



**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND WATER ECONOMY
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY
IPARD Programme 2014-2020 Monitoring Committee**

**Minutes of the seventh meeting of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020
Monitoring Committee**

**26th of November 2020
Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water economy**

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I. List of participants

1. Mr. Rexhail Ismaili - Chairperson of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee

Members present at the IPARD Monitoring Committee meeting:

1. Ms. Andrijana Velevska - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy;
2. Ms. Maja Lazareska Joveska - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy;
3. Mr. Goce Georgievski – Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy;
4. Mr. Dritan Ramadani - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy;
5. Ms. Nazmije Idrizi - Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning;
6. Mr. Marjan Kopevski - Ministry of Transport and Communications;
7. Mr. Vlado Avramovski – Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;
8. Ms. Evgenija Serafimovski – Secretariat for European Affairs;
9. Mr. Elgafar Jusufi – National Extension Agency;
10. _Mr. Saso Risteski - Macedonian Association of processors;
11. Mr. Sashko Arsov -Food and Veterinary Agency;
12. Ms. Aleksandra Martinovska – Stojcevska - Faculty of agricultural sciences and food-Skopje;
13. Ms. Daniela Dimovska - Faculty of agricultural sciences and food – UGD Stip;
14. Mr. Vladimir Petkov - Faculty for Veterinary Medicine;
15. Ms Marina Tosevska – LAG Agro Lider;
16. Mr. Petar Gjeorgievski - Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia;
17. Mr. Saso Krcoski - Network of young farmers;
18. Ms.Liljana Jonoski – Rural Coalition;
19. Mr. Jani Kjuka - Wines from Macedonia;
20. Mr.Arben Halili – Economic Chamber of Noth West Macedonia;
21. Mr. Hazir Polozani – University of Tetovo.
22. Mr. Nenad Stojanov- Association of farmers.

Present deputy members of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee:

1. Mr. Refet Ameti – Ministry of Culture;
2. Ms. Frosina Pandurska Dramikjanin - Macedonian ecological group;
3. Ms. Lidija Stojanovska- Chamber of crafts;

Representatives of the European Commission (EC) in an advisory role:

1. Mr. Liam Breslin – Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development;
2. Mr. Marius Lazdinis - Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development;
3. Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis – Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development.

Representatives of the European Delegation:

1. Ms. Margarita Deleva - Delegation of European Union in the Republic of North Macedonia;
2. Mr. Kostas Souphilas - Delegation of European Union in the Republic of North Macedonia;
3. Mr. Sergej Mihajlov - Delegation of European Union in the Republic of North Macedonia.

Representatives of IPARD Structure:

Representatives of NAO and NF:

1. Mr. Vlado Karamanolevski - Ministry of Finance;
2. Ms. Aleksandra Simjanoska - Ministry of Finance.

Representatives from IPARD Managing Authority (MA):

1. Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski - Head of IPARD MA;
2. Mr. Viktor Mladenovski - Unit for monitoring of implementation of IPARD funds and reporting;
3. Ms. Jasmina Hadzibulic - Unit for monitoring of implementation of IPARD funds and reporting;
4. Ms. Gordana Smileska - Unit for monitoring of implementation of IPARD funds and reporting;
5. Mr. Kiril Ristoski - Unit for implementation of IPARD technical assistance;
6. Mr. Zlatko Kolevski - Unit for implementation of IPARD technical assistance;
7. Mr. Oliver Stefanovski - Unit for implementation of IPARD technical assistance;
8. Mr. Saska Jovanovska Vukelic - Unit for implementation of IPARD technical assistance;
9. Ms. Gabriela Petrova - Unit for implementation of IPARD technical assistance;
10. Mr. Aleksandar Anteski - Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;
11. Mr. Dusko Jakimovski - Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;
12. Mr. Isah Imishti - Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;
13. Mr. Muhadin Limani - Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;

Representatives from the Agency for Financial Support to Agriculture and Rural Development (IPARD Agency):

1. Mr. Nikolche Babovski - Director of the IPARD Agency;
2. Mr. Vladimir Nanevski - IPARD Agency;
3. Mr. Vladimir Hristov - IPARD Agency.



