

THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT POLICY'S INSTRUMENTS AND THE GLOBALISATION

Romeo IONESCU*

***Abstract.** The environment can not be ignored nowadays. As a result, the EU developed legislative, technical and economical instruments and specific supporting instruments which are able to answer to the new environment tendencies and strategies.*

This paper realises a comparative analysis of these instruments, including the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme. A distinct part of the paper deals with the financial instruments connected to the environment protection and analyses the situation in the Member States. We talk about the environment preservation, the innovative projects and the technical assistance projects in the third countries, as well.

***Keywords:** European environment policy, eco-management, audit scheme, environment protection, LIFE program, European Comission.*

1. Introduction

The is paper realises the distinction between the specific instruments, as LIFE+, the Structural Funds, the Cohesion Fund, the credit system of the European Investment Bank and the program NATURA, as well.

Nowadays, 16.5% of the ERDF and 50% of the Cohesion Fund finance directly the environment programs. We realised a comparative analysis of every structural fund and of its effects on the environment protection.

The NATURA 2000 is analysed distinctly because its sites cover 18% from the EU's area. As a new member of the EU, Romania has specific objectives and deadlines according to the European environment policy. These objectives cover 2004-2016 periods.

The last part of the paper deals with the environmental policy in Romania under the 2007-2013 National Development Plan. We talked about the Sector Operational Program Environment and the National Reference Strategic Framework, as well. Of course, we analysed the six priority axis of the Romanian environment policy.

* Dunărea de Jos University, 47 Domnească, St., 800008, Galatz, Romania.

The main conclusion of the paper is that the environment protection represents a challenge not only for the EU, but for the whole world, which can support or decelerate the socio-economic development.

The paper is based on the latest statistical database of Eurostat and the WTO.

2. The environment policy objectives and instruments

The evolution of the environment policy and its changes in time are reflected by its objectives, priorities and its numerous implementing instruments. There are three kinds of instruments: legislative, technical and economic-financial, which are supported by “help instruments”, which are connected to the new environment protection tendencies and strategies.

One of the main functions of the environment action programs was the elaboration and the systematization of an efficient system of instruments in order to achieve the environment objectives. These instruments are subordinated to the European Environment Program and they are systematized by the European Commission as: regulation instruments, market instruments and technical instruments.

The regulation instruments establish the common legal framework and cover 200 components of the community acquis (regulations, directives decisions) which translate under the legislative framework European strategies, programs and action plans. The most frequent used instrument by the Member States is directive.

The market instruments cover all economic, technical and financial instruments which have impact on the costs and the profits of the economic agents, in order to modify the production and consumption behaviours according to the environment objectives. These instruments are based on the social market economy doctrine, which considers that markets are imperfect and the governmental intervention has to correct these imperfections. Under our approach, these imperfections are environment externalities. The main advantage of the market instruments is the adapting of the environment policy to the needs of the market economy. Under the market instruments, the European Commission is focused on: ecologic compatibility insurance, identification of the obstacles in economic instruments' implementation, environment taxes, environment responsibility, environment voluntary agreements, fiscal instruments for environment protection¹.

¹ European Council, Decision no. 2179/1998, Brussels.

In 1993, the EU implemented Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), in order to support companies to adopt an ecologic management, by integration environment protection to the companies' strategies. Still 2001, EMAS was extended to all economic sectors, including public administration and European Commission. An essential role is the correct price establishment. This price has to cover the environment costs, as well. Under the European Commission point of view, the public administration has the responsibility to imply itself in the evaluation of this cost, in order to orient the companies to take into consideration the environment impact.

The technical instruments cover EU Eco-Labeling Board, environment voluntary accords, IPPC system, PIP system, environment inspection criteria for the Member States, Best Available Technologies and so on.

The Eco-Labeling Board is a system which supports the social responsibility of the companies and those goods which have a little impact on environment.

The environment voluntary accords were implemented until 2002 and they added a regulation framework to the community environment agreements².

