



**PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF
“THE ENTERPRISE FOR MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
ACTIVITIES” AS A BENEFICIARY UNDER THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME
ENVIRONMENT 2007-2013**

According to article 60 of Environment Protection Act the *Enterprise for management of environmental protection activities (EMEPA)* is a state enterprise. It is not a trade company and it does not make and allocate profit according to article 62, paragraph 3 from the Trade Act. The main activity of the enterprise is provision of financial assistance in the implementation of environmental protection projects in line with environmental national and municipal strategies and programmes.

According to article 4 of the Regulation of the *EMEPA Structure and Activities, the enterprise allocates financial resources to operations and activities* in realisation of Ministry of environment and water national policy for protection of the environment.

In particular, the EMEPA funds operations in the following sectors: waste management; establishment of waste-water treatment plants and sewerage network and operations for biodiversity protection and restoration. EMEPA supports operations through grants, loans bearing no interest and low interest loans or subsidies for partial or full coverage of bank credits interests for environmental operations and infrastructure.

Operational Programme Environment (OPE) funds operations under three priority axes:

- *Priority axis 1:* Improvement and development of water and wastewater infrastructure in settlements with over 2000 PE and in settlements below 2000 PE within urban agglomeration areas;
- *Priority axis 2:* Improvement and development of waste treatment infrastructure;
- *Priority axis 3:* Protection and restoration of biodiversity.

Taking into account the fact that EMEPA is a legitimate subject for funding of operations in implementation of national environmental policies in the same sectors as those in the OPE, we propose *EMEPA to be established as beneficiary under the three priority axes of the programme*. The following statements support the above proposal:

- *EMEPA is the only legitimate subject responsible for financing of environmental operations according to the Environment protection act*. Also, it has proven capacity since 2002 in allocation of financial resources to environmental activities. EMEPA has gained experience and capacity in co-financing of projects supported under OPE. Being a beneficiary under the OPE, the EMEPA will ensure synergy and will contribute to the qualitatively and rapidly implementation of OPE’s main objectives.
- *The management board of the EMEPA consists of representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Water (the minister and other relevant expert), of the Executive Environment Agency, Ministry of Finance, of business, elected by NGOs, National association of municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria and the executive director of the EMEPA*. The high level and diverse representation in the EMEPA management board guarantee sound financial management, prioritization and involvement of interested parties.

- In addition, the organizational structure of the EMEPA as well as the high qualified and experiences employees (74 at present) ensure adequate implementation of the enterprise legitimate obligations for funding of environmental protection operations.

If the EMEPA is to be approved as beneficiary under priority axes 1, 2 and 3 of the programme, the programme needs to be complemented.

The following texts are concerned (in the English version of the document):

- *Page 51, p.1.7. Beneficiaries:* Municipal administrations, WSSCs and River Basin Management Directorates – the following text should be added “Enterprise for management of environmental protection activities”
- *Page 57, p. 2.7 Beneficiaries:* Municipal administrations, regional associations/ associations of municipalities - the following text should be added “Enterprise for management of environmental protection activities”
- *Page 61, p. 3.7. Beneficiaries:* Municipal authorities, associations of municipalities, directorates within the Ministry of environment and water and within the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply that are responsible for managing national and natural parks respectively, as well as other units within these two ministries that are involved in/responsible for the management of NATURA 2000 sites and protected areas, NATURA 2000 management administrations, non-governmental organizations. - the following text should be added “Enterprise for management of environmental protection activities”

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