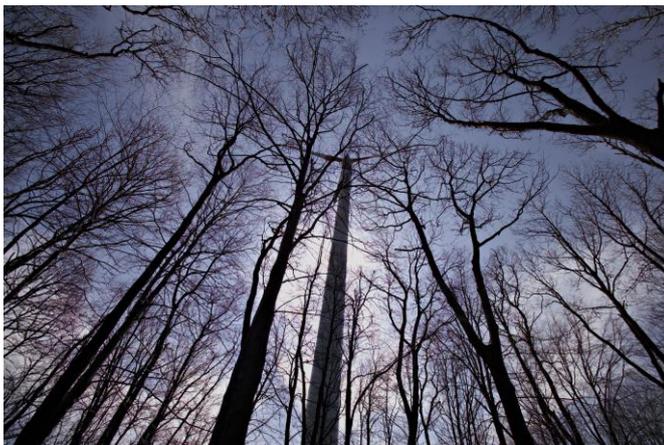


## SLOVAKIA

**Program rozvoja vidieka  
Slovenská republika 2007-2013  
– November 2007** (Programme for  
Development of Rural Regions 2007-  
2013)

*(The text of this summary sheet was  
finalised in August 2010 in  
accordance with the version of the  
RDP that was current at this time)*



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### Other useful links:

Rural Development Programme (RDP): <http://www.land.gov.sk/en/index.php?navID=1&id=19>  
National Strategy Plan (NSP): Not available  
National Rural Network (NRN): <http://www.nsrv.sk/>

## Climate Change and Renewable Energy issues in 2007-2013 RDP

Climate change (CC) is fundamental to the context for agriculture and policy making. EU agriculture must play an important role in mitigating this phenomenon by curbing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; at the same time it needs to adapt to the expected climatic adversities which will have serious consequences on production processes. Rural development offers a range of possibilities to support farming practices and investments that can contribute to climate change *mitigation* efforts (including the increase of the use of *Renewable Energy* (RE) resources) and additionally effect *adaptation* benefits. CC challenges have been well recognized in the baseline analysis of the 2007-2013 EU Rural Development Programmes (RDP) and addressed in their strategies. Following the Health Check (HC) of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the 'new challenges' of the RD policy include 'climate change' and 'renewable energy' for which an additional budget of approximately €1 billion<sup>(1)</sup> have been made available for Member States (MS) to spend on these issues<sup>(2)</sup>. As a consequence, the operations related to these newly introduced EU priorities have been further strengthened in the RDPs.

<sup>1</sup> 19.8% of the total additional funds released.

<sup>2</sup> The budget allocated to the 'new challenges' includes the funds released by the HC of the CAP (including voluntary modulation and transfers according to Art. 136 of Regulation (EC) No. 73/2009) and the European Economic Recovery Package (EERP).

## Introduction - overview of Member State RDP

All the three dimensions of climate change (mitigation, adaptation and the potential for renewable energies) are addressed by the baseline analysis provided in the Slovakian RDP. These three aspects have been considered and correspondingly addressed in the RDP strategy and within the implemented measures.

The orientation of measures towards protection of soils is emphasised within the baseline analysis. It has been identified that 43.3% of agricultural land is potentially threatened by climate change and water erosion processes as well as a number of other damaging factors such as compaction, acidification, reduction in humus content and contamination. The RDP strategy therefore supports the development of activities for protection against erosion of soils and restoration of the natural potential of the countryside.

Emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in Slovakia have increased gradually since 1994 with industry and agriculture contributing to 8% of the national total. Tackling climate change is therefore considered a priority by a number of policy papers, namely through the reduction of emissions of GHG and minimise the negative effects of agricultural activities. The RDP strategy emphasises the encouragement environmentally-friendly agricultural activities and higher support for environmental protection.

Forests cover 41% of the Slovakian territory. The area of forests is increasing since 1970 and now covers 2,004,100 ha of forest land which is designated for the long-term fulfilment of forest functions. This includes productive functions for marketable purposes, environmental protection functions and other special purposes. Moreover, bio-energies have been heavily supported by the Slovakian government with biomass from forests being considered as the main resource (biomass output has grown in recent years). In addition, another prospective bio-energy source is energy crops, such as quickly growing woody species. The RDP strategy therefore strengthens the country's support for environmentally-friendly forestry activities.

Other aspects of the strategy do not explicitly mention climate change, but do nonetheless focus upon a variety of relevant activities

Given that Slovakia is a predominantly mountainous country with a high share of soils which are regarded as having productive disadvantages, one of the main challenges identified by the RDP baseline analysis relates to supporting sustainable agriculture in areas with natural handicaps. It is important to note that the farming systems and practices within these areas are perceived very positively as contributing to the maintenance of ecological stability, agricultural landscapes and diverse biodiversity<sup>3</sup>, as well as the sustainable use of natural resources. Such high nature value farming encompasses a diverse range of agricultural systems and practices with extensive and semi-extensive land use, low energy inputs and the recycling of organic manures. Support for the continuation of these sustainable farming systems and practices therefore has a key place in Slovak environmental policy. The RDP strategy therefore places emphasis on maintaining agricultural activities in areas with natural handicaps, as well as the preservation of environmental values and the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. In addition, biodiversity will be further enhanced through protection activities on sites such as National Natural Preserves or Natura 2000 areas.

