

ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT

FM14-21

Slovakia

SK-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

2023

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2023 was a key year for progressing towards Project implementation and successful year for developing bilateral cooperation at both, Programme and Project level.

Cooperation between the Financial Mechanism Office (hereinafter referred to as the “FMO”), Donor Programme Partners (hereinafter referred to as the “DPPs”), National Focal Point (hereinafter referred to as the “NFP”) and the Programme Operator (hereinafter referred to as “PO”) has yielded positive results in overcoming the financial and time burdens in implementation of Projects. Additional funds released for the SK-Climate Programme helped the Project Promoters (hereinafter referred to as “PPs” to face the economic challenges marked with exceptional price increases and significantly facilitated the implementation of key infrastructure Project outputs. Flexibility for completion of Projects after the final date of eligibility of Project costs, as set in Regulations, amplifies possibility of reaching the expected results within individual Projects.

The SK-Climate Programme achieved significant progress in Project implementation, with key soft and/or hard measures on climate change mitigation and adaptation implemented in the vast majority of supported Projects. Target groups – public, students and teachers, environment, started to benefit from the outputs already achieved under the supported Projects and positive impacts on the overall Programme objective can be observed.

Bilateral cooperation at the Project level brought new ideas, solutions and building up the knowledge of Slovak as well as Norwegian experts, mainly in the thematic field of degraded wetland restoration in the light of climate change.

Very close bilateral cooperation of the DPPs and the PO at Programme level contributed significantly to share good practice and inspirations in solutions for mitigation and adaptation to climate change among stakeholders from public sector (schools, municipalities) in both countries, Slovakia and Norway.

Obstacles occurring during implementation of individual Projects, mainly unpredictable circumstances in public procurement or unfavourable weather conditions, remain challenges for the PO and the PPs in the year 2024 as well. Nevertheless, the SK-Climate Programme outcomes and outputs are still achievable and the core of the Projects supported under the SK-Climate Programme shall be completed.

B. PERFORMANCE

1. Programme progress and results

Objectives

The overall objective of the SK-Climate Programme in line with the Programme Agreement is *“Climate change mitigated and vulnerability to climate change reduced”*. In 2023, Programme is making significant progress towards this objective through the implementation of Projects supported within the relevant Calls under the individual Programme Outcome/Outputs:

- Outcome 1/Output 1.1 “Action plans for mitigation and adaptation implemented by local authorities in urban areas (ClimaUrban)” – 3 Projects supported under the EEA Grants and 6 Projects supported under the Norway Grants, among them **8 Projects in implementation**, 1 Project withdrawn in 2022,
- Outcome 1/Output 1.2 “Awareness raising activities on climate change mitigation and adaptation carried out by schools (ClimaEdu)” – 30 Projects supported under the Norway Grants, among them **15 Projects already completed, 15 Projects in implementation**,
- Outcome 1/Output 1.3 “Awareness raising activities on climate change mitigation and adaptation carried out (ClimaInfo)” – **4 Projects supported under the Norway Grants in implementation**, among them 1 Project additionally contracted from the Reserve list in 2023,
- Outcome 1/Output 1.4 “Climate change and environment education centre in Dropie supported for additional demonstration measures and educational programmes” – **1 Pre-defined Project in implementation**,
- Outcome 2/Output 2.1 “Restoration of degraded wetland ecosystems (ClimaLocal)” – **6 Projects supported under the Norway Grants in implementation**.

In 2023, overall 49 Projects were in implementation under the Programme, 15 of them already completed.

In light of restrictions and obstacles in the previous years 2021 and 2022, caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic, uncertain geopolitical situation, war in Ukraine and unfavourable economic situation, the 2023 was a milestone year for acceleration of the implementation of supported Projects. With a few exceptions, the Projects supported under the SK-Climate Programme progressed in their implementation markedly.

After receiving the Letters by the Financial Mechanism Office of 9 June 2022 and 28 October 2022, following the **Addendum No. 3** to the Programme Agreement with effectiveness from 16 May 2023, the SK-Climate PO supported in 2023 by **additional funds** 8 PPs through the Call for award of additional funding to already contracted Projects (launched in 10 January 2023 and closed in 15 December 2023). This Call aimed to help the PPs to address the economic challenges marked with exceptional price increases, which are beyond their control, with the scope to safeguard the planned Projects’ results within the available timeframe. One more Project with the Donor Project Partner from Norway, included in the Reserve list under the Call No. 3 – ClimaInfo in favour of the Outcome 1/Output 1.3, was supported from uncommitted additional Programme allocation.

The **Annex 3** provides “Project summary and call details”.

It is important to mention, that despite the additional funds allocated to the Programme, maximum effort of the PO and the PPs was to implement the Projects within the originally contracted budgets with respect of the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and requirements for feasibility, quality and sustainability of achieved results, as well.

In the light of all mentioned circumstances, the SK-Climate Programme reached a reasonable balance between the additional funds needed and savings reached to cover increased prices of energy, construction materials and construction works according to the needs of individual Projects.

Overall, in vast majority of supported Projects, key measures on climate change mitigation/adaptation contributing to the overall Programme objective are already implemented or at least procured. As a result, target groups started to benefit from the increased climate change resilience and responsiveness within targeted areas as described below.

