 <p>MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS	
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0	Page 1 of 13

<p>MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF IPARD II MONITORING COMMITTEE Meeting number 7 Minutes from the seventh meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee 26th July 2021/ Video conference/Hotel Verde Complex, Donja Gorica bb, 81 000 Podgorica</p>

I. List of participants (attached to Minutes):

Due to the situation caused by the COVID 19 virus, the meeting was held via the Zoom platform, while some members attended the meeting in the hall of the Voco Hotel.

Meeting was attended by the IPARD II monitoring committee members, as well as the representatives of the European Commission and EU Delegation in Montenegro. Most of the members followed the meeting through the Zoom platform, while representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management were present in the hall, as well as a representative of the Directorate for Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Affairs.


Result:

Quorum was fulfilled, so the meeting could be held and decisions can be taken (16 members or their substitutes with voting rights were present from 27 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 27)
2. Non-voting members (from number 28 to and including 33.)
3. Observers (number 34 to 36.)

II. Agenda

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0
	Page 2 of 13

Agenda of the meeting

AGENDA


Seventh IPARD II Monitoring Committee meeting (Video Conference)

Date: Monday 26th July 2021

Time: 10:00

Place: Video conference

No. items	Provisional time	Content	Informative /Need agreement /Need approval /Need opinion of the IMC members	Responsibility
1.	10:00-10:10	Opening of the meeting; Approval of the Agenda and check of list of members/representatives (attached to the agenda)	Need approval	Nebojša Veličković, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson
2.	10:10-10:15	Adoption of the minutes of the previous IPARD monitoring committee (MC) meeting (attached to the agenda) and information on the implementation of decisions taken at the previous IPARD II monitoring committee meeting	Need approval	Nebojša Veličković, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS	
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0	Page 3 of 13

3.	10:15-10:20	Adoptions of the amendments of the Rules of procedures of the monitoring committee for the IPARD II programme for Montenegro (IPARD II Monitoring Committee meeting), article 3 "Appointment and structure of the committee" because of the institutional changes in Montenegro	Need approval	Nebojša Veličković, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Chairperson
4.	10:20-10:35	Introduction European Commission (DG AGRI)	Informative	Marius Lazdinis, acting Head of Unit - Pre-accession assistance DG AGRLE5.
No.items	Provisional time	Content	Informative /Need agreement /Need approval /Need opinion of the IMC members	Responsibility
5.	10:35 –10:45	Update on preparations for IPARD III programme	Informative	Zoran Irić ¹ , Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development.

¹ In accordance with the Substitution Plan, in case of absence General Director /Head of Managing Authority, this position will be covered by the Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development



MONTENEGRO
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management


DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS

MANAGING AUTHORITY

Version: 2.0

Page 4 of 13

				Miloš Kusovac, Head of Department for Programming
6.	10:45-10:55	Presentation of the state of play for the FIRST and the SECOND IPARD call for Measure 1 (General information about programme/measure implementation on the basis of monitoring tables & results of calls; Report of approved/rejected projects)	Informative	Danka Perović, Head of the IPARD Agency/General director of Directorate for Payments
7.	10:55-11:05	Presentation of the state of play for the FIRST, SECOND and THIRD IPARD call for Measure 3 (General information about programme/measure implementation on the basis of monitoring tables & results of calls; Report of approved/rejected projects)	Informative	Danka Perović, Head of the IPARD Agency/General director of Directorate for Payments
8.	11:05-11:15	Information of the state of play for the FIRST IPARD call for measure 7	Informative	Zoran Irić ² , Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development,

 MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0
	Page 5 of 13

No.items	Provisional time	Provisional time	Content	Informative /Need agreement /Need approval /Need opinion of the IMC members
9.	11:15-11:30	<p>Information about the communication activities linked to the 'plan of visibility and communication activities for IPARD II programme' for the period from previous IMC meeting (20th November 2020.)</p> <p>Approval of the Realization of 'Plan of visibility and communication activities - Annual List of Actions - 2020'</p>	Need approval	<p>Danka Perović, Head of the IPARD Agency/General director of Directorate for Payments</p> <p>Zoran Irić, Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development</p>
10.	11:30-11:35	Presentation of the Annual implementation report 2020	Informative	<p>Zoran Irić, Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development</p>
11.	11:35-11:50	Presentation of some of the members of the IPARD II monitoring committee	Informative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Economic Development - Directorate for Industrial and Regional Development



MONTENEGRO
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management


DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS

MANAGING AUTHORITY

Version: 2.0

Page 6 of 13

					<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry of Economic Development - Directorate for Development Policies in Tourism• Regional Development Agency for Bjelasica, Komovi and Prokletije
12.	11:50-12:15	AOB			
13.	12:15-12:30	Proposals for a date and the agenda of the next meeting	Informative		

 <p>MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS	
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0	Page 7 of 13

III. Result of the IPARD II meeting

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

- **Nebojša Veličković, MsC**, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and Chairperson of the IPARD II MC opened the meeting and presented the Agenda.

