

30 April 2014

Dear Mr. Popens,  
Dear Mr. Landabasso,  
Dear Sirs/Madams,

We write to you with our observations regarding the extent to which environmental mainstreaming considerations have been included as part of the drafting of Cohesion Policy Operational Programmes and Partnership Agreements.

The Common Regulation on the future Cohesion Policy underlines the importance of sustainable development and stipulates that *“Member States and the Commission shall ensure that environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, disaster resilience, and risk prevention and management are promoted in the preparation and implementation of Partnership Agreements and programmes”* (Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, Art. 8).

In addition Annex I of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 further elaborates that *“Member States and managing authorities shall, in all phases of implementation, ensure the full mainstreaming of sustainable development into the ESI Funds, respecting the principle of sustainable development as laid down in Article 3(3) TEU, as well as complying with the obligation to integrate environmental protection requirements pursuant to Article 11 TFEU and the polluter pays principle as set out in Article 191(2) TFEU.*

The provision for a horizontal principle of environmental mainstreaming is therefore fundamental to the planning and implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds spending plans and programmes.

However, during the Cohesion Policy programming process, we have observed that environmental sustainability is not being appropriately included in the Operational Programmes and Partnership Agreements. One reason for this is that Article 8 cited above has been interpreted differently by different decision-makers: namely that the three aspects of sustainable development, including the economic, social and environmental dimensions, are seen as isolated from one another. Environmental mainstreaming cannot be achieved via a “sectoral priorities approach,” where economic sustainability is achieved through funding for small and medium enterprises, social sustainability will be addressed with the support of the European Social Fund, or that Thematic Objectives 4 and 6 alone will guarantee environmental sustainability.

The cross-cutting character of the sustainable development imperative is defined by considerations for environmental requirements in *ALL* Thematic Objectives and interventions in *ALL* sectors and areas. Therefore we believe that reference to Article 8 in Operational Programmes and Partnership Agreements must translate into concrete actions aimed at achieving sustainability in all three dimensions across all Thematic Objectives.

The genuine application of Article 8 would require Member States and Regions to develop measures for the overall integration of environmental considerations and demonstrate how cross-cutting issues have been integrated in the planning documents. This could be achieved through high standard selection criteria, as requested in Article 96, 7 a, of the Common Provisions Regulation.

Moreover there are a number of practical examples for environmental mainstreaming that can be replicated, including:

- Environmental selection criteria
- Green public procurement
- Environmental management representatives for the funding programme
- Environmental evaluation sheet for funded measures
- Bonus point system to value environmental and climate friendly measures
- Associated environmental monitoring Working groups

To this end, please find attached more suggestions for environmental and climate mainstreaming measures, including excerpts from the Sustainable Development chapter of the Slovak Partnership Agreement, which includes important aspects of horizontal integration.

As the Operational Programmes near finalization, with some having already been submitted to the Commission, we ask that the responsible desk officer ensures concrete actions for the application of Article 8 are included for all priority axis of the Operational Programmes. This can also be reflected in the Operational Programme template, which already includes a section for ensuring the high quality of sustainable development.

