projects in this activity area met with a range of difficulties. The evaluation demonstrated that in principle structural funds were not the optimum funding source for the activities of non-governmental environmental organizations. Significant implementation problems were also encountered by water and wastewater management projects. Project operators had not prepared the necessary technical documentation in advance, which resulted in project implementation delays.

Cost efficiency

Project cost efficiency could be measured only in the case of polluted area management, since projects carried out under other activity areas were either different in essence or different implementing measures were applied in them. Judging from the ratio of achieved results and project budgets, the protected area clean-up projects were cost efficient. Evaluation of measure efficiency based on the indicator cost also showed that the costs of project operators in territory clean-up were the most similar amongst each other.

Administration system efficiency

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the SPD measure 1.3 administration system revealed failure to avoid duplication of the functions of the intermediate and implementing institutions as well as involvement of the intermediate institution into the entire SPD project cycle. That predetermines a complicated multi-stage structural funds administration system, a complicated and long decision-making process, additional labour costs for both institutions as well as lengthier project administration procedures. The findings of a survey of the SPD measure 1.3 project operators clearly demonstrated the importance of an effective and simple system of EU structural support administration. Project implementation is negatively affected by the following project administration-related factors: prolonged public procurement, EU support administration complexity and instability, limited opportunities to amend projects and delays in signing a support contract. According to the data of the survey, project operators' assessment of the work of the Environmental Projects Management Agency in project administration is positive rather than negative, yet they indicate improvement of its work as one of the

most significant factors in future implementation of the environmental projects funded from EU structural assistance.

Evaluation of effectiveness

Effectiveness is defined as the degree of achievement of objectives. Therefore, the evaluation of the measure 1.3 implementation effectiveness aimed to answer the question whether the SPD measure 1.3 objectives were attained. To answer this question, a quantitative (indicator achievement) and a qualitative assessment of the achieved results was performed. On the basis of the logical model of evaluation, external factors, which may determine the measure implementation productivity, were also analyzed: the project operators' capacity to continue the funded activities as well as sufficiency and competence of the human resources, which are influenced by the general civil service stability and working conditions at the institutions of the environmental system.

Quantitative evaluation

Quantitative evaluation of effectiveness covers an analysis of the achievement of the monitoring indicators (impact, outcome and product) and a SMART analysis. If the planned indicators have been achieved, the EU structural assistance has been effective. However, the monitoring indicators must be SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, reliable and timely. Otherwise, their attainment cannot reliably attest the effectiveness of support use.

Achievement of indicators

In quantitative terms, all the objectives of the SPD measure 1.3 were in principle achieved. The most precise target indicator in the SPD was that of cleaned up polluted areas. The total average indicator achievement degree on the SPD level amounts to 473 per cent, which means that planning on the SPD level was very inaccurate or, in some cases, the interpretation of indicators changed in the course of its implementation. One of the main reasons is failure to prepare methodology or guidance on indicator calculation in the course of SPD project development and implementation. Such methodology is being prepared for the 2007-2013 period.

SMART analysis results

A SMART analysis has helped to determine certain drawbacks of indicator distribution and formation. First of all, the SPD measure 1.3 envisaged too few result and impact-level indicators related to the financed activity areas and the distribution of indicators for the measure expenditure was disproportionate. Second, certain indicators were insufficiently adjusted to the specifics of the financed projects, measured incomparable results and frequently included units of different types. That especially holds true of projects of polluted area clean-up and environmental education and awareness raising. Under the first area, the indicator failed to measure the results of all financed activities and aggregated different measuring units. For instance, hectares were used to measure the area of land territories, documentation for the clean-up of which had been prepared, as well as the area of cleaned lakes, rivers and rivulets. The indicator of implemented environmental awareness raising measures could have included created websites, seminars, circulation of published booklets etc. Third, the SPD measure 1.3 indicators also lack horizontal priority subgroups (except for employment indicators). Fourth, despite the fact that the indicator of total and additional jobs was provided for, it was not relevant for the measure 1.3 projects, i.e. the measure did not directly create jobs.

Qualitative evaluation

Qualitative evaluation of effectiveness was performed in order to determine whether or not the goals set in the programming documents were achieved, what the quality of results was and what the influence of external factors on result continuity was.

