



Project no. **511088**

Project acronym **ERA ENV**

Project title: **Integration of Associated Candidate Countries and New EU Member States in European Research Area by ENVironmental approaches**

Instrument: **Specific Support Action**

Thematic Priority: **Sustainable Development, Global Changes and Ecosystems**

PUBLISHABLE FINAL ACTIVITY REPORT

Period covered: from **01.04.2005** to: **30.09.2006**

Date of preparation: **November 2006**

Start date of project: **01.04.2005**

Duration: **18 months**

Project coordinator name: **Madalin IONITA**

Project coordinator organisation name **SC FIMAN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Final version

Publishable Final Activity Report



1. Project execution

Starting with 1st of April 2006 a new initiative co-financed by the European Commission through the 6th Framework Programme (FP6) for RTD/"Global change and ecosystems" sub-priority was running having as main objectives to

1. **encourage and facilitate** the participation of potential participants (research organisations and SMEs) from the Associated Candidate Countries (ACC) and New member States (NMS) in the activities of the Priority 1.1.6.3 – Global Change and Ecosystems, focused on scientific activities related to Danube river basin and Black Sea Coast within EU 6th FP

and

2. **advertise** FP6 in participating ACC and NMS in order to raise the awareness regarding the opportunities offered by the EU Research Programme and support the building of consortia with participants from the above mentioned area.

This initiative was the project "**Integration of Associated Candidate Countries and New EU Member States in European Research Area by ENVironmental approaches**" (ERA ENV)

ERA ENV was addressing to the following strategic objectives:

- **to raise the quantity and quality** of research projects from participants from Associated Candidate Countries as partners or co-ordinators in all types of instruments, especially the new instruments Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence, in Thematic Priority 6.3 "Global Change and Ecosystems" of FP6.
- **to contribute to the implementation of the "Global change and Ecosystems" work programme** by ensuring an increased number of successful participants from ACC and NMS and fostering the co-operation between research communities from member states, associated and candidate countries, thus contributing to the creation of a real European Research Area.

The aim of ERA ENV was to enhance the participation of research organisations and SMEs from ACC and NMS in FP6 and Global Changes and Ecosystems sub-priority. **The proposed activities:**

- actively promoted the research competencies on environment in ACC and NMS (at least 200 research organisations from ACC and NMS will be promoted);
- trained research and SMEs representative on issues related to FP6 and "Global Changes and Ecosystems" (11 training sessions organized and up to 240 researchers trained);

- allowed to promote FP6/Global Changes and Ecosystems to research community and SMEs (2,750 brochures, 5,000 leaflets, 2,750 CDs, one web page, monthly E- newsletters, one European Conference);
- allowed to support researchers/SMEs in proposals elaboration and submission (up to 20 proposals with ACC and NMS partners);
- allowed to establish partnerships between organizations from Member States (MS) and ACC and NMS (one international thematic networking will be organized).

The project's current relation to state-of-the-art

The overall concept of the ERA-ENV consortium was to set up an efficient and complex services for research community and SMEs acting in environment sector, in order to support researchers and SMEs participation in proposals, particularly the new instruments, relevant to the Global Changes and Ecosystems, but not only. The methodology proposed in order to reach the objectives included capacity building & training measures for researchers and SMEs, associations, researchers/coordinators (both individual and organisations), and pro-active consortium building, match making and impact assessment of research community and SMEs participation in the new instruments. The existing network of NCPs was playing a central role as “gateway” to the respective national research communities.

The emphases of this project lies in the integration of the **Associated Candidate Countries (Romania, Bulgaria) and Turkey** (Turkey is since a short time also fully associated to the 6th Framework Programme), which will enter the European Union in a later period. In these countries **information, awareness, assistance and training activities** are still having an essential importance for increasing the participation of researchers and SMEs in the 6th FP, TP 6.3.

When ERA ENV has been written different actions and specific activities were foreseen in order to create real links between *info part* (especially NCP network but also other organisations dealing and supporting research community to participate at EU funded programmes) and *target group* (RTD actors, at European level) by creating a network to support and mobilize the research community around and **European Research Area in ENVIRONMENT sector**.

Such activities as information and awareness campaigns, elaboration of promotion materials, training materials and sessions, assistance and support, match-making, international thematic networking, European Conference, etc will support research community to better participate within last calls of FP6. Also we proposed as methodology the possibility to use the existing networks active at European level but also relevant organisations and associations.

ERA ENV was also aiming to develop a strategy in order to implement a **Specific Support Action** that will actively contribute to the achievement of the work programme for Sub-Priority 1.1.6.3 – Global Change and Ecosystems, the preparation of future activities, with a view to enabling the Community to achieve the RTD strategic objectives.

In the same time, the new created network stimulated, encouraged and facilitated the participation of different organisations from ACC in the activities of the 6th Thematic Priority Area.