Results: The Chairperson of the Committee, 22 members and 3 deputy members with voting right (out of a total of 33 members with a right to vote) participated in the meeting. A quorum of 2/3 of the members with a right to vote was achieved to hold the meeting in accordance with the Rules of Procedure article 8 paragraph 3.

The checklist for presence of members from the meetings of the IPARD Monitoring Committee is shown in Appendix 1 of these minutes.

The list of observers is shown in Appendix 2 of these minutes.

II. AGENDA

For the 7th IPARD II Monitoring Committee meeting

No.	Time	Topic	Presented by:	Documents
	09:00	Registration	MA Secretariat	
	09:30 09:45	Confirmation of presence of members/deputies at the meeting and reached quorum to hold the meeting according to the Rules of procedure	MA Secretariat	
1.	09:30 09:45	Opening of the meeting Adoption of the draft Agenda for the seventh meeting of the IPARD 2014-2020 Monitoring Committee (MC)	Chairperson	 Draft Agenda
2.	09:50 10:00	Adoption of the Minutes of the sixth IPARD II MC meeting, held on 12 December 2019	Chairperson	 Final draft minutes
3.	10:00 10:15	Information on the implementation of decisions/conclusions taken at the sixth IPARD II MC meeting, held on 12 December 2019	MA	 MA report
4.	10:15 10:20	Information on appointments of new members of IPARD II MC	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
5.	10:20 10:30	Information regarding IPA Monitoring Committee meeting held on 14 October 2020	NIPAC	 To be presented at the meeting
6.	Status on implementation of IPARD Programme 2014-2020			
6.1	10:30 10:50	General information about programme / measure implementation on the basis of monitoring indicators, tables	MA	 MA report
6.2	10:50 11:10	Information on the progress of activities of IPARD Agency	IPARD Agency (IA)	 IA report
6.3	11:10 11:30	Information on functioning of the monitoring and control system Information on the status with the entrustment of budget implementation tasks for measure Rural Public Infrastructure Information on financial implementation of IPARD and use of interest earned	NAO	 NAO report

7.		Discussions on modification of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020		
7.1	11:30 12:00	Information on potential modification of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
8.		Technical Assistance activities		
8.1	12:00 12:15	Information on the progress of APTA 2020 implementation	MA	 MA report
8.2	12:15 12:30	Adoption of APTA 2020 (modification 2)	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
8.3	12:30 12:45	Adoption of APTA 2021	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
8.4	12:45 12:55	Information on the progress of activities related to the Communication and Publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020	MA	 MA report
8.5	12:55 13:10	Adoption of Action Plan for Communication and Publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020 for year 2021	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
9.		Information / discussion on results of the on-going evaluation of IPARD Programme		
9.1	13:10 13:20	Information on ex post evaluation of the IPARD Programme 2007-2013	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
9.2	13:20 13:40	Information on ongoing evaluation of IPARD Programme 2014-2020	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
10.		Preparation of IPARD III Programme 2021- 2027		
10.1	13:40 14:00	Information on preparatory activities of the IPARD III Programme 2021- 2021	MA	 To be presented at the meeting
11.	14:00 14:20	AOB		 Discussion
12.	14:20 14:30	Proposal for the Agenda of the next eighth IPARD 2014-2020 MC meeting / agreement on indicative date	Chairperson /European Commission	 Discussion
	14:30	Closure of the meeting	Chairperson	

III. RESULTS OF THE IPARD II MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING

Opening of the meeting

Mr. Liam Breslin, representative of the European Commission, welcomed members of the Monitoring Committee. He congratulated Mr. Rexhail Ismaili on becoming a chairperson for the IPARD Monitoring Committee. He noted that 2020 was a challenging year for North Macedonia due to Covid 19 pandemic, but overall, the implementation of the IPARD Programme is running well. Regarding the lack of staff in the IPARD structure, he passed a message to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, and Ministry of Finance, to take the necessary steps to get extra staff, otherwise it might delay adoption of IPARD III Programme, as it already did with entrustment of new measures. He noted that North Macedonia is among the frontrunners in IPARD implementation and the only country that did not seek the n+3 exception this year.