Drinking water supply and wastewater management

The granted support improved the quality of water used by several thousands of residents and improved the accessibility of water services in small residential areas, thus solving a problem that is important to small residential areas and contributing to the implementation of an objective stipulated in the SPD. Nevertheless, projects in this activity area encountered bigger implementation problems. Project operators had not prepared the necessary technical documentation in advance, which resulted in project implementation delays.

An important factor in ensuring project result continuity is the capacity of water management companies that supported project results to provide services and invest in their development. At present, the water management structure is not effective as a result of a large number of water management companies. Some companies, small ones in particular, are unable to cover all costs and to make independent investments in service development from the revenues received for the provision of water services. Secondly, result continuity will also depend on the capability of the residents to connect to the networks and to pay for the services.

Identification of past pollution and its areas, and their clean-up

Polluted territory clean-up contributed to the achievement of the SPD objective "To clean up areas suffering from pollution and to manage pollution hazards resulting from the dumping of hazardous waste in the past and to restore the natural state of nature to areas blighted by pollution". Yet, the implementation of an inventory of the country's polluted territories began only in 2008. It will determine objects posing the greatest hazards to the environment and include extensive ecogeological research. The data collected during the inventory will allow building the framework of a national strategy for the management of polluted territories. Hence, only then support to these activities can become more purposeful, although the financed projects have unquestionably contributed added value to the establishment of the condition of polluted areas. In their turn, cleaned water bodies and their environment have created the most visible results as well as a more pleasant and attractive environment and recreation sites.

Establishment and management of protected and non-protected areas

The support of structural funds to the system of protected areas served as a very valuable stimulus, since the performed work was necessary to improve the system of protected territories and to create a more favourable environment for recreation as well as preservation of biodiversity. Another important indicator reflecting the significance of the result is the fact that the public was informed about all the work. The established protected area administrations are becoming cultural centres in those locations, and that also may be regarded as a positive indirect outcome, improving the image of protected territories, which do not yet enjoy a positive reputation everywhere. However, evaluation of the funds allocated to planning document preparation raises doubts as to their sufficiency. That could have affected the quality of the documents.

Strengthening of environmental monitoring, control and prevention

Projects in the activity area of environmental monitoring, control and prevention address the specific problems faced by the laboratories and state institutions responsible for inspections and control, especially as regards inadequate infrastructure and equipment. In this activity area, projects aimed at strengthening the laboratories and facilities were carried out. At present regional laboratories are preparing for accreditation. They must be ready to perform all the research required by the National Environmental Monitoring Programme and the requirements of EU directives as well as the respective national legislation. The activities of environmental protection inspectors are gradually becoming more complicated due to the growing number of controlled areas and increasingly strict performance standards. The tools acquired using the EU structural assistance funds have improved the working conditions of inspectors and created more opportunities to ensure compliance with the new requirements. However, not all of the acquired tools were used fully.

Raising environmental awareness and environmental education

In the course of implementing the measure, the environmental awareness of the public increased. Although the number of residents well-informed about the environment, compared with other EU countries, remains rather low (35 per cent against the EU average of 50 per cent), it went up by 4 per cent during the SPD implementation period. Thus, the projects contributed to the objectives set for the measure. However, these objectives were not properly elaborated in the education and awareness raising programme. Consequently, the awareness raising and education funded under the measure became a goal in itself. Secondly, due to the relatively heavy administrative load falling on small-scale projects, limited own financial resources and insufficient experience (especially as regards organization of public procurement) in implementing projects of a similar type, the implementation of projects in this activity area met with a range of difficulties. The evaluation demonstrated that in principle structural funds were not the optimum funding source for the activities of non-governmental environmental organizations.

The continuity of the results of all the funded activity projects will depend on further funding as well as on the capability of the project operators or the beneficiaries of the achieved results to sustain the results. The continuity of the results of the projects carried out by the institutions of the environmental protection system may be affected by the problems of the generally frequent staff changes and their insufficient competence.

