



SOP 1, Template 2: Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE)

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Serbia Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE)

Program/Project/Activity Data:

Activity/Project Name:	Improving Serbia's Environmental Protection Activity		
Assistance Objective:	Economic Growth		
Program Area:	Environment		
Country(ies) and/or Operating Unit:	Serbia		
Originating Office:	USAID Serbia/ODEG	Date: 05/27/2021	
PAD Level RCE: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCN of Original RCE/IEE:		
RCE/IEE Amendment: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCN of Amendment(s):		
Supplemental RCE: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
If Yes, Purpose of Amendment:			
DCN(s) of Related EA/IEE/RCE/ER(s):			
Implementation Start/End:		LOP: 12/15/2021 – 12/15/2025	
Funding Amount:		LOP Amount: \$5,000,000	
Contract/Award Number (if known):			
IEE Expiration Date (if any):		Reporting due dates (if any):	
Recommended Determination: Categorical Exclusion			
Additional Elements:			
Government to Government: <input type="checkbox"/> Local Procurement: <input type="checkbox"/> Donor Co-Funded: <input type="checkbox"/>			

1. Project and Activity Description

1.1 Purpose and Scope of RCE

This RCE is covering the new Improving Serbia's Environmental Protection Activity planned as 5 years effort estimated at \$5 million. The overall purpose of the activity is to improve Serbia's commitment to environmental and biodiversity protection.

1.2 Project Overview

The Improving Serbia's Environmental Protection Activity will advance Serbia's Biodiversity and Environmental protection by provision of capacity building, advocacy support, public awareness and cross sectoral cooperation.

2. Project Description and Climate Risk Screening

This activity will have the following components, anticipated results and illustrative activities:

Serbia/EPA

Objective 1: Management capacity of protected areas improved

Anticipated Results:

1. Improved transparency of information provided to citizens
Illustrative activities may include: data collection about protected areas, communication capacity building, improved availability of online and social media content about protected areas etc.
2. Improved capacity of relevant nature protection actors, including protected area managers
Illustrative activities may include: capacity building on issues such as management, fundraising, community cooperation, IT skills; facilitating communication and networking among park rangers; increasing availability of training etc.
3. Established cooperation with international/US-based environmental protection actors
Illustrative activities may include: formalization of membership, best practice exchange, implementation of joint trainings and other activities; study visits.

Objective 2: Enabled sustainable biodiversity financing mechanisms

Anticipated Results:

1. Increase in committed/invested GOS resources focused on environmental protection
Illustrative activities may include: facilitation of dialogue, support for advocacy campaigns, support for policy development, support for joint fundraising campaigns, etc.
2. Eco-friendly revenue generating services, products and initiatives piloted at the community level
Illustrative activities may include: technical assistance for developing eco-tourism and eco-friendly products, establishment of community conversation groups etc.
3. Private sector resources for environmental protection mobilized
Illustrative activities may include: support for crowdfunding campaigns, individual fundraising efforts for particular community initiatives, engagement of the private sector in development of ideas for revenue generating services etc.

Objective 3: Increase citizen demand for environmental, biodiversity protection and clean air

Anticipated Results:

1. Increased citizen knowledge regarding environmental protection including air pollution
Illustrative activities may include: support for citizen outreach and PR campaigns, development of reports and content on environmental protection and air pollution, support for efforts related to access to information and information transparency etc.
2. More opportunities for citizen participation in environmental policy and decision making created
Illustrative activities may include: support for public hearings, town halls and discussion around new legislation, policy brief development, facilitation between citizens and policy makers etc.
3. More civil society and non-traditional civic groups engaged in environmental protection advocacy and monitoring, including on topics related to air pollution
Illustrative activities may include: grant support for various local, regional and national initiatives related to environmental protection and air pollution, support for community initiatives and non-formal groups.

The CDCS Climate Risk Screening did not identify any moderate or high risks for the IR 2.2: Equity of Disadvantaged Communities Increased. The activity design team, in consultation with the Climate Integration Lead, considered the potential effect of climate risks/stressors on the sustainability of this activity (floods, droughts and storms) in addition to the impact of project activities on the climate (increased greenhouse gas emissions, land use changes, etc.)