Mr. Breslin informed about his retirement at the end of November. He introduced Mr. Marius Lazdinis who will be Acting Head of the Unit starting from 1 December.

1. With reference to item 1 of the agenda: "Adoption of the draft agenda for the seventh meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee".

The Chairperson of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee (IPARD II MC), Mr. Rexhail Ismaili opened the seventh meeting of the Committee by welcoming all attendees. He informed the members on the proposed agenda for the seventh meeting of the IPARD II MC.

None of the members of the Committee had any remarks regarding the agenda, and the following decision was adopted:

Decision No. 1: IPARD II Monitoring Committee adopted the agenda for the seventh meeting of the Monitoring Committee.

2. With reference to item 2 of the agenda: "Adoption of the minutes from the previous sixth meeting of the IPARD II MC held on December 12, 2019"

The Chairperson of the IPARD II MC informed that the minutes from the previous meeting of the Monitoring Committee held on 12th of December 2019, were sent to the members of the Committee on 28th of January 2020 and no comments from the members were submitted to the Secretariat till 2nd of February 2020.

The members of the IPARD II MC did not have any remarks on the minutes and the following decision was adopted:

Decision No. 2: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee adopted the minutes of the sixth meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee, held on 12th of December 2019, as final.

3. With reference to item 3 of the agenda: "Information on the implementation of the decisions /conclusions adopted at the previous sixth meeting of the IPARD II MC "

The Head of the Managing Authority, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, informed on the progress made in the implementation of the decisions/conclusions adopted at the previous meeting of the IPARD II MC as well as on the decisions adopted by written procedure, i.e.:

- Annual Report on the Implementation of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020 for 2019;
- Modification of the Action plan for intended operations under the Technical Assistance measure (APTA) for 2020;
- Modification of the Rules of Procedure of IPARD II MC.

Regarding this item, the members of the Committee adopted the following conclusion:

Conclusion No. 1: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on the progress made in implementing the decisions/conclusions of the sixth meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee.

4. With reference to item 4 of the agenda: "Information on appointments of new members of IPARD II MC"

Regarding this item, Head of MA, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski informed about the new members of the IPARD II MC as well as the new Chairperson. New members of the IPARD II MC are:

- Dritan Ramadani- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy;
- Vlado Avramovski- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;
- Arben Halili- Economic chamber of north- west Macedonia;
- Nenad Stojanov – Association of Farmers;
- Aleksandra Martinoska- Stojchevska- Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food- Skopje;
- Rexhail Ismaili- Chairperson of the IPARD MC 2014- 2020.

The following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 2: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on appointments of new members of IPARD II Monitoring Committee.

5. With reference to item 5 of the agenda: "Information regarding the IPA Monitoring Committee held on 14th of October 2020"

The representative of the National IPA Coordinator, Evgenija Serafimovska Kirkovski informed about the meeting of the IPA Monitoring Committee, i.e conclusions adopted at it. She also emphasized that staff retention policy in the IPA structure has been continuously discussed. Based on continuous pressure from Brussel, NIPAC was obliged to submit a new proposal regarding the staff retention policy in November 2020 and it is expected to be adopted in March 2021. The representative of the EC, Liam Breslin, proposed to national authorities to seek entrustment for the

measure "Investments in rural public infrastructure" in the next 6 months. Head of MA, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, answered that realization of that measure cannot start until the needed staff is employed in the IPARD Agency.

Regarding this item, the members of the Committee adopted the following conclusion

Conclusion No. 3: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed regarding IPA Monitoring Committee held on 14th of October 2020.