Decision number 1

- Agenda was adopted.
- All 16 members with voting rights voted YES for the adoption.

In accordance with the point 2 of the Agenda: Adoption of the minutes of the previous IPARD monitoring committee (MC) meeting (attached to the agenda) and information on the implementation of decisions taken at the previous IPARD II monitoring committee meeting

- **Nebojša Veličković, MsC**, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and Chairperson of the IPARD II MC

The minutes were sent to all members of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee within the stipulated deadline. One comment was received by the Director General of the Payments Directorate, Ms. Danka Perović, which was accepted and included in the final version of the Minutes.

Decision number 2

- Minutes from the previous meeting of IPARD II MC were approved.
- All 16 members with voting rights voted YES for adoption.

In accordance with the point 3 of the Agenda: Adoptions of the amendments of the Rules of procedures of the monitoring committee for the IPARD II programme for Montenegro (IPARD II Monitoring Committee meeting), article 3 "Appointment and structure of the committee" because of the institutional changes in Montenegro

Nebojša Veličković, MsC, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and Chairperson of the IPARD II MC, due to institutional changes in Montenegro (merging of some Ministries into one or change of their names) it was necessary to make changes. It was emphasized that the mentioned Rules of Procedure were sent to all members of the Monitoring Committee, the version in the "track" and the consolidated text, on which there were no remarks or comments, and the proposed changes of the Rules of Procedure was adopted.



MONTENEGRO
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management

DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS

MANAGING AUTHORITY

Version: 2.0

Page 8 of 13

Decision number 3

- The amendments of the Rules of procedures of the monitoring committee for the IPARD II programme for Montenegro were approved.
- All 16 members with voting rights voted YES for adoption.

In accordance with the point 4 of the Agenda: Introduction European Commission (DG AGRI)

- **Marius Lazdinis, acting Head of Unit - Pre-accession assistance DG AGRI.E5**

At the beginning of the discussion, Mr. Lazdinis referred to the process of reorganization of work in DG AGRI and resolving personnel issues, due to the retirement of the current head with the expectation of the completion in September of the process started. He further referred to the process of adopting the EU budget, emphasizing that long talks were held, among other things, on the budget for financing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). To this end, 4 Regulations for the implementation of the CAP are being prepared.

In addition, Mr. Lazdinis referred to the "Green Agenda" for the countries of the Western Balkans, a strategy based on 5 pillars-goals, described in this document, which is the obligation of the countries of the Western Balkans in the implementation of their policies. Therefore, Montenegro has an obligation to participate in its implementation through projects in the areas of its policies.

The Framework Financial Partnership Agreement should be adopted by mid-September.

Mr. Lazdinis paid special attention to the dynamics of the development of the IPARD III program in Montenegro for the new programming period 2021-2027, explaining the current situation, to put it mildly, disappointing. There is an obvious problem with the preparation of sectoral studies, as well as the workload of the Managing Authority (Directorate for Rural Development), which has not had a Head for almost 6 months.


Mr. Lazdinis also mentioned that the insecurity of some employees is felt, due to the recent personnel changes.

The European Commission is in the final stage of adopting the Regulations for the implementation of the IPARD III program, the final draft of the program must be submitted to the Commission by the end of September so that it can be adopted by the end of the year. In case the program is not adopted by the end of the current year, Montenegro will find itself in a situation where the funds for the next programming period will not be approved. In addition, funds from 2017 and 2018, in the amount of about € 9 million, have not been spent and there is a risk, if we do not spend them by the end of the year, of losing these funds and returning them to the EU budget.

In addition, Mr. Lazdinis stressed that Montenegro is the only country that has not accredited and does not use the technical assistance measure.

Finally, Mr. Lazdinis expressed the readiness of DG AGRI to assist Montenegro in this process, as much as they can.

Nebojša Veličković, MsC, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and Chairperson of the IPARD II, introduced the new members of the monitoring committee from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, present at the meeting, and stressed that all employees are completely safe and that no one should feel insecure due to personnel changes. He also mentioned that in accordance with the personnel plan, new employments are planned in the Directorate for Rural Development.

