

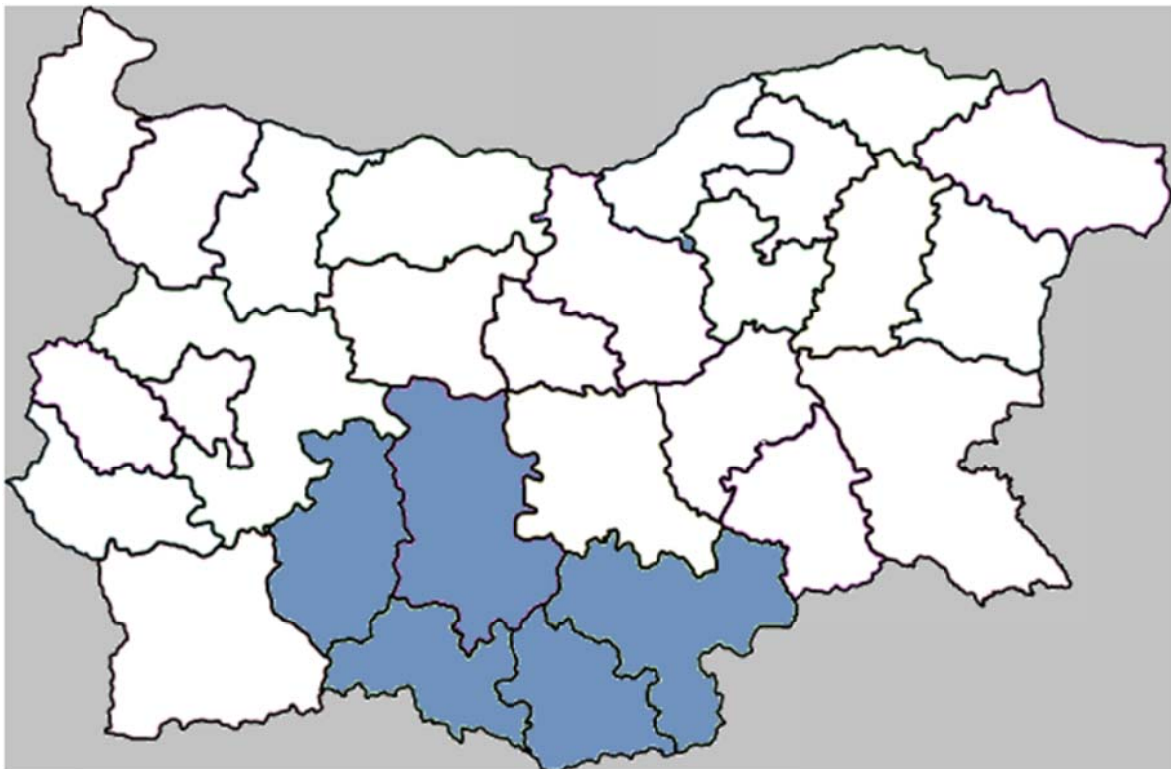
ACTION PLAN

Centre for Sustainability and Economic Growth

Policy instrument:

Regional Development Plan for South-Central Bulgaria

2014-2020



Pazardzhik, Bulgaria, July 2020

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LIST OF ACRONYMS:

GPP-STREAM:	Project “Green Public Procurement and Sustainability Tools for Resource Efficiency Mainstreaming”
GPP	Green public procurement
RES	Renewable energy sources
EE	Energy efficiency
RDP	Regional Development Plan for South-Central Region 2014-2020
CSEG	Centre for Sustainability and Economic Growth
LCC	Life-cycle costs
LCCA	Life-cycle costs analysis
PA	Public authority
SEAP	Sustainable energy action plan
SECAP	Sustainable energy and climate action plan
MRDPW	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works
ABEA	Association of Bulgarian Energy Agencies
EAP	Energy Agency of Plovdiv
REAP	Regional Energy Agency of Pazardjik
TEA	Thracian Economic Area
ICT	Information and communications technology

Chapter 1 General information

Project: Green Public Procurement and Sustainability Tools for Resource Efficiency Mainstreaming - GPP-STREAM / Index: PGI05251

Partner organisation(s) concerned: Centre for Sustainability and Economic Growth

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NUTS2 region: South Central Region of Bulgaria

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Chapter 2 Policy context

- The Action Plan aims to impact:
- ✓ Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
 - European Territorial Cooperation programme
 - ✓ Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument(s) addressed: Regional Development Plan for South-Central Region 2014-2020

Policy context and the way the action plan should contribute to improve the policy instrument:

2.1. GPP-STREAM project overview



European regions play a multiple role in the adoption of green public procurement (GPP) policies as they elaborate and adopt GPP plans, can mainstream GPP within all policy instruments that they manage, can purchase eco-innovative and resource efficient goods and services, playing thus also a significant role in the promotion of more resource efficient economies. There are still large areas for improvement in the adoption of GPP in relation to EU funded programmes and other policy instruments, in the undertaking of the tool by beneficiaries and in the monitoring of GPP implementation, hence in the evaluation and mainstreaming of its benefits. GPP toolkits, common environmental criteria, training materials and help desks have been developed throughout Europe. Limited experience is yet available on how to include environmental criteria into financing instruments and in the implementation of development strategies. GPP-STREAM project builds on the idea that interregional cooperation can help mainstreaming GPP policies within the administrations involved and ensure that resource efficiency measures are spread and benefits acknowledged.

The project aims to improve the management, implementation, and monitoring of policy instruments that integrate GPP approaches so as to ensure that resource efficiency gains can be maximized and

resource efficiency objectives are institutionalized through GPP. The project is coordinated by Region Friuli and is implemented in partnership with 8 Bulgarian, Spanish, French, Italian and Romanian bodies that have complementary environmental and GPP expertise. The expected results and outcomes are: 5 transnational learning events, at least 300 stakeholders involved, 13 GPP webinars, 5 GPP toolkits and one online platform, 8 policy instruments from 5 EU countries will integrate GPP approaches, 40 EU policy instrument managing authorities apply GPP-STREAM toolkits.

GPP-STREAM is the first project to focus on how the governance and implementation of GPP can be improved by encouraging the interaction of different policy instruments within one administration and across different government levels. The innovative character is reflected by the use of environmental criteria and the spread of green procurement practices not only in the purchases of goods and services that administrations need for the realization of their ordinary activities, but also by the use of the tool as a transversal instrument for selecting and directing development and investment measures, directly targeting the policies beneficiaries.

GPP-STREAM proposes monitoring measures that can guarantee that the effects of the inclusion of GPP into policy instruments can be measured as part of the overall GPP strategy of an administration. GPP-STREAM foresees the participation of regions with different development levels that can engage in GPP mainstreaming by adapting management and policy approaches to the different situations and stakeholders. We believe that cooperation at this level can be more effective in reducing the gaps than cooperation focusing only on the implementation of GPP tenders and criteria as it is more suitable to be adapted to different market structures.



