



THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
for Central and Eastern Europe

Action Plan

Regional Focal Point for Article 6 of the United Nations
Framework Convention on Climate Change

Regional Environmental Center
for Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey

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1. Background

Article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change stipulates the promotion of education, training and public awareness on climate change. Its implementation on the international and national levels has gone through a number of milestones.

Enhancement of public awareness well as knowledge of governmental and business structures through the educational and informational mechanisms is a comprehensive way to contribute towards fulfillment of the requirements of the Convention and Kyoto Protocol on the reduction of GHG emissions, bring benefits to national economies on the state and local level through the behavioral changes, support usage of environmentally friendly and energy efficient technologies. Nowadays information and its purposeful dissemination is inseparable part of everyday life as well as the most efficient instrument of the realization of any, political or public, campaigns.

Article 6 of the UNFCCC being the main legal base for the identified activities defines the six priorities that are determined by the Convention as essential for involving all levels of the society in climate change process. The outcomes that Parties are obligated to demonstrate and which should “promote and facilitate at the national, and as appropriate, subregional and regional levels...” are the following: climate change related educational programs at the primary and secondary levels, public awareness campaigns, public access to relevant information, public participation, training of encompassing experts and enhancement of international cooperation.

In addition to the regulations of the Convention, a special mechanism was elaborated and launched providing for better realization of the stipulations of Article 6, i.e. New Delhi Working Program The Program has been adopted by the Eighth Conference of Parties, New Delhi, India, (Decision 11/CP.8). In 2002 recognizing the importance of the implementation of the elements of Article 6. The program is based on such guidelines as country-driven, integration, interdisciplinary and co-operative approaches, cost-effectiveness and principles of sustainable development.

In 2004 CC:iNet, the web portal, was designed at the request of the Parties to the UNFCCC.. The portal was launched at the Tenth Conference of Parties in Buenos Aires, Argentina. CC:iNet is an informational tool serving as a clearinghouse to promote the main principles of Article 6.

In 2007, the Thirteenth Conference of Parties, Bali, adopted the Decision 9/CP13 on the extension of the New Delhi Working Programme. The Decision 9/CP 13 recognized that the implementation of the Article 6 of the Convention is a long-term process requiring a framework to support the national efforts. The New Delhi program, being such a framework, should be extended for the upcoming five years and adapted to address gaps and needs identified. One of the tools vested in the extended New Delhi Programme is the strengthening of the regional and sub-regional efforts.

National Focal Points (NFP) for the Article 6 play a vital role in implementation of its stipulations in their respective countries taking into consideration the countries’ specific conditions and characteristics. In 2004 the REC Country Office in Turkey was nominated a NFP for the Article 6.

Referring to the above mentioned decisions of the Conference of Parties and taking into consideration the successful experience of REC CO Turkey acting as a NFP, the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe proposes to set up the Regional Focal Point for the Article 6 of the

Convention (RFP REC) providing for the more efficient implementation of the Article 6 in CEE and Turkey. The ultimate goal of the RFP REC is to foster national efforts in the REC beneficiary countries in Central and Eastern Europe, South East Europe, and Turkey on the implementation of the Article 6 and the extended New Delhi Work Program through enhanced work of the National Focal Points on all items of the Article 6. The objectives of RFP REC are as follows:

- To support the National Focal Points to implement their tasks under Article 6 of the Convention;
- To facilitate the exchange of information and experience among National Focal Points/National Focal Points for the Article 6 and the stakeholders (government officials, business, academia, civil society);
- To facilitate dissemination of knowledge and information in national languages in the CEE, SEE and Turkey;
- To facilitate regional and sub-regional cooperation in the all REC beneficiary countries.

2. Regional needs

The analysis of capacities in the field of public awareness, education, training, information dissemination in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey usually has been carried out within the scope of the wider capacity-building needs assessment projects.

