 <p>MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 1 of 12

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF IPARD III MONITORING COMMITTEE
Minutes number 3
Minutes from the THIRD meeting of the IPARD III Monitoring Committee
20 June 2024/ Hotel "GORSKE OČI", Žabljak

I. List of participants (attached to Minutes):

Meeting was attended by the IPARD III Monitoring Committee members, as well as the representatives of the European Commission and EU Delegation in Montenegro. Meeting was not attended by representatives of the Ministry of Public Administration, the Ministry of Transport and Maritime Affairs, the Community of Municipalities of Montenegro, NGO "Green home", the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Urbanism and State Property, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, the Statistical office of Montenegro - Monstat, the Chamber of Commerce, the Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management - University of Montenegro, the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering - University of Montenegro, the National Association of Winemakers and Vinegrowers of Montenegro, the Centre for Agro development - Bijelo Polje, the Control and Certification Body "Monteorganica", the Association of Private Forest Owners, the Association of Agricultural Fruit and Vegetable Producers "Ratar", the Association of Producers "Domaće voće Poblaće" and the "Association of Marikultura".

Result:


Quorum was fulfilled, so the meeting could be held and decisions can be taken (25 members or their substitutes with voting rights were present out of 43 members with voting rights).

Attachment: Apart from the short list of the participants explained in Minutes, attached is the list of participants divided as:


1. Voting members (concluding with number 43.);
2. Non-voting members (from number 1 to 6 second table);
3. Representatives of the European Commission with advisory role and observers (from number 1 to 3 third table).

This is necessary to show that sufficient number of members is present and the meeting can be organized.


II. Agenda

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0
	Page 2 of 12


No. items	Provisional time	Content	Informative /Need agreement /Need approval /Need opinion of the IMC members	Responsibility
1.	11:00-11:10	Opening of the meeting; Approval of the Agenda Information on changes to the Decision of the IMC, Reason: New appointments and institutional changes in Montenegro	Need approval	Andrija Delić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson
2.	11:10-11:20	Short introduction by European Commission (DG AGRI)	Informative	Frank Bollen, Head of Unit G4 - Neighbourhood, enlargement and pre-accession assistance of DG AGRI/European Commission
3.	11:20-11:25	Adoption of the minutes of the previous IPARD monitoring committee (IMC) meeting (attached to the Agenda) and information on the implementation of decisions taken at the previous IPARD III monitoring committee meeting	Need approval	Andrija Delić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0
	Page 3 of 12


4.	11:25-11:35	State of play of the implementation of IPARD III	Informative	Dick van Dijk, DG AGRI/European Commission
5.	11:35-11:45	State of play of the implementation of the IPARD III programme	Informative	Andrijana Rakočević, Head of the IPARD Managing Authority/Director General of Directorate for Rural Development
6.	11:45-12:00	Presentation on the state of implementation of the first IPARD public calls for Measure 7, sub-measures 7.1 and 7.2 (general information on implementation based on monitoring tables and call results; report on approved/rejected projects)	Informative	Marko Radonjić, Head of the IPARD Agency/Director General of Directorate for payments
7.	12:00-12:15	State of play of the implementation of the IPARD II programme	Informative	Marko Radonjić, Head of the IPARD Agency/Director General of Directorate for payments
8.	12:15-12:30	Presentation of the Annual Implementation Report for 2023	Informative	Zoran Irić, Head of Division for Monitoring and Evaluation of IPARD

 <p>MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	<p>DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT</p>	
<p>IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY</p>	<p>Version: 1.0</p>	<p>Page 4 of 12</p>

9.	12:30-12:45	Modification of IPARD III programme - version 1.2.	Need approval	Miloš Kusovac, Head of Division for Programming
10.	12:45-12:55	<p>Information about the communication activities linked to the 'plan of visibility and communication activities for IPARD programme for the period from previous IMC meeting (7th December 2023.)</p> <p>Approval of the Realization of the Annual List of Activities 2023 - Visibility and Communication Activities Plan for the IPARD III Programme</p>	Need approval	<p>Nina Jakić, Head of Division for Technical Assistance and Public Relations (PR) of Rural Development</p>
11.	12:55-13:05	<p>Presentation of some of the members of the IPARD III monitoring committee</p>	Informative	<p>1. Svetlana Šjivančanin, acting general director of the Directorate for Tourism Development and Drafting of Tourism Regulations in the Ministry of Tourism 2. Nataša Vojinović, Director Assistant of the Sector for Statistics of Agriculture, Fisheries, Business Statistics and Environment and Forestry of the Statistical Office of Montenegro-MONSTAT</p>
12.	13:05-13:30	Discussion		

