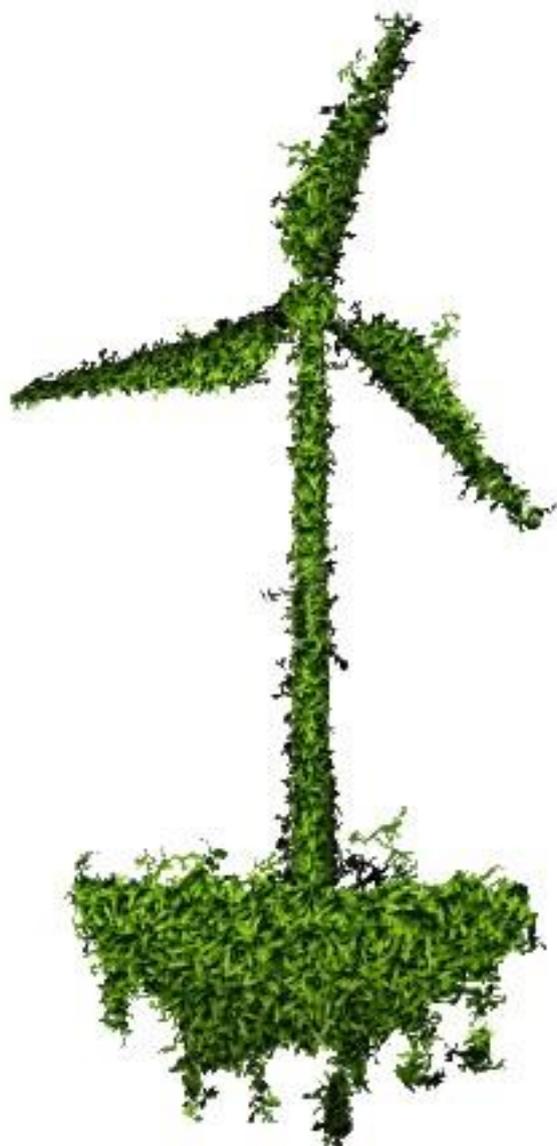


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Analysis of national strategies of the Republic of Macedonia in terms of alignment with climate change issues



Center for environmental research and information Eko-svest | Nevena Smilevska

**Analysis of national strategies of
The Republic of Macedonia in terms of
alignment with climate change issues**
- English language summary-

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Summary

The aim of this analysis is to give an overview of three national strategies and to find whether these strategies have properly addressed climate change issues. The three reviewed strategies are the energy strategy, the transport strategy and the biodiversity strategy of the Republic of Macedonia. The analysis reflects the views of several civil society organisations from Macedonia about the need for including concrete measures for climate change adaptation and mitigation into national strategies. It is intended to present these views to national decision makers, as well as to the general public.

The original Macedonian language document consists of five parts:

1. Introduction – presenting the objective of the analysis;
2. Overview of national strategies – a brief description of national strategies;
3. Climate change issues in the national strategies – an overview of the level of alignment with climate change issues;
4. Conclusion – a brief presentation of the findings from this analysis; and
5. Recommendations – key measures and activities to be undertaken regarding each of the three national strategies, including revision of the strategies.

This analysis was conducted as part of the project “Climate initiatives in Macedonia” which was implemented by Eko-svest in the period March – December 2012 and financially supported by the Air Pollution and Climate Secretariat (AirClim).

The strategies for the sectors of energy, transport and biodiversity were chosen for analysing as these sectors either have the greatest impact on climate change or are impacted the most by it. The finding was that all three strategies have chapters on climate change where climate change is identified as an issue. However, these chapters only raise the concern of climate change identifying environmental protection and climate change as a very important issue (in more or less detail), but lack concrete climate change adaptation or mitigation measures.

In the following pages the recommendations developed based on this analysis are given.

As this is just a summary of the original analysis, for more information about the original please contact us at info@ekosvest.com.mk.

Recommendations

Having in mind that climate change is no longer a disputed issue, but is happening here and now, the problems it causes are not only of the utmost importance, but are also very urgent. Therefore, the intention of this document which presents the views of civil society organisations working in the field of environment is to give a set of recommendations for revising the three strategies from the point of view of climate change as soon as possible. An emphasis is put on a much more serious and thorough approach when including climate change issues in the strategies, especially when identifying measures for adaptation to climate change or mitigation measures. These measures and solutions should be based on the best practice available and on worldwide experience.