Flexibility to deliver (in case of goods) or perform (in case of services, works) the subject matter after 30 April 2024, but no later than 31 December 2024, given in Regulations, provides the PPs with more certainty in further implementation of their Projects, mainly in those cases when the matter is subject of public procurement which is indeed often time most consuming process within the whole Project.

In 2023, **bilateral cooperation** was really a showcase of the SK-Climate Programme. Bilateral cooperation at both, Programme as well as Project level, was significantly strengthened and well-developed in practice, as described below. Several bilateral Programme activities were organized for stakeholders from public sector, schools and municipalities. Progress in implementation of Projects with the Donor Project Partners was accompanied by high engagement of the experts in developing joint/shared expertise for the most effective planning and realization of measures on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Support of wide range of the Slovak PPs – public sector, local authorities, non-governmental sector to implement measures on mitigation/adaptation to climate change across the whole territory of Slovakia together with bilateral activities performed for various stakeholders are true **added value** of this Programme

Outcome 1: Increased climate change resilience and responsiveness within targeted areas

All relevant stakeholders contributed significantly to implementation progress in 2023, boosting the outputs reached under the **Outcome 1** forward:

- FMO, DPPs and NFP by adoption of measures to safeguard the planned Projects' results within the available timeframe, including the additional funding of the Programme as well as limited but still provided time flexibility in Project completion after 30 April 2024 as set in Article 8.2, point 3 of Regulations,
- PO with highly engagement in assisting the PPs to overcome any burden occurred and processing the awarding of additional funds,
- PPs with rigorous and proactive approach in implementing the Projects.

As a result, key soft/hard measures on climate change mitigation and adaptation were implemented or are in implementation in the vast majority of Projects and the PPs shall

complete their Projects until 30 April 2024. Positive impact on the SK-Climate Programme's result framework can be observed.

Very few Projects may exceptionally need a longer period for completion due to unforeseeable external factors related mainly to the public procurement. The PO will continue to undertake every effort to assist the PPs to complete their Projects within the available timeframe.

Projects within the ClimaUrban Calls (**Output 1.1**) implement a wide range of climate change mitigation and adaptation investment measures in grey and blue-green urban infrastructure. Thanks to the award of additional funding, 4 PPs completed their key hard measures. Public (mainly residents) and environment are the main target groups who started to benefit from implemented measures.

The Project **SK-CLIMATE-0029** "Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change in the City of Žilina" is a good example of completed series of key infrastructure measures to increase the city's capacity to adapt to climate change, contributing to the indicator "Number of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures implemented". Planted greenery (tree alleys, line and mobile greenery) support suitable microclimate for pedestrians and cyclists in "heat islands" in the city. Reduction of energy intensity and energy loss in the school building contributes to the indicator „Estimated annual CO₂ emissions reductions of supported entities (in tonnes)". Due to award of additional funding, PP covered increased costs for roof reconstruction at the Municipal Office of Žilina with adjustment for an extensive vegetation roof and purchase of electric cars for food delivery to the elderly. The city develops "The Strategy and Action Plan for Adaptation to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change" as baseline document to identify vulnerabilities and specific adaptation and mitigation measures needed.

Implementation of Projects under the ClimaEdu Small Grant Scheme Call (**Output 1.2**), carried out by schools made substantial progress. In 2023, 15 Projects from 30 Projects were completed. Mainly students and teachers benefit from the Project outputs as target groups, by learning on climate change through created/updated education materials and benefiting from physical measures implemented at school buildings and campuses. Awareness raising campaigns for public carried out by schools contributes significantly to the indicator of **Outcome 1** "Number of people self-reporting having more climate friendly behaviour".

Primary and Secondary Grammar School of St. John Paul II. Poprad successfully completed **Project SK-CLIMATE-0001** focused on mitigation "green energy" measures. The Project educates students on significance of energy savings and e-mobility for climate change through installed photovoltaics onto the school roof and into smart benches and created mini eco-park with e-scooters and e-bikes. Special application monitoring generated electricity was developed to interconnect physical measures with the educational process.

In 2023, 4 Projects were in implementation under the ClimaInfo Call (**Output 1.3**) as the PO contracted one more Project from the Reserve list due to the additional funds awarded to the SK-Climate Programme. Following high interest of target groups in awareness raising activities carried out within the Projects, there is high presumption of exceeding set target values of relevant indicator "Number of attendees reached by the campaigns". Within the **Project SK-CLIMATE-0045**, wide audience was reached through a number of thematic online training

courses, info-sheets and handbooks sharing the knowledge and skills in “Low-carbon building”, “Low impact living” and “Greenery and water for housing”. New Project **SK-CLIMATE-0050**, contracted in 2023, brings the topic of creating outdoor environmental programmes and hybrid presentation zone to present environmentally friendly adaptation measures in revitalized barrier-free public spaces in the form of “organic community garden” and “gallery rain garden”.

Pre-defined Project **SK-CLIMATE-0038** “Climate change and environment education centre (Living Lab) in Dropie” (**Output 1.4**) made a progress in Project activities. The Living Lab centre has seen an increase in the public’s interest in educational programmes reflected in an increase of the indicator “Number of students completing educational activities/courses”. Rain garden was created within practical workshop for students “Youth Climate Change Living Lab”. In addition, domestic wastewater treatment plant was constructed within the “Work package 1: Living lab – outdoor measures”.