The elements of capacity building needs assessment for the Article 6 have been present in a number of the national and international studies among which the most significant were the following:

- National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) project. The project has been launched by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) in cooperation with UNDP in 2002 following the request of the Parties at the Seventh Conference of the Parties, Marrakech, Morocco. The overall aim of the project was to provide countries with the opportunity to identify priority capacity needs in order to effectively address cross-cutting global environmental issues in the context of the three Rio Conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. In the countries of CEE and Turkey under the thematic topic on Climate Change several capacity building needs related to the main pillars of the Article 6 were identified;
- “On the Road to Montreal”, Under this project the preparedness of the four Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro) for the implementation of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol has been assessed. Shortcomings and gaps have been identified, including the low awareness of the societies of the mentioned countries on the issue of climate change;
- Synthesis report on the state of capacity building needs process in the Economies in Transition has been prepared for the Thirteenth Conference of Parties, Bali, Indonesia, in 2007. Among the fields where the capacities were assessed there was the field of education, training, and public awareness.

The overall conclusion which can be drawn from the above mentioned projects is that despite the differences among the REC's beneficiary countries, the implementation of the Article 6 of the UNFCCC is everywhere low on the political agenda of these countries.

Through the desk studies and interviews of the experts, the following common needs and challenges on the way to the realization of priorities of the Article 6 have been identified in all REC's beneficiary countries:

1. Challenge: organizing of *National-wide climate awareness rising campaigns* in local languages for all the stakeholders.

Problems identified: The importance of organization of national climate awareness rising campaigns has been emphasized by all the interviewed experts. Their opinion was that without comprehensive national wide awareness rising campaigns on climate change, it is difficult to overcome the so-called psychology of denial and approach the stakeholders. The same message appears also in the UNEP handbook "Raising awareness on climate change". In the handbook the campaigns of this scope are regarded as the most appropriate tool to facilitate and regulate the process of the development of a national Article 6 programs.

The main problem is the lack of sufficient financial resources, human resources, and know-how on the campaigns organization'.

2. Challenge: *Developing the environmental and climate change curricula* in the primary and secondary school.

Problems identified: climate change process, its mitigation, adaptation to the effects of the climate change are the complicated issue from every point of view – international, legal, scientific, and technological. To compose a course requires knowledge on all the above mentioned points. Moreover, the materials are often not available in the local languages. To prepare a toolkit where all the points are clarified and elaborated, and the paper, audio, and video materials are available in local language can be significant assistance for the teachers in primary and secondary school of the Region.

3. Challenge: Building *expertise within the governmental bodies* of the CEE countries, especially in the non-environmental institutions.

Problems identified: since the issues of climate change are low on the political agenda of the countries, policies and measures leading towards substantial greenhouse gas reductions are slow to be developed, slow to be adopted, and slow to be implemented. Moreover, the considerations of the future climate impacts are seldom included in the mid- and long-term state and sectoral strategies and programmes. There is also a need for improving institutional arrangements and national coordination.

4. Challenge: *Increasing social and corporate responsibility of the businesses.*

Problems identified; currently the businesses consider the environmental protection policies and measures as the constraints on the businesses' development and additional burden in the cases where reporting and data collection are involved. On the other hand, the management of the businesses sometimes lack precise

and clear information on the various systems of carbon trading, get confused among these systems, and cannot realize the full potential of these systems for the further development and investments. One more problem is the low awareness of the businesses on the impact of climate change in the mid-term. Consequently, the business- and investment plans are not adjusted in line with potential adaptation needs.

5. Challenge: *changing the behavioral patterns of general public* into more environmentally friendly and less carbon-polluting ones.

Problems identified: there is lack of means to convey the message on the climate change to the general public. Unfortunately there is no common perception of the close relation between the routine behavior patterns of general public and global problems. On the other hand, information on how to change the everyday routines in a “green” way is often missing, especially in the local languages.

The REC RFP can significantly contribute towards the solutions of the all above mentioned problems through information dissemination, international cooperation, involvement of all stakeholders.

