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European Civil Protection



Programme for Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Floods in the Western Balkans and Turkey – IPA FLOODS

First Steering Group Meeting

23 June 2015

Italian Civil Protection Department
Rome, Italy

Minutes of the Meeting

Purpose of the meeting: reviewing IPA FLOODS inception phase and discussing the work-plan and requirements for implementation of Programme components.

Participants: Programme Focal Points in the Beneficiaries¹, representatives from the EC Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (“DG ECHO”), the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe (“DPPI SEE”) and the International Sava River Basin Commission (“ISRBC”) and partners of the IPA FLOODS implementing Consortium.

Observers: representatives from Italian Fire-fighters Department and Civil Protection of Umbria Region (Italy).

Opening remarks: Luigi D’Angelo Italian Civil Protection Department, IPA FLOODS Programme Director and Alexander Kopke, Deputy Head of Unit, DG ECHO

- IPA FLOODS aims to build upon existing resources in the region and supports improved flood response preparedness and further approximation to the EU Floods Directive (“EUFD”) in the Beneficiaries;
- The Programme inception phase has been carried forward by the IPA FLOODS Consortium in close consultation with Beneficiaries and with the aim to ensure compliance with the relevant EU framework and regional dimension combined with measures tailored to Beneficiaries’ specific profiles;
- The Steering Group is the main internal governance body of the Programme. To this purpose, appointed Focal Points in the Beneficiaries are called to be members of the Steering Group and to ensure strategic guidance to Programme implementation, including by providing recommendations for corrective measures and monitoring Programme progress;
- The Consortium expresses highest appreciation for the commitment and the broad support provided by Beneficiaries with ensuring most effective Programme inception;
- IPA FLOODS is a key regional programme. It ensures a continuity with both previously conducted and ongoing initiatives in the region (e.g. IPA Civil Protection Cooperation Programmes phase I and II). Additionally, it’s scope is relevant to the overall risk profile in the

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

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Beneficiaries and builds upon the assistance that has been provided through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (“UCPM”) at the occasion of recent flood emergencies in the region;

- Floods are accounted to be the most devastating disasters in Europe. Flood risk management (“FRM”) is a challenging field also at EU level. To this purpose, a comprehensive policy framework has been developed with regards to the water sector in general (EU Water Framework Directive of 2001, EUFD of 2007);
- Along with progressive developments within the UCPM legislation and operations in recent years, it was understood the importance of investing to enhance the partnership with the scientific community towards evidence-based decision making in both prevention and preparedness. This is very crucial having regard to the scope of IPA FLOODS.

Regional partners: Ivana Ljubojevic, Head of DPPI SEE Secretariat and Dragan Zeljko, Deputy Secretary for Integrated RBM and Water Planning, ISRBC

- DPPI SEE has been the forum within which IPA FLOODS was discussed from the very on-set. Accordingly, the DPPI SEE and its Secretariat wish for mutual coordination with IPA FLOODS to continue and invite the Programme Consortium to further use the opportunity of the bi-annual DPPI SEE Regional Meetings to keep the DPPI SEE member countries constantly updated on the Programme progress;
- Member countries of the ISRBC are ratifying a jointly developed Protocol on Flood Protection to the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin aimed to regulate cooperation in the areas of FRM planning, flood forecasting and warning systems and mutual assistance in case of floods. In this respect, possible areas of contribution by IPA FLOODS to the activities either jointly planned in the ISRBC or in its member countries include assistance in preliminary risk assessment where not yet performed (e.g. Montenegro and parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Brcko District and Adriatic Sea basin in Republika Srpska). The commonly agreed activities of the ISRBC member countries could also benefit from experiences gained through the development of border-crossing protocols under IPA FLOODS.