The current Action Plan is being elaborated within the frame of Phase 1 of the GPP-STREAM project and should be implemented during Phase 2, in the period of 01.06.2020 – 31.05.2022. It is built on the outcomes of constant stakeholder meetings, best practices exchange, transnational learning events experience and highlights the needs and expectations for improvement of local policy instruments. Furthermore, it encompasses discussed ideas and activities that representatives of public institutions find necessary and useful for further development and improvement of local bylaws related to green public procurement.

The Action Plan is focused on activities that aim to assist administrations in the region of South Central Bulgaria to better appreciate and recognize the need for greening purchases of goods and services and to equip them with knowledge and experience necessary for implementing the GPP concept into local/regional programs, development plans and strategies. The aims of the activities outlined below, coincide with the aims of the project:

1. Identify, collect and share best practices and support tools for the adoption of green public procurement oriented towards resource efficiency within the responsible bodies of the policy instruments;
2. Improve the integration of GPP objectives and actions within the funding programmes and sectoral / development plans;
3. Improve the capacity of national, regional and local administrations to align their actions in order to enhance GPP implementation;
4. Improve the capacity of monitoring GPP implementation triggered by the implementation of specific policy instruments and plans;
5. Stimulate the adoption of green demand for goods and services along all phases of policy instruments' implementation, including those that are affected but not directly managed by the authorities that developed the instruments.



2.2. Policy Instrument Addressed

The Regional Development Plan of the South Central Region for 2014-2020 is the main strategic document for the integrated development of the region concerned, for the respective period. One of the financial instruments for the realization of the goals and priorities of the Regional Plan for development of the area is the

Operational Program "Regions in Growth" 2014-2020. In particular, the thematic focus of the GPP-STREAM project objectives is in line with Priority 1.3: “*Environment and climate change adaptation*”, Specific objective 7: “*Support for the transition to a low carbon economy*” of the Regional Development Plan of the South Central Region for the period 2014-2020.

The Regional Development Plan of the South Central Region 2014-2020 analyses the socio-economic and ecological state and potential of the region and presents strategic objectives for regional development. The plan complies with the national strategic framework and the regional development strategies of the main administrative units – Pazardzhik, Plovdiv, Smolyan, Haskovo and Kardzhali. It sets as its strategic objective to bring the region’s development level closer to the average EU regions’ level, by increasing the regional competitiveness through local resources, new incentives for the innovative businesses, application of new technologies, technology transfer, consultations and services. Specific Objectives 6 “Prevention of the effects of climate change” and 7 “Supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy” within Priority 1.3 “Development of infrastructure for environmental protection and adaptation to climate change” outline the measures that municipalities should uptake. The current Action Plan aims to influence with its activities directly on the following measures, envisaged in SO6 and SO7 of Priority 1.3 of the Regional Development Plan:

- Development and improvement of local energy programmes including SEAPs and SECAPs;
- Local programmes for air quality management, water and soil management;
- Improve and raise awareness among citizens on topics related to protection of environment and efficient use of resources.
- Development and implementation of projects/initiatives which aim to improve energy performance of public buildings;
- Support to projects/initiatives which aim to increase the share of RES energy.

The indispensable role that GPP can play in the achievement of these objectives is indisputable. In this regard, by clearly stating its support to GPP implementation on a local level and by involving all stakeholders to participate in the actions that will drive GPP forward, CSEG will provide advice and collaboration in the elaboration of local plans and programmes. Furthermore, by transferring all gathered knowledge and lessons from project’s meetings and visits CSEG will boost the potential for local GPP growth and development. By building on our experience within the GPP-STREAM project, in the current document, we are elaborating on several actions that will contribute to GPP uptake on

local level, thus contributing to accomplish the objectives set in the Regional development plan. Applying all lessons learnt and adopting them to the local policy context is an incentive for both stakeholders and policymakers for a successful improvement of the current political and administrative barriers facing GPP.

The Regional Development Plan of the South Central Region 2014-2020 as one of the six Level 2 development plans for 2014-2020, is an essential element in the hierarchical system of strategic planning documents for the regional development. It sets medium-term goals and priorities for sustainable integrated regional and local development on the territory of the region, taking into account its specific characteristics and development potential.

The plan was developed on the basis of an integrated approach and as a planning document by intermediate hierarchical level and coordinates between strategic documents for regional development from other territorial levels – National Regional Development Strategy, Regional Development Strategies and Municipal Development Plans. An important task of the RDP is to follow the one set out in The National Regional Development Strategy 2012-2022 (NSRF) is a common strategic one platform, while bringing it to lower territorial levels.

A leading motive in the development process of the South Central Region RDP is the new role of cohesion policy, the orientation towards meeting the goals of Europe 2020 strategy with more active involvement of the regions, and at the same time with enhanced emphasis on territorial cooperation and a results-driven and added approach value. Economic, social and territorial cohesion are considered as equal, complementary and supportive components of the unitary integrated regional development concept that excludes sectoral fragmentation.

By implementing the activities in the current Action Plan, CSEG shall influence the RDP by playing a major role in the development of local bylaws that are typical for every municipality and aim at completing the strategic goals and objectives highlighted in the regional plan. Such local bylaws are:

- Energy efficiency programs
- RES programs
- Air quality management programs
- Sustainable development plans and programs, etc.

The improvement of local policy by-laws (local programs for development and for air quality management, energy efficiency plans and programs for their implementation; local RES Programs;

environmental and clean energy issues) in order to mitigate the effect of climate change is among the main priorities of the Regional Development Plan. GPP can bring a significant added value for the implementation of these objectives. The RDP foresees a specific horizontal objective linked to sustainability. By facilitating GPP uptake, CSEG, as a local NGO, shall help the RDP's beneficiaries to achieve their objective. Environmental negative impact reduction through increased resource efficiency is a key priority in all strategical documents, including the RDP.

The Region of South Central Bulgaria has a large and unexploited RES potential and the energy saving potential in the public and household (old buildings) sectors is large. These are two opportunities for integrated sustainable regional development based on GPP policy, driving eco-innovative products and services in the regional market. The region is classified as the most polluted in terms of air, water and soil due to a large number of areas with accumulated environmental problems – Plovdiv, Kardzhali, Dimitrovgrad and Assenovgrad. Setting up and integrating GPP criteria into the local by-laws and by ERDF beneficiaries can significantly mitigate all these negative trends and will further trigger the deployment of RES and EE measures.

Environmental negative impact reduction through increased resource efficiency is a key priority in all strategical documents, including the Regional Development Plan. The Plan outlines priorities for improving the resource efficiency in the following sectors: improvement of waste management and construction of modern landfills; local programmes for air quality management, water and soil management; development and improvement of local energy programmes; improve and raise awareness among citizens on topics related to protection of environment and efficient use of resources. Despite the role that GPP can play in the achievement of these objectives, there is rare evidence of the systematic deployment of GPP at national and regional levels. The former action plan on GPP has been developed, covering the period till the end of 2014. Its main weakness was the unclear definition of product groups where the state can develop GPP. The “National Strategy for Development of the Public Procurement Sector in Bulgaria, 2014-2020” contains a specific measure to accelerate the development of GPP, but none for policy instruments managers, nor for monitoring aspects.