3. REC’s experience

The REC’s vast experience during the recent years in the field of environmental information includes a significant number of projects featuring the following to reflect properly the sophisticated nature of the issue:

- All six pillars of the Article 6 covered: education, training, public awareness, public participation in the decision making, public access to environmental information, international cooperation;
- Wide range of countries; the countries were sometimes bundled within a single project to provide a comparative as well as cooperative perspectives;
- Wide range of stakeholders: civil society, governmental officials, businesses, mass media, general public;
- Wide range of sectors of economies where the climate change information is relevant for the future development;
- Wide range of methodological approaches including legal, regulatory, economic, technological, informational points of view;
- Wide range of the formats of the projects including the case studies with the consecutive distribution of the obtained results, trainings, seminars, etc.

The most successful and interesting projects the implementation of which can significantly contribute towards the establishment of the RFP REC are listed below. Here it should be mentioned that the Climate Change Department of the REC has been hosting the Regional Secretariat of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP). The projects implemented under the framework of REEEP have got a strong climate component and accumulated experience within the Department on the information dissemination.

1. “Green pack”

Beneficiary country/countries: Countries of Estonia, Romania, Hungary

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: education in primary and secondary school

Time period: 2001 - today

Implementing agency: REC HQ

Short description of the project: The Green Pack is a multi-medium environmental education curriculum kit to teach children about environmental protection and sustainable development.

The Green Pack is primarily developed to support European primary school teachers and their students.

2. “Aarhus meets Kyoto”

Beneficiary country/countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: public access to climate related information and public participation in environmental decision making

Time period: 2001-2002

Implementing agency: REC HQ in the partnership with the WRI

Short description of the project: The project assessed the public access to the climate related information in the participating countries. Indicator framework has been proposed by WRI. The framework lists indicators to measure public participation in climate. The structure of the survey is as follows. The indicators are divided into three parts:

- Access to General Information and Compliance;
- Access to Participation in Decision Making Affecting Climate Change;
- Efforts to build the capacity of the Public for Meaningful Participation in Climate- Change- Related Decision Making.

Each part is divided into categories; each category is comprised of indicators. Each indicator contains several values. The partner NGOs filled in the indicators through the desk and field researches.

3. “Kyoto in Home”

Beneficiary country/countries: Hungary

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: secondary education, international cooperation

Time period: 2009-10

Implementing agency: REC CO Hungary

Short description of the project: Schools for Intelligent Energy Use (SIEU) builds a bridge between schools and societies. This project contributes to the development of energy and climate education in secondary level by encouraging cooperation between European Member States to make young generation adopt intelligent energy behavior at home to reduce the amount of GHG emissions. This is done by sharing and widening successful didactic concepts like Schools for Sustainability (SfS) to other European Member States. 10 schools participated in the project in every country.

4. Belgrade Initiative

Beneficiary country/countries: Countries of South-East Europe (SEE)

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: international cooperation

Time period: 2007 and onwards

Implementing agency: REC CO Serbia and REC HQ

Short description of the project: For enhancing regional SEE cooperation in the field of climate change a background document initiated by the host country, Serbia, has been prepared by the REC for the Ministerial Debate at Belgrade 2007 „Environment for Europe” Conference. It was proposed to focus the debate on the following important issues: SEE common concerns in Capacity building, Education,

Training and Public Awareness. The document called Belgrade Initiative received full support of the UNECE Sixth Ministerial Conference „Environment for Europe”, Belgrade 10-12 October, 2007. The Belgrade Initiative also provides with establishment of a Sub-regional Virtual Climate Change related Centre in Belgrade, as means of improving the sub-regional cooperation in SEE.