Outcome 2: Enhanced ability of targeted ecosystems to adapt to climate change

In 2023, the implementation progress within all 6 Projects supported under the ClimaLocal Call (**Outcome2/Output 2.1**) increased rapidly. Common goal of the Projects is to restore ability of degraded wetland ecosystems to adapt to climate change. Reciprocal benefits from measures implemented are expected. Restored wetlands will be more resilient to climate change, help mitigate its negative impacts on the surrounding environment and provide better ecosystem services, which will also be reflected in the improved quality of life of people. Unexpected unfavourable natural conditions and lack of time for implementation of technical measures are the main risk factors for successful completion of supported Projects within the available timeframe. These risks are reduced thanks to high engagement and diligence of the PPs in Project management with aim to reach Project objectives. One PP applied for the additional funding to cover increased costs of construction works needed to restore the wetland. The request of additional funding is in process of evaluation with final decision of the PO expected in February 2024. The fulfilment of set target values of indicators is in gradual progress and their achievement is expected in 2024.

Preparatory key measures were implemented within the Projects including detail mapping of environmental status of wetland sites and design of efficient measures for their restoration. Drone technique for mapping was shown as very useful tool in hard-to-reach wetland sites. Very close cooperation of Project Partners from research and public institutions brought results in the form of restoration plans, established of monitoring nets, compiled technical reports/expertise and Project documentation. All these outputs create important background for implementation of suitable, efficient and sustainable restoration measures getting back the benefits of wetlands to environment and people in light of climate change. Norwegian Partners involved in 3 of 6 wetland Projects play an important role in sharing and getting expertise in the field of carbon capture in wetlands and awareness raising activities as well.

Some Projects getting forward and started to implement technical restoration measures. The Project **SK-CLIMATE-0041** “Wetlands for life and well-being: Morava river alluvium ramsar site restoration (Acronym: WARRIOR)” implemented by Green Foundation, is a good example.

Within this Project the agricultural land was transformed into alluvial meadow, invasive species were removed and native species and trees were planted. The excavation and removal of sediments in the dead arm started with aim to preserve waterlogged areas throughout the year, improve water regime and restore local ecosystems.

Water retention measures are in progress at all 4 wetland sites within the Project **SK-CLIMATE-0042** implemented by the PP “Voda pre klímu – environmentálne technológie” (Water for Climate – environmental technologies, c.a.). In addition to hard measures, awareness raising activities proceed very well in this Project, with innovative method of 3D models of wetlands before and after restoration applied. Thanks to their interactive character, a wide audience across all age categories is attracted and involved in awareness raising campaign of the Project “how water works in nature”. Wetland publication for children in preparation by Partner2 Primary and Secondary School of Maximilián Hell including English version demonstrates, that the topic of wetland restoration can be shared with all, even very low, age categories.

Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between beneficiary and donor state entities involved in the programme

Bilateral cooperation becomes undoubtedly an integral part of the SK-Climate Programme with high progress reached in 2023.

Cooperation of the PO with the DPPs within the **SK-Climate Cooperation Committee** continued in 2023, with two Cooperation Committee Meetings held. The first meeting was held on 1 June 2023 via videoconference. The overall progress in Project implementation and the absorption capacity of the Call for award of additional funding were the main topics discussed. The additional support of the Projects ranked into the Reserve list under the ClimaInfo Call was discussed as the option to use the remaining allocation of the SK-Climate Programme besides the additional funds allocated under the Call for award of additional funding to already contracted Projects. The second meeting was held on 16-19 October 2023. Sample of 6 Projects were visited in South-Western part of Slovakia in order to present achieved results, with emphasis placed to the field visits of the wetland Projects implemented in cooperation with the Norwegian Partners under the Output 2.1. Project on-site visits were also a unique opportunity for students from SKI school in Norway to see good practices and particular activities and measures on climate change mitigation and adaptation implemented in Slovakia within the joint bilateral activity described below. The key issues discussed at the Cooperation Committee Meeting on 19. October 2023 included the update on additional funds contracted, status of public procurements, identified irregularities, the activities to be carry out under the Bilateral Fund and publicity and communication of the Programme results in 2024.

The year 2023 has been very successful regarding the bilateral activities on the Programme’s level under the **Bilateral Fund** of the SK-Climate Programme. Due to close cooperation between the PO and the DPPs overall 4 bilateral activities were carried out getting very positive feedback from the Slovak as well as Norwegian participants.

SK-Climate EduClima Study tours were organized in two terms, on 9-11 and 22-24 May 2023 in Oslo, Norway. This activity supported Slovak students and teachers from the primary and secondary schools acting as the PPs under the ClimaEdu Small Grant Scheme to share the

theory and practice in the field of education on climate change mitigation and adaptation with selected Norwegian schools.

SK-Climate UrbanClima Study tour carried out on 18-20 September 2023 in Oslo, Norway targeted the representatives of Slovak municipalities of over 15,000 inhabitants, excluding the PPs supported within the Calls No. ACC01 and ACC02. This bilateral activity aimed to share best practice in climate-friendly solutions applied in urban environment and to develop bilateral partnerships among relevant stakeholders from public sector in both countries, Slovakia and Norway.