Another major output of the activities envisaged in this Action Plan is the increase of awareness, knowledge and expertise of public authority officers from South Central Region on topics like GPP, LCCA, and improved capabilities on how to practically include GPP criteria in their purchasing processes. This will lead to enhanced capacities of public purchasers in relation to the technical

aspects involved in the application of GPP requirements, and reduced risk of unsuccessful procedures caused by an incorrect application of GPP criteria, which eventually will lead to an increase in “green” public purchases of goods in services, i.e. the final result of the envisaged activities will lead to an increased numbers of tenders with GPP criteria awarded by the PAs from the Region.

Along with the National Strategy for the Development of Public Tenders in Bulgaria for 2014-2020, which specifies the *Public Procurement Act* as a major tool for enforcing green practices, and the Plan for its implementation, there are other strategic and long-term documents relevant to GPP, such as:

- National Development Program: Bulgaria 2020 and Plan for action;
- Operational programs for the period 2014-2020 – Transport and transport infrastructure, Environment protection, Regions in Growth, Innovation and competitiveness, Protecting environment and climate change etc.;
- Energy Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria until 2030*;
- National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2014-2020*;
- National Action Plan for Renewable Energy Sources 2010-2020*;
- Third National Climate Change Action Plan for the period 2013-2020*;
- National long-term program to promote consumption of biofuels in the transport sector 2008-2020;
- National program to reduce the total annual emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds and ammonia in ambient air;
- Integrated transport strategy until 2030;
- National Forestry Sector Development Strategy in Republic of Bulgaria 2013-2020;
- National Strategic Plan for Waste Management from construction and demolition in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2011-2020;
- National Waste Management Plan for the period 2014-2020;

* The current Action Plan envisages concrete measures and activities which will contribute for the achievement of the targets and indicators set in these strategy documents. Although the Plan targets at administrations from South Central Region of Bulgaria (58 LAs and 5 regional administrations), the regional stakeholder group includes also other public administrations like MRDPW, energy and environmental agencies, as well as a large number of stakeholders from the other sectors: business associations, civil organizations and non-governmental organizations which operate in the field of environment protection. The main objective is to provoke a large public debate on topics related to

climate change issues, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and protection of environment which will subsequently lead to the development or where existing to the improvement of detailed and customized local/regional environmental/energy programmes.

A number of other regulations related to green public procurement in Bulgaria are:

- **Energy Efficiency Act.** It introduces obligations for contracting authorities involved by purchasing products of a certain energy class or meeting energy efficiency requirements;
- **Environmental Protection Act** – for example, through upholding the principle of integration of environmental protection policies into sectoral and regional economic and public relations development policies, it presupposes the promotion of the green public procurement; introduces rules on evaluation of the environmental impact of investment proposals concerning public procurement, falling within the product groups Infrastructures for sewage and Design, Construction and Maintenance on roads.
- **Waste Management Act** – for example Art. 10, para. 6, which introduces an obligation for contracting authorities in public contracts involving the design and execution of works, to include in the conditions for the selection of a contractor and in the contracts for assigning obligations to contractors to invest in recycled building materials.
- **Innovative Strategy for Smart Specialization of Bulgaria 2014-2020:** this strategy highlights the importance to further develop the “green market” in Bulgaria and public procurement is considered as a major tool for provision of opportunities for the business to realize innovative solutions in the sectors of waste, water, energy efficiency and energy technologies.

2.3. Current situation related to GPP in Bulgaria

Currently, public tenders in Bulgaria are awarded in correspondence with the principle of the “most economically advantageous offer”. The Public Procurement Act (PPA) outlines the three types of contract award criteria: 1) the lowest price criterion; 2) level of expenditure, including cost-effectiveness and life-cycle costs; 3) the best value for money, which is estimated based on the value or the level of expenditure, as well as on indicators that include qualitative, environmental and/or social aspects related to the subject-matter of the public contract. There is a lack knowledge and experience among some administrations and procurers in relation to applying the “life-cycle cost” method. Besides, the major National Action Plan for promotion of GPP has not been updated yet,

which presents a further drawback and a challenge for green spending promotion and dissemination. In this respect, and in correspondence with targets set in the application stage of the project, CSEG shall focus on integrating the concept of green procurement into local bylaws related to energy efficiency, RES, environmental and sustainable development programmes, etc., and thus it will contribute to the goals set into the Regional Development Plan of South Central Bulgaria.

Barriers for the larger deployment of GPP in Bulgaria:

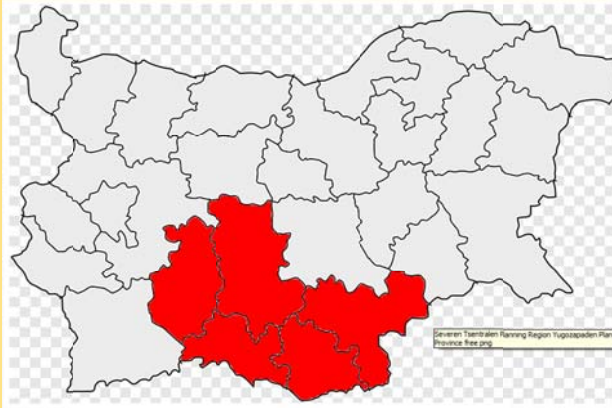
- Need to update the national strategy document presenting a clear vision and institutional support for promoting the development of the GPP. The National Action Plan for stimulation of GPP has a time horizon up to 2014 and hasn't been updated since then.
- Lack of motivation of public procurement experts to apply green criteria due to the advisable and not mandatory nature of the criteria.
- Lack of knowledge of the lifecycle cost principle and the perception of green public procurement as luxury procurement.
- Technology restrictions to implementing the green concept and slow development of the Green Public Procurement market.
- Lack of knowledge among contracting parties of the benefits of green public procurement.

In order to overcome the barriers and improve the state-of-play related to GPP, CSEG has been in constant contact with project stakeholders. They have participated in stakeholder meetings, in transnational learning events and they have pointed out the activities of the current Action Plan as a necessary means for local policy improvement. Along the project lifetime, they have pointed out obstacles and challenges that they must face, especially small and rural municipalities, and they have proved their interest and commitment to envisaged activities.