5. Building Capacities in the field of Climate Change in the Republic of Serbia

Beneficiary country: Republic of Serbia

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: training of journalists

Time period: 2007 - 2008

Implementing agency: Regional Environmental Center for CEE and Turkey

Short description of the project: The main objective of the project is to support the national activities to prepare the First National Communication under the UNFCCC and disseminate the information. Activities include different types of trainings. Governmental officials outside of Ministry for Environment are provided with basic information on the international climate negotiation, furthermore seminar for experts is made to deepen their knowledge and experience with reporting to the UNFCCC. In order to improve the understanding by media of climate change, training is organized for journalists.

6. Support of national focal point in BiH in preparation of the Initial National Communication under UNFCCC

Beneficiary country/countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: training for media, public awareness

Time period: 2008 - 2009

Implementing agency: REC

Short description of the project: The main objective of the project is to increase in-country capacities, specially National Focal Point, aiming to promote UNFCCC trough public awareness campaign and to build capacities in Bosnia and Herzegovina for successful preparation of INC. The main goal of the project is to fully apply Article 6 of the Convention related to education, training and public awareness during process of preparation of INC for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Regarding education and trainings, the project will organize briefings for decision makers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and representatives of media aiming to promote UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol and to promote activities related to preparation of INC in B&H. In additionally the project will organise a national conference and series of one day trainings (3 in total) for junior experts (under age 35) and students of final year from the universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina involved in process of preparation of INC.

Public awareness campaign will be organised by production of billboards, radio jingles and preparation of leaflet.

7. Sustainable Development (SD) course

Beneficiary country/countries: CEE and Turkey, EECCA region

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: education, international cooperation

Time period: 2004 – 2008

Implementing agency: REC for CEE and Turkey

Short description of the project: The basic goal of organizing the courses was to increase the knowledge of governmental officials from ministries other than Ministry for Environment in the field of environmental protection focusing on sustainable development. The SD course for senior civil servants of several CEE countries was organized in 2004, where about 80 people were trained from 10 countries. The

course consisted of several modules. The first –and obligatory- module was a general introduction to the concept of sustainability (strategies, methodologies, policies and actions for CEE), then the participants could make a choice for a second module freely. The second module was focusing on economic sectors (e.g. energy), where strategies/ policy options and available tools were introduced to implement the required steps toward sustainable development.

8. REEEP Travelling exhibition

Beneficiary country/countries: CEE, but can be more

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: education, public awareness

Time period: 2005 - 2008

Implementing agency: REC/REEEP Regional Secretariat for CEE and Turkey

Shot description of the project: “The Power to Change” poster exhibition was developed in 2005 with the aim to educate and raise awareness among all stakeholders in our region. The traveling exhibition maps out four areas related to energy efficiency and renewable energy, including an overview of why change is needed (climate change, energy security, access to energy and health), a look at renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, a sampling of finance and policy measures employed around the world and an introduction to the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP). The Power to Change exhibition is functioning based on requests coming in from different countries/ events and it is shipped to the beneficiary country/event for an agreed time frame.

9. Training for Journalists on Sustainable Energy

Beneficiary country/countries: CEE

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: training

Time period: 2006

Implementing agency: REC/REEEP Regional Secretariat for CEE and Turkey.

Short description of the project: The first REEEP regional training for journalists covering sustainable energy was held in Riga, Latvia, by the REC in its capacity as REEEP Regional Secretariat for Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey. The training provided sixteen participating journalists with skills and techniques that they can apply to improve the quality and impact of their stories and reports on climate change, renewables and energy efficiency. The participants performed guided journalistic research on a sustainable energy story of their choice. In order to provide participants with access to sustainable energy experts and decision makers from their countries, the training was organized back to back with the Third BISE Forum on Intelligent Energy in Municipalities in the New Member States, Candidate Countries, Western Balkans and Ukraine. By the end of the training, the journalists were expected to produce a draft story/article using the skills and knowledge they have gained and to publish or broadcast at least one such story or report related to sustainable energy issues in their home media after the training.