Yours kindly,



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	<b>Research, development of technologies and innovations</b>
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encouraging the development of research capacity in Universities and in the areas of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Measures for environmental protection and nature conservation, climate change</li> <li>o Energy efficiency, sufficiency and renewable energy</li> <li>o Resource efficiency and insufficiency, material cycles (recycling &amp; upcycling)</li> <li>o Eco-innovation, ecosystem services and green infrastructure</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Promotion of environmental R &amp; D centers of excellence</li> </ul>
R & D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of regional and national networks between research, economy and society with the objective of sustainable, resource-friendly development, in particular regional cluster on energy efficiency, resource protection and the Green Economy</li> <li>- R &amp; D related to stimulate demand and the marketing of "green products" and "Eco-design"</li> <li>- Promotion of centers of excellence" sustainability "(social innovation)</li> <li>- Development of environmentally friendly and socially responsible transport and mobility forms / concepts (alternative drives and forms of mobility)</li> <li>- R &amp; D in optimizing efficiency of combustion engine technology, especially of electric vehicles and other environmentally friendly types (e.g. hydrogen, biofuels 3rd generation)</li> <li>- Promotion of regional economic cycles and value-chains and their impact on environmental sustainability and social stability</li> <li>- Promotion of collaborative research projects, including cross-border, for example to address the consequences of climate change or sustainable mobility</li> </ul>
Innovation, market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of applied R &amp; D for climate protection</li> <li>- Promotion of applied R &amp; D with respect to the adaptation to climate change</li> <li>- Promote R &amp; D in the areas of eco-innovation and green infrastructure</li> <li>- R &amp; D for environmentally-friendly transport route expansion, such as traffic control systems, railway catenary systems that can function as a power supply network</li> <li>- R &amp; D in ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, and habitat diversity and connection</li> <li>- Promotion of R &amp; D to combat soil erosion and surfaces sealing and preserve and improve soil quality</li> <li>- Application-oriented research in the field of risk prevention and disaster protection mechanism / management (e.g. for flood protection)</li> <li>- Further development of techniques and solutions for saving energy and application of renewable energy</li> <li>- Promotion of research into innovative and environmentally sustainable biogas production - technical and material research (e.g. development of dry fermentation)</li> <li>- Exploration of new efficiency and sufficiency innovations in the energy and resource sector</li> <li>- Promotion of R &amp; D projects in solar energy and small wind power</li> <li>- Development of environmentally friendly energy storage technologies</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of eco-friendly and intelligent medium-and low-voltage systems</li> <li>- R &amp; D in the field of so-called green IT (especially with respect to energy efficiency and resource conservation)</li> <li>- Promoting the study of pollution prevention in the entire production and application process of products and services</li> <li>- Accompanying research on the environmental and social impacts of new technologies</li> <li>- Development and market introduction of innovations in carbon reduction-technologies</li> <li>- Development of environmental technologies and eco-friendly, durable and durable products (R &amp; D on eco-design)</li> <li>- Development of environmentally friendly production methods</li> <li>- R &amp; D to build closed material cycles</li> <li>- Development of recycable materials and products</li> <li>- Research in the development of waste prevention and recycling strategies and procedures (in this context: professional research on recycling potential for new and existing products)</li> <li>- Development of methods for waste water treatment and recycling of precious materials</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Competitiveness of SMEs</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthen the entrepreneurial potential and support complementary activities such as counseling, coaching, market access, networking and training regards resource efficiency and environmental protection</li> <li>- Promotion of business incubators and start-up of ecologically innovative SMEs</li> <li>- Promotion of development projects, and (direct) marketing of regionally produced products and regional material cycles, promotion of regional market partnerships</li> <li>- Investment in diversifying local economies by protecting, promoting and developing the cultural and natural heritage and landscapes (in both rural and urban areas)</li> <li>- Promotion of regional SME networks and regional value chains</li> <li>- Promotion of environmentally relevant consultation, education and training and the coaching of company directors</li> <li>- Promote the use of external advice on environmental and conservation issues to ensure the transfer of knowledge in small and medium enterprise structures</li> <li>- Promote founding of companies in the Green Economy</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of consultancy and support for SMEs to realize their potential to save energy, in energy efficiency and the sustainable use of resources</li> <li>- Supporting SMEs in increasing their own innovation capabilities, successful innovation activities and exchange / cooperation with other SMEs and science and research institutions</li> <li>- Adding value by improving product qualities like durability, reparability, resource efficiency</li> <li>- Promoting (including cross-border) SME networks in the area of sustainable, resource-and climate-friendly development</li> <li>- Promotion of trade fairs and international exchange of eco-innovation</li> <li>- Promote the use of Green IT</li> <li>- Promote the use of external advice (particularly on issues of environmental protection and nature conservation) to ensure the transfer of knowledge in small and medium enterprise</li> </ul>