The IPPC system supports the pollution decrease in energy, metallurgy, chemistry and offals management. The specific measures are focused on the emissions decrease in water, soil and air and offals management, in order to ensure a high environment protection.

The PIP system was implemented until 2003 and supports the eco-markets³. The system is focused on two main directions: general conditions for the ecologic integration improvement to the goods life cycle and the goods with highest ecologic potential.

The system follows three steps: implementation of the polluter-paid principle on the prices level, consumer option and goods ecologically production.

The environment inspection criteria for the Member States were created in order to ensure the conformity with the European environment legislation and to apply uniformly it. Criteria represent minimal conditions for environment inspections' management and evaluation.

The standards and emission limits are parts of the environment legislation limit environment pollution and identify great polluters.

Best Available Technologies (BAT) is presented in special guides on distinct industries and is obligatory for all companies.

² European Commission, COM no. 412/2002 final, Brussels.

³ European Commission, Building on Environment Life-Cycle Thinking, Brussels, June 2003.

3. Community Financial Instruments for the environment protection

3.1. LIFE Program

The EU has specific financial instruments which support the environment policy: LIFE Program, Structural Funds, Cohesion Fund, European Investment Bank's credits, NATURA 2000 Program and NGOs environment promoting.

The Community Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE) was created in 1992. It is used exclusively to the European Environment Program's implementation and covers three thematic areas: environment, nature and third countries. The objectives of the program are the following:

- definition and promoting of the production and consumption models according to the sustainable development principles;
- good practice examples promoting;
- supporting the pilot projects, horizontal information, education and training;
- development and improvement of the administrative structures competences;
- implementation of the environment in other policies.

LIFE program is divided into three thematic components: LIFE-Nature, LIFE-Environment and LIFE-Third countries. Every component has its own budget and specific priorities. Accompanying measures is a subcategory of the components and it supports with materials, studies and information the implementation of the three components, dissemination and good practice exchanges. All components have to be co-financed by the eligible countries, excepting the accompanying measures, which benefit only by European financing (see Table 1).

Table 1
LIFE budget

	LIFE -Nature	LIFE – Environment	LIFE – Third countries	Accompanying measures
Budget	47% of LIFE total budget	47% of LIFE total budget	6% of LIFE total budget	5% of disposable funds

The projects financed by LIFE have to be under community interest and to support the LIFE objectives, to be implemented by serious financial and technical partners and to be feasible as cost-efficiency and budget.

LIFE-Nature finances 50%-70% of eligible expenditures for natural habitat, wild fauna and flora preservation projects. The main such projects of the Member States are presented in table 2.

Table 2
Nature preserving projects under LIFE-Nature program

Country	Projects
Belgium	Land acquisition to protect special areas.
Denmark	Rebuilding of the rivers banks and swamp habitats; Reinsertion of the animal to grass.
Germany	Rebuilding of the swamp lands.
Estonia	Preservation of the boreal Baltic coast glades.
Greece	Protection of the endangered species, as Mediterranean monk seal.
Spain	Protection of the swamp lands, dunes, lagoons and maritime and coast areas; Protection of the endangered species, as brown bear, European back eagle, European otter and bat.
France	Contracts with the farmers for land ecologic management.
Ireland	Prominence of the Irish natural patrimony, especially by supporting eco-tourism.
Italy	Protection of specific animals (wolves, bears, bats) or specific habitats (swamps, rivers, springs).
Latvia	Restoration and protection of large natural areas.
Luxembourg	Restoration of the biodiversity which was destroyed by agriculture.
Hungary	Protection of wolf and lynx from the North-East.
Netherland	Reinsertion of the spontaneous processes in order to recreate the natural sites.
Austria	Build of a "green bridge" above a speedway, in order to allow the passing of the brown bears in Alps and to grow the bear population.
Portugal	Management plans for „Nature 2000" sites.
Romania	National action plan for the protection of the dolphins from the Black Sea.
Slovenia	Protection of the swamps.
Finland	Monitoring of some specific butterflies which are used as indicators of the environment situation.
Swedish	Restoration of large swamp and glade areas on the Baltic Sea coasts.
UK	Protection of the birds which nest on the soil, especially in the Hebrides Islands.