Impact evaluation

Impact refers to positive and negative as well as direct and indirect effects of intervention. One of the ways to evaluate impact is comparison of actual and target indicators of the impact level. However, the SPD measure 1.3 impact indicators are not sufficient to evaluate the impact for all activity areas, and therefore the impact analysis was performed using a special logical model of impact. In this assessment, the impact of the measure is divided into direct/indirect, long-term/short-term, as well as environmental, social and economic.

During the evaluation of the SPD measure 1.3 impact using the logical model, an index of the impact of every activity area funded under the measure was built (for more detail, see chapter 2.5.2 of the report). The index was derived using various sources of information (monitoring information, survey results, expert evaluation). According to this index, the most significant impact is attributed to protected area establishment and management projects as well as polluted territory management and water and

wastewater management projects of a similar size. Environmental awareness projects will have the smallest impact. A comparison of the impact index with the relative scope of support shows that the biggest relative impact is also produced by protected area projects, while the smallest – by awareness raising projects. The second position is taken by polluted territory clean-up projects, which produce a significant impact despite a comparatively small scope of assistance.

Drinking water supply and wastewater management

Drinking water and wastewater management projects have a significant environmental as well as social-economic effect. Of all the funded activities, these projects yield the greatest positive impact on households by improving the quality of water services provided to them or by increasing the availability of these services. The continuity of the results of these projects will depend on further funding because the majority of the water management companies that supported the results will be unable to invest in the maintenance and development of the built/renovated networks from their own funds.

Identification of past pollution and its areas, and their clean-up

Polluted area clean-up projects declared the biggest environmental impact of all activity areas. However, cleaned lakes and river banks also have a direct social-economic impact in the territories of related municipalities, especially on recreation development. In certain cases, structural assistance was distributed to an excessive range of works to be performed and therefore insufficient funds resulted in poor quality of conducted studies (for instance, when devising nature management plans). The continuity and impact of the projects that received support for territory clean-up feasibility studies will particularly depend on further funding.

Establishment and management of protected and non-protected areas

Protected area establishment and management projects have a direct positive impact on the preservation of biodiversity and landscape as well as on the improvement of the environment quality. They are also a direct positive influence on tourism development. That is confirmed by the constantly expanding flows of visitors. The social-economic impact also manifests itself through a more pleasant environment enjoyed by the residents. However, the continuity of project results may be influenced by frequent personnel changes at the administrations, i.e. by the general problem of civil service instability and unfavourable conditions of work. Further funding of the implementation of nature management measures is also important.

Reinforcement of environmental monitoring, control and prevention

Environmental monitoring, control and prevention projects have an indirect environmental and social-economic impact on the reduction of damage to the environment and the risk of such damage. The continuity of such projects is also influenced by further funding, frequent staff changes and, in certain cases, by their lack of competence.

Raising environmental awareness and environmental education

Awareness raising and education projects absorbed a relatively small share of funds, compared to other activities. However, they targeted important factors indirectly influencing the environmental quality, which were not affected by other activities. A long-term side effect of the support is produced on non-governmental environmental organizations, which could proceed with their activities in the course of implementing the measure. This potential is important to further environmental education of the public and awareness raising. Therefore, although the highest positive impact was not achieved due to insufficient experience of the project operators and low project quality, funding of

such projects, while improving support programming and the support granting mechanisms, remains relevant.

Evaluation of the implementation of horizontal priorities

Sustainable development

The SPD measure 1.3 is intended for the implementation of the horizontal priority of sustainable development. Therefore, it is obvious that projects declared the biggest impact in relation to this priority. A strong impact on sustainable development is linked to the environmental content of measure 1.3. According to the data of the computer information system for the management and supervision of EU structural funds and the Cohesion Fund (SFMIS), this measure made the largest contribution to the realization of the sustainable development principle of all the SPD 2004-2006 measures. The sustainable development goal set by the measure is in line with the objectives of the EU and Lithuanian strategic documents related to sustainable development. Impact on sustainable development was most frequently declared by projects of protected and non-protected area establishment and management (100 per cent of them indicated it as the main objective), while big impact was declared by drinking water and wastewater management projects (83.3 per cent) as well as by projects of identification of past pollution and its areas as well as their clean-up (82.9 per cent).