10. Project: REEEP Media Award for Excellence in Sustainable Energy Reporting in Central and Eastern Europe

Beneficiary country/countries: CEE

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: awareness rising

Time period: 2007

Implementing agency: REC/REEEP Regional Secretariat for CEE and Turkey

Short description of the project: The award aims to increase the knowledge, awareness and understanding of the role of renewable energy and energy efficiency in economic development,

environmental protection and community engagement. It also aims to improve the quality and quantity of articles and feature stories that cover sustainable energy alternatives within the mass media. Articles received from applicants had to fulfill the below requirements:

- To cover topics and provide vital information related to sustainable energy, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, alternative forms of energy, and their need and effects on society and the environment;
- To have impact on communities and society in CEE countries (e.g. link to climate change, increased number of renewable energy users, investment in energy efficiency, government decisions or policies in favor of sustainable energy etc.);
- To appear in print, on air or online in the period **August 1, 2006 – February 28, 2007**; and
- To demonstrate high-quality journalism.

11. Possibility of new measures in energy intensity improvement

Beneficiary country/countries: Hungary

Relevant pillar of the Article 6: training

Time period: 2008

Implementing agency: REC

Short description of the project: The aim of the project is to raise awareness of the Hungarian public sector on energy saving potentials and practices, how to switch to a sustainable energy consumption. Problems like climate change, GHG emission, energy dependence, increase in energy consumption, importance of energy saving, standby were presented in a factsheets and booklet developed in national language.

It is clear from above that the REC possesses sufficient experience on implementation of projects in all priority areas of the Article 6.

4. Involvement of stakeholders

4.1. Governmental representatives

Role: as it was mentioned in the previous sections, the involvement of and cooperation among governmental officials, decision makers, and decision takers are crucial for development of policies and measures leading to the GHG reduction. Training for decision makers on the environmental issues should be promoted to move up the issue on political agendas so that climate change needs are better acknowledged.

Strategic goals for the RFP REC for cooperation with this stakeholder:

- Improve awareness of decision makers, state and local authorities, incorporate public awareness consideration into local planning;
- Exchange experiences about the realized educational programs and related regulations (good practices and lessons learned);
- Facilitate stakeholder alliances aiming to increase public and business participation
- Improve quality of the information on climate change disseminated among the public through the elaboration of availability criteria

4.2 Business community

Role: In order to increase the interest of business community in the realization of the projects with GHG reduction opportunities and investment in environmentally friendly and energy efficient technologies training on the mechanisms of the Convention and the Protocol is needed.

Strategic goals for the RFP REC for cooperation with this stakeholder:

- Present the environmental policies and measures as the tool for development and attracting investments;
- Train the representatives of financial structures and project developers on the issue of the climate change impacts ;
- Create incentives for economic agents to participate in national programs on voluntary base;
- Develop opportunities for realization of state programs in collaboration with public organizations.

4.3 Media

Role: Realizing the importance of the promotion of climate change in mass media and taking into account the lack of journalists competent in this area, activities aiming the increasing of knowledge, awareness and understanding of climate change among the representatives of TV, radio and press would be a solution. It also aims to improve the quality and quantity of articles and feature stories within the mass media that cover climate change and issues related to GHG reduction.

Strategic goals for the RFP REC for cooperation with this stakeholder:

- Convey the message on climate change and its impact from the scientific community to the other stakeholders in a clear and understandable way;
- Provide the journalists with adequate information on the issue of climate change.

4.4 Academia

Role: Taking into consideration the role of scientific research as a ground for the evidence of the impacts of climate change, it is important to deliver the message from academia to all stakeholders in a clear and comprehensive manner. Currently the results of the research activities are rather difficult for understanding for the general public due to the presence of the professional jargon. The other activity for the RFP REC is the support of the already existing networks and promotion of further cooperation.

Strategic goals for the RFP REC for cooperation with this stakeholder:

- Convey the message on climate change and its impact from the scientific community to the other stakeholders in a clear and understandable way;
- Support the development of research networks.