IPA FLOODS scope and inception phase: Antonio Barbera, IPA FLOODS Programme Manager

- IPA FLOODS objectives and expected results are reviewed. Emphasis is given to the purpose of contributing to improve FRM capacities at national, regional and EU levels in the Beneficiaries (response preparedness and prevention) by increasing capacities to collaborate in dealing with floods and improving capabilities to deal with challenges posed by implementation of the EUFD;
- Programme components and activities in relation to Lot 1 and Lot 2 respectively are outlined along with the participatory implementation approach combined with integration of existing capacities and compliance with the relevant EU framework;
- Main activities implemented in the Programme inception phase are addressed, including inception visits and operational assessment missions in all the Beneficiaries in relation to both the establishment of multinational Civil Protection Modules (“CPMs”) for “Flood Rescue using Boats” (“FRB”) and capacity building on the EUFD including establishment of an informal EUFD-related Advisory Group in each Beneficiary), appointment of Programme Focal Points in all the Beneficiaries, development of the general description of core requirements for CPMs for FRB, discussion of technical specification for FRB equipment with Beneficiaries, in depth analysis on procurement-related aspects, base-line analysis on border-crossing and HNS arrangements in the region, survey of good practices for EUFD implementation, coordination with relevant regional initiatives and networks and communication and visibility actions.

Capacity building for flood response preparedness under IPA FLOODS Lot 1: Domen Torkar, Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief of Slovenia

- The scope, requirements and work-plan for Programme component on developing multinational CPMs for FRB are presented;

- To this purpose the concept and methodology for the development of multinational CPMs is discussed, including among other aspects envisaged arrangements for personnel organization and purpose of the Standard Operating Procedures (“SOPs”);
- A proposed combination of Beneficiaries into multinational CPMs, based on existing cross-border cooperation arrangements including in shared risk prone areas, is presented. This includes a first CPM with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia and a second CPM with Albania, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey;
- Main features of the specifications for FRB equipment discussed with the Beneficiaries are presented;
- The work-plan and tentative outline of relevant up-coming activities are presented, including working groups for development of concepts and SOPs for national teams and multinational CPMs (October 2015), requirements for trainings for operational level (April to June 2016) and management level (March or June 2016) and field-exercise in Croatia (October 2016);
- Slovenia as Consortium partner offer to host the CPMs-based working groups in October 2015. Nevertheless, as the aim is to organize as much as possible IPA FLOODS activities and events in the region, Beneficiaries are encouraged to investigate and inform the Consortium on their interest to host the working groups.

Development of border-crossing and Host Nation Support (“HNS”) protocols under IPA FLOODS Lot 1 and Lot 2 and first field-exercise under IPA FLOODS Lot 1: Igor Milic, National Protection and Rescue Directorate of Croatia

- The rationale, requirements and time-line for activities related to the development of border-crossing and HNS protocols and procedures are presented (in particular, the regional workshop to be held in December 2015 in Montenegro and the cross-border meetings in February 2016);
- Emphasis is put on the need to build upon the results achieved and the lessons learned in the area being addressed in the framework of the IPA Civil Protection Cooperation Programme phase II (i.e. national HNS table-top exercises and regional exercise) and to the aim to ensure synchronization and integration of relevant activities to be conducted under Lot 1 and Lot 2 respectively;
- Attention is put on the need to engage in activities representatives from all relevant stakeholders in the Beneficiaries, e.g. Disaster Management/Civil Protection Authorities Ministries of Interior, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Customs Authorities, etc.
- The purpose and planning process of the regional exercise to be held in Croatia in October 2016 is also discussed;
- The scope of the exercise will be to test regional cooperation by the newly established and trained multinational CPMs as well as cooperation with incoming international assistance through participation by CPMs of the same type from Participating States of the UCPM.

Capacity building and provision of support for approximation to the EUFD under IPA FLOODS Lot 1): Marco Massabò and Stefania Traverso, CIMA Research Foundation

- The scope, rationale and work-plan for activities related to capacity building for implementation of the EUFD are discussed;
- The importance of the support which is provided in each Beneficiary by the informal Advisory Group is highlighted. To this purpose, under IPA FLOODS the Advisory Group is intended as the forum where all main national agencies and institutions engaged in water management and flood risk prevention measures in the Beneficiaries meet and provide strategic guidance and recommendations to Programme implementation;
- Coordination with other relevant initiatives is addressed, including ISRBC and the WB FLOODS Project implemented under the EC DG NEAR “Gap analysis and needs assessment in the context of implementing EUFD in the Western Balkans”;

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- The main outcomes from the operational assessment phase on the overall status of implementation of the EUFD in the Beneficiaries are reviewed, including based on the results of the preparatory working session with Programme Focal Points for EUFD-related activities that has taken place on 22 June at the premises of the Italian Civil Protection Department.