2.4. The Region of South Central Bulgaria and main Stakeholders

South-Central Region overview

Structure



South Central Region is one of the Level 2 / NUTS 2 / regions in Bulgaria, covering the territories of the administrative districts of Kardzhali, Pazardzhik, Plovdiv, Smolyan and Haskovo / NUTS 3 level /. The area includes a total of 58 municipalities:

18 municipalities in the district Plovdiv; 12 municipalities in Pazardzhik District; 7 municipalities in Kardzhali District; 10 municipalities in Smolyan district and 11 municipalities in Haskovo district. The area of the area is 22 365,1 km², accounting for 20.07% of the country's territory.

Population

The population, as of 31.12.2018 is 1 413 840 people, corresponding to 20.13% of the country's population, which ranks region on second place in Bulgaria after the South-West region. The largest province in terms of population is the district of Plovdiv – 669 065 people, and the smallest – the district of Smolyan – 106 352 people. The population density is 63.2 people / km², which is almost the same as the national average, which is 63.3%. Plovdiv District has the highest population density - 112 people / km², which is well above the national average. By general demographic indicators the South Central Region is close to the national average and the negative trends are relatively moderate.

Territory

The territorial structure of the area covers 48.6% of the agricultural land, forest – 45,2%, and only 3,8% of the area is occupied by urban areas.

Economics

There are 18 industrial zones / parks in the south-central region. Plovdiv region attracts a significant amount of investment, which also leads to the growth of

	employment. The Thracian Economic Area (TEA) unites the six industrial zones in the Plovdiv area. The TEA is being implemented over an area of 1,070 hectares.
Nature	South Central Region is among the richest in biodiversity areas in the country. It covers much of the Central Balkan National Park, part of the National Park Rila Park and the whole massif of the Rhodope Mountains. Most of the protected areas in Natura 2000 ecological network – over 44% of the country. On the territory of the region there are 11 nature reserves, 9 maintained reserves, 155 protected areas and 98 landmarks.

Key stakeholders that take part of promotion of GPP concept in the region

- **Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, DG "Strategic Planning of Regional Development and Administrative and territorial organization** - in charge of the Regional Development Plan of South Central Region.
- **The Bulgarian Public Procurement Agency** – the state authority body responsible for development and monitoring of public procurement policies including the green procurement.
- **Local authorities from South Central Region in Bulgaria** - 58 municipalities, that are the main beneficiaries of the policy addressed.
- **Regional administrations: Pazardzhik, Smolyan, Plovdiv, Kardzhali, and Haskovo** – they represent the Bulgarian Government at local/regional level. They have power to influence policy improvements at local level.
- **Energy agencies in Bulgaria** – they represent a specific sector which brings technical knowledge and know-how in regards to efficient technologies used in buildings and industrial systems.
- **NGOs, SMEs associations and civil organizations working in the field of environmental protection** – they represent a large communication and dissemination channel. They influence

on the positive perception of green technologies among local companies and citizens.

- **Other market players like suppliers of energy efficient equipment, energy auditors, suppliers of environmental-friendly products** – they bring research expertise on specific technical issues related to efficient products, equipment and clean/green technologies
- **Regional Inspectorates on Environment and Water (RIEW) in the different districts** – this is state body responsible for the appropriate implementation of the national environmental legislation at local level.
- **Chambers of commerce, professional associations, and other interested associations** – they give contribution during market consultations.

Chapter 3 Details of the actions envisaged

Produced by CSEG, this Action Plan is a document providing details on how the lessons learnt from the GPP-STREAM project cooperation will be exploited in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within our region. It specifies the nature of the actions to be implemented, their time frame, the players involved, the costs (if any) and funding sources (if any).

ACTION 1:

Organization of thematic training seminars to encourage GPP uptake among public authorities

Sub activities:

- ✓ Perform a desk-based study
- ✓ Develop a training programme aiming at capacity building among public administration authorities
- ✓ Promotion and implementation of GPP trainings
- ✓ Feedback

Relevance to the project

This action was inspired by the transnational learning events and stakeholder group meetings within the project. Specifically from the following:

- Capacity building sessions on GPP, Livia Mazzà, Fondazione Ecosistemi and Giuseppe Cane, Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia during the Kick-off meeting, 29 November 2018. Activity A6. Organization of the first Transnational Learning Event.
- European GPP-STREAM conference “Institutions for the ecological transition” (Compraverde Forum), organized on 17 October 2019 in Rome, Italy. Activity B9. Organization of an EU Project Conference hosted by the 12th edition of the international event dedicated to GPP Forum CompraVerde – BuyGreen.
- Stakeholder meeting – 4 September 2019 in Pazardzhik, Bulgaria (discussion on possible administration capacity improvement and training programmes). Activity A16. Organization of at least one policy instrument Stakeholder Group meeting.

As a result of the above mentioned activities under GPP-STREAM project, we can draw the following conclusion: yet, a lack of knowledge exists among procurers for the implementation of environmental criteria in public procurement. The specific knowledge on “green” criteria implementation is insufficient, and the same refers to the use of the method “life-cycle cost analyses” (LCCA). The contracting authorities avoid using new and innovative assessment methods like LCCA. The larger deployment of this methodology can foster the sustainable development of public procurement based on “green” criteria because it should be clearly explained and demonstrated to contracting authorities that an initial higher price in “green” purchase can often lead to a lower LCC in the long-term period and to an improved development of the local business sector.

On the other hand, public authorities must be aware that GPP helps them to achieve not only the environmental targets set in their strategy documents, but also it can provide social, economic, and political benefits. It can help stimulate a critical mass of demand for more sustainable goods and services which otherwise would be difficult to get onto the market. GPP is therefore a strong stimulus for eco-innovation.

Nature of the action

One of the main barriers and a major obstacle, that has always been pointed out as a milestone to GPP implementation is the necessity of further improvement of public-authority knowledge and

administration capacity on that matter. During transnational learning meetings, it has often been pointed out that constant training for public procurement officers seems to be a driver to GPP uptake in every country.

Lack of knowledge about environmental issues and green criteria has to be overcome and instead we should instil an interest and a focus on organization and implementation of GPP on a local level. We need to provide public authorities from South Central Region of Bulgaria with advice and information on the straightforward implementation of GPP.

Moreover, by means of regular training sessions and thematic seminars CSEG will highlight the following key finding from the work-sessions during GPP-STREAM project:

- Green procurement can be a major driver of innovation by providing industry with incentives to apply eco-friendly methods
- Green procurement can provide financial savings to public authorities, especially when considering the entire life cycle of a contract rather than only the purchase price

The purpose of the training sessions and capacity building events, which will be organized within this Action will be to increase the capacity of procurement officers to:

- ✓ Integrate environmental considerations into tendering procedures.
- ✓ Administer the entire tendering process.
- ✓ To recognise GPP as a valuable tool needed for reaching strategic goals and programme targets.
- ✓ Respond to tenderers' inquiries and verify environmental claims.
- ✓ Evaluate the life cycle costs of the tendering procedures and select the most advantageous tender.
- ✓ Raise awareness of the (environmental and financial) benefits of environmental procurement at all administrative levels.