4.5 NGO

Role: in the field of information sharing, awareness raising and education it is very important, to have the proper communication tools with the politicians. Civil society possesses the skill of communicating the public's opinion to the decision-makers, helping a consensus to be reached. Helping more NGOs to become important players information sharing activities would significantly contribute to the better understanding of climate change and sustainable development and their relation with economic growth by all stakeholders.

Strategic goals for the RFP REC for cooperation with this stakeholder:

- Increase public participation in climate related decision making;;
- Support participation of civil society as observers at the international negotiations on the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol.

5. Programming Opportunities for REC as Regional Focal Point on Article 6 of UNFCCC.

The following priorities and programming opportunities can be identified in order to foster national efforts in the all REC beneficiary countries in Central and Eastern Europe, South East Europe, and Turkey on the implementation of the Article 6 and the extended New Delhi Work Programme through enhanced work of the National Focal Points on all items of the Article 6:

№	Programming Need	Comments, if any
1	Contribution to consistent and coherent development of educational programs on climate change as a part of national policies	More attention in the region should be paid to the long-term national actions. RFP will assist to scale up the efficiency of existing methods for enhancing public awareness and engage new methods that are to be used in national informational campaigns on climate change
2	Enhancement of governmental knowledge - providing clear vision on climate change, topics related to the reduction of GHG and sustainable development for all levels of national governments	RFP will organize/support training for the governmental officials from both environmental and non-environmental bodies
3	Transfer of good practices, examples/success stories about policies and measures, regulations implementation, bring the information about the international climate-related campaigns to the national level	
4	Collaboration with national focal points on information sharing, best practices sharing and cooperation on the regional level	The potential feels for this cooperation are awareness raising campaigns and educational programs
5	Support access to climate related information –	

	assessment of the possibilities of general public to access to the climate related information and to participate in the climate related decision making	
6	Assessment of barriers on the way of public awareness raising and analysis for effective actions on national and local levels	
7	Promotion of existing (for instance CC:iNET) and creation of new informational tools (distribution of printed materials, promotion of the topic in media)	
8	Promotion of the results of scientific and research papers of the international scientific community for all stakeholder groups and non-environmental community	
9	Support of the new financial instruments encouraging the business community to participate in the activities pursuant to Article 6	
10	Assurance of the broader public participation, i.e. facilitation of NGO accreditation with the UNFCCC	For instance, manuals on the participation of NGO in international process can be developed
11	Dissemination of information on climate change to international community at the international meetings	

6. Start –up activities

№	Activity	Date	Comments
1	Drafting action plan	August-October 2008	REC as an organization which came out with initiative to become a Regional Focal Point on Article 6 of UNFCCC takes responsibility to elaborate an Action Plan on raising of public awareness and education on climate change in Central and Eastern Europe, South East Europe, and Turkey. Final draft will be based on the analysis of regional needs and contain long-term actions in accordance with the requirements of Article 6. The document will be presented to the international climate change community after discussion with and in case of approval of National Focal Points in the countries of interest.
2	Organize of workshop for National Focal Points.	The end of October, 2008	In order to introduce the draft of Action Plan for the expert discussion REC will organize a workshop for the representatives of National Focal Points from the 17 REC beneficiary countries.

3	Organization of the side-event on the COP 14 in Poznan, Poland	December, 2008	The side-event dedicated to the realization of the Article 6 of the UNFCCC which will be organized by REC in frame of the Conference of Parties is a an opportunity to present the final draft of Action Plan to the international climate change community.
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7. Short-term activities for the year 2009

1	Support of the CC:iNet, analysis of instruments and tools submitted to the CC:inet by other participants from the point of view of the applicability in the beneficiary countries	
2	Extension of existing international educational programs, i.e. preparation of the Climate Annex for the Green Pack	
3	Training of trainers – organization/support of the training for non-governmental stakeholders involved in the climate change process (academia, business, mass media, civil society)	The following provision of the training for the local stakeholders on the local languages is anticipated