Study Tour of Norwegian school in Slovakia was organized on 16-19 October 2023 in Bratislava, Slovakia as joined activity to the Cooperation Committee Meeting. This activity followed up the success of 2 SK-Climate EduClima Study tours organized in Oslo, Norway and aimed to guide the Norwegian students and teachers through practical measures on climate change mitigation and adaptation implemented in urban, school and wetland environment in Slovakia. Norwegian students were directly in touch with their Slovak peers at two Slovak schools and were involved into several practical lessons on significance of mitigation and adaptation measures on climate change including 3D models of wetlands and fieldwork on wetland site.

The SK-Climate Programme supports a number of the **Donor Partnership Projects**. In 2023, one more Project with the Norwegian Partner was contracted under the ClimaInfo Call. The number of Projects involving cooperation with a Donor Project Partner increases to 23, including 24 Partners from Norway and 1 Partner from Iceland.

Bilateral cooperation at the Project level strengthen following the progress in Project implementation. The Projects supported under the ClimaInfo Call (Output 1.3) contribute significantly to the indicator “Number of training courses co-organised by donor state and beneficiary state entities”, with set target value already exceeded. The Project **SK-CLIMATE-0039** “Ecohydrological Restoration of Peatlands in the Carpathians” is a good example of very close cooperation of Slovak experts and Norwegian experts from NINA in developing new methodology to quantify the carbon sequestration potential of restored sites – peatlands, based on sample collection in the field, analysis and data modelling.

C. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. Monitorings carried out

In 2023, the SK-Climate PO conducted monitoring of Projects towards the Programme’s Outcomes and Outputs in accordance with the provisions contained in the legal framework. Projects were monitored in line with the Monitoring plan with some modifications made regarding on-the-spot verifications and on-site monitoring visits, considering the progress reached under the individual Projects, including subject matter delivered as well as expenditures incurred.

Following the experiences from previous year 2022 and implementation progress achieved, a strong emphasis on results-based monitoring was placed to:

- capture and verify the Project progress in achieving results including relevant Project indicators in line with the Project contracts,
- assist the PPs in a timely manner in order to minimise the risk of any ambiguities, mainly to capture proper reporting of achieved Project indicators supported with relevant source of verification,
- identify any problems and obstacles limiting the intended progress (permissions needs, public procurements),
- gather feedback from all relevant stakeholders on achieved results and perception of their benefits by relevant target groups.

In addition, risk-based monitoring and compliance-based monitoring were employed through standard monitoring tools – on-site monitoring visits merged with on-the-spot verifications when possible.

The SK-Climate PO performed the administrative verifications of incurred expenditures towards progress in implementation on basis of four-month reporting period per each Project (Project Interim Reports). A regular flow of information on implementation progress was captured through more than 100 administrative controls in 2023. The on-site monitoring visits of 15 Projects and on-the-spot verifications of 21 Projects were performed with focus on Projects which were not monitored in 2022 yet, Projects with significant progress in achieved results and incurred expenditures (completed or before completion) and Projects defined at risk (based on risk analysis).

The results of monitoring revealed that the Projects were well on track with implementation in 2023. The PPs reported most often within the interviews common difficulties in Project implementation, such as requirements on reporting the Project indicators together with verifiable supporting documentation, administratively burdensome public procurement and time-consuming administration of accounting documents required. The PPs successfully overcome these burdens thanks to close communication with the SK-Climate PO. The feedback of target groups on implemented soft and hard measures on climate change adaptation and mitigation was very positive, with a highest enthusiasm observed among the students of supported schools under the Small Grant Scheme (Output 1.2).

Moreover, the PO was in very close contact with the PPs via phone or e-mail, even on daily basis when relevant, providing them the assistance in solving common problems and checking the solutions/steps applied to reach intended progress. Prolongation of Project duration was applied according to individual status of Project implementation as good practice to prevent potential shortcomings in completing the outputs and achieving the indicators. The **Project SK-Climate-0017** “Climatic garden” and the **Project SK-Climate-0014** “Eco Classroom at GYMPABA (ECG)” are two examples of a number of successfully completed Projects in 2023 thanks to their prolongation. As the implementation of key hard adaptation measures was in delay due to unfavourable epidemiological situation (pandemic COVID-19), lack and price increase of construction materials and time-consuming public procurement, additional time was needed for the follow-up awareness raising activities in order to reach target values for relevant indicator “Number of people self-reporting having more climate friendly behaviour”.

The **Monitoring plan for the year 2024** is provided in Annex 5.

2. Evaluations carried out

In the year 2023, no evaluation of the SK-Climate Programme, according to Article 10.1 of the Regulations, has been carried out.

D. ANNEXES

- 1. Results achieved**
- 2. Communication summary**
- 3. Project summary and call details**
- 4. Risk management**
- 5. Monitoring plan**
- 6. Evaluation report**
- 7. Agreement conditions**

Annex 1: Results achieved

Objective: Climate change mitigated and vulnerability to climate change reduced								
Outcome 1: Increased climate change resilience and responsiveness within targeted areas								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Share of Slovak population benefiting from living in more climate change resilient and responsive urban areas	Percentage	0.00 %	0.10 % (APR 2021)	Reported 2021, 2025			13.50 %	-
Estimated annual CO2 emissions reductions of supported entities (in tonnes)	Annual number	0	557.68 (APR 2022)	-	-	1,017.02	28,570	Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by the Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator. The value reflects the distinct achievement between 2022 and 2023.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	377.12	-	-	228.90	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	180.56	-	-	788.12	-	-
Number of people self-reporting having more climate friendly behaviour	Cumulative number	0	3,406 (APR 2021)	Reported 2021, 2025			15,800	-
Output 1.1: Action plans for mitigation and adaptation implemented by local authorities in urban areas								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of action plans completed	Cumulative number	0	1 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	9	Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by the Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator.