Of the utmost importance is the need for creating measures and mechanisms for constant monitoring of the effects of climate change. Furthermore, the results of this monitoring should be constantly and freely available to the public, which in turn will have a beneficial effect on raising the awareness for these activities.

Below are presented the recommendations of the project team which were made in consultation with experts and civil society organisations working in the field of environment.

General recommendations for all strategies:

- The public and the civil society sector should be included in all stages of preparation of strategies, including the inception phase, and their opinions and comments should be taken into serious consideration, instead of being only provisionally taken into account.
- It is the view of civil society organisations that, due to the aspirations of the Republic of Macedonia for membership in the EU, when creating the development vision for the state, the Government should take into account not only the EU 2020 goals, but also the guidelines for 2050. The document “Roadmap 2050²” is a great example of these guidelines. It is a communication of the European Commission to several EU institutions and it gives guidelines for moving towards a low carbon, competitive economy until 2050.

1 Biodiversity

- Prepare a study for assessing the impact of global climate change on biodiversity in Macedonia, as well as establish measures for adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change. The study should assess not only the impact of climate change from the point of view of protection and development of biodiversity, but also to assess the economic impact through valorisation of the effects of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems;
- Integrate the demands of all relevant conventions which are connected with biodiversity protection, including the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, as well as the UN Framework convention on climate change (UNFCCC) in the new strategy for protection of biodiversity. Furthermore, make sure basic biodiversity protection and conservation measures in the new strategy include adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change, as well as all relevant findings from National reports of Macedonia to the UNFCCC;

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0112:FIN:EN:PDF>

- Ensure good intersectoral and interministerial cooperation in the preparation of all policy documents and strategies that can influence biodiversity in any way. This is of particular importance for sectors that have a conflict of interest with the protection of biodiversity because of using natural resources for economic purposes and for large infrastructural developments;
- Raise the capacities of institutions in charge of designing and implementing concrete measures for protection and adaptation of biodiversity to climate change.

2 Energy

- Increase intersectoral cooperation in order to avoid conflicts between various strategies related to the same regions. Furthermore, the inherent conflict between the biodiversity and energy strategies requires analysing the list of potential hydro energy projects (small and large hydro power plants) in terms of their potential individual and cumulative impact on the environment³. The recommendation of the civil society sector with regard to this is that projects which have the greatest adverse effect on the environment or are in serious conflict with environmental protection should be discarded as not favourable for the progress of Macedonia;
- Review the ecologically improved scenario (third scenario considered in the Energy strategy) or prepare a new “green” scenario in the course of preparing the Third national communication on climate change (which is on-going parallel to this analysis). The improved scenario or the new “green” scenario should be based on a seriously increased use of new renewable energy sources (solar, geothermal and wind power as energy sources, and local use of waste biomass from agriculture for heating) without any technical, social or other limitations and should be seriously promoted instead of the “black” scenario based on coal;
- Intensify energy efficiency in all sectors as a key strategy for saving energy in Macedonia;
- Ensure that the regular revision of the energy strategy is conducted with broad public participation and with the participation and cooperation of the civil society sector organisations which are active in the fields of environmental protection and climate change issues.

3 Transport

- Modernise the transport vehicles used in public transport in larger cities, such as Bitola, Tetovo, Ohrid, Kumanovo and others. This will contribute to lowering the levels of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions not only from the public transport, but from the private vehicles as well, due to their reduced intensity of usage;
- Improve planning, organisation and control of public transport, with an accent on urban planning which reduces the number of vehicles in the central city areas and stimulates the use of public transport; create parking policies which do not allow for occupation of parking spaces for longer periods of time; create new pedestrian zones; reroute the necessity of traffic in city centres by proper spatial planning; introduce low emission zones, etc.;
- Promote railway transport and improvement of railway services, while at the same time reducing investments in road transport. This action would significantly reduce GHG emissions;
- Stimulate bicycle transport and establish good walking conditions;
- Prepare an environmental protection plan for the transport sector with an emphasis on adaptation and mitigation of climate change effects that stem from this sector.

³ To this effect, it is the view of civil society organisations that a comparison should be made between the economic gain of the projects on one side, and all other losses, such as ecosystem service losses, health care risks and expenses, etc. on the other side, and to prepare a list of development projects with minimal impact that are economically viable and desirable.

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