ERA ENV created a European network with experienced organisations for environment actors

ERA-ENV mobilised the skills and competencies of 11 (eleven) experienced organisations from 7 (seven) European Countries, of which 2 are MS (Austria and Germany), 2 are NMS (Hungary and Slovakia), 2 are ACC (Romania, Bulgaria) and also Turkey.

The project activities started with **awareness campaign** in each country in order to present the project, its activities and objectives. For that specific actions has been organized, such as emails, letters, faxes to clients of contractors (**around 20,000 mailings and messages**), articles to newspapers, publications, news agencies (**more than 100 articles and press announcement**), articles published in specialized magazines (**more than 25 articles**), presentation at other events (**more than 50 participations at other events**).

A database with more than **515 validated profiles** exists now after first 18 months and a system for registration and match making has been designed and is working properly.

During the second phase of the project **11 training sessions** have been organized in NMS and ACC and **794 researchers** and SMEs representatives have been trained regarding specific rules to participate in the calls of FP6 or received advices related with a good implementation of running FP6 projects. These training sessions have been organized in 2 rounds: first round with lecturers from MS and the second round with trained experts from NMS and ACC. The experts from MS (FFG and IFAK contractors) prepared the training materials in this way ERA ENV ensured a real transfer of know-how from experienced people from MS to their less experienced colleagues from NMS and ACC.

As a result of these training sessions and match-making the ERA ENV clients created consortia and **48 new project proposals** have been submitted within the 4th call on Global Changes and Ecosystems sub-priority (3rd of November 2005) but also within Policy Oriented Research (Scientific Support to Policies – SSP, 22nd of March 2006) and INCO calls (6th of March 2006) (all of these related to environment issues).

Connected with match making process and support offered to ERA ENV target group the consortium organized in May 2006 in Bucharest – Romania a **Thematic Networking**, as an international event. The event provided official information about the new theme “Environment” of the 7th FP (delivered by the EC Project Officer Javier Francisco Peinado Lebrero), but also promoted profiles of organisations from participating countries and their project ideas connected to FP7/Environment theme. All the partners participated and they supported financially people from their countries to participate (using ERA ENV budget). Within 2 sessions each country presented 2 profiles of organisations (10 per total) and 2 project ideas (10 per total); within the second part of the event **156 face-to-face meetings** were organized between the proposers of ideas and persons presenting interest on that project idea. Most than **92 persons participated** at event. Some indicators of the event: **71 profiles** sent to coordinator, **123 proposal ideas** received by coordinator, **274 expressions of interest** received. At this event the participants were supported financially by ERA ENV contractors.

Also within the implementation period important efforts have been made by each partner on **direct partner search and match making** between researchers with the specific intention to increase the number of NMS and ACC partners from academia & industry/SMEs in proposals submitted to FP6 (more than **600 organisations received assistance** related to FP6 general issues). During the whole project duration the match making activities consisted on screening, identifying and profiling researchers from ACC and NMS to join consortia (more than **15,000 organisations** have been screened), preparation of **catalogues of profiles** (comprising more than **500 profiles**) existing in electronic and on-paper format; presentation of ERA ENV clients (researchers and SMEs) at relevant national or international events in order to increase the visibility of their activities and successes (more than **50 events** in MS, NMS and ACC), individual partner search, match making and assistance in consortium building and project proposals elaboration (more than **600 organisations received assistance, 215 organisations and researchers were assisted for proposal elaboration** out of which **60 organisations were assisted in preparing proposal, 48 proposals have been submitted**); promotion by presenting success stories of matched partners or submitted proposals (**48 success stories** are promoted on ERA ENV website).

Special attention was allowed to elaboration of the information and promotion materials. The contractors used the following methodology: experts from Austria and Germany having experience in creating such materials developed the structure in English and all NMS and ACC contractors translated the same material into national languages. In this way we assured an unique and high quality level material. Information materials (**leaflet – 7,775, brochure – 6,000, CD – 3,050, catalogues – 700, posters, banners, flyers**) have been designed, printed and distributed to target groups informing them about the possibilities offered by FP6. Also individual advice and information to all interested researchers and SMEs representatives was given.

As a final activity the consortium organized an international event (ERA ENV European Conference) for promotion of project results titled “GEO welcomes FP7”. The event was organized on 15th of September 2006, in Constanta/Romania. The ERA ENV European Conference’s agenda was divided in two sessions:

1. Session I – GEO a European approach.
2. Session II – Opportunities offered by FP7.

There were **109 participants** who attended the Conference. The participants were from **8 countries** (Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey and Israel) and officials from the European Commission and United Nations Office in Viena. All the ERA ENV contractors participated. At this event the participants were supported financially by ERA ENV contractors.