By delivering training sessions and seminars, and raising the issue of GPP uptake, local municipalities shall embrace the benefits and positive impact of green public spending and shall use it as a powerful tool in reaching the objectives set in their local programmes for RES, energy efficiency, air quality etc. Improvement of local by-laws, on one hand is closely related to the constant update and increase of administration skills, knowledge and understandings. By stressing on the importance of GPP

implementation into local policies, we shall provide a tool for realizing targets and objectives which is so important for programs efficiency and final evaluation.

Public tenders need to support the transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient economy, for example by promoting more widespread use of green public procurement and to improve the framework conditions for business innovation using a fully demand-driven policy. Public bodies should show influence and leadership through green procurement, introducing new regulatory requirements, life cycle costing boundaries, preferred practices and business models. The overall objective is to show concern about climate change, sustainable use of natural resources, health and safety, and waste management.

The motivation behind green procurement is that GPP sets trends in new product development, production and consumption, and thus transforms already established markets. In recent years, public procurement has been a strong factor in creating a major market for green products - stationery, hospital supplies, electric cars or other vehicles (e.g. hydrogen cars), competitive trade and organic food. In the process of awarding goods, services or works, the contracting authority may incorporate environmental standards, both in functionality and performance requirements, as well as in the terms of the contract. The total cost of the property acquired or the criteria for assessing the life cycle of the products can be applied to assess the environmental impact of the goods and services together with the maintenance costs. Local and regional administrations must respond to the competitive pressure to provide better services at a lower cost, but also seek to exploit global markets that offer increasingly effective solutions.

- Activity 1.1. The first step is to start communication with the target group and create **a desk-based study** providing information about the most problematic issues and opportunities. We can use questionnaires that have been completed by GPP-STREAM stakeholders and build on them a further and more focused research to collect data only from public procurement officers and thus create **targeted training programmes**. These surveys will show how many topics we should include, what are the main information/knowledge gaps addressed and where we should focus on. “Connecting the puzzle”, working from start to finish will help public authorities grasp the picture and improve their understanding on the subject. Good knowledge of the target group is very important for the success of the trainings.

- Activity 1.2. The second thing, based on the research study, responses, collected data and analyses - to **develop a training programme**.

Sub tasks:

- Identify the ways of training public administration and regional self-government officials and complete their overview. Choose the most appropriate path and form of training for this target group.
 - In case we need additional experts, we shall try to find and involve some of them in the preparation of the programme and related documents. Design content and form of educational programme and methodical material.
- Activity 1.3. The third part is to **promote and implement** this training programme. Public administration shall be informed about forthcoming training events by e-mails, by publishing invitations and informative articles in local media and by directly contacting interested parties. This activity will last for about 12 months. One training session will be organized on each 4 months. The initial idea is to organize face-to-face training events, but should we encounter force majeure circumstances, the trainings will be organized online by means of webinar platforms. Should the training foresees specific expertise and knowledge on GPP and LCCA, CSEG intends to implement the training activities by outsourcing part of the themes to an external organisation with consolidated expertise in GPP training. These organizations are environmental and energy agencies which already took an active part during activities in Phase 1.
 - Activity 1.4. Monitoring: the fourth part will be **gathering feedback** from the participants by means of questionnaires, e-mails, face to face communication/meetings. The objective of this phase is: 1) to fine tune the training programme; 2) to assess the level of satisfaction among participants in the training course. **Indicator for success**: From 0-50 % positive feedback will be assessed as not satisfactory influence of this action and under-achievement, from 50-75 % positive feedback will be assessed as a satisfactory level of the Action achievements and above 75 % positive feedback will be assessed as significant influence from this Action.

Stakeholders participating in this Action:

- Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, DG "Strategic Planning of Regional Development and Administrative territorial Organization": the Ministry is the responsible body for the RDP of South Central Region. CSEG will report to the Ministry the progress of this action and it will prepare a summary report comparing the achieved results towards the initially planned indicators.
- Local and Regional authorities and administrations from South Central Region in Bulgaria: these PAs will be the main beneficiaries of the action. They will be actively involved in all phases of the Action by constant communication and dissemination activities. They will participate in the monitoring phase by completing the satisfactory survey.
- Chambers of commerce, professional associations, civil organizations, and other interested associations, and NGOs: this is an important stakeholder group because they have specific knowledge and expertise on environmental topics and they will be invited to participate actively in the training sessions by presenting good practices in the area of GPP and environmental initiatives.
- Energy and Environmental Agencies: similarly to the above mentioned group (the NGOs), these stakeholders possess significant knowledge and expertise on very specific topics like GPP, LCCA, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, protection of environment, climate change issues, sustainable transport, and policy development. For this reason, this stakeholder group will be also involved actively in the phase of the training sessions – they will be invited to present good practices on GPP and environmental topics as speakers/presenters.

Timeframe:

Activity 1.1: Expected duration: 4 months; Expected deadline September 2020

Activity 1.2: Expected duration: 6 months; Expected deadline March 2021

Activity 1.3: Expected duration: 12 months; Expected deadline March 2022

Activity 1.4: Expected duration: 2 months; Expected deadline May 2022.

Cost

Staff costs: 2 experts to work part-time during the 2-year period of implementation of this activity.

Organization of training sessions (within Act. 1.3): at least 3 training sessions x eur 2,000 each = eur 6,000 total (cost for rent of conference hall, presentation equipment, catering for 2 days each) *.

Involvement of external expert organization: eur 3,000 (eur 1,000 for each of the training sessions).

* The initial idea is to organize face-to-face training events, but should we encounter force majeure circumstances, the trainings will be organized online by means of webinar platforms. This will significantly reduce this cost category for events organization to less than eur 600.

Funding

Association CSEG own budget, own resources.

Performance indicators of this Action:

- Number of stakeholders participating in training sessions
- % of participants with positive feedback / Satisfaction level assessment
- % of participants with increased knowledge on topics related to GPP concept integration and environment initiatives

ACTION 2:

Setting up a Regional Environmental Help Desk

Activities:

- Provide technical support and expertise to local and regional authorities from South Central Region of Bulgaria in development, improvement, assessment, and monitoring of their sustainable policies, strategies, and bylaws.
- Perform a communication and dissemination campaign on topics like GPP, protection of environment, climate change issues, EE and RES.

Relevance to the project

This action was inspired by the exchange of experience activities within the project namely by sharing the development plans in the Romanian transnational learning event /11 September 2019/:

- GPP key enabler for climate change adaptation process in several Romanian provinces; Sibiu, Târgu-Mureş and Brasov, as well as
- Presentation for green public procurement – key enabler for Climate change adaptation process – Ministry of Environment of Romania.