	<p>structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthening of international marketing</li> <li>- Promote international exchanges of experience in the establishment and development of eco-innovation</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Shift towards a Low-carbon Economy in All Sectors</b></p>
EE/RES - general	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of innovative technologies for generating renewable energy, especially those that are mentioned in the SET-Plan and the Energy Roadmap 2050</li> <li>- Promoting the use of solar energy and sustainable biofuels</li> <li>- Promoting innovative, decentralized pilot projects based on renewable energy sources (RES)</li> <li>- Promotion of ecological construction</li> <li>- Promotion of innovative and environmentally sustainable biogas production. For this purpose, inter alia include the production of biogas from legumes, organic wastes and by-products, landscaping management materials and other organic waste</li> <li>- Promotion of cascade utilization of renewable raw-materials</li> <li>- Investment in heat networks based RES</li> <li>- Investments in integrated power and heat projects (production, storage and distribution)</li> <li>- Investments in innovative renewable energy storage technologies</li> <li>- Investments to improve the energy efficiency of existing heat networks</li> <li>- Increase the participation of citizens in the energy transition</li> <li>- Promotion of communication strategies among social groups (development of guidance material, catalogs for actions and measures) to improve acceptance regarding the energy transition and energy saving</li> <li>- Promotion of Small Wind Turbines</li> <li>- Promotion of decentralized heat storage</li> <li>- Support for decentralized / centralized renewable electricity storage</li> <li>- Promotion of energy cooperatives and community based energy projects</li> </ul>
EE/RES - SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting the use of RES in SMEs</li> <li>- Promotion of energy efficiency and energy sufficiency in SMEs</li> <li>- Promotion of "zero emission-parks"</li> <li>- Promotion of investment in the energy process optimization in manufacturing industry</li> <li>- Use of so far unused industrial resp. waste heat</li> <li>- Investments in innovative storage technologies in SMEs</li> <li>- Promotion of innovative storage network systems (between several SMEs)</li> <li>- Investments in energy efficiency of buildings</li> <li>- Support for regional SME networks for the production and distribution of renewables</li> <li>- Promotion of campaigns and consulting services to address the energy transition and CO2 reduction and improvement of resource efficiency</li> <li>- The promotion of natural refrigerants in heat pumps / refrigeration</li> <li>- Promotion of energy consultancy in SMEs</li> <li>- Use of Green IT in SMEs</li> </ul>
EE/RES –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting the use of renewable energy, investment in energy efficiency measures in public</li> </ul>