 <p data-bbox="389 1480 487 1869"> MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management </p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 5 of 12

13.	13:30	Proposals for a date and the Agenda of the next meeting	Informative
14.	13:45	Lunch - Visit IPARD beneficiary	
15.	17:00	Departure for Podgorica by bus	

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 6 of 12

III. Result of the IPARD III meeting

In accordance with point 1 of the Agenda: Opening of the meeting, Adoption of the Agenda

- **Andrija Delić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson** of the IPARD III monitoring committee, opened the meeting and presented the Agenda.

Decision no.1


- Agenda was adopted.
- All 25 members with voting rights voted YES for adoption.

In accordance with point 2 of the Agenda: Short introduction by European Commission (DG AGRI)

- **Frank Bollen, Head of Unit G4 - Neighbourhood, enlargement and pre-accession assistance of DG AGRI/European Commission:** he greeted the present members of the IMC and expressed his satisfaction that this meeting was organized in the northern part of Montenegro and especially welcomed the initiative and the opportunity for the members to visit IPARD recipients. In his presentation, he referred to the activities started regarding the IPARD III programme, where two public calls were announced, and the third was announced the day before in the company "Agromont". He recalled the financial agreement concluded in February with the Government of Montenegro, and that in April the first tranche in the amount of about 4,2 million euros was released for the pre-financing of the IPARD III programme. He also welcomed the visible progress in the number of recipients of the IPARD programme who have applications of ever better quality. He invited all those present to take an active part, given that one of the points is the adoption of modification to the IPARD III programme, and that today is a unique opportunity for representatives of agricultural associations to take part in the discussion. Also, the first amendments to the IPARD III programme were adopted last year. At the end of the presentation, he reminded of the remaining part from the IPARD II programme in the amount of 14 million euros of the funds that need to be spent by the end of the year and called on all present to make additional efforts in order to spend these funds.

In accordance with point 3 of the Agenda: Adoption of the Minutes from the previous meeting of the IPARD III Monitoring Committee (annex to the Agenda) and the report on the follow-up of the decisions made at the previous meeting of the IPARD III Monitoring Committee

- **Andrija Delić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson** of the IPARD III monitoring committee stated that the Minutes were sent to all members of the IPARD III Monitoring Committee within the stipulated period and that there were no comments on the Minutes in question.

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 7 of 12

Decision no.2


- Minutes from the previous meeting of IPARD III MC were approved.
- All 25 members with voting rights voted YES for adoption.

In accordance with the point 4 of the Agenda: State of play of the implementation of IPARD III

- **Dick van Dijk, DG AGRI/European Commission, Programme manager** in his presentation, he made an overview of the situation after the first quarter of all five beneficiary countries in the implementation of the IPARD III programme, based on which he also gave a comparative analysis of state of play of the implementation of IPARD in Montenegro. At the beginning, he referred to the implementation of the IPARD II programme, which ends on December 31, 2024. He also emphasized that, out of the original 39 million euros, Montenegro had around 37 million euros at its disposal, of which it used 23 million euros, and that it have to spend 14 million euros by the end of the year. He then referred to the implementation of the IPARD III programme, where he pointed out that North Macedonia and Turkey are fully entrusted with the execution of payments, while Montenegro still has obligations (obligations related to the implementation of ISO standards and IT) in order to receive full accreditation. Albania is in a special situation, as could be heard from the media, and all processes have been stopped until the investigation is completed. Then, Mr. Van Dijk gave an overview of the published public calls for measures, and reminded that Montenegro closed two public calls and the day before announced the publication of a new public call for Measure 3. After that, a review was made of the amounts for pre-financing of the IPARD III programme, whereby Montenegro was granted 4.2 million euros. In his further presentation, he reviewed the accreditation plan for new measures through the IPARD III programme. Also, at the end, he recalled the legally binding rules of visibility that must be observed. Failure to comply with the visibility conditions is a breach of the grant agreement and could lead to sanctions, but this is part of the on-the-spot verification by the IPARD agency as well as the Audit Authority.