Equal opportunities

In the implementation of the horizontal priority of equal opportunities, the principle of non-violation was followed, active measures were not applied, and no specific project selection criteria or additional points were provided. In addition, the following measures were not applied: description of equal opportunities and possible applicable measures, assistance to project implementing bodies, consultations with concerned parties etc. The main contribution to equal opportunities came from projects in the activity area of protected area establishment and management, adapting the installed infrastructure for the disabled. However, attempts to ensure access to project outcomes to the disabled met with certain obstacles, primarily lack of funds and disadvantageous legal regulation.

Information society

Impact on the implementation of the horizontal priority of information society was most frequently declared by environmental awareness raising and education projects. However, evaluation of the measures applied in these projects suggests that the potential in the information society implementation projects was not utilized. The opportunities of information communication technologies were not used in an innovative or interactive way. A greater contribution could have come from the environmental monitoring and prevention reinforcement projects through control system development as well as from protected area establishment and management projects through improved accessibility of digital information at visitor centres. With respect to information society, project AIVIKS of the Environmental Protection Agency is relevant for the improvement of the information system. The project included a feasibility study on the improvement of the current system.

Regional development

Impact on regional development was mainly declared by drinking water and wastewater management projects. The financial influence of measure 1.3 on problem regions, such as the region of Ignalina nuclear power plant, was insignificant compared to other SPD priority 1 measures. It may be concluded from the evaluation of the measure's impact on Lithuania's territories (counties and municipalities) suffering from environmental problems of various intensity that in this area the activities under which the municipalities had applied brought the biggest benefits to regional development.

Summary of recommendations

1. In order to approach the target indicator of 95 per cent of the population having access to centrally supplied water services, a larger share of responsibility for the development of drinking water and wastewater management in the medium-term should be assumed by the municipalities. Secondly, funding of the 2007-2013 period projects should be coordinated with the general concept of expanding the water supply and wastewater management system.
2. Until an inventory of potentially polluted areas is performed, more attention during project selection should be devoted to the projects' social and economic impact. As the Geological Survey of Lithuania is implementing a project of polluted area inventory, it would be useful to take its intermediate results into account, while the final results should be taken into consideration when setting the priority for cleaning the most polluted territories in the next financial period.
3. In order to ensure continuity of the results of environmental monitoring, control and prevention reinforcement projects and with regard to the limited possibilities to obtain additional financing in the short term, it is necessary to use all the available funding sources efficiently. When planning the EU structural funds' assistance in the 2007-2013 period in the environmental field, synergy among separate priorities and measures should also be aimed at.
4. It is recommended to continue the funding of protected area establishment and management projects by way of planning in the 2007-2013 period and to inform the public about the achieved outcomes. This planning experience is relevant for polluted area cleaning and other projects, which will be selected by way of regional project planning in the 2007-2013 period.
5. It is recommended to improve the management of environmental awareness and education projects in the 2007-2013 period.
6. Programming documents and/or programmes should clearly define the objectives and tasks (preferably, expressed in quantitative terms) of projects funded by way of planning and specify the envisaged results, also provide better justification of the funding need by drawing a comparison between the current situation and the tools and work to be procured.
7. It is recommended to learn from the lessons of building and applying the indicators of the 2004-2006 period.
8. It is recommended to devote more attention to the promotion of all horizontal priorities by informing and consulting project implementing bodies on horizontal priority integration into projects at all the stages of project preparation, implementation and publicity activities. Examples of horizontal priority integration into projects may be presented in programming documents as well.
9. To publicize good practice of SPD measure 1.3 implementation at the conference held to present the findings of this evaluation and at other events. These success cases may also be presented on the website of the Ministry of Environment and/or the Environmental Projects Management Agency and elsewhere.
10. When developing the administration system for EU structural support to the environmental sector in 2007-2013, efforts should be made to ensure separation of the administrative functions of the Ministry of Environment and the Environmental Projects Management Agency and to avoid duplication of the functions.
11. When implementing the Operational Programme for Cohesion Promotion 2007-2013 and drafting its complement, descriptions of project funding conditions and other related documents, the Ministry of Environment is advised to cooperate with other institutions administering operational programmes and other financial support instruments and to ensure that the same investments do not receive funding under several operational programme priorities and measures as well as other financial assistance instruments.



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