 <p>MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS	
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0	Page 9 of 13

In accordance with the point 5 of the Agenda: Update on preparations for IPARD III programme

- **Miloš Kusovac, Head of Department for Programming**, presented the current situation in the development of the IPARD III program and the measures that are planned to be accredited for the upcoming programming period. He particularly referred to the documents that need to be completed for the IPARD III program, and the findings of which must be an integral part of the IPARD III program. These are sectoral studies, the Agricultural Development Strategy and the ex-ante evaluation of the program.
- **Dick Van Dijk, „desk officer“ for Montenegro in Pre-Accession Unit of DG AGRI/European Commission**, pointed out the problem of not using the technical assistance measure, which could hire experts to help with the development of the program, and asked at what stage is the IPARD III program, and when is the first draft of the document expected to be sent to the European Commission?
- **Miloš Kusovac, Head of Department for Programming**, also agreed that non-use of the technical assistance measure is a major shortcoming for Montenegro, which will be seek to accredit in the forthcoming programming period, and said that the first draft of the IPARD III program could be submitted to the Commission in late September.

In accordance with the points 6 and 7 of the Agenda: Presentation of the state of play for the FIRST and the SECOND IPARD call for Measure 1 and FIRST, SECOND and THIRD IPARD call for Measure 3 (General information about programme/measure implementation on the basis of monitoring tables & results of calls; Report of approved/rejected projects)

- **Danka Perović, Head of the IPARD Agency/Director General of Directorate for payments**, presented the results of previous public calls for measures 1 and 3, investment structure, regional and municipal distribution of support. Through two published calls for Measure 1 - Investments in primary production, 359 projects were contracted, so far 188 projects with support in the amount of € 4.06 million have been paid. For three public calls for Measure 3 - Investments in processing, 47 projects have been contracted, 10 projects have been paid so far, with support in the amount of € 2.2 million.

The overview of the main conclusion of the discussion:

- **Dick Van Dijk, „desk officer“ for Montenegro in Pre-Accession Unit of DG AGRI/European Commission**, commented on the value of the funds contracted so far in relation to the available funds and expressed concern that the money was not being spent. In that context, he asked two questions: what about advance payments, whether the



MONTENEGRO
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management

DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS

MANAGING AUTHORITY

Version: 2.0

Page 10 of 13

conditions are clear enough to all participants in the process or they need to be further emphasized, and another question, related to the fear that certain projects will be abandoned due to the economic downturn with COVID-19, what is the risk of that and is there a solution?

- **Danka Perović, Head of the IPARD Agency/Director General of Directorate for payments,** *Answer:* when it comes to advance payments, activities began in January 2021, both through introducing applicants or recipients to presentations of measures and in direct consultation with the Directorate for Payments. As a result of these activities, we have recipients of Measure 3, who have already signed annexes to the contract, while a bank or equivalent guarantee for individuals for Measure 1 is more difficult to provide. As for the fear that certain projects will be abandoned as a result of the investment risk in the current situation, so far there have been no requests for withdrawal other than the request for postponement of investments, ie. to extend the deadline.


In accordance with the point 8 of the Agenda: Information of the state of play for the FIRST IPARD call for measure 7

- **Zoran Irić , Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development,** briefly presented the first Public Call for Measure 7 - Farm Diversification and business development, submeasure 7.1. - Support of investments for development of rural tourism. The conditions and criteria for obtaining support, available funds and the level of support that can be achieved through this Public Call were presented.

In accordance with the point 9 of the Agenda: Information about the communication activities linked to the 'plan of visibility and communication activities for IPARD II programme' for the period from previous IMC meeting (20th November 2020.); Approval of the Realization of 'Plan of visibility and communication activities - Annual List of Actions – 2020'

- **Zoran Irić , Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development,** presented the activities that have been implemented for the purpose of promotion and visibility of the IPARD II program since the previous meeting (November 20, 2020). He reminded that the THIRD public call for Measure 3 was published on December 15. A press conference on the occasion of the announcement of the third Public Call for Measure 3 was held at the EU Info Center, where the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Mr. Aleksandar Stijović, and the Head of the EU Delegation to Montenegro, Ms. Oana-Cristina Popa spoke. Submission of applications for this Public Call was scheduled for March 15, 2021., but the deadline for submission was extended to 15.04.2021.

After the adoption of the Decree amending the Decree on the implementation and procedure of using funds from EU pre-accession assistance instruments, which includes measure 7 of the IPARD II program - Farm Diversification and business development, preconditions were

 <p>MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS	
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0	Page 11 of 13

created for publishing the FIRST Public Call for Measure 7, submeasure 7.1. Support of investments for development of rural tourism.

Public Call is announced and presented on 23.06.2021. by The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Mr. Aleksandar Stijović, and the Head of the Department for Cooperation in the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro, Mr. Hermann Spitz, at the EU Info Center. Mr. Zoran Irić emphasized that for the purposes of promoting the FIRST Public Call for Measure 7, roll-ups were prepared, material for clarification of procurement procedures, mandatory standards for recipients and a valid version of the Decree for implementation of measures 1, 3 and 7 were posted on the IPARD website. As part of the promotional activities, workshops were held for employees of the Directorates for Advisory Affairs in Plant Production and Livestock, as well as workshops in 19 Montenegrin municipalities, which were attended by more than 400 interested parties. A novelty in the part of the promotion is the sending of SMS messages to registered agricultural holdings, which was realized through the system established by the Ministry of Public Administration, Digital Society and Media, within which SMS was sent to more than 14,000 mobile phone numbers. The Realization of the Annual List of Activities for 2020 was presented.

