

HYDRO-METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATORY - HASKOVO
BG 2003/005-632-02.01-02

Floods in the Maritsa River Basin: Risk Analysis and Evaluation, Mobilisation of Information Sources for Mitigating Flood Impact

Progress Achieved in the Implementation of Activities

1. Status of the project activities carried out in monitored period:

1.1. Overall compliance of the observed activities with the specific objectives of the project

The project had performed little activities until the time of the visit by the monitoring team.

1.2. Overall compliance with planned outputs/results

There is a substantial delay in the production of the planned outputs due to delays at operational level. The PRAG rules and procedures seem to be very requiring and the project had not made any provisions for administrative back up.

1.1. Overall compliance with the presented time schedule of the project

There will be a substantial delay in the delivery of the equipment, which is a key part of this project. There is some delay because the amendment of the budget has not been completed. This is due to the fact that some essential costs are not foreseen in the approved version of the budget, i.e. no funds are allocated for coordination and administration. It is therefore no clear who will be in charge of preparing the tender dossiers.

1.4. Compliance with the budget

Cannot be assessed at this stage. There are very few costs incurred.

1.5. Involvement of partners and direct beneficiaries from the project in the implementation of activities and especially consultation with and participation by direct beneficiaries during the preparatory activities of the project

The contacts with the partner are very good and have a long history but there have been no meetings with the Turkish counterpart in the framework of this project. A seminar had taken place the week before the visit by the monitoring team where many of the Bulgarian stakeholders took place. There is forthcoming meeting to define the control points and critical points (critical points are the places where critical situations may arise). The critical and control points will be defined with the participation of all municipalities along the basin of the Maritza river. Svilengrad is the potentially most endangered region on Bulgarian territory.

There can be therefore some difficulties with the coordination of the team, which is very dissipated. There are hydrological technicians in Svilengrad, Plovdiv and Sofia. There have been some recent changes in the staff. The former accountant of the organization had left and an external accountant will be hired for the project.

1.6. Status of sub-contracted services

- Tender handled according to PRAG rules – No, contract addendum has not been approved yet. Tender documentation has not been submitted in English language following the PRAG rules and the requirements of the IA. There can be some problems related to the origin of some goods and the specifications referring to concrete brands, because the number of producers of the required equipment is very limited.
- Compliance of sub-contracted activities with planned time-schedule – Sub-contracted activities have not started yet.
- Quality of services/works –Y/N
Comments: The quality of sub-contracted services will not be assessed at this stage since the execution of contracts has not started.
- Availability and correct keeping of all necessary documents –Y/N
General assessment of the quality of record keeping and the use of documents in the process of project management.
Little documentation had been produced under the project at the time of the visit by the monitoring team apart from the documentation exchanged with the Phare IA. This documentation was available and kept in an orderly way.

2. Have project activities been modified and what are the reasons? Major problems encountered / solutions found. Degree of flexibility displayed by the project management in revising indicators at all levels of the Logical Framework.

Project activities have not been modified but there is a substantial delay in the implementation of activities. Deviation from the original time frame may continue to accrue.

3. Outputs and results achieved in the past period

No outputs and results are achieved in the past period.

4. Availability and keeping of documentation related to the implementation of the project

The documentation is available and kept in an orderly manner. There have been some media publications; however media clippings have not been prepared.

5. Availability and utilization of the equipment, rented or bought under the project as planned

No equipment has been delivered yet.

6. Publicity EU (Compliance with the contractual obligations on publicity and visibility)

Signs prepared according to the visibility guidelines were placed both in the Meteorological Observatory in Haskovo and at the headquarters in Plovdiv. No other materials and publications have been produced by the project so far.

7. Useful experiences for future projects/good practices, lessons learned/

This aspect of the projects will be evaluated at the final stage of project implementation. It is yet too early to assess the impact of the projects and their sustainability, which are key to identifying good practices.

8. Overall assessment of the progress of the project and recommendations

Please specify recommended corrective actions related to significant changes in activities / or ineffective strategy; unsatisfactory quality of implementation; shortcomings in management or project team; please comment on any deviation with regard to the contractual obligation on publicity and visibility

8.1. Corrected previously observed shortcomings and problems

This is the first visit by the monitoring team, so no previous recommendations were given. The second monitoring visit will place special attention on whether currently given observations were taken into account.

8.2. The planned progress has been achieved

At this stage of the project the main milestones are related to the progress in delivering equipment. Little progress has been made in this respect.

8.3. Specific recommendations

- Speed up the signing of the contract addendum, especially in relation to the necessary modifications of the budget.
- Speed up the tendering procedures.
- Organize regular meetings with the Phare IA and especially the Financial Officer.

8.4. Advice provided

Advice on tendering procedures and tendering documentation and on budgetary and financial issues was provided during a follow up visit to the headquarters in Plovdiv with the participation of the Financial and Accounting Expert – Veliko Sherbanov. The follow-up visit took place on the 3rd April.