In accordance with point 5 of the Agenda: State of play of the implementation of IPARD III

- **Andrijana Rakočević, Head of the IPARD Managing Authority/ Director General of Directorate for Rural Development**, presented the activities undertaken in order to implement the IPARD III programme, which was adopted on June 29, 2022. She reminded that this programme has already undergone one change so far, and that the re-accreditation procedure of measures M1, M3 and M7 from the IPARD III programme is underway. Also, the accreditation package for M9 was sent to the EC. In the further presentation, she presented the initiated activities on the preparation of the accreditation package for M4 - Agri-environment-climate and organic farming measure, while the accreditation package for M6 - Investments in rural public infrastructure was submitted to the NAO. Mrs. Rakočević informed the audience that two public calls have been published: The first public call for the allocation of financial support for Measure 7 "Diversification of farms and business development", sub-measure 7.1 " Support of investments for development of rural tourism " (March 21, 2024) and the first public call for the allocation of financial support funds for sub-measure 7.2

 <p style="text-align: center;">MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 8 of 12


"Support of investments for on farm processing " of the Programme (April 11, 2024). Also, the third public call will be published on June 27, 2024 - M3 - "Investments in physical assets concerning processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products". At the very end, she recalled the realization of the Twinning project "Strengthening the capacity in the sector of agriculture and rural development for the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy in Montenegro", where we have 1.9 million euros at our disposal and emphasized that thanks to the expert missions, we had significant help in the preparation of the calculations for Measure 4.

In accordance with point 6 of the Agenda: Presentation on the state of implementation of the first IPARD public calls for Measure 7, sub-measures 7.1 and 7.2 (general information on implementation based on monitoring tables and call results; report on approved/rejected projects)

- **Marko Radonjić, Head of the IPARD Agency/Director General of the Directorate for Payments**, in his presentation, he pointed out that the beginning of the implementation of the IPARD III programme began through the publication of a public call through sub-measure 7.1, and informed those present that 161 requests for support were received at the address of the Directorate for Payments, with a total investment amount including VAT of over EUR 31 million, while support in the amount of over EUR 16 million was requested. The administrative controls of the requests have already started and, judging by the submitted documentation, maturity can be seen in the preparation of the documentation itself. Mr. Radonjić presented the municipal division in relation to submitted requests for submeasure 7.1. where Nikšić leads the way, with 30 submitted requests, followed by Žabljak (23), then Mojkovac (20), Plužine (18), Kolašin (15) and Bijelo Polje (14). Most of the projects are from municipalities in the north of Montenegro, 123 of them to be exact. Regarding submeasure 7.2. the situation is different when it comes to regional division. Of the 18 submitted requests, as many as 13 are from the municipalities of the central region, 4 each from Nikšić and Podgorica. As for the sectoral division, in relation to Measure 3, where the milk and meat processing sectors are dominant, here most projects refer to the plant processing sector. At the end, he reminded about the activities that follow; Measure 3, the publication of which has been announced, the publication of a new public call for Measure 1 during the summer of this year, and the accreditation of new measures.

In accordance with item 7 of the Agenda: State of play of the implementation of the IPARD II programme

- **Marko Radonjić, Head of the IPARD Agency/Director General of the Directorate for Payments**, in his presentation, during the review of the implementation of the IPARD II programme, he informed those present that a total of 919 projects have been contracted so far. In the previous period, projects from the Fifth Public Call through Measure 1 were also contracted, where 297 projects were contracted, which is the largest number of contracted projects per call. So far, almost EUR 25 million of EU support has been paid, which is half of what was contracted. Payment requests arrive daily, so it is expected that all submitted payment requests will be paid by the end of the year. To this end, in order to allow more time for the realization of investments, the deadlines for the realization of investments through the First public call for sub-measure 7.1 and the Fifth public call through

 <p>MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 9 of 12

Measure 1 were extended by one month each. For now, 73 requests for payment are being processed.

Mr. Radonjić informed those present about the future steps, so in addition to the activities concerning the payment of recipients through IPARD II by the end of the year, and the work on contracting new recipients through IPARD III, as well as the publication of new public calls, there are ongoing activities regarding the accreditation of new measures and additional employment of people who will implement these measures. Montenegro will very soon officially submit the request for accreditation of Measure 4, which refers to agro-ecological measures, and the package of procedures for Measure 6, which refers to investments in public rural infrastructure which has already been submitted to the Ministry of Finance for comments..


