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Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to provide the reader with a broad but clear understanding of how the Green Energy Cluster intends to contribute to the better and wiser exploit the Cross-border Romanian-Bulgaria area's natural resources as a source for renewables through a common roadmap and to serve as an engine and proactive coordinator for the stakeholders' intrinsic will to increase the deployment of renewable energy in the region with a vision rendering account to all the parties' concerned interests. It covers the three year period (2015-2017).

The Strategic and Operational Plan (S&OP) outlines a three year Strategic and two-year Operational Plan for the Green Energy Cluster (GEC) that was founded in mid 2015. The S&OP is a deliverable of the EU Project "Green energy cluster - Constanta-Dobrich" - MIS-ETC Code 328, Romania-Bulgaria Cross - Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013. During the process of preparation of this document several important strategic documents important for the RES sector development and the cross-border region development were taken into consideration to determine the sector's key weaknesses and opportunities. A significant input in that respect came also from the documents recently developed into the project framework:

- Inventory on main actors in the RES business, science, authorities and NGO's in the cross-border area and
- Cross-border region Constantza-Dobrich RES development trends and opportunities' study according best world practices

The objective of this document is to set out a clear, concise and realistic strategy for the Green energy cluster together with an operational plan, which will enable the cluster to leverage the strengths inherent in the construct of its Triple Helix membership and to focus these talents on addressing current area's and area's RES sector weaknesses and exploiting opportunities. The main problem the project aims



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to tackle is the chaotic, environmentally-hostile, regionally unbalanced and vision-deprived growth of renewable energy production in the cross-border region

Constanta-Dobrich. This strategic document is a proposal to the Green Energy Cluster Executive Board on how the GEC could through its activities minimize the area's RES sector weaknesses and maximize the green growth opportunities. Major weaknesses have been found in the following areas:

- non-coordinated efforts for the sustainable use and protection of natural resources and environment
- lack of relevant training and skills development
- lack of tools and techniques to encourage area's sustainable resource use
- weak joint cooperation between stakeholders

At the same time several areas of opportunities have been discovered as very important for the area's sustainable development and they have to be addressed specifically by the Green cluster activities in the area of:

- the better and wiser exploitation of the area's natural resources as a source for renewables through a common roadmap
- the structured and mutually favorable joint efforts thus focusing on the sustainable development of the cross-border region's human, natural and environmental resources using its advantages
- the concept of green growth
- the renewable energy sources projects initiated by municipalities
- changing policy frameworks for the sustainable rural area management using the advantages of the RES industry deployment

The main purpose of the Green Energy Cluster is to serve as a tool for minimization of risks and maximization of opportunities that have been outlined in the studies carried on and to help preventing and reducing the economic divergence between the regions, soundly fixing common business and socially-responsive interests for a substantial improvement of the level of the area's cross-border co-operation. It aims at



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promoting the natural resources prudent exploitation by mastered, diversified and territorially balanced growth of green energy and at unifying efforts for preserving and developing the area's comparative advantages and common opportunities, as well as for overcoming common problems and threats.

A three step approach has been selected that comprises of three Priority Focus Areas (PFAs) that are suggested as the 'pillars' for the Green Energy Cluster strategy formation for the next 3 years, in the short, medium, and longer term. These PFA 'pillars' are:

PFA 1: Immediate-term:

Focus on: Building the capacity of the Green Energy Cluster to function as an effective independent organization.

PFA 2: Medium term

Focus on: Promoting the natural resources prudent exploitation by mastered, diversified and territorially balanced growth of green energy and joint management systems for environmental protection

PFA 3: Longer-term

Focus on: Ensuring sustainable and mastered conditions for maximizing the area's clean energy potential and extending the outreach and impact of the Green Energy Cluster

The goals and objectives of the Green Energy Cluster are closely linked to the priorities and measures that were outlined in the relevant strategic documents for Romania, Bulgaria and EU in order to ensure benefits for the both national economies. If the envisaged goals are to be achieved the benefits for the RES Sector and both national economies will be significant since their fulfillment will lead to increase of investments in R&D, increase of higher value added generated through clustering activity, increase of employment and the area's green growth. In addition to this



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the Green Energy Cluster will directly contribute to Europe 2020 goals in the area of environmental protection.

In order to underpin the proposed three pillar approach certain level of basic funding for cluster management activity needs to be ensured. Basic funding should cover the cost of functioning of the Green Energy Cluster day to day activities and the cost of functioning of a system that will be developed - the ISEM . This funding will be ensured primarily by the project budget. After its end at 31.12.2015 the Green Energy Cluster will be financed through its own operational activities - offering services and attracting public funding with the main responsibility of the founding member Varna Business Agency Dobrich branch.