Source: European Commission, DG Environment (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/life/nature.htm>).

LIFE-Environment finances 30%-50% of the eligible expenditures for the implementation of the community environment policy and legislation in the Member States and in candidate states, as well. The main objective

of this program is to support the development of methods and innovator techniques of the environment protection. The program has five eligible domains: land use development and planning, water management, decrease of the economic activities' impact on environment, waste management and decrease the impact on the environment using an integrate production framework.

The main projects implemented by the Member States under LIFE-Environment program are presented in table 3.

Table 3
Innovator projects in the Member States

Country	Innovator projects
Belgium	Systems of environment integrated management for major socio-cultural events (fairs, festivals).
Denmark	Decontamination of the treated wood waste; Ecologic denomination for retail sector.
Germany	Recycling of demolition waste and oils; Improvement of water quality; Environment local management plans.
Greece	Environment management plan for Olympic Games (2004, Athens); Olive oil production without impact on environment.
Spain	Integrate initiatives connected to sustainable development and tourism supporting.
France	Design of the cars' components in order to improve their environmental performances; Innovator treatment for residual waters.
Ireland	Regional environment management; Electronic equipment recycling.
Italy	Local initiatives for sustainable tourism promoting; Fight against greenhouse effect and air pollution.
Luxembourg	Use of simulation and monitoring soft for wastewater treatment.
Netherland	Integrated management for cities' water; Ecologic building supporting.
Austria	Sustainable development strategies for rural and urban areas; Promoting of bio-fuels and recycled building materials.
Portugal	Air quality monitoring; Decreasing the impact of the pig farms on environment.
Romania	Selective system of household waste collecting.
Finland	Integrated management for costal rivers and river basins.
Swedish	Waste ecologic treatment; Forest sustainable management.
UK	Collection, redistribution and reuse of the IT waste.

Source: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/life/environment.htm>.

LIFE-Third countries finances technical assistance (70% of the eligible expenditures) for the sustainable development in the third countries. This program is focused on the initiation of the administrative capacities and structures for the environment policy and action programs development in the Member States, in some candidate states and in third countries beside Mediterranean and Baltic Seas. The project proposals have to be of community interest, to promote international, national or regional sustainable development and to propose solutions to solve the major environment problems.

The technical assistance projects from the third countries are presented in table 4.

Table 4
Technical assistance projects in the third countries

Country	Technical assistance projects
Albania	Traffic sustainable development in Tirana;
Algeria	Implementation of an environmental information and forming centre.
Bosnia-Herzegovina.	Action environment plan for swampy areas Bardaca; Assistance for environment management for local and regional authorities; Decreasing the industrial activities impact on the environment; Assistance for the initiation of the legislation connected to the pollution decrease.
Croatia	Introduction of national amendments to air pollution and offals.
Gaza and West Coast	Integrated management to the rural environment.
Jordanian	Implementation of a natural touristic park in Jerash; Environmental aspects.
Lebanon	Decreasing of the industrial pollution and offals; Fight against forest arsons.
Russia	Environment technical assistance for the city of Kalinin-grad; Administrative assistance for Baltic Sea shores' protection.
Syria	Implementation of the environment management systems, especially EMAS, to the Syrian business environment.
Tunisia	Creation of monitoring pilot systems to the desert advancing (together with Morocco).
Turkey	Improvement of the air and water quality and the offals; Elimination of the odorous emissions.

Source: http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/life/third_countries.htm.

LIFE – Environment covers 30%-50% of the expenditures to innovator techniques and methods which are able to support the decrease of the negative impact on environment.