<p>public infra- structure</p>	<p>buildings and public infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of decentralized supply networks for connecting RES</li> <li>- Investments in the energy optimization of public institutions, such as by improving the building envelope and heating and cooling, increasing the share of renewables, use of energy-efficient technologies (including Green IT, integration of smart grids and distribution systems)</li> <li>- Promotion of solar thermal and photovoltaic systems on public, municipal buildings</li> <li>- Promotion of Small Wind Turbines</li> <li>- Promotion of decentralized electricity storage technologies</li> <li>- Promote efficient and intelligent street lighting based on RES</li> <li>- Investments to improve the energy efficiency of existing heat networks</li> <li>- Promotion of fuel-free, renewable based heat supply for heating and hot water</li> <li>- Promoting the reduction of energy consumption in transport and logistics</li> <li>- Accompanying measures to promote behavioral change in the use of public infrastructure</li> <li>- Promotion of innovative solutions to optimize the use of public infrastructure (e.g. integrated transport systems and measures to optimize the transport volume)</li> <li>- Promotion of consulting and planning services</li> </ul>
<p>Distribution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of intelligent and innovative energy infrastructure and corresponding energy distribution systems</li> <li>- Promoting measures to ensure the convergence of different energy sources which enable broad RES-energy mix</li> <li>- Promoting the development and use of appropriate storage systems</li> <li>- Promotion of low and medium voltage distribution systems</li> <li>- Promotion of Smart Grids</li> <li>- Promotion of energy efficiency and sufficiency measures (where energy can be saved, the development of energy networks at this point may be smaller)</li> <li>- Promotion of communication strategies among the society (development of guidance material, action plans, etc.) to improve the acceptability of the energy transition</li> <li>- Promotion of campaigns and consulting services to address the energy transition and reduction and improvement of resource efficiency</li> </ul>
<p>Sustainable urban develop- ment / mobility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of area-based, integrated approaches and concepts for renovating neighborhoods or entire cities and towns</li> <li>- Identify and opening up of potential efficiency gains in heat and electricity generation, distribution, storage and consumption, e.g. promotion of local energy saving concepts, energy plans and energy needs analysis</li> <li>- Promotion of integrated municipal heating networks and electricity network infrastructure for electric mobility in public transport and private motorized transport and conversion of vehicle parks in urban transport to more environmentally friendly modes</li> <li>- Promote electric mobility and environmentally friendly mobility systems based on RES</li> <li>- Promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructure</li> <li>- Promotion of low-traffic residential structures</li> <li>- Promoting concepts and implementation of a sustainable transport of public freight</li> <li>- Promote measures to change the "modal split" favoring walking, cycling and public transport</li> <li>- Accompanying measures to promote behavioral change in the use of public infrastructure</li> <li>- Promoting innovative solutions that optimize and improve the use of public infrastructure (e.g. integrated transport systems and measures to decrease the transport volume)</li> <li>- Reduction of emissions in transport and logistics</li> <li>- Testing and introduction of alternative transport and mobility concepts that are</li> </ul>