In accordance with Article 8 of the Agenda: Presentation of the Annual Implementation Report for 2023

- **Zoran Irić, Head of Division for Monitoring and Evaluation of IPARD**, in his presentation, he informed those present that the IPARD Managing Authority, in accordance with Article 59 of the Sectoral Agreement between the European Commission and the Government of Montenegro, prepared an annual report on the implementation of the IPARD II programme for the year 2023. The report, which in a written procedure, was sent to the members of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee for comments. There were no comments within the deadline, except for a few suggestions that will be considered in subsequent reports, and the report was adopted in that format. When talking about the implementation of the IPARD II programme in 2023, the structure of disbursed projects by measure and support structure (EU/national part) is presented in more detail, as well as an overview of disbursed projects by year (2019-2023).

In addition, the regional structure of disbursed projects by measures and support structure (EU/national part) is presented. Bearing in mind that in the previous period it was possible to finance projects using advance and interim payment mechanisms, details were presented about the number of users who used this mechanism to invest in their projects in 2023, and in anticipation of an increasing number of users who will use it in the future opportunities like this. In the end, he reminded that since we are entering the last year of the implementation of the IPARD II programme, after which, in accordance with the assumed obligations, it is necessary to carry out the final evaluation (ex-post) of the IPARD II programme, the activities that will precede the creation of this document have been announced.

In accordance with Article 9 of the Agenda: Modification of IPARD III programme - version 1.2.

- **Miloš Kusovac, Head of Division for Programming**, during the presentation, he presented the current changes related to the IPARD III programme. In accordance with the procedure, modification to the IPARD III programme ver. 1.2, in such a way that the members of the IPARD III monitoring committee were invited to submit proposals for programme changes. The received proposals were considered and included in the proposal for changes, which is subject to adoption. Part of the

 <p style="text-align: center;">MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 10 of 12

changes refers to technical changes (change of names of ministries, numbering of tables), changes to the text in the introductory part of the programme, as well as changes to the IPARD measures themselves.

With Measure 1, the changes refer to the definition of the user, specific and other eligibility criteria, non-productive investments, acceptable costs and the ranking system of received requests. The changes to Measure 3 are minor and refer to the clarification of the recipients of the support, while the changes to Measure 4 refer to the clarification of the period in which additional obligations are assumed, the level of payment, the initial balance and additional obligations (changes made in accordance with the recommendations of twinning experts).

When it comes to Measure 5, the term of the territory that can access the LAG was additionally clarified, while the changes to Measure 6 refer to common and specific criteria, acceptable investments and the ranking system of received requests.


Measure 7 has undergone considerable changes in the definition of recipients (potential recipients of sub-measures 7.1 and 7.2 must prove that they are entitled to basic payments in the year before the announcement of the public call), the investment possibilities of recipients below 600 above sea level have been further clarified. At the suggestion of members of the IPARD Monitoring Committee, the meat processing sector was included as part of sub-measure 7.2, while the criterion that the recipient is an agricultural insurer was introduced as a criterion when ranking the received requests. As an additional clarification, Annex 2 - Classification of rural and mountainous areas has been amended in a way that will enable the smooth issuance of the requested documentation.

Decision number 3

- Modification of IPARD III programme - version 1.2 was adopted
- All 25 members with voting rights voted YES for the adoption.

In accordance with Article 10 of the Agenda: Information about the communication activities linked to the plan of visibility and communication activities for IPARD programme for the period from previous IMC meeting (7th December 2023.) - Approval of the Realization of the Annual List of Activities 2023 - Visibility and Communication Activities Plan for the IPARD III Programme

- **Nina Jakić**, Head of Division for Technical Assistance and Public Relations (PR) of Rural Development, she informed the attendees about the promotional activities after the last IMC meeting. Promotional activities for the IPARD III programme were carried out in accordance with the Plan for the publication of Public Calls for 2024, and two public calls were published for Measure 7 (sub-measure 7.1 intended for investments in rural tourism and sub-measure 7.2 intended for investments in agricultural processing), which were announced 45 days before the publication of the Public Call at the official conference organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, in cooperation with the Delegation of the European Union in Montenegro, at the company "Šahović" in Tuzi on the occasion of the announcement of the first Public Call for Measure 7 within the IPARD III programme. Before the publication of the Public Call on February 8, 2024, an information