6. In relation to item 6 of the Agenda: "Status with the implementation of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020"

6.1. Sub-item 5.1 of the agenda: "General information about programme/measure implementation on the basis of monitoring indicators, tables"

Regarding this sub-item, the MA representative, Mr. Viktor Mladenovski presented the Annual monitoring report for the implementation of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020, informing that the main indicators for implementation are with status as of 31st of October 2020, while the indicators that provide information regarding the type of production or type of investment are with status as of 30th of June 2020. Attendees at the meeting were informed about the implementation of the three measures of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020, public calls and etc.

The representative of the EC, Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis noted that the report shows fulfilment of Programme's targets below 50%. The targets set in the IPARD Programme 2014-2020 were too high and this should be taken into account during preparation of IPARD III. This means that targets, which were set at the beginning of preparation of IPARD II, were over ambitious and unrealistic. He also reminded that, implementation of IPARD II and IPARD III is an exercise for accession in EU as, in the EU member states, particular attention is paid to the way how targets are set and reached. The next issue he pointed out was regarding building construction permits as well as legalisation in relation to farms that has a negative impact on IPARD implementation.

The Head of the Managing Authority, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski informed that after the last MC meeting, MA prepared Guideline for construction on agricultural land and presented it to the concerned parties on forums and workshops organized within the publicity campaign and published it on the IPARD MA website. He also noted that MA will prepare similar guidelines for obtaining environmental permits and permits for providing water for irrigation from wells.

On question, raised by Mr. Liam Breslin, concerning the level of interest in Measure 7 and its low approval rate, the MA representative Mr. Viktor Mladenovski responded that on the first public call there were large number of applications with high value of investments for renewable energy sources, but they were rejected due to not fulfilling Programme's criteria.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 4: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on general information about programme / measure implementation on the basis of monitoring indicators, tables

6.2 Sub-item 6.2 of the agenda: "Information on the progress of activities of IPARD Agency"

The Director of IPARD Agency, Mr. Nikolce Babovski, informed that during the state of emergency, IPARD Agency adopted a Decree with legal force aimed to protect EU taxpayers' funds and applicants who were either in the application or implementation phase of projects. He pointed out that at one of the last sessions of the Government of North Macedonia, a conclusion was reached regarding the fulfilling of the required job positions of the entire IPA structure until the end of the first quarter of 2021.

The IPARD Agency representative, Mr. Vangel Nanevski informed that according to the Decree adopted during the crisis, the deadline for realization of investments was prolonged for 60 days (the deadlines specified in the Contracts for Financial Support for implementation of the investment subject to the Contract shall be suspended during the period of the state of emergency and shall be postponed after the cease of the state of emergency, but only for such number of days for which they were suspended, from the date of the cease of the state of emergency). The on-spot controls for measure 1 were replaced with administrative verification of the declared data using the available data bases and registries for measure 3 and measure 7 the controls took place physically in accordance with the Decree. Contracting was implemented by sending the contracts and the decisions by mail. He also informed about the second modification which referred to the procedure for approval of requests in a situation when the total amount requested is above the available budget from the Public Call.

Mr. Nanevski presented the results from the implementation of the Programme by public calls (Appendix 3 to these minutes). Ranking procedure is to be imposed on applications submitted on public call 01/2020 since the available budget of the measure was surpassed.

He noted incompleteness of applications as the main reason for rejection, especially in Measure 7 where 151 out of 261 applications on public call 01/2019 were rejected due to incompleteness. In addition, delay in the process of contracting the applications is caused by the slow respond of the Burro for Court Expertise in the process of determining the reasonableness of the costs. Large number of received applications and insufficient number of employees, still remains as one of the bottlenecks in the process of assessment of the applications and payment requests.

The representative from IPARD Agency, Mr. Vladimir Hristov, presented the data regarding the payment of applications. He pointed out that regarding public call 01/2017 there are still active contracts where the deadline for payment is 2021 and during the next period 9 requests for payment with a requested amount of 2,5 million € are expected to be submitted. Regarding call 01/2018, most of the beneficiaries have completed the deadlines for realization and it is expected that payment requests of around 4 million € will be submitted in 2021.

Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis shared concerns of the European Commission about high number of in remaining vacancies and lack of retention policy in the IPARD Agency.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 5: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee informed on the progress of activities of IPARD Agency.

6.3 Sub-item 6.3 of the agenda: "Information on functioning of the monitoring and control system"

"Information on the status with the entrustment of budget implementation tasks for measure Rural Public Infrastructure"

"Information on financial implementation of IPARD and use of interest earned"

The NAO representative, Ms. Aleksandra Simjanoska, informed the Committee regarding the management and control system of IPARD.

The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was also informed regarding the verification visits by NAO, the internal audits carried out during 2020 by the Internal Audit Department within each institution.

Concerning risk of de-commitment in 2021, national IPARD authorities assured that it will be avoided due to planned execution of payments until end-2020 and during 2021.

Regarding this sub-item, members of the MC adopted the following conclusion:

Conclusion No. 6: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on functioning of the monitoring and control system.

7. With reference to item 7 of the agenda: "Discussions on modification of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020"

7.1 Sub-item 7.1 of the agenda: "Information on potential modification of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020"

The Head of the Managing Authority, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, informed about the possible, third modification of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020. The reasons for the proposed modification are:

- Reallocation of funds for Measure 7;
- Proposed amendments of the Sectoral Agreement.

The third modification provides:

- Reallocation of funds from Measure 3 and 9 to Measure 7;
- Modification of the term "young farmer" within the Programme;
- Introduction of the possibility of advance payment up to 50% of the public aid related to the investment

Regarding this item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 7: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on the potential third modification of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020.

8. With reference to item 8 of the agenda: "Technical Assistance activities"

8.1 Sub-item 8.1 of the agenda: "Information on the progress of APTA 2020 implementation"

The MA representative, Mr. Kiril Ristoski informed about the realized activities of APTA for 2020. He also pointed out that due to the pandemic caused by Covid 19, they were not able to fully implement APTA for 2020.

Activities implemented in 2020 by the Unit for implementation of the Measure Technical Assistance:

- Organization of the Monitoring Committee;
- Procurement of office supplies;
- Ex-Post evaluation of the IPARD Programme 2007-2013;
- Realization of the IPARD Publicity Campaign.

Activities that are in the phase of realization of the measure Technical Assistance:

- Organization of 4 meetings of the Monitoring Committee;
- Procurement of database for the needs of IPARD Agency;
- Ex-ante evaluation of the IPARD III Programme;
- Translation of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020.

Regarding this item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 8: IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on the progress of APTA 2019 implementation.

8.2 Sub-item 8.1 of the agenda: „Adoption of APTA 2020" (modification 2)"

The MA representative, Mr. Kiril Ristoski presented the amendments of APTA for 2020. He pointed out that everything that was not realized with APTA for 2020 will be transferred into 2021.

Regarding this sub-item, the following decision was adopted:

Decision No. 3: IPARD II Monitoring Committee adopted the APTA 2020 (version 2).

8.3 Sub-item 8.3 of the agenda: „Adoption of APTA 2021"

The MA representative, Mr. Kiril Ristoski presented the activities envisaged in APTA for 2021:

- Training for the members of the Monitoring Committee;
- IPARD Programme publicity campaign;
- Seminars and visits expenditure;
- Training for potential LAG for implementation of their local development strategies;

- Procurement of office supplies;
- Evaluation of IPARD Programme 2014-2020;
- Directing specific parts of the management and control system.

The following decision was reached regarding this sub-item:

Decision No. 4: IPARD II Monitoring Committee reviewed and adopted the APTA for 2021.

8.4 Sub-item 8.4 of the agenda: "Information on the progress of activities related to the Communication and Publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020"

The MA representative, Ms. Saska Jovanovska – Vukelic, informed about the activities within the publicity campaign for the IPARD Programme 2014-2020, foreseen in the Annual action plan for communication and publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020 for 2020. She presented the realized activities as well as the future planned activities regarding communication and publicity for 2020.