It is essential to stress the importance of the both Green Energy Cluster Centres and the Cluster manager office (based at Varna Business Agency Dobrich branch) for efficient cluster management activity. The Cluster manager office is envisaged to act as facilitator for the fulfillment of the Competitiveness Cluster's year-on-year operational plan. At the same time it will act as very important link between strategic level and operational level of activity.

Green Energy Cluster Description / Mission / Vision /Goals and Objectives statement

The Green Energy Cluster brings together large and small firms in RES sector and firms providing related business services, educational establishments, NGO's and other entities, all working together in a the cross-border area to develop synergies and cooperative efforts. Other partners may be brought in, such as public authorities, either local or regional. The reason the Green Energy cluster (GEC) was created was to bring together in a structured, organized and integrated way at a cross-borer level representatives of the sectors. related to the RES industry in Romania and Bulgaria. The cluster aims at bringing together at a sound base a broad group of entities from both countries related to the long-term development of renewable energy for structured and mutually favorable joint efforts thus focusing



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on the sustainable development of the cross-border region's human, natural and environmental resources using its advantages.

The Mission of the Green Energy Cluster

To create a long-term model for enhancing the sustainable use and protection of natural resources and environment and promotion of efficient risk management the Romanian-Bulgarian Constanta-Dobrich cross-border area primarily by fostering and promoting intra and inter sectoral collaboration on ideas, initiatives and projects related to the area's green growth, at local, regional, national and international levels and by the joint development and promotion of tools and techniques to encourage sustainable resource use.

Vision

To bring together the local people, communities, academia and business of the Romania-Bulgaria Constanta-Dobrich border region to participate in the joint development of the green energy ensuring effective protection and use of the area's natural assets, using its human, natural and environmental resources and advantages in a cooperative and sustainable way.

General goal

The general goal of the Partnership shall be to contribute to a better and wiser use of natural resources in the cross-border region between Romania and Bulgaria as a renewable energy source through common actions and serve as an engine and proactive coordinator of the willingness of stakeholders to increase the deployment of renewable energy in the region with the vision and attention to the interests of all parties.



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Specific goals

Specific goals of the Partnership:

- Strengthening the concept of green growth in the cross-border region and development of cluster products and services in the field of renewable energy;
- Participation/initiatives in innovation projects and development of RES;
- Improving policy frameworks for sustainable management of rural areas using the benefits of the renewable energy industry and development of coordinated cluster policies;
- Participation in national and international forums and projects in the field of renewable energy;
- Development of national and international economic contacts and relations;
- Organizing of joint cluster marketing;
- Monitoring of programs for financing and support in project financing;
- Cooperation with other cluster organizations in the country and abroad;
- Managers and employees professional development in the field of renewable energy;
- Promoting projects for renewable energy sources initiated by municipalities;
- Setting up, maintenance and updating of a web-based system for information and access to geographic and attribute data in the field of renewable energy sources;
- Introduction and promotion of integrated security system and environmental protection management.
- Research and networking (organization of seminars, short courses and updating exchange of information between companies, organizations, authorities, communities)
- Political action (lobby activity and creating framework of dialogue between industry, the scientific community and central and local authorities)
- Social action for local communities
- Commercial cooperation (for instance common purchasing, business assistance, consulting for marketing and promoting exports)
- Education and training (workforce training and training managers)



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Innovation and technology (can help improve of the innovation process and transfer of technology; otherwise, it is possible to define new standards for transfer of new technologies and the improvement of the production process)

Cluster expansion (cluster training initiatives aim at developing a certain region by promoting a specific brand and direct foreign investment in the region).

The means

The means of attaining the Partnership's goals shall be:

Supporting the individual Partnership members, representation and protection of the members' interests before the municipal and government authorities and any local and foreign organizations;

Participation in the drafting and management of national, European and international programs and projects contributing to attainment of the Partnership's goals;

Organizing of public events, round tables, seminars, discussions, work meetings, exhibitions, fairs, festivals, ceremonies, concerts, performances, celebrations, etc.;

Organizing and conducting of professional educational, training and informative events, schools, circles, courses, clubs, cinema and video shows and any other educational events for increasing the knowledge and skills of the citizens, providing of computer and Internet services.

Setting up an information fund relating to the activity - libraries, reading-rooms, photo-, audio-, film and video libraries, as well as setting up and maintenance of electronic and information networks, databases, information laboratories.

Publishing activity, publishing and distribution of books, brochures, emblems, advertising materials of the Partnership and providing of technical services for preparing, designing, copying of documents and other publications, as well as transfer thereof by telecommunication or electronic means.

Web-based system for information and access to geographic and attribute data in the field of RES.



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Shared Values of the Cluster

Building trust within the cluster community is critical. A set of shared values can provide a platform from which trust can be built over time. It is vital that these values are explicitly identified, stated and communicated amongst all stakeholders.

The following is offered as a possible values framework for the stakeholders of the Green Energy Cluster:

- Collaboration
- Partnership
- Integrity
- Ethical conduct
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Innovation