 <p style="text-align: center;">MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 11 of 12

campaign began where workshops were held in all local governments attended by over 1,000 interested potential users. 1000 leaflets and 1 roll up were printed in order to promote this public call, which was published on March 21, 2024. During the information campaign, which was organized in the weeks before the publication of the Public Call, the IPARD Open Door Days were also marked in Podgorica, after which all future recipients were informed about opportunities regarding all IPARD measures. The first public call for the allocation of financial support funds for sub-measure 7.2 "Support for investments for processing on the farm" was published on April 11, 2024, and the deadline for submitting applications lasted until June 11, 2024. Representatives of the Ministry started an information campaign for this sub-measure before the publication of the Public Call, i.e. March 28, 2024, where this sub-measure was presented in all municipalities. For promotion purposes, 500 leaflets were printed and distributed to potential users and 1 roll-up was made for Measure 7. In May, on the occasion of the celebration the Month of Europe, representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications took part in a series of various events in several municipalities, under the slogan "European tour", so Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management participated in the events in Žabljak, and representatives of the IPARD structure and the EU Delegation in Petnjica visited a recipient of IPARD support. Also, IPARD users presented their products at stands during the central event in Podgorica. There were talks about activities related to the publication of the new issue of the IPARD ZA TEBE newsletter, participation in the fair of European projects organized by the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, etc. At the end, she informed those present that June 19, 2024. - The MAFWM organized a conference on the announcement of the publication of the First public call for Measure 3 "Investments in physical assets concerning processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products" which was organized at the company "Agromont" in Martinići (Danilovgrad). The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management Vladimir Joković, Frank Bollen - Head of Unit G4 - Neighborhood, enlargement and pre-accession assistance of DG AGRI/European Commission and executive director of company "Agromont" Luka Jokić as a recipient of IPARD support spoke at the mentioned conference. After short statements, a tour of the investment on the mentioned farm, which was realized with funds from the IPARD programme, was organized. Further, she informed about numerous guest appearances by MAFWM employees on state and local TV and radio stations, a total of 368 announcements (58 newspaper announcements, 89 TV reports and 221 announcements on portals).

Decision number 4

- Realization of the Annual List of Activities 2023 - Visibility and Communication Activities Plan for the IPARD III Programme
- All 25 members with voting rights voted YES for the adoption.


In accordance with item 11 of the Agenda: Presentation of two members of the IPARD III Monitoring Committee

 <p style="text-align: center;">MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 12 of 12


- **Olivera Blagojević Popović, Head of the Directorate for Investments in the Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern,** presented the most significant activities from the aspect of linking rural tourism and agriculture, especially referring to the financial support provided by the relevant ministries in order to improve quality and service through the diversification of the tourist offer. Mrs. Popović informed the audience that the Regional Development Strategy of Montenegro 2023-2027 had been adopted, as well as the support that is committed to the development of rural tourism through Public Calls implemented by this Ministry. Also, there was talk about the workshops that were conducted with the aim of educating rural households on the subject of recording turnover through the fiscal service, as well as about the awards that were given to the best rural households.
- **The chairman, Mr. Andrija Delić,** gave an explanation regarding the absence of another member who was supposed to present herself at today's meeting - Nataša Vojinović, assistant director of the Sector for Statistics of Agriculture, Fisheries, Business Statistics and Environment and Forestry of the Directorate for Statistics of Montenegro-MONSTAT, which is justifiably absent due to the procedure for adopting the Law on the Census of Agriculture.

In accordance with point 12 of Agenda: Discussion

- **Vučko Pešić, president of the Rural tourism association "Tourism in villages",** referred to the difficulties regarding the realization of credit funds from the IRF, recognizing this as a special difficulty for smaller agricultural producers. He also commented on the topic of focalization of rural households and stated that he believes that our households should be the last to apply this kind of recording service. Mr. Pešić noted that there was a lot of non-compliance during the preparation of technical documentation for sub-measure 7.1.
- **Milko Živković, President of the Union of livestock breeders of Northern part of Montenegro,** he thanked for the initiative to organize this meeting of the IMC in the northern part of Montenegro. In his presentation, he referred to a number of topics, among other things, he particularly emphasized that additional efforts should be made in order to retain and bring young people to live in the countryside. He expressed special interest in the measure that will be intended for investments in public rural infrastructure, while he believes that we should prepare well in order to make the best use of additional funds. Mr. Živković suggested that it is necessary to remove all administrative barriers concerning the Evaluation Commission for reference prices, since it has been noticed that this is one important item that slows down the process. Also, since there was talk about rural tourism, he emphasized that it is important to have an adequate supply of healthy food, but that it is also important to preserve the environment, since a large number of tourists visit our areas on motorcycles, which is not allowed in other countries. In the end, he welcomed the agriculture census that follows as well as the campaign that was carried out for Measure 7, which is evident from the number of applications received.