	<p>environmentally friendly and provide for easy accessibility to e.g. vocational schools - this is especially important for rural areas (pilot projects)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of environmentally sensitive traffic control</li> <li>- Promotion of civil society initiatives that are likely to reduce emission reductions in the urban transport sector</li> <li>- Investments to improve the energy efficiency of existing heat networks</li> <li>- Promoting efforts of cities and towns to reduce emissions by supporting the communities in the development, implementation and qualification of innovative and integrated approaches to sustainable urban development with special emphasis on energy efficiency, climate and environmental protection, restoration and revitalization of inner city brownfields</li> <li>- Promoting measures for the conservation and revitalization of wetlands that serve as carbon sinks and at the same time for the protection of biodiversity</li> <li>- The promotion of natural and planted settlement structures</li> <li>- Promote the creation of action plans to reduce GHG emissions and the use of renewable energy in communities</li> <li>- Promote networking and cooperation between the actors, communication of innovative proposals</li> <li>- Promotion of car-sharing</li> <li>- Promotion of communication strategies among the society (development of guidance material, action plans) to improve acceptance issues regarding the energy transition</li> <li>- Promotion of campaigns and consulting services to address the energy transition and CO2 reduction and improvement of resource efficiency</li> <li>- Promotion of green infrastructure (eg green areas, forests) with cooling function during heat waves and storage of CO2</li> </ul>
R & D	<p>See above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of SME clusters and / or between research institutions</li> <li>- promote market launches of this cooperation</li> </ul>
CHP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investment in high efficiency cogeneration</li> <li>- Investment in heat networks based on RES</li> <li>- Investments in integrated power and heat projects (production, storage and distribution)</li> <li>- Promotion of Energy Efficiency and sufficiency measures</li> <li>- Investment in heat networks of companies, which are supplied from CHP plants and industrial waste heat or waste treatment plants</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Adaptation to climate change and risk prevention</b></p>
Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Natural methods to improve drinking water enrichment</li> <li>- Natural flood protection measures, recovery of natural retention areas of rivers, restoration of floodplains, dike relocation</li> <li>- Precautionary ecological (natural) flood protection (e.g. forest conversion program) in rural and urban areas</li> <li>- Support for targeted water-retaining and regulating measures</li> <li>- Promoting measures for the prevention of forest fires and storm damage, e.g. by ecological forest management</li> <li>- Small-scale modeling scenarios on the impact of climate change, including the establishment of local adaptation concepts</li> <li>- Measures to strengthen urban green areas, plantations on yards and buildings</li> <li>- Promoting intercultural gardens and (esp. for low-income families) urban agriculture</li> <li>- Promoting more resilient structures of regional supply (e.g. supply of energy and food)</li> <li>- Promotion of green areas to reduce surface runoff during heavy rain</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction of risks to human health, risk prevention and management (e.g. endocrine disruptors in drinking water, softeners in plastics and cosmetics, multi-resistant organisms and adaptation to climate change in the health sector)</li> <li>- Promotion of small-scale scenarios on the impact of climate change, including the establishment of local adaptation strategies</li> <li>- Management plans for the protection of nature and environment in an urban environment, nature and environmental monitoring of the effects of climate change and risk prevention</li> </ul>
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of monitoring measures - Civil Protection</li> <li>- Promoting measures to combat forest fires</li> <li>- Reduction of the effects of harmful soil changes by improving the security of the old mining area</li> <li>- Sustainable, regionally adapted water management</li> <li>- Promotion of technical equipment to cope with disasters</li> <li>- Concept development and development of management plans for disaster management</li> <li>- Promoting measures to limit invasive species</li> <li>- Conservation and recreation (decommissioning) of cold air generation areas and corridors in cities</li> </ul>
	<b>Environmental protection and resource efficiency</b>
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of innovative recycling infrastructure</li> <li>- Supporting projects in the field of upcycling of existing products and materials</li> <li>- Promotion of recycling facilities (leads to resources protection and energy saving, as the upcycling of materials uses less resources and energy)</li> <li>- Accompanying information and education activities of the consumer</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of innovation support measures (e.g. more efficient wastewater treatment processes, disposal of resulting by-products or chemical contaminants in wastewater)</li> <li>- Ecological water treatment</li> <li>- Decentralized biological waste treatment systems, e.g. promotion of decentralized wastewater treatment in rural areas</li> <li>- Sustainable water management to improve water quality</li> <li>- Ecological management of rivers, creation of riparian corridors, restoration of rivers</li> <li>- Improving the consistency, structure, and the water balance of the aquatic environment</li> <li>- Rainwater harvesting and percolation</li> <li>- Protect and restore the ecological balance regarding consequences of groundwater extraction</li> <li>- Creation of river development plans</li> </ul>
Cultural/natural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of investment in relation to the conservation, protection, enhancement and restoration of the natural heritage and the development of high nature value</li> <li>- Protection and restoration of historic landscapes, cultural landscapes and cultural landscape elements</li> <li>- Studies and reports to capture and inventor of valuable elements for nature conservation and structures of the cultural landscape as well as the preparation and planning of projects aimed at their protection and development</li> <li>- Restoration of natural ecosystems, protection of ecological network in the area, migration corridors and “stepping stone habitats”</li> <li>- Promotion of institutions of national cultural and natural heritage (e.g. Green Belt)</li> <li>- Investments for the acquisition of land and for the implementation and development of a functional ecological network</li> <li>- Development and utilization of natural heritage for ecological nature tourism (now an</li> </ul>