This event was organized in the frame of Activity A10. Second Transnational Learning Event in Romania. Several municipalities from different Romanian regions presented their environmental and climate change mitigation programmes. These were municipalities of Sibiu, Târgu-Mureş, Braşov, and Botoşani. By this, the municipal administrations demonstrated in a very efficient way how the link between local environmental bylaws and GPP can be achieved. On the other hand, the Romanian Ministry of Environment presented their climate change strategy and how the integration of GPP concept can significantly contribute to the objectives set in their environmental policy.

Nature of the action

Association CSEG is well-known at local and regional level for its work in identifying and developing new projects for sustainable development in various key sectors. The Association works with public institutions and private entities in Bulgaria, as well as with similar organizations and institutions at European level. Its services are utilized by public administrations, business communities, and citizens. The experts within CSEG are experienced in applying integrated approaches, analysis, and solutions that encourage local authorities and communities to develop and implement energy efficient strategies, programmes, plans and projects. The experts' professional expertise covers a wide range of fields: economic and financial analysis, policy advice, project management, writing and promotion, environment and clean energy expertise.

The envisaged activities within this and the other two actions will have a direct impact on the development and where existing on the improvement of the following policy strategies at local and regional level in South Central Region of Bulgaria:

- **Energy efficiency programmes** at local and regional level: as according to Art. 12, par. 2 of the *Energy Efficiency Act (EEA)* “...the governmental and local authorities shall develop and adopt energy efficiency programs” which have to be “drawn up in consideration of strategic objectives and

priorities of regional development plans of the respective regions” which for South Central Region is the Regional Development Plan for South-Central Region 2014-2020. A preliminary analysis performed by CSEG in last two years shows that most of the LAs from South Central Region do not have such energy programmes, or in some cases they have programmes which need further improvement in order to take into account the local specific features of the region, and to set ambitious but at the same time feasible objectives in the short-term (3 years) and/or long-term (10 years) periods.

- **Programmes for promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and biofuels:** as according to Art. 9 of the *Energy from Renewable Sources Act* “the municipal councils shall adopt long-term and short-term programmes for promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and biofuels”. The long-term programmes include measures for larger deployment of local and sustainable RES which must be implemented within 10 years, while the short-term programmes have measures which must be accomplished within 3 years of adoption of the programme. CSEG strongly promotes the integrated approach in which a public administration can adopt one sustainable energy programme which contains both – energy efficiency and RES measures and thus achieving the synergy effect where one measure fosters the effect of the other measures, i.e. the development of one integrated SEAP (sustainable energy action plan), instead of development of several different strategies with similar objectives.

- **Strategy documents for Transnational partnership among stakeholders from educational sector:** CSEG participates as a stakeholder in several working groups related to the development of transnational strategies for partnership in the field of education. These partnership strategies always include a public administration and/or educational authority from South Central Region and similar institutions from other European countries, and they are being developed within different EU initiatives. They represent a very good channel for transferring the GPP and environmental expertise gained in Phase 1 of GPP-STREAM project to other stakeholders not only from South Central Region of Bulgaria, but also from other remote regions not directly involved in GPP-STREAM. CSEG already participated in the development of such collaborative strategy document between Peshtera municipality (Bulgaria), Ludbreg municipality (Croatia), and Kochani municipality (North Macedonia) by providing concrete measures and ideas for a larger deployment of green purchases in public administrations and a larger deployment of topics in school curricular related to protection of environment and climate change. The reference strategy document could be found on internet at the following [LINK](#).

Local policy programmes which will be directly impacted by the deployment of Environmental Helpdesk activities (through monitoring, updates and suggestions for improvement) are:

- Municipality of Pazardzhik: “Energy Efficiency Programme of Pazardzhik Municipality 2018-2028”. The programme sets ambitious targets to cut energy consumption in public buildings and public facilities by more than 35% for a period of 10 years, and to cut CO2 emissions by 25% for the same period. The baseline year is 2017, and concrete energy-saving measures have been identified and integrated into the Programme with the support of Association CSEG, which was actively involved in its development. Link to this energy programme: <https://pazardzhik.bg/bg/programa-za-energiyna-efektivnost-na-obshtina-pazardzhikbg-1/>
- Municipality of Peshtera: “Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2019-2020”. This policy document sets ambitious targets for improving of energy performance in the public sector by implementing energy saving measures together with larger utilization of local renewable energy sources, as the region is famous with its large potentials of biomass, geothermal and solar energy, Link to this energy programme: https://www.peshtera.bg/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=72&Itemid=203

Association CSEG was actively involved in the development of these two sustainable energy programmes. Furthermore, municipal experts from Pazardzhik and Peshtera were participating actively in the Stakeholder meetings and Transnational learning events organized during Phase 1 of GPP-STREAM, and agreed to work with CSEG experts on monitoring, improvement, and updating of their energy programmes.

However, by setting up a Regional Environmental Helpdesk, the Association intends to transfer this positive experience also to other municipalities from the region which have high energy saving potentials and excellent preconditions for development of local RES-projects like municipalities of: Velingrad, Bratzigovo, Septemvri and Belovo.

By developing and/or improving where existing the above mentioned local integrated environment strategies, we directly impact on SO (specific objective) 6 “Prevention of the effects of climate change” and SO7 “Supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy” within Priority 1.3 “Development of infrastructure for environmental protection and adaptation to climate change” of the

Regional Development Plan of the South Central Region 2014-2020 which foresee the following measures to be implemented:

- Development and improvement of local energy programmes including SEAPs and SECAPs;
- Local programmes for air quality management, water and soil management;
- Improve and raise awareness among citizens on topics related to protection of environment and efficient use of resources.
- Development and implementation of projects/initiatives which aim to improve energy performance of public buildings;
- Support to projects/initiatives which aim to increase the share of RES energy.

Furthermore, the policy instrument “**Regional Development Plan of the South Central Region 2014-2020**” is implemented through **Operational Programme “Regions in Growth” (OPRG)**, which provides funding to local administrations for implementing energy efficiency and RES measures in the Public and Residential sectors, which represent an excellent opportunity for municipalities from South Central Region to apply for funding of the measures foreseen in their SEAPs and SECAPs. Most of the resources of the OPRG 2014-2020 (54,46% \approx eur 714 mln) are allocated for sustainable urban development based on **Integrated Plans for Urban Regeneration and Development**.

The development/improvement of these integrated local environment strategies will have a direct impact on a better deployment/improved governance of the policy instrument OPRG, because Priority axis 1 and Priority axis 2 are including concrete EE, RES and environmental areas of topics which are funded by this instrument. The local bylaws developed/improved within GPP-STREAM and this particular Action “Environmental Helpdesk”, contain specific and customized sustainable energy and climate-mitigation measures which will significantly facilitate municipalities from South Central Region when they prepare and apply for new projects under the OPRG. For example, the SEAP of municipality of Peshtera which was approved by their city council in January 2020 comprises some very specific short-term measures, and one of them is to improve energy performance of 7 public buildings. The municipality is currently undertaking procedures to apply for funding of energy-saving measures within OPRG for these identified public objects.