 <p style="text-align: center;">MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 13 of 12

- **Željko Macanović, President of the Association "Zdravo zrno"**, in his presentation, gave an overview of the quick implementation of the investment in the procurement of tractors thanks to the funds of IPARD, but that he had a problem with the realization of credit funds from the IRF. Mr. Macanović pointed out that the aggravating circumstance is that it is necessary to "mortgage one's grandfather's property" in order to obtain credit and stated that in this sense he considers it necessary to establish a guarantee fund for these purposes.
- **Ivan Mališić, Coordinator of the Department for Loans and Guarantees at the Investment and Development Fund**, pointed out that he is pleased by the fact that people are maturing and that the number of quality IPARD applications is increasing. Also, he emphasized the problem that the previous members pointed out, which is mass desertion of the village and that he is afraid that there will be no one to take advantage of all these measures. Mr. Mališić emphasized that he believes that with a strategic approach, all actors can profit from the introduction of fiscal policies on rural households, but that they should be introduced at the moment when those households are sufficiently strengthened. In addition, he emphasized the importance of education in all spheres, especially in terms of the construction of tourist facilities in rural areas, which are currently being built and are not environmentally compatible.
- **Spasoje Vujošević, Coordinator of the Department for Loans and Guarantees at the Investment and Development Fund**, during the discussion pointed out that the IRF, in cooperation with the representatives of the Ministry, really made additional efforts to realize funds for investments for Measure 1, where 120 loans have been approved to date, while 30 more in the procedure. Finally, he informed the audience that he hopes that the IRF will soon grow into the National Development Bank, so that it will be possible to eliminate certain aggravating conditions through legal solutions.
- **Andrijana Rakočević, Head of the IPARD Managing Authority/Director General of Directorate for Rural Development**, referred to a number of topics that emerged from the discussion and explained that this Ministry launched an initiative with the Ministry of Finance regarding the provision of certain reliefs during the introduction of fiscal policy for rural households, but that so far no concrete solution has been obtained. Also, she reminded that earlier there was talk of passing the Law on the formation of a guarantee fund and that this ministry made a proposal to find a way to ease the conditions for obtaining loans in agreement with the IRF.
She emphasized that during the meeting of the management structure of IPARD and the management of IRF, a certain relief was agreed when it comes to investments of up to 50,000 euros and now it is no longer approved by the Board of Directors, which significantly speeds up the process. Then, she referred to Measure 6 intended for investments in public rural infrastructure, and informed those present about a series of activities carried out in order to prepare the accreditation package and the preparation of local self-governments that are potential recipients of this measure.
- **Marko Radonjić, Director General of the Directorate for Payments/Head of the IPARD Agency**, reminded those present that the Government of Montenegro has provided a guarantee that all

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTORATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT	
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 1.0	Page 14 of 12

projects received through the fifth public call for M1 will be contracted, since the potential support through the same is significantly greater compared to the available funds through this measure. In this way, we avoided the process of ranking and potential rejection of the recipient by the Government of Montenegro in order to secure funds that were not available to us at the time of contracting the projects. He also referred to the Commission for reference prices and pointed out that it has been strengthened with a new number of members in order to finish projects faster, and due to market changes in prices for certain projects, additional assessments were made. He invited the present representatives of various associations to apply with good projects, saying that the IPARD management structure is ready to implement the available funds in the best possible way.

- **Frank Bollen, Head of the pre-accession unit for the neighborhood, enlargement and pre-accession assistance/European Commission**, reminded the audience that the European Commission provided Montenegro with additional time for the realization of the investments that will be contracted from the IPARD II programme, but also reminded that these funds are to be spend by the end of this year. At the end of the presentation, he reminded of the 63 million that Montenegro received through the IPARD III programme, which is about 60% more compared to the previous programming period, so he invited all those present to use their time wisely, encouraging the authorities, agricultural producers as well as everyone present to do everything in their power to use this money.

In accordance with point 13 of Agenda: Proposals for date and agenda for the next meeting

- **Andrija Delić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson** of the IPARD III monitoring committee, proposed that the date for the next meeting be in the end of this year, about which the members of the IPARD III Monitoring Committee will be informed in a timely manner.

Signatures

CHAIRPERSON OF IPARD III MC	FOR SECRETARIAT:
<i>Mr. Andrija Delić</i>	<i>Mrs. Andrijana Rakočević</i>
<i>Position: State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson of the IPARD III monitoring committee</i>	<i>Position: Head of the IPARD Managing Authority, General Director directorate for rural development,</i>
Signature: 	Signature: 
Date: 29.07.2024.	Date: 29.07.2024.

Attachment: List of participants