	<p>important economic factor), valuing through information boards, learning centers, barrier-free access to the countryside, through the marketing of typical regional products, through the creation of semi-natural infrastructure and accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoting the restoration of damaged parts of landscape</li> <li>- Restoration of avenues including especially in their role as migration corridors and stepping stones</li> <li>- Protection and restoration of biodiversity cells in urban areas</li> <li>- Promotion of services of ecological nature tourism</li> <li>- Promoting an eco-friendly, natural, organic / sustainable tourism</li> <li>- Promotion of cycling tourism, especially in rural areas</li> <li>- Promotion of an original nature tourism (possibly the recovery industry of the future)</li> </ul>
<p>Natura 2000, Bio-diversity, eco-system services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measures to protect Natura 2000 areas</li> <li>- Promotion of investment in green infrastructure, ecological network systems, including Natura 2000 and Water Management</li> <li>- Elaboration of projects for the protection and management plans for Natura 2000 sites and other places of high nature value</li> <li>- Investments in biological stations, which take over the Natura 2000 management</li> <li>- Restoration of natural ecosystems, development of habitat connectivity (e.g. Green Belt)</li> <li>- Restoration and promotion of wetlands and peat lands</li> <li>- Promotion of projects for area management and practical measures for the protection and preservation of sensitive habitats and species in these areas</li> <li>- Investments to raise awareness for conservation and visitor management</li> <li>- Promoting measures that contribute to reducing the impact of landscape fragmentation and / or to reduce landscape fragmentation</li> <li>- stimulate the construction of crossing facilities on heavily traveled country roads (Green Bridge)</li> <li>- Promotion of connected forest structures that can be used energetically</li> <li>- Promotion of restoration measures</li> <li>- Restoration of floodplains and riparian corridors</li> <li>- Promoting measures for stabilization and recovery of endangered species</li> </ul>
<p>Urban environment, brownfield</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support of sustainable, integrated development of urban areas, including through sustainable municipal drainage systems, remediation and restoration of contaminated sites</li> <li>- Promotion of infrastructure and capacities for ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) to strengthen the environmental awareness of the population (possibly on the ESF)</li> <li>- Promotion of measures that protect the climate, the protection of biodiversity (e.g. green infrastructure) or the protection and promotion of ventilation (cold air generation areas and corridors) -</li> <li>- Promoting regionalization of energy and water supply and sewage and waste disposal in connection with improving energy and resource efficiency</li> <li>- Investment in measures to reduce traffic-related air pollution, especially programs for retrofitting or replacement of bus fleets</li> <li>- Incentive programs for clean transport, better infrastructure for public transport and promotion of alternative transport models and mobility concepts</li> <li>- Promotion of CO2 reducing transport concepts</li> <li>- Promoting electric public transport and / or an electric public vehicle fleets</li> <li>- Promotion of local public transport (innovative offers, pilot projects)</li> <li>- Investment in intelligent traffic management systems</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investment in local cycle tracks</li> <li>- Promotion of individual urban electric mobility</li> <li>- Promotion of infrastructure for electric mobility</li> <li>- Promotion of alternative transport concepts, e.g. linking of freight transport with public transport and better integration of the various modes of transport in total</li> <li>- Unsealing and reactivation of brownfield sites and unused sealed areas in the municipal area</li> <li>- Restoration and promotion of wetlands and peat lands in the urban area</li> <li>- Promotion of civil society in particular activities to preserve biodiversity in cities.</li> <li>- Promoting measures in Natura 2000 sites</li> <li>- Promoting participation in civil society activities for the design and development of urban greening, both in park landscapes, habitat associations, natural landscapes and man-made spaces such as urban community gardens.</li> <li>- Promoting intercultural gardens and urban agriculture (esp. for low-income families and immigrant background)</li> <li>- Promotion of green spaces and forests to improve air quality</li> <li>- Promote measures for avoiding or reducing noise</li> <li>- Promotion of biodiversity islands and composite structures in cities</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Financial instruments</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of investment measures in renewable energy and climate protection</li> <li>- Support for community-lead local sustainable energy projects</li> <li>- Establishment of investment funds especially suitable for investment projects in the field of energy for communities, businesses and individuals</li> <li>- Building an endowment fund at the country level, suitable for the provision of co-financing for SMEs and associations and cooperatives.</li> <li>- Co-financing of measures under Natura 2000 could also be done through mitigation and compensation measures..</li> <li>- Investments in Natura 2000 could be realized in addition to the traditional grant funding via private equity funds: For example the reforestation of forest land or construction of structures over a equity funds (equity funds).</li> <li>- Investment in the construction of new facilities for renewable energy and also to increase efficiency should be promoted mainly through a revolving fund. This fund includes the following application:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion of design and consulting services</li> <li>- Investments in energy efficiency</li> <li>- Investments to renewable energies</li> <li>- Promotion of modern and environmentally friendly production systems for the manufacture of solar systems</li> <li>- Promote the market and the market introduction of energy storage technologies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### **1.5.3 Sustainable development**

Programs co-financed by ESIF must follow a horizontal principle of sustainable development. The basis of sustainable development are three pillars, namely environmental, economic and social. The main objective of horizontal principle of sustainable development is to ensure the environmental and social sustainability of economic growth, with particular emphasis on the protection and improvement of the environment, taking into account the "polluter pays principle".

[...]

In the Slovak Republic, the "polluter pays" principle will be implemented through legal and economic instruments so that polluters are motivated to reduce pollution, targeting all polluters and pollutions. Economic tools are an important part of the Environmental Policy, and these include taxes, fees, charges, fines and compensation. Funding obtained this way produce revenue for the Environmental Fund, and these are re-used for remedial action in a given sector of the economy. In applying the "polluter pays" principle it will primarily be used by two horizontal instruments - integrated pollution prevention and control ( IPPC ) and environmental impact assessment ( EIA ). Those horizontal instruments shall also be applied in the provision of support from ESIF, the principle of sustainable development will be integrated into the relevant programs ESIF 2014 -2020 throughout individual OPs and their management documentation (program manual, handbook for applicants). [..]

The effective application of the principle of horizontal sustainable development will be the key objective set out in the evaluation and selection process of applying for grants as a criterion for disqualification under the priority axes of the OP. Investments from ESIF should not increase the burden on the environment. The assessment of the level of pollution of the environment will be compulsory linked to the application for grant, being part of the assessment process of the proposed action regarding its anticipated impacts on the environment within the applicable legislation ( i.e. the decision of the investigation procedure or final opinion). [...] In connection with the application of the principle "Polluter pays" costs deemed ineligible expenses for activities relating to compliance with the obligations laid down by generally binding legal regulations in connection with the "polluter pays" principle. This principle is reflected in terms of the assistance provided in the call for applications for grants. Process of monitoring implementation of the principle of sustainable development at the project level will be monitored by monitoring reports ( i.e., description of activities carried out, their results and assess their contribution to the achievement of the objectives set for the horizontal principle), as well as the on -site project implementation and subsequent evaluation of the contribution of the horizontal principle. Explicit explanation on the application of horizontal principles will be the basis for the process of assessing the contribution of ESIF to the objectives identified in the national strategy document. Achieved level of performance of the objectives set in the national strategy document, including draft recommendations and corrective actions to achieve them will be submitted annually to the Government.

Analyses, evaluation, strategic and legislative advice for the horizontal application of the principle of sustainable development at the national level will be provided by the Government Office. The MA shall regularly submit to the authority responsible for the application of the principle of sustainable development horizontal information on its implementation, monitoring and evaluation reports, as well as on-site inspections at regular intervals. Representative body responsible for the implementation of horizontal principles of sustainable development will be defining the conditions for granting assistance related to the provision of horizontal application of the principle of sustainable development and its method of verification, which will be binding for the MA. It will also provide educational and training activities for the implementation of sustainable development entities involved in the implementation of the ESIF , relevant socio - economic partners, as well as evaluator of applications for grant . [...] . The responsible representatives of the Office of the Slovak Republic for the application horizontal principles of sustainable development will be represented in all monitoring committees and working groups for the preparation and implementation of

Excerpt from the Slovak Partnership Agreement, April 2014, translation from original

operational programs under the ESIF. In accordance with the partnership principle will be relevant civil society institutions, representing the area of sustainable development involved in the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the OP . In order to reduce the negative impacts on climate, reducing air pollution and other environmental components, as well as with regard to energy efficiency, projects funded by ESIF will apply green procurement.

With regard to support resource efficiency, waste management efforts should be made in the implementation of tools for preventing and re-use of waste , building facilities for material and energy recovery and waste treatment facilities for hazardous waste . [...] . In the field of air protection it is necessary to promote new technologies and systemic BAT measures to cut emissions and to ensure among other things compliance with the Directive on industrial emissions and also contribute to meeting the requirements under the Directive on air quality and cleaner air for Europe. Within the energy sector the promotion of energy efficiency and increasing renewable energy, low carbon technologies and eco - innovative approaches is important.

It remains necessary to raise awareness about the possibilities of energy saving, including information campaigns and events. Promoter will turn investments towards highly efficient heat and electricity system networks, heating / cooling, energy saving and optimization of energy use at the local / municipal level by promoting low- carbon strategies / action plans for sustainable energy, as well as the introduction of smart metering and network .

In the area of support for biomass it is required to establish sustainability criteria for evaluation process and in the project, in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on sustainability requirements for the use of solid and gaseous biomass sources in electricity, heating and cooling.

In order to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change SR is preparing a comprehensive adaptation strategy tackling the adverse effects of climate change. This strategy proposes principles that should guide the adaptation process, the criteria for selecting priority actions and a set of adaptation measures that should lead to a reduction of the negative social and economic costs.[...] For systematic monitoring of the impact of ESIF on climate change , it is possible to use existing models , which allow to determine the carbon intensity of individual activities within the OP (e.g. model CO2MPARE). In the context of biodiversity and ecosystems protection the SR prepares an updated National Biodiversity Strategy for the years 2012 -2020. A key objective remains to halt biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation in Slovakia, ensuring their rational use and revitalization of ecosystem services as far as feasible. Biodiversity is maintained by combining synergies with agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and tourism and strengthening economic instruments and incentives .

[...].