Representatives of the European Commission complemented national authorities on outstanding work on communication and publicity of IPARD implementation – even during the pandemic. These activities also provide a proof on involvement of social and economic partners in preparation for the upcoming calls and IPARD implementation in general.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 9: The IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on the progress of activities related to the communication and publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020

8.5 Sub-item 8.5 of the agenda: "Adoption of Action plan for communication and publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020 for year 2021"

The MA representative, Ms. Saska Jovanovska – Vukelic presented the activities foreseen in the Action plan for communication and publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020 for year 2021. The action plan envisages:

- Organization (on-line or with physical presence) of IPARD info educational days by promoting successful examples;
- IPARD forums (on-line or with physical presence) for more successful implementation of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020;
- IPARD workshops (on-line or with physical presence) for preparation of IPARD requests, announcement of public calls;
- Appearances/articles in print and electronic media;
- Publishing the list of end users of funds from the IPARD Programme 2014-2020;
- Preparation and distribution of requests for use of funds and instructions for users of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020;

- Preparation and distribution of brochures dedicated to the promotion of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020;
- Preparation and publication of a book - illustrated edition for successful examples of IPARD projects;
- Production and publication of audio and videos;

Regarding this sub-item, the following decision was adopted:

Decision No. 5: IPARD II Monitoring Committee reviewed and adopted the Action plan for communication and publicity of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020 for year 2021.

9. With reference to item 9 of the agenda: "Information/discussion on results of the on-going evaluation of IPARD Programme"

9.1 Sub-item 9.1 of the agenda: "Information on ex post evaluation of the IPARD Programme 2007-2013"

The MA representative, Mr. Aleksandar Anteski presented the details regarding the ex-post evaluation of the IPARD Programme 2007-2013, focusing on the recommendations from the final report which was approved on 23.09.2020. Regarding the recommendations, the following was noted:

- Due to the long processing period, MA and IPARD Agency to find ways to speed timeline between application and fund disbursement;
- MA and IPARD Agency to focus more on regions with lower interest in applying;
- Improve the communication between the applicants and IPARD Agency;
- Introduction of software solutions and interconnectivity between databases;
- More focused calls;
- Improving the quality of advisory services;
- Pre-financing support.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 10: IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed on ex post evaluation of the IPARD Programme 2007-2013.

9.2 Sub-item 9.2 of the agenda: "Information on ongoing evaluation of IPARD Programme 2014-2020"

The representative from MA, Mr. Aleksandar Anteski informed about the on-going evaluation of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020. The following were identified as obstacles to the implementation of the evaluation activities:

- Lack of human capacities in terms of evaluation activities;
- Delayed data submission by the IPARD Agency;

- Manual data processing in the IPARD Agency;
- Incompatible data regarding the implementation of the IPARD Programme 2014-2020.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 11: IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed about the ongoing evaluation of IPARD Programme 2014-2020.

10. With reference to item 10 of the agenda: "Preparation of IPARD III Programme 2021-2027"

10.1 Sub-item 10.1 of the agenda: "Information on preparatory activities of the IPARD III Programme 2021- 2021"

The Head of the MA, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski informed about the activities for preparation of the IPARD Programme 2021-2027. The representative from EC, Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis, emphasized that the country is among the leaders in terms of preparations for the IPARD III Programme. He also pointed out that the availability of funds will depend on the decisions made regarding the human resources in the IPARD structures. If there is not enough staff needed to implement the IPARD Programme, there will be no reason to allocate additional funds. The representative of the EC, Mr. Liam Breslin announced that on 27.11.2020 a meeting will be held with all IPARD countries where 8 measures will be discussed which will be further sent to the MA. Regarding the question of the EC representative, Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis, what members think regarding the IPARD III Programme, i.e. whether they have any proposal, the representative of MES, Ms. Frosina Pandurska Dramiqanin emphasized the importance of the Agro-environmental measures in terms of maintaining the landscapes, especially in current or future protected areas where we have increasing livestock reduction. She also asked how the problem of lack of legalized buildings in rural areas will be overcome, specifically in Measure 7 in the next IPARD III Program. The Head of MA, Mr. Zivko Brajkovski, answered that MA intends to introduce Agro-environmental measures and organic production within the IPARD III Programme. Taking into account that MA has not yet received the guidelines for the development of this measure, he asked the EC representatives all guidelines regarding individual measures to be submitted no later than the end of January 2021. Regarding the Agro-environmental measures, the representative of IPARD Agency, Mr. Vangel Nanevski emphasized that it is not enough just to program this measure, but it is necessary to employ appropriate staff, trained for their implementation.