Number of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures implemented	Cumulative number	0	57 (IFR 2023)	-	-	74	142	Value is based on the Project Interim Reports (completed measures) submitted by the Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator.
Output 1.2: Awareness raising activities on climate change mitigation and adaptation carried out by schools								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of schools carrying out awareness raising campaigns	Cumulative number	0	8 (IFR 2023)	-	-	15	30	The achieved value is being counted only after the completion of the Project and is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	8	-	-	15	-	-
Number of students participating in awareness raising campaigns	Cumulative number	0	16,887 (IFR 2023)	-	-	21,858	7,600	Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator. The achievement reported is in line with the Projects contracted, higher than the target value for the Programme.
Number of physical climate change responsive measures carried out in schools	Cumulative number	0	117 (IFR 2023)	-	-	132	86	Value is based on the Project Interim Reports (completed measures) submitted by Project

								Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator. The achievement reported is in line with the Projects contracted, higher than the target value for the Programme.
Output 1.3: Awareness raising activities on climate change mitigation and adaptation carried out								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of awareness raising campaigns carried out	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	5	30	Campaigns are being counted only after their full completion. Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	0	-	-	5	-	-
Number of attendees reached by the campaigns	Cumulative number	0	18,560 (IFR 2023)	-	-	37,669	7,500	Attendees of partial part of campaigns are counted within this value as well. Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator. The achievement reported is in line with the Projects contracted, higher than the target value for the Programme.

Output 1.4: Climate change and environment education centre in Dropie supported for additional demonstration measures and educational programmes								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of new outdoor climate change mitigation and adaptation measures completed	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	2	7	Value is based on the Project Interim Reports (completed measures) submitted by Project Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator.
Estimated annual reduced energy/electricity consumption (in kWh)	Annual number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	66,521	As of 31st December 2023, the relevant activity has not been completed. Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator.
Number of students completing educational activities/courses	Cumulative number	0	409 (IFR 2023)	-	-	987	1,200	Reports submitted by Project Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator.
Number of local decision-makers and administrators completing workshops/courses	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	360	As of 31st December 2023, the relevant activity has not been completed. Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoter and verified by the Programme Operator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-

<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
Outcome 2: Enhanced ability of targeted ecosystems to adapt to climate change								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Improved environmental status of supported ecosystems	Binary	No	No (APR 2022)	Reported 'No' in 2022			Yes	-
Estimated number of people benefiting from ecosystems improvement measures	Cumulative number	0	0 (APR 2022)	Reported 2022, 2025			3,000	-
Output 2.1: Restoration of degraded wetland ecosystems								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of wetland ecosystems supported	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	6	Project Contracts entered into force in February 2022. Projects made a significant progress in implementation in 2023. The achieved value is being counted only after the completion of relevant activities. Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator.
Estimated area of wetland ecosystems restored (in m2)	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	600,000	Project Contracts entered into force in February 2022. Projects made a significant progress in implementation in 2023.

								The achieved value is being counted only after the completion of relevant activities. Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator.
Number of awareness campaigns carried out	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	6	Project Contracts entered into force in February 2022. Projects made a significant progress in implementation in 2023. The achieved value is being counted only after the completion of the Project. Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator.
Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between beneficiary and donor state entities involved in the programme								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Level of trust between cooperating entities in Beneficiary States and Donor States	Scale 1-7	6.34	-	-	-	-	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	The achievement value will be collected by the FMO.
Level of satisfaction with the partnership	Scale 1-7	6.50	-	-	-	-	4.50, Target is	The achievement value will be collected by the FMO.

							≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	
Share of cooperating organisations that apply the knowledge acquired from bilateral partnership	Percentage	N/A	-	-	-	-	60.00 %	The achievement value will be collected by the FMO.
Bilateral Output 1: Cooperation between Donor and Beneficiary State entities supported								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of projects involving cooperation with a Donor project partner	Cumulative number	0	24 (IFR 2023)	-	-	24	36	Value is based on the Partnership Agreements concluded with Bilateral Partners within Projects. A Project is counted once, if there are multiple Bilateral Partners involved from the same Donor State. 23 Projects involve bilateral Partner from Norway and 1 Project involves also Partner from Iceland.
Number of training courses co-organised by donor state and beneficiary state entities	Cumulative number	0	12 (IFR 2023)	-	-	17	10	Value is based on the Project Interim Reports submitted by the Project Promoters and verified by the Programme Operator. The achievement reported is in line with the Projects contracted, higher than the target value for the Programme.