Defined or illustrative activities under Component One — Management capacity of protected areas improved	Potential Climate Risk	Climate Risk Rating*
1.1 Improved transparency of information provided to citizens	floods, droughts and storms	Low
1.2 Improved capacity of relevant nature protection actors, including protected area managers	floods, droughts and storms	Low
1.3 Established cooperation with international/US-based environmental protection actors	floods, droughts and storms	Low

Defined or illustrative activities under Component Two — Enabled sustainable biodiversity financing mechanisms	Potential Climate Risk	Climate Risk Rating*
2.1 Increase in committed/invested GOS resources focused on environmental protection	floods, droughts and storms	Low
2.2 Eco-friendly revenue generating services, products and initiatives piloted at the community level	floods, droughts and storms	Low
2.3 Private sector resources for environmental protection mobilized	floods, droughts and storms	Low

Defined or illustrative activities under Component Three — Increase citizen demand for environmental, biodiversity protection and clean air	Potential Climate Risk	Climate Risk Rating*
3.1 Increased citizen knowledge regarding environmental protection including air pollution	floods, droughts and storms	Low
3.2 More opportunities for citizen participation in environmental policy and decision making created	floods, droughts and storms	Low
3.3 More civil society and non-traditional civic groups engaged in environmental protection	floods, droughts and storms	Low

4. Justification for Categorical Exclusion Determination

The activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 under this award will not have an effect on the natural or physical environment and are among the classes of activities listed in 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2). Therefore, under §216.2(c)(1), neither an IEE nor an EA will be required for these activities. Instead, a categorical exclusion threshold determination is recommended for:

- Activities from 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 listed above fall under 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.);
- Activities under §216.2(c)(2) (iii) Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings; and/or
- Additionally, all activities under §216.2(c)(2)(xiv) Studies, projects or programs intended to develop the capability of recipient countries to engage in development planning, except to the extent designed to result in activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.).

5. Limitations of the Categorical Exclusion Determination:

This categorical exclusion does not cover classes of actions normally having a significant effect on the environment under §216.2(d):

- i. Programs of river basin development;
- ii. Irrigation and water management;
- iii. Agricultural land leveling;
- iv. Drainage projects;
- v. Large scale agricultural mechanization;
- vi. Resettlement projects;
- vii. New land development;
- viii. Penetration road building and road improvement;
- ix. Powerplants;
- x. Industrial plants; and
- xi. Potable water and sewerage projects

In addition, this categorical exclusion does not cover activities that:

- Support project preparation, project feasibility studies, engineering design for activities listed in §216.2(d)(1);
- Affect endangered species ;
- Provide support to extractive industries (e.g. mining and quarrying);
- Promote timber harvesting;
- Lead to construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or renovation work;
- Support agro-processing or industrial enterprises;
- Provide support for regulatory permitting;
- Lead to privatization of industrial facilities or infrastructure with heavily polluted property;
- Assist the procurement (including payment in kind, donations, guarantees of credit) or use (including handling, transport, fuel for transport, storage, mixing, loading, application, clean-up of spray equipment, and disposal) of pesticides or activities involving procurement, transport, use, storage, or disposal of toxic materials--pesticides cover all insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, etc. covered under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act; and/or
- Procure or use genetically modified organisms.

Any of these actions would require a Europe and Eurasia Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO) approved amendment to the categorical exclusion.

6. Mandatory Inclusion of Environmental Compliance Requirements in Solicitations, Awards, Budgets, and Work Plans

- Appropriate environmental compliance language, including limitations defined in Section 3, shall be incorporated into solicitations and awards for categorical exclusions.
- The implementing partner shall ensure annual work plans do not prescribe activities that are defined as limitations in Section 3.

7. Revisions

Under §216.3(a)(9), if new information becomes available that indicates that activities covered by the categorical exclusion might be considered major and their effect significant, or if additional activities are proposed that might be considered major and their effect significant, this categorical exclusion determination will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the Mission Environmental Officer (MEO) with concurrence by the BEO. It is the responsibility of the USAID Contract Officer's Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) to keep the MEO and BEO informed of any new information or changes in the activity that might require revision of this determination.

8. Recommended Determination for Categorical Exclusion Clearances

Approval :	<p>Shanley Pinchotti Digitally signed by Shanley Pinchotti Date: 2021.06.01 11:10:31 +02'00'</p> <hr/> <p>Shanley Pinchotti, Acting Mission Director</p>	<hr/> <p>Date</p>
Clearance:	<p>Ivan Vukojevic Digitally signed by Ivan Vukojevic Date: 2021.06.01 10:44:34 +02'00'</p> <hr/> <p>Ivan Vukojevic, Mission Environmental Officer</p>	<hr/> <p>Date</p>
Clearance:	<p>Jelena Avramovic Digitally signed by Jelena Avramovic Date: 2021.06.01 11:06:23 +02'00'</p> <hr/> <p>Jelena Avramovic, AOR/COR</p>	<hr/> <p>Date</p>
Concurrence:	<p>POOJAN BHASKER TRIPATHI (affiliate) Digitally signed by POOJAN BHASKER TRIPATHI (affiliate) Date: 2021.06.01 11:16:02 -04'00'</p> <hr/> <p>Poojan Tripathi E&E Bureau Environmental Officer</p>	<hr/> <p>Date</p>

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MEO (to also provide a copy to AOR/COR)