Public procurement is not any more treated as an administrative procedure to purchase products and services but as an important tool to help reaching strategic goals, including resource efficiency objectives. In the past decade the EU created a highly supporting policy framework for GPP, but the real action should happen mainly at local and regional level. Studies showed that one of the main

barriers to up-taking GPP is lack of information, knowledge and co-operation, that follows that it is important to exchange experience, share knowledge and promote the replication of best practices.

In line with the European sustainable policy agenda, many public authorities have developed strategies ranging from climate action plans to resource efficiency, energy efficiency strategies to circular and green economy policies. GPP is an important driver to achieve such national, regional and local targets, particularly by including high energy efficiency requirements in tenders for buildings, transport and ICT.

At a local level, thousands of cities are part of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, which requests signatories to develop and implement Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs) that go even beyond the EU climate mitigation and adaptation policy targets. Linking GPP to SECAP's helps members of the Global Covenant of Mayors to achieve their ambitions climate mitigation and adaptation targets. The RDP of South Central Region highlights the need in its SO6 of Priority 1.3 of the development of SEAPs and SECAPs by local administrations in the region. It provides clear indications and measures that the development of these local bylaws by municipalities in the region needs to be reinforced and increased.

Any energy efficiency or climate-related policy should include GPP as an important measure to achieve the targets of such a policy. As according to the Bulgarian 'Energy Efficiency Act', every municipality must develop an EE Programme. On the other hand, as according to the 'Energy from Renewable Sources Act' every municipality must develop a RES Programme. Yet most of the Bulgarian municipalities do not have such policy programmes, because most of the municipalities (especially rural and small ones) do not have the required professional and expert staff to develop and follow tailored and customized policy actions. Association CSEG will assist the public authorities in the development, improvement and monitoring of such programmes and integrate also the GPP concept into these programmes.

Successful GPP uptake needs to be implemented and integrated into local strategies and development plans, into local programmes for energy efficiency and RES and last but not least into local climate related by-laws. A few green products and green tenders may bring some publicity and reduce some greenhouse gas emissions, however it will remain a one-off sustainable public purchase without any further impact. By the means of a GPP strategy and GPP implementation in most of the local by-laws, it has the potential of becoming an important driver for achieving policy goals. Any energy efficiency

or climate-related policy should include GPP as an important measure to achieve the targets of such a policy.

Activity 2.1 Research on the existence of local by-laws in the municipalities from the Region

- Objective: to find out if municipalities have already developed local policies and if they need improvement.
- Description: Desk-based research to find out what environmental policies exist, and do they need improvement.

Activity 2.2 Enhance the skills of PAs in South Central Region on development of local sustainable policies

- Objective: increase knowledge and expertise of employees who work in public administrations on how to develop and improve sustainable policies
- Description: Organize bi-lateral meetings and workshops with those stakeholders, where to discuss the need to develop, improve and/or adapt sustainable programmes based on the environmental concept. CSEG experts already participated in a number of local bylaws development and improvement and will provide support to the PAs from South Central Region in the development, implementation, adaptation, and monitoring of their sustainable strategies and programmes. Special focus will be given to SEAPs and SECAPs, which are part of the measures envisaged in the RDP of the South Central Region in Bulgaria. Should force majeure circumstances appear during the implementation of this activity, the face-to-face meetings and workshops will be replaced by online meetings by using the means of platforms – GoToWebinar, ZOOM, etc.

Activity 2.3 Communication and Dissemination campaign

- Objective: to continue the dissemination of project products and GPP practices achieved and identified during Phase 1 to stakeholders from South Central Region of Bulgaria.
- Description: GPP-STREAM elaborated very useful tools (like GPP tender model toolkit – Activity A17; Toolkit for GPP compliance for EU beneficiaries – Activity

A18; GPP Monitoring Guidelines – Activity A19), and identified about 50 GPP and environmental good practices with a replicability potential and resource efficiency gains. The **dissemination** of these represents a continuous process which will not end up in Phase 1, but it will continue in Phase 2 and even beyond project ending. During the dissemination activities, CSEG will offer to its stakeholders support in **communication** activities. For example, a Bulgarian municipality might be interested in implementation of a best practice which was already implemented in a remote EU region, outside Bulgaria – in this case, CSEG experts will assist the Bulgarian municipality in finding more sources of information by contacting the Author of the practice as well as contacting the main organization responsible for its implementation.

Usually, isolated municipalities, small and rural ones, have less administrative capacity and expert knowledge and face difficulties when they need to implement contemporary policies, instruments or tools. Face-to-face communication turns out as the best tool for achieving the principle ”seeing is believing”. In a personal meeting, best practices can be revealed with details and their results may be clearly stated. All questions can receive a full and detailed reply. Afterwards communication becomes easier and making awareness campaigns sounds as more and more possible follow-up instrument of broadening GPP knowledge.

By getting to understand best GPP practices, a public authority who wants to implement GPP as part of a wider strategy and policy does no longer have to reinvent the wheel. “The power of GPP”, all the ingredients to apply GPP will be presented in a direct meeting: legal backing, guidance, policies, good practice etc. Usually, policy makers want to learn from others who have successfully integrated GPP. These may include public authorities from the same region or country or public authorities from other countries. Besides field visits and bilateral meetings, learning from others or sharing experience is a possibility that deserves to be explored.

Main objectives of the meetings and workshops within the Helpdesk are :

- to present to the local stakeholders the EU policies and Strategies on GPP, the circular economy and circular procurement as well as an introduction of key criteria for the GPP categories
- to share good practices and avoid reinventing the wheel
- Increase administration skills and knowledge on how to develop local energy programmes, SECAPs, SEAPs

- Raise awareness about the importance of GPP and why should they be supported
- Acquaintance with GPP-STREAM project and similar opportunities as a possible solution for further GPP implementation
- Continue the activities of the regional GPP-STREAM stakeholder network that can communicate and discuss GPP and environmental issues
- Ensuring GPP continuation/sustainability
- Ensuring GPP spreading through effective dissemination
- Linking Green Public Procurement to innovation and circular procurement – Public procurement of innovation is future-driven as it is about using public procurement as a driver for developing new approaches, products and services. Circular public procurement tries to close the public procurement circle by considering a move from linear to circular production and consumption. By linking GPP to circular economy and innovation policy makers ensure a continuous improvement and up-scaling of the green public procurement process
- to support municipalities and region to achieve national energy and climate targets where GPP is having a central part and the CSEG will support all stakeholders in procurement to succeed in the transition to a green economy

Stakeholders involved

- Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, DG "Strategic Planning of Regional Development and Administrative territorial Organization": the Ministry is the responsible body for the RDP of South Central Region. CSEG will report to the Ministry the progress of this action with a special focus on energy programmes, SEAPs, and SECAPs which are listed as a key priority in the RDP.
- Local and Regional authorities and administrations from South Central Region in Bulgaria: these PAs will be the main beneficiaries of the action by targeting at their policies which need to be improved or created. They will be actively involved in all phases of the Action by constant communication and dissemination activities, and participate in the bilateral meetings and workshops envisaged within this Action.
- Chambers of commerce, professional associations, civil organizations, and other interested associations, and NGOs: this is an important stakeholder group because they have specific knowledge and expertise on environmental topics and they will be invited to participate

actively in the workshops by providing feedback on proposed measures for improvement and development of local policies.