Annex 2: Communication summary

1. Best projects

The project example No. 1:

ACC02P01 – Mitigation and adaptation to climate change in Žilina
(GrACE ID: SK-CLIMATE-0029)

*This best practice example is from the Call No. 2 (ACC02) “**Action plans for mitigation and adaptation implemented by local authorities in urban areas (ClimaUrban)**” financed from the Norway Grants and State Budget of the Slovak Republic. The main objective is to support the systematic connecting of mitigation and adaptation measures in urban areas, which, together and for the public interest, contribute to the sustainable quality of life of the city population and the quality of the environment, in reaction to the negative impacts of climate change.*

The main goal of the Project is implementation of measures that contributing to mitigation and adaptation to climate change in the City of Žilina. Within the Project, the Strategy and Action Plan for Adaptation to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change in the City of Žilina is developed as a short-term and medium-term strategic document, which defines the city’s activity focused on reduction of CO₂ emission and adaptation to climate change. In addition, hard, investment measures were carried out covering topics like reduction of energy intensity of the kindergarten, application of light colours on buildings, transport topic including electric cars for food delivery to the elderly, green and blue infrastructure, extensive vegetation roof on the Municipal Office, waste management, educational activities and publicity.

The Bilateral Project Partner – Tou Scene from Norway will cooperate on elaboration and providing of expertise during the educational activities and publicity.

For more information, see the project’s web page: <https://www.zilinaklima.sk/en/>

Project Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m--sXbS01R8&t=20s>

The project example No.2:

ACC03P02 –Environmental research in interior and exterior learning zone
(GrACE ID: SK-CLIMATE-0027)

*This best practice example is from the SGS 1 Call (ACC03) “**Awareness raising on climate change mitigation and adaptation at schools (ClimaEdu)**” financed from the Norway Grants and State Budget of the Slovak Republic. The aim was to raise the awareness of students (from primary and secondary schools) towards the mitigation and adaptation to climate change through theoretical education as well as through realization of concrete physical measures in schools and school areas. Under this Call the Secondary Grammar School, Topoľčany (Gymnázium Topoľčany) implements the Project “Environmental research in interior and exterior learning zone”. A number of activities were taken place to interconnect education and physical measures on climate change adaptation including creation of interior and exterior learning zone with a learning path and an eco-classroom, building of insect houses, vertical gardens and organising of the environmental events.*

*The Bilateral Project Partner – Råholt secondary school from Norway participated in comparison of curriculum, testing of new didactic material, testing the condition of natural elements in Norway, co-organizing environmental events and presenting information and outputs of the Project implementation on environmental conference. In addition, Slovak Project Partners were involved in the Project. The Constantin the Philosopher University in Nitra, Faculty of Natural Sciences and the Secondary Grammar School in the City of Šahy, who is implemented such an excellent project under this same Call **SK-CLIMATE-0018**.*

For more information, see the project’s web page: <https://www.ecolearning.sk/en/news/>

2. Visibility of the Grants and the Donors

2.a. Communication activities

“EduClima Study Tour – bilateral activity realized to Oslo in two terms”

The PO in cooperation with the DPPs organized two bilateral activities “Norway Educlima Study Tours” to Norway on May 2023, with aim to share experience on climate change mitigation and adaptation between Slovak schools supported within the SGS1 Call (ClimaEdu) and selected schools from Norway. Overall, 50 teachers and students from 11 schools from Slovakia participated.

The interactions between Norwegian and Slovak students on the farm of the "Stabekk" secondary school and the SKI Turnhall school were realized. Students had presentations about their Projects implemented within the SGS 1 Call (ClimaEdu), what was streamed live for the first time, through the FB page of the SK-Climate Programme.

For more information click here:

- <https://www.minzp.sk/en/eeagrants/news/the-first-term-bilateral-activity-norway-educlima-study-tour-was-successfully-implemented.html>
- <https://www.minzp.sk/en/eeagrants/news/norway-educlima-study-tour2.html>

Bilateral activity for Slovak municipalities in Norway “UrbanClima Study Tour”

“UrbanClima Study Tour” for representatives of Slovak municipalities to share know-how on mitigation and adaptation measures on climate change in urban environment was organized on September 2023 thanks to close cooperation of PO with DPPs. Solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change were presented by Slovak representatives as well as Norwegian local experts. Examples of good practice how to include water areas in modern urban solutions within the framework of urban planning and how to apply low-energy “green” approach to building management were demonstrated in the city of Bærum.

For more information click here:

- <https://www.minzp.sk/en/eeagrants/news/urban-clima-study-tour.html>

“Study Tour of Norwegian school in Slovakia – joint bilateral activity within the Cooperation Committee of the SK-Climate Programme”

The PO in cooperation with the DPPs on 16-19 October 2023 organized within the Cooperation Committee a joint bilateral activity for teachers and students from SKI Schule, Norway. Norwegian teachers and students participated a number of onsite / field visits of selected Projects implemented under the SK-Climate Programme.

The PO accompanied the Norwegian delegation to two secondary schools, in Šurany (Project **SK-CLIMATE-0003**) and Bratislava (Project **SK-CLIMATE-0005**). Both, Slovak as well Norwegian students talked together about their school activities on climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Project of city of Šaľa (**SK-CLIMATE-0037**) was visited to see mitigation and adaptation measures implemented in urban environment. Finally, the “wetlands” were visited including the Information Centre for wetlands with 3D models created under the Project **SK-CLIMATE-0042**, followed by field visits of the Ramsar site restored under the Project SK-CLIMATE-0041 and peatland restored under the Project **SK-CLIMATE-0039**.

For more information click here:

- <https://www.minzp.sk/en/eeagrants/news/norwegian-students-slovakia-reciprocal-bilateral-activity-within-sk-climate-programme.html>.