Regarding this item, the following conclusion was adopted:

Conclusion No. 12: IPARD II Monitoring Committee was informed about preparatory activities of the IPARD III Programme 2021- 2021

11. With reference to item 11 of the Agenda: "AOB"

Regarding this item, the representative from EC, Mr. Liam Breslin, informed the Head of MA, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, that all measures and guidelines regarding the preparation of the IPARD III

Programme will be submitted on time. Although 8 of them have already been submitted as a draft, they are not far from the final version. The other 5 measures will also be submitted on time. He further made certain remarks by the Commission. Namely, the European Commission and DG AGRI are satisfied with how the Republic of North Macedonia implements the IPARD Programme. On the other hand, the Commission is concerned about the lack of human resources in Agency and MA. He appealed to the authorities to take steps to fill the required job positions, otherwise there will be consequences, i.e.:

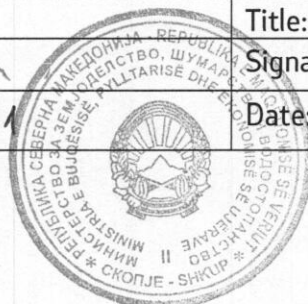
- DG AGRI could introduce sanctions due to late execution of payments (over 6 months).
- Late accreditation of the measure "Investments in rural public infrastructure", i.e. it will be delayed until the staff will be recruited and trained. As entrustment documents have been prepared at least two years ago, some of them might already require updating or rewriting.
- The number of employees will affect the IPARD III Programme, i.e. the available financial resources intended for the Republic of North Macedonia. If the human resources are not filled, it will be difficult to justify allocation of additional budget for the country.

12. With reference to item 12 of the Agenda: "Proposal for the Agenda of the next eight IPARD II MC meeting/agreement on indicative new date"

Regarding item 12 of the Agenda, the Chairperson informed on the draft agenda for the 8th meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee. He proposed the date for the next 8th meeting to be agreed in accordance with the availability of the representatives of the European Commission.

The Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee closed the meeting and declared it as successful.

FOR THE IPARD MONITORING COMMITTEE:	FOR THE SECRETARIAT:
Rexhail Ismaili	Zhivko Brajkovski:
Title: Chairperson	Title: Head of IPARD Managing Authority
Signature: 	Signature: 
Date: 08.06.2021	Date: 08.06.2021



Appendix 1: List of members (or their deputies) present at the meeting of the IPARD II Monitoring Committee

No.	Name of member	Institution	Present	Present (deputy member)	Deputy	Number of absences
1.	Mr. Rexhail Ismaili	MAFWE	√			
Government institutions						
2.	Mr. Dritan Ramadani	MAFWE	√			0
3.	Mr. Goce Georgievski	MAFWE	√			0
4.	Ms. Maja Lazareska Joveska	MAFWE	√			0
5.	Ms. Andrijana Velevska	MAFWE	√			0
6.	Ms. Evgenija Serafimovska Kirkovski	SEA	√			0
7.	Ms. Marina Arsovska	Ministry of Economy	/	/	/	2
8.	Mr. Vulnet Arifi	Ministry of Local Self –Government	/	/	/	1
9.	Mr. Avzi Demiri	Ministry of Culture		√	Mr. Refet Ameti	0
10.	Ms. Nazmije Idrizi	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	√			0
11.	Mr. Marjan Kopevski	Ministry of Transport and Communications	√			0
12.	Mr. Vlado Avramovski	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	√			0
13.	Mr. Sashko Arsov	Food and Veterinary Agency	√			0
Agencies						
14.	Mr. Elgafar Jusufi	NEA	√			0
15.	Ms. Ljiljana Vukovikj	Agency for support of entrepreneurship	/	/	/	1
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PARTNERS						