- Energy and Environmental Agencies: similarly to the above mentioned group (the NGOs), these stakeholders possess significant knowledge and expertise on very specific topics like GPP, LCCA, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, protection of environment, climate change issues, sustainable transport, and policy development. They will be invited to provide a specific input in the phase of development of local/regional policies.

Timeframe

The helpdesk will be made operational for the two-year implementation of Phase 2 of GPP-STREAM project, from June 2020 to May 2022, and then Association CSEG will seek and evaluate the opportunity to be funded through specific resources from the new programming period.

Costs

- Staff costs: 1 expert to work part-time during the 2-year period of implementation of this activity.
- Organization of meetings and workshops targeting at PAs from the region: at least one workshop will be organized each 6 months. One-day event \approx eur 600 x 4 = eur 2,400 eur

Funding sources

Association CSEG own resources.

Performance indicators of this Action:

- Number of bilateral meetings with municipal representatives
- Number of stakeholders participating at workshops
- Number of developed/improved bylaws

ACTION 3:

GPP Forum

Activities:

- Dissemination event with high impact on a specific topic like GPP.
- Setting up this event as an annual forum – or part of an environmental forum. The purpose is to continue organizing the GPP Forum beyond project end.

Relevance to the project

This action was inspired by the following activities within GPP-STREAM Project:

- European GPP-STREAM conference “Institutions for the ecological transition” (Compraverde Forum), organized on 17 October 2019 in Rome, Italy. Activity B9. Organization of an EU Project Conference hosted by the 12th edition of the international event dedicated to GPP Forum Compraverde – BuyGreen.
- Transnational Learning Event in France, Second Day – a national Forum on territorial food systems and the good examples from local authorities in territorial and sustainable food. Activity A21. Organization of the Fourth transnational learning event in Lyon, France.

Both events, organized within the frame of GPP-STREAM project have been visited by a large number of stakeholders reaching out to more than 100 participants each. The conferences included also round tables where specific topics with interested stakeholders could be further discussed in details. The dissemination and communication impact of such events is significant, and since in Bulgaria there are not such forums dedicated to GPP and organized regularly (at least once per year), this good practice is considered as a practice with a high replication and follow up potential.

Nature of the action

During Phase 1 of GPP-STREAM project, partner CSEG carried out targeted communication and dissemination campaign. However, lessons learnt, best practices identified, and toolkits elaborated during the first two years of the project need to be disseminated, communicated, and presented to a

larger audience in Bulgaria, i.e. not only stakeholders from South Central Region of Bulgaria, but also similar institutions and organizations from other regions and neighbouring countries. There are some forums and national conferences which are being organized regularly but they target specifically on the following topics: energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, smart cities, zero energy buildings, etc. There is a lack of forums in Bulgaria which address directly GPP. Association CSEG intends to change this and initiate the organization of a GPP Forum once in each year, and continue this action beyond the project end.

This measure was discussed with representatives of environmental and energy agencies during Phase 1 of the project. They declared their intention to support the initiation of an annual event called GPP Forum. Furthermore, representatives of EAP and REAP (energy agencies of Plovdiv and Pazardzhik) proposed that the GPP Forum is organized and be part of the Annual ABEA Conference. The annual ABEA (Association of Bulgarian Energy Agencies) conference is being organized since year 2007, and it is a 2-day event which aims to bring together policymakers, research institutions, public administrations, NGOs, and business representatives in order to disseminate and communicate best practices in various topics for sustainable development. They proposed that the GPP Forum is organized as a one-day event within the National conference and be part of the Agenda in the next events.

The main purpose of this Action is to draw community's attention towards the necessity of an effective use of natural resources through reduction, reuse, treatment and transformation of residues into resources for new production processes. The following activities are envisaged in order to implement the Action:

Activity 3.1 Preparatory activities

- CSEG will prepare the Agenda of the event with a special focus on GPP best practices. We shall explore the possibility to invite foreign speakers, part of the GPP-STREAM consortiums to take part into the event by presenting best practices from their regions.

Activity 3.2 Organization of an annual GPP Forum

- Organization of the event: the event will have at least two sessions: the first sessions will present GPP best practices and methods to integrate LCC concept into public procurement. The second session will be organized in the form of round tables, where participants will be split in thematic working groups in order to discuss different and

specific topics related to effective use of natural resources, larger deployment of “green” purchases, development of local/regional policies which promote the GPP concept, etc.

Activity 3.3 Targeted communication campaign

- In order that one forum is successful and sustainable, we need to communicate its main goals and objectives to target groups which are interested by the topic. CSEG will undertake a targeted communication campaign so that more stakeholders are informed and participate on the event. Press releases will be sent to different media channels – printed and online. Information notices and teasers will be published on the different social channels which have been already developed during Phase 1 of the project (Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter), as well as on the ‘Events’ section of the project website, and the website of partner CSEG. An official invitation will be sent to the stakeholders which are already part of the GPP-STREAM network. The aim is to reach as many interested stakeholders as possible.

Stakeholders involved

CSEG will invite all identified stakeholders of its GPP-STREAM network:

- MRDPW as the main responsible body for the development and implementation of the policy;
- Local and regional authorities as main beneficiaries of the OP ‘Regions in Growth’;
- Environment and energy agencies: they will be invited not only as attendants, but also as speakers/facilitators because they have knowledge and expertise on specific themes;
- Chambers of commerce, professional associations, and other interested associations, and NGOs – this represents a very important target group because it can bring knowledge and innovative ideas in the development of sustainable initiatives and policies.

Timeframe

The GPP Forum will be organized once each year. At the end of Phase 2, CSEG will evaluate the possibility to continue its organization on a regular base beyond project ending.

Costs

- Staff costs for a period of 3 months before organization of the conference: 1 expert to work part-time during this period.
- Costs for organization of the event: eur 4,000 / event (this includes rent of conference hall, presentation equipment, external experts/speakers to present GPP good practices, elaboration of communication materials, catering and other logistics costs for organizing the event).*

* In case of force majeure circumstances, CSEG will evaluate the opportunity to organize an online forum by using platforms like GoToWebinar, ZOOM, etc.

Funding sources

Association CSEG own resources.

Performance indicators of this Action:

- Number of stakeholders participating at the thematic conference

Date: 31 July 2020

Name of the organisation(s): Association Centre for Sustainability and Economic Growth /CSEG/

Signatures of the relevant organisation(s):

Maria Kotzeva:

/Chair of the Board/