2.b. Project stories

The Project stories were published on the web page, social media account and the YouTube channel of the SK-Climate Programme. The total number of **Project stories was 14** in 2023. The articles published twice on more page, channel or media are counted only once.

For more information click here:

- <https://www.facebook.com/eeagrants.SKCLIMATE/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/@SK-Klima-GrantyEHPaNorska>
- <https://www.minzp.sk/en/eeagrants/news/>

3. Media coverage

1. <https://tvnoviny.sk/ekonomika/clanok/675435-zilina-zacina-bojovat-proti-negativnym-vplyvom-klimy-viacere-budovy-pokryje-zelenou-strechou>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/@SK-Klima-GrantyEHPaNorska>
3. <https://www.asb.sk/zelena-obnova/na-spojenej-skole-v-poprade-pribudli-solarne-panely-aj-smart-lavicky-na-nabijanie-telefonov-ci-bicyklov>
4. <https://zilina.sk/budova-mestskeho-uradu-v-ziline-ma-novu-zelenu-strechu/>
5. <https://www.zilina.sk/clanky/foto/24913>
6. <https://www.teraz.sk/regiony/solarne-panely-na-skole-v-poprade-pokr/694434-clanok.html>
7. <https://www.enviroportal.sk/clanok/poprad-solarne-panely-na-budove-ss-jana-pavla-ii-pokryju-cast-spotreby-energie>
8. <https://presov.zoznam.sk/solarne-panely-pokryju-cast-spotreby-energie-vyska-dotacie-je-takmer-50-tisic-eur/>
9. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGBGFIlundU>
10. <https://spravy.rtvs.sk/2023/06/ochranari-a-aktivisti-zachranuju-vzacne-mokrade-z-ktorych-mnohe-postupne-vysychaju/>

11. <https://hnonline.sk/slovensko/96079129-samospravy-a-kraje-nemaju-povinnost-vypracovat-si-adaptacne-strategie-nemusia-mat-klimaticke-plany>
12. <https://bbonline.sk/zakladna-skola-na-spojovej-ulici-vybudovala-zaujimavu-vzdelavaciu-zahradu-eduga/>
13. <https://www.ssn.sk/27471/klimaticke-zmeny-budu-mat-negativny-vplyv-na-spolocne-zdravie-ludi-zvierat/>

4. Website and social media

Link to programme website		Total number of page views in the reporting year	
https://minzp.sk/eea/		1241	
	Link or account handle	Number of posts published in the reporting year	Number of followers
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/eeagrants.SKCLIMATE/	13	332
X (formerly Twitter)	https://www.youtube.com/@SK-Klima-GrantyEHPaNorska	4	54

5. Visuals

The Project stories were published on the media library on the following link:

- <https://www.ealibrary.org/menu/100-2014-2021?Country=118&page=1&Programmes=Climate%20Change%20Mitigation%20and%20Adaptation>

Annex 3: Project summary and call details

1. Project summary

	Number	Total Grant	Amount budgeted to dpps (estimate)
Total number of projects contracted	49	€ 19,346,839	€ 1,024,192
Number of pre-defined projects contracted	1	€ 1,200,000	€ 201,000
Number of projects with a donor project partner	23	€ 16,126,325	€ 1,024,192
Number of projects with a donor project partner Norway	23	€ 16,126,325	€ 1,000,442
Number of projects with a donor project partner Iceland	1	€ 1,377,176	€ 23,750
Number of projects with a donor project partner Liechtenstein	0	€ 0	€ 0

2. Call details

Call title	Outcome(s)	Call amount	Submission deadline	Number of applications received	Grant amount applied for	Grant demand %	Number of applications approved for funding	Grant amount awarded	Number of projects contracted	Amount contracted
ACTION PLANS FOR MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IMPLEMENTED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN URBAN AREAS	Outcome 1	€ 7,748,465	28/02/2020	8	€ 12,235,230	157.91 %	6	€ 6,358,242	6	€ 6,840,073
ACTION PLANS FOR MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IMPLEMENTED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN URBAN AREAS (CLIMAURBAN)	Outcome 1	€ 4,176,838	28/02/2020	7	€ 9,358,745	224.06 %	3	€ 4,176,838	3	€ 4,346,998
AWARENESS RAISING ON CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION (ClimaInfo)	Outcome 1	€ 819,825	26/02/2021	36	€ 11,710,793	1,428.45 %	3	€ 819,825	4	€ 1,073,277

AWARENESS RAISING ON CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION AT SCHOOLS (ClimaEdu)	Outcome 1	€ 1,067,813	28/02/2020	123	€ 5,335,031	499.62 %	30	€ 1,067,813	30	€ 1,086,491
RESTORATION OF DEGRADED WETLAND ECOSYSTEMS (ClimaLocal)	Outcome 2	€ 4,800,000	31/03/2021	8	€ 6,186,509	128.89 %	6	€ 4,800,000	6	€ 4,800,000