Decision number 4


- "Realization of 'Plan of visibility and communication activities - Annual List of Actions – 2020' is adopted.
- All 16 members with voting rights voted YES for adoption.

In accordance with the point 10 of the Agenda: Presentation of the Annual implementation report 2020

- **Zoran Irić , Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development** emphasized that the Report had already been adopted by the Committee, and during the presentation he emphasized the most important things from the Report.

The overview of the main conclusion of the discussion:

- **Dick Van Dijk, „desk officer“ for Montenegro in Pre-Accession Unit of DG AGRI/European Commission**, stated that the Annual Report on the Implementation of the IPARD II Program has been received and that, if necessary, it will request additional clarifications. He stressed that the money provided by the EU for the implementation of the IPARD II program is a significant source of funding, and given that a number of projects have been contracted and paid so far and that even more are expected. The next report on implementation of the program is expected to assess the positive effects of using IPARD money: for example, relating to persons who have fully met EU standards, increased production, increased exports of some products (or less imports), and on the stay of young people in rural areas;

 <p style="text-align: center;">MONTENEGRO Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p>	DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS	
MANAGING AUTHORITY	Version: 2.0	Page 12 of 13

- **Zoran Irić, Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development**, emphasized that the Managing Authority and the Directorate for Payments have a large set of data at their disposal, which they will use for more detailed analyzes and which they will present in the next report.

In accordance with the point 11 of the Agenda: Presentation of some of the members of the IPARD II monitoring committee

- **Nebojša Veličković, MsC**, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and Chairperson of the IPARD II MC, stressed that the practice of introducing new members of the monitoring committee continues and announced:
- **Renata Milutinović**, Acting Director General of the Directorate for Industrial and Regional Development in the Ministry of Economic Development, presented the institution and the scope of work it deals with, emphasizing the importance of implementing the IPARD program and the institution's interest in rural development policies, especially in terms of regional development of northern region.

The overview of the main conclusion of the discussion:

- **Dick Van Dijk**, „desk officer“ for Montenegro in Pre-Accession Unit of DG AGRI/European Commission, asked all new members presenting what is the special interest of their institutions related to IPARD, and if he understood that the greatest interest of MED is related to the processing industry, and how they can contribute to IPARD and as a new member of the monitoring committee contribute to improve the work of the monitoring committee.
- **Renata Milutinović**, Acting Director General of the Directorate for Industrial and Regional Development in the Ministry of Economic Development, emphasized that this is a quality project aimed at the development of rural areas, and that after considering the effects so far, they will eventually be able to propose something new.
- **Anka Kujović**, Senior Advisor in the Directorate for Development Policies in Tourism at the Ministry of Economic Development, failed to present herself due to technical problems.
- **Jelena Krivčević**, Executive Director of the Regional Development Agency for Bjelasica, Komovi and Prokletije, presented the institution and the scope of work it deals with. An NGO founded ten years ago that deals with rural and regional development, with a special focus on the development of rural tourism. The organization covers the northeastern part of Montenegro, but due to the great interest of people for advice in rural tourism from various parts of Montenegro are present in other parts. The agency is ready to provide any assistance to the process.



MONTENEGRO
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and
Water Management

DIRECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PR RELATIONS

MANAGING AUTHORITY

Version: 2.0

Page 13 of 13

- Dick Van Dijk, „desk officer“ for Montenegro in Pre-Accession Unit of DG AGRI/European Commission, thanked for the presentation and welcomed them as a new member of the committee.

In accordance with the point 12 of the Agenda: AOB, there were no additional requests to discuss any issues.

In accordance with the point 12 of the Agenda: Suggestions date and Agenda for next meeting

An overview of the main conclusions of the discussion:

- Dick Van Dijk, „desk officer“ for Montenegro in Pre-Accession Unit of DG AGRI/European Commission, proposed that the next meeting be organized in late November or early December 2021, after consultation with the Managing Authority, of which the members of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee will be informed in a timely manner.

Signatures:

CHAIRPERSON OF THE IPARD II MC:	FOR THE SECRETARIAT:
Mr NEBOJŠA VELIČKOVIĆ	Mr ZORAN IRIĆ
<i>Position:</i> State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	<i>Position:</i> Head of Department for monitoring and evaluation of IPARD, coordination and public relations of rural development
Signature: 	Signature: 
Date: 01 th September 2021	Date: 01 th September 2021

Attachment: List of participants