Capacity building for flood response preparedness under IPA FLOODS Lot 2: Klaus Buchmüller, German Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) and Estelle Batt, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agencies (MSB)

- The main concepts and general approach to the implementation of Programme activities in relation to the development of multinational CPMs for “High Capacity Pumping” (“HCP”) and “Flood Containment” (“FC”) respectively are presented, including envisaged working groups and training programme for both operational and management staff of the established CPMs;
- Lot 2 will be implemented so as to ensure pragmatic approach towards maximizing synergies between activities for HCP and FC respectively;
- A tentative time-table of activities is presented. Detailed planning has not started yet by the Consortium and will commence soon after signature of the Grant Contract for Lot 2 (expected in July 2015).
- Beneficiaries are encouraged to provide input to the Consortium regarding the planning of activities to ensure that Beneficiaries’ needs and wishes are taken into account.

Procurement: Manila Marcuccio, Studiare Sviluppo

- The state of the art and way forward for procurement procedures for FRB equipment is outlined;
- It is informed that based on the preliminary analysis of possible lots of equipment (for rescue boats, personal protective equipment and logistic equipment) the Consortium will likely be able to apply a competitive negotiated procedure which does not imply publication and for which the Consortium may invite a short-list of at least three qualified suppliers in both the EU and the region;
- The great majority of Beneficiaries have provided their official approval on the list of proposed technical specifications for FRB equipment as initially developed by the Consortium and fine-tuned throughout conducted operational assessment missions in the region. All other Beneficiaries are warmly encouraged to provide their feedback to the Consortium as requested so as to allow timely and effective setting-up of arrangements and subsequent launch of the procurement procedure in line with the plan;
- Attention is posed on potential issues in relation to smooth donation process;
- Provided arrangements in place in each Beneficiary in relation to the donation of equipment under international projects/initiatives (including relevant tax exemptions), the hand-over of FRB equipment to all Beneficiaries shall be finalized between the end of 2015 and March 2016 at the latest, i.e. so as to allow the use of equipment during the FRB operational training programme.

Closing remarks: all participants

- Synergies between the two main IPA FLOODS components (flood response preparedness and approximation to the EUFD) shall be supported as much as possible. This is a challenge and at the same time an opportunity that the Consortium is ready to pursue in collaboration with the Beneficiaries;
- IPA FLOODS offers also an opportunity to Beneficiaries to enhance cross-sectoral coordination and inter-institutional collaboration so as to benefit from existing knowledge and capacities to the maximum extent possible. In this respect, Croatia offered the involvement of own experts to share their knowledge and experience with the recently completed process of drafting the planning documentation to meet the requirements of the EUFD;
- Areas in need of attention for tailored capacity building and technical assistance in the Beneficiaries discussed during the meeting with Programme Focal Points for EUFD-related

activities shall be further addressed and will set the basis for meetings planned with Advisory Groups in October-November 2015;

- Beneficiaries have different experiences and capacities. Programme success will also depend on to which extent measures will be tailored to Beneficiaries' specific profiles;
- Unless differently agreed by the Beneficiaries, the Consortium will plan next activities on capacity building for flood response preparedness under Lot 1 in accordance with the presented combination of Beneficiaries into multinational CPMs (i.e. CPM No. 1: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia; CPM No. 2: Albania, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey);
- There is a request from Bosnia and Herzegovina to re-assess and adjust to the extent possible the time-table of activities on capacity building for approximation to the EUFD so as to ensure a further balanced distribution between end of 2015 and 2016;
- Montenegro confirms the commitment to host Programme activities (e.g. operational trainings). Other all Beneficiaries are invited to consider the opportunity to host Programme events;
- The Programme Inception Report will be finalized by the Consortium so as to incorporate the outcomes from the First Steering Group Meeting and officially disseminated to relevant stakeholders;
- The Second IPA FLOODS Steering Group Meeting will be convened in February 2016 (venue to be defined).

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