Annex 4: Risk management

Risk description	Likelihood (1-4)	Consequence (1-4)	Risk score	Planned response in 2024
Lack of interest of Applicants in the Programme's calls (in a broader sense)	1 low	1 low	1.00	The standard open calls were closed in February/March, 2020 and 2021 and the call for award of additional funding to already contracted Projects was closed in December 2023. No further calls under the Programme will be open in 2024. Thus, the response in 2024 to mitigate this risk is not relevant.
Changed legislative environment (e.g. national Public Procurement Act)	3 medium high	2 medium low	2.45	Following frequent changes in Slovak legislation during Project implementation in previous years, the PO shall continue to carry out the following measures in response to this risk: - monitoring changes of relevant legislation and/or other documents under the legal framework on national and central level having impact on the Programme and Projects implemented (e. g. the Act on Public Procurement and the Act on Financial Control and Audit); - informing the Project Promoters in timely manner.
Lack of project management experience and capacity of project promoters	1 low	1 low	1.00	As a high number of Projects is still in implementation, the PO shall continue to carry out the following measures to mitigate this risk: - regular supervising of the Project implementation by the responsible Project Manager/Financial Manager in order to take the appropriate action in a timely manner; - user-friendly guidelines for PPs, information emails and/or seminars for PPs (if needed).
Insufficient administrative capacities in the PO structure	1 low	1 low	1.00	In order to maintain the stabilised administrative capacities within the organisational structure, the PO shall mitigate this risk by continuing the

				application of a stratified system of motivation (stable salaries, individualised training system of employees, suitable work equipment, emphasis on safe working environment, enabling the distance work, if appropriate etc.).
Long-lasting obtaining of permits necessary for project implementation (e.g. construction permits)	1 low	3 medium high	1.73	In order to mitigate the impacts of this risk, the PO shall continue the regular supervising of the Projects implementation by the responsible Project Manager in order to take the appropriate action in a timely manner. Close communication with the PPs via phone or e-mails, even on daily basis, shall be applied case-by-case.
Shortcomings resulting from the public procurement procedures	3 medium high	3 medium high	3.00	In order to mitigate the impacts of this risk, the PO shall continue with the following measures: - systematic re-training of PO's employees in case of amendment of relevant legislation (mainly the Act on Public Procurement and the Act on Financial Control and Audit) with regard to the PO's system of public procurement control; - informing the PPs through updating of guidelines, information emails, seminars and PO 'web (if relevant).
Objective obstacles for smooth implementation of Projects caused by the external, unpredictable factors beyond the control of the SK-Climate Programme Operator and/or Project Promoters	2 medium low	3 medium high	2.45	As there is still probability of the external, unpredictable factors occurrence, the following measures shall be carry out by the PO in response to this risk: - close communication and assistance to the PPs to implement and complete their Projects applying case-by-case approach; - updating of guidelines for PPs, information emails and/or seminars for PPs on available solutions (mainly regarding the given flexibility in Project completion in line with the Regulations).
Overall risk of not absorbing most financing and achieving most targets (1-4):			2.00	

Annex 5: Monitoring plan

Please note this Annex is uploaded separately and is not visible in this document. Please download and print separately if needed.

Annex 6: Evaluation report

Not Available

Annex 7: Agreement conditions

Description	Type	Tracking	Fulfilled	Date of fulfilment	Description of measures taken
<p>1. For pre-defined project no. 1 (numbering under Section 5.1 of Annex II to the Programme Agreement), the National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that the appraisal foreseen in Article 6.5.3 of the Regulation is externalised and carried out by a legal entity independent of and unrelated to the Programme Operator.</p>	General	One-time fulfilment	Yes	07/04/2021	<p>The appraisal of the Pre-defined Project was externalised, carried out by a legal entity independent of and unrelated to the SK-Climate Programme Operator, selected based on the results of the public procurement.</p> <p>The National Focal Point notified on 22. March 2021 to the FMO the completion of the appraisal of the Pre-defined Project in accordance with the Art. 6.5.3 of the Regulation.</p>
<p>2. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that project promoters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project in their ownership for a period of at least 5 years following the completion of the project and continue to use such buildings for the benefit of the overall objectives of the project for the same period; • Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project properly insured against losses such 	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		<p>In line with the Guideline on Forms issued by the National Focal Point, special provisions related to buildings are mandatory part of the Calls of proposals.</p> <p>Provisions related to buildings in the wording of the conditions set in the Programme Agreement are mentioned in the Chapter 8 of all the Calls for proposals launched by the SK-Climate Programme Operator.</p> <p>Condition of sustainability and durability of assets are defined in the Project Contracts and shall be monitored by the SK-Climate Programme Operator.</p>

<p>as fire, theft and other normally insurable incidents both during project implementation and for at least 5 years following the completion of the project; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside appropriate resources for the maintenance of any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project for at least 5 years following the completion of the project. The specific means for implementation of this obligation shall be specified in the project contract. 					
<p>No costs shall be eligible under pre-defined project 1 (number under Section 5.1 of Annex II to the programme agreement) before a detailed description, budget and the target for energy savings under the pre-defined project has been submitted and the FMC has confirmed the grant to the project as described in Annex II to this programme agreement. A detailed overview of the financing from all funding sources and the timeline for the realisation of all the activities related to the centre shall also be provided.</p>	<p>Pre-eligibility</p>	<p>One-time fulfilment</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>19/05/2020</p>	<p>The SK-Climate Programme Operator provided the FMO with the required documents on 20. February 2020. Based on the statement of the FMO from 19. May 2020, the FMO considers the pre-eligibility condition to be fulfilled.</p>