16.	Mr. Igor Tasevski	Macedonian Chamber of Commerce	/	/	/	1
17.	Mr. Ognen Orovchanec	Agrobiz Chamber at the Association of Chambers of Commerce of RM	/	/	/	1
18.	Mr. Sasho Risteski	Macedonian Association of processors	√			0
19.	Mr. Asen Dukovski	Association of farmers	/	/	/	2
20.	Mr. Zoran Zimbakov	Local self-government units	/	/	/	1
21.	Ms. Ana Martinovska Stoevska	Faculty of agricultural sciences and food	√			0
22.	Mr. Agron Fazliji	Chamber of craftsmen		√	Ms. Lidija Stojanovska	0
23.	Ms. Daniela Dimovska	Faculty of agricultural sciences and food – UGD Stip	√			0
24.	Ms. Marina Toshevska	Agro - LIDER	√			0
25.	Mr. Petar Gjorgjievski	Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia	√			0
26.	Mr. Vladimir Petkov	Faculty for Veterinary Medicine	√			0
27.	Mr. Sasho Krcoski	Network of young farmers	√			0
28.	Mr. Vlado Babadzovski	Trade union association of agricultural producers-SPAS	/	/	/	1
30.	Mr. Natalija Melovska	Macedonian ecological group		√	Ms. Frosina Pandurska Dramikjanin	0
31.	Ms. Liljana Jonoski	Rural Coalition	√			0

32.	Mr. Nenad Stojanov	Association of farmers	√			0
33.	Mr. Jani Kjuka	Wines from Macedonia	√			0
34.	Mr. Arben Halili	Economic Chamber of North West Macedonia;	√			0
35.	Mr. Hazir Polozani	University of Tetovo	√			0
TOTAL:			22	3		

Appendix 2: List of observers

Representatives of governmental institutions:

- Neda Gjokovikj- MAFWE;
- Aleksandar Dimitrovski- MAFWE;
- Ms. Zeljka Gudelj- MAFWE
- Mr. Ivan Ristovski- Cabinet of Deputy President of the Government in charge of Economic Affairs

Representatives of the State Audit Office (Audit Authority)

- Mr. Zoran Ristovski - Audit Authority;
- Ms. Vesna Mladenovska - Audit Authority;
- Mr. Arben Ramadani- Audit Authority;
- Ms. Natasa Misovska- Audit Authority.

Representatives of ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PARTNERS:

- Ms. Elizabeta Angeleska – Association of agricultural schools;
- Mr. Panche Arsov - Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development

Appendix 3: Results from the implementation of the Programme

Public call (Measure)	Submitted		Contracted		Paid		Description
	applications	EU part	applications	EU part	applications	EU part	
01/2017 (all)	<u>1.648</u>	<u>72.329.985</u>	<u>899</u>	<u>16.099.845</u>	<u>859</u>	<u>11.139.357</u>	Payment of 2,5 mill. € expected in 2021
01/2018 (M3)	<u>65</u>	<u>15.306.651</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>6.700.036</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>1.929.367</u>	Payment of 4 mill. € expected in 2021
02/2018 (M1)	<u>1.099</u>	<u>18.335.969</u>	<u>640</u>	<u>6.319.986</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>1.272.017</u>	Payment to continue in 2021 and 2022
01/2019 (M9)	<u>261</u>	<u>43.821.070</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>2.332.025</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	Still contracting, approx. 80 more contracts
02/2019 (M3)	<u>61</u>	<u>16.763.734</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>6.272.419</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	Still contracting
01/2020 (M1)	<u>748</u>	<u>21.011.113</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>/</u>	Ranking procedure imposed
Total	<u>3.882</u>	<u>187.568.522</u>	<u>1.645</u>	<u>37.724.311</u>	<u>1.284</u>	<u>14.340.741</u>	