ERA ENV project – communication/website

ERA ENV presented itself to the public in May - June 2005, providing a highly informative and inviting homepage (periodically up-dated). This helped the ERA ENV partners to have a dedicated section only for management issues (as a private section) but also supported and assisted the target group to be all the time up-dated regarding FP6/Global changes and ecosystems sub-priority and SSP & INCO hot news. Important information regarding the project activities themselves, FP6 issues, useful links and contacts, events, news, success stories, related initiatives can be found at: www.eraenv.com. Each partner has translated in his national language the ERA ENV project description, and each page has been linked behind its national flag image on the header of the portal. An electronic newsletter is published monthly and is sent automatically to the data base.

25 announcements and press articles have been published, **4 press articles published on CORDIS WIRE** (“Thematic networking within the project ERA ENV”, “ERA ENV – training session in Romania”, “ERA ENV – Success indicators and further actions on Environment sector”, in January and March 2006, “European Conference for promoting ERA ENV results” in July 2006), **one News published on CORDIS NEWS** (“ERA ENV project exceeds expectations at halfway stage” January 2006) which is crucial for the visibility of the projects services, progress and results.

The project coordinator participated also in a **“phone interview” with EC experts/CORDIS News service** (during the interview the project activities, objectives and results were presented).

A special section was introduced on the web page: **success stories**. Success stories represent submitted proposals by organizations successfully involved in consortia supported by ERA ENV partners. Due to activities performed within the project such as promoting expertise, training sessions, match-making process, individual assistance the organizations found suitable partners and elaborated high-quality proposals.

In this way, through the activities already developed within ERA ENV the objectives mentioned above were reached and the project expected results were in line with the Technical Annex.

Further and more detailed information could be found into the periodic reports submitted to EC.

List of contractors in ERA ENV

Role	Participant name	Participant short name	Country
Coordinator	SC FIMAN Development Services SA	FIMAN DS	Romania
Partner 2	Österreichische Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft mbH (Austrian Research Promotion Agency)	FFG	Austria
Partner 3	Institut fuer Automation und Kommunikation e.v. Magdeburg	IFAK	Germany
Partner 4	Technická univerzita vo Zvolene (Technical University in Zvolen)	TUZVO	Slovakia
Partner 5	National Office of Research and Development -	NKTH	Hungary
Partner 6	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences / Central Laboratory of General Ecology	CLGE	Bulgaria
Partner 7	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey	TUBITAK	Turkey
Partner 8	Applied Research and Communications Fund	ARC Fund	Bulgaria
Partner 9	Ministerul Educatiei si Cercetarii/Autoritatea Nationala pentru Cercetare Stiintifica (Ministry of Education and Research/National Authority for Scientific Research)	MEdC	Romania
Partner 10	Istanbul Technical University -EU Center	ITU Center	EU Turkey
Partner 11	Budapest University of Technology and Economics // National Technical Information Centre and Library	BUTE	Hungary

For further information please visit www.eraenv.com

SC FIMAN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES SA
87 – Vasile Lascar Street, 2nd District, 020493 – Bucharest, Romania

MADALIN IONITA
madalin.ionita@fimands.ro
tel: 00 4 021 211 1945
fax: 00 4 021 211 1937



2. Dissemination and use

Publishable Results

From the first reporting period, the following deliverables are available to be published:

- Brochure (*available on ERA ENV website in English but also translated into Romanian, Turkish, Hungarian, Slovak, Bulgarian*)
- Leaflet (*available on ERA ENV website in English but also translated into Romanian, Turkish, Hungarian, Slovak, Bulgarian*)
- CD (*available on ERA ENV website in English but also translated into Romanian, Turkish, Hungarian, Slovak, Bulgarian*)
- Press articles (*several issues were already published in each participating country*)
- E-Newsletter (*first 12 issues are already available on ERA ENV website in English*)
- Training materials (*available on ERA ENV website in English but also could be published as translated material into participating country languages*)
- List of participants at training sessions (*available on ERA ENV website*)
- Press articles for EC (*available on EC CORDIS wire website*)
- “Partner search” Catalogue (*distributed by MS contractors at 9 international events, by ACC and NMS contractors at other national events; it will be also distributed at thematic networking in Romania*)

From the last reporting period, the following deliverables are available to be published:

- Catalogue created for Thematic Networking (*available on ERA ENV website in English*)
- Leaflet created for Thematic Networking (*available on ERA ENV website in English*)
- Brochure created for European Conference (*available on ERA ENV website in English*)
- Catalogue created for European Conference (*available on ERA ENV website in English*)
- Leaflet created for European Conference (*available on ERA ENV website in English*)
- Press articles (*several issues were already published in each participating country*)
- E-Newsletter (*last 6 issues are available on ERA ENV website in English*)
- List of participants at Thematic Networking and European Conference (*available on ERA ENV website*)
- Press article for EC (*available on EC CORDIS wire website*)