LIFE – Nature financed 50%-70% of the biodiversity preservation and amelioration projects, including the support to the Nature 2000 network. LIFE-Third countries program covers 70% of the financing connected to the administrative structures creation and the environment policy implementation in countries from Mediterranean and Baltic areas.

The financial perspectives 2007-2013 [COM (2004)101] support the environment dimension of the specific community financing. The environment objectives are included to the priority domains and are financed under the thematic areas “Sustainable growth”, “Sustainable management and natural resources protection” and “EU as global partner”.

The European Commission proposed a new program LIFE+ – “Financial instrument for environment: promotion of a sustainable EU”, in order to support the development, applying, monitoring, evaluation and communication in the environment community policy and law. The program supported PAM 6 by financing those activities which are able to create added value to the community and to generate multiplication effects, under to priority axis: “Ecologic Implementation and Governance” and “Information and Communication”⁴.

LIFE+ started in 2007 and is divided into three components: LIFE+ Nature and biodiversity, LIFE+ Environment policy and governance and LIFE+ Information and communication.

During 2007-2013, the budget of this financial instrument is 2.143 billion Euros. LIFE+ can finance public and/or private actors and institutes.

LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity program is focused on the following objectives:

- implementation of the community policy and legislation regarding nature and biodiversity, especially of the Directives no. 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC at local and regional levels, in order to support the future development and the implementation of the Nature 2000 network, including costal and marine habitats and species;
- consolidation of the knowledge basis for the preliminary evaluation, monitoring and final evaluation of the common policy and legislation regarding nature and biodiversity;

⁴ CEE (2004), Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the financial instrument for the environment (life +), Com (2004) 621 final.

- elaboration and applying of the monitoring and evaluation policies and instruments to nature and biodiversity;

- a better environment governance.

LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance program supports:

- development of innovator policies, technologies, methods and instruments;

- consolidation of the knowledge basis for the environment policy and legislation;

- elaboration and applying of the monitoring and preliminary evaluation policies connected to the environment protection;

- supporting the regional and local applying environment policy;

- supporting better environment governance.

LIFE+ Information and communication is focused on: information diffusion and forest fires preventing, and complementary measures.

3.2. Other EU financial programmes for environment protection

Another EU specific financial instrument which supports the environment policy is Structural Funds system. This system covers 35% of common budget. Nowadays, 16.5% of European Regional Development Fund and 50% of Cohesion Fund finance directly environment programs.

The environment protection represents an important criterion to select the projects financed by the European Investments Bank (EIB). EIB can cover 50% of the investment cost in: water and air quality improvement, urban transport networks, healthcare, energy and offals management.

Nature 2000 program covers 18000 protected areas with high ecologic value. This network consists of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protected Areas.

Romanian legislation specifies these elements into Law no. 462/2001. Romania has the most bio-geographic regions: alpine, continental, Pannonian, veldt and Pontic. Nature 2000 implementation in Romania represents a condition to the Romania's integration into EU. As a result, Romania had to achieve the following objectives:

- 2004 – transposal of the Birds and Habitats Directives into national legislation;

- 2007 – elaboration of the list of potential Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs);

- 2009 – bio-geographic seminars for the Sites of Community Importance’s list negotiation;
- 2010 – endorsement of the Sites of Community Importance’s list;
- 2016 – the Sites of Community Importance will become Special Conservation Areas and it will be created a functional system of protected areas Nature 2000.

The environment NGOs promoting program supports the initiatives of the civil society connected to the European environment policy implementation. EU finances 70% of these initiatives (80% for the candidate countries).

4. Conclusions

The dynamic analysis of the environment instruments system reflects the EU concern to adapt the environment policy to the market economy principles. This means the movement of the accent from the control and command instruments to those which are based on market, using special actions, in order to integrate the ecologic components to the production and consumption behaviour.

The environment protection represents a challenge not only for the EU, but for the whole world, which can support or decelerate the socio-economic development.

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