



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General Enlargement

D - FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS & REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

The Director

Brussels, **01 JUL. 2011**

ELARG.D / GSH /

Ms Ana Colovic Lesoska
 National coordinator for CEE
 Bankwatch Network Center
 for environmental research and information "Eco-sense"
 Skopje,
 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
ana@bankwatch.org

Consultation process for the future of Pre Accession assistance post 2013

Ref: Your letter of 25 March 2011

Dear Ms. Colovic Lesoska,

Thank you for your letter of 25 March, sent on behalf of several Western Balkans environmental NGOs, in which you request in particular that the deadline for the stakeholder consultation on the future of IPA be extended, and request a meeting with the consultants responsible for gathering data from stakeholders.

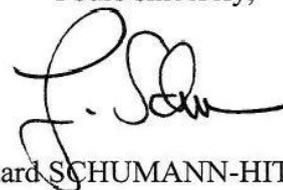
As you will be aware, we extended the deadline until 06 April. We could not extend the deadline further in order to allow enough time for collating and analysing the results. In the end the questionnaire on IPA received 338 responses. This compares favourably with the public consultation on the future of all external EC funding (conducted by DG DEVCO), where the questionnaire received 220 replies.

We followed the same procedure for distributing the questionnaire in each IPA beneficiary country. In late February, all relevant Commission staff were made aware of the consultation. EC Heads of Operations and NIPACs were both asked to publicise the questionnaire amongst IPA stakeholders in each respective IPA country. We deliberately restricted information on the questionnaire to IPA stakeholders as some of the questions were complex, and they all required prior knowledge of IPA's existing structures and practices.

The main vehicle for consulting stakeholders was the questionnaire. In addition, the consultants made a small number of field visits, mainly to interview NIPACs, and they conducted a number of telephone interviews and video conferences. We did not have the time or resources to organise focus groups or large meetings in the beneficiary countries.

Nevertheless, the stakeholders' contributions to the questionnaire are extensive and valuable, and will certainly contribute towards the Commission's proposal for a revised pre-accession instrument. This proposal will be submitted to the Council and the Parliament in the last quarter of 2011, and will be the subject of negotiations in the legislative bodies during 2012.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Schumann-Hitzler', written in a cursive style.

Gerhard SCHUMANN-HITZLER

Cc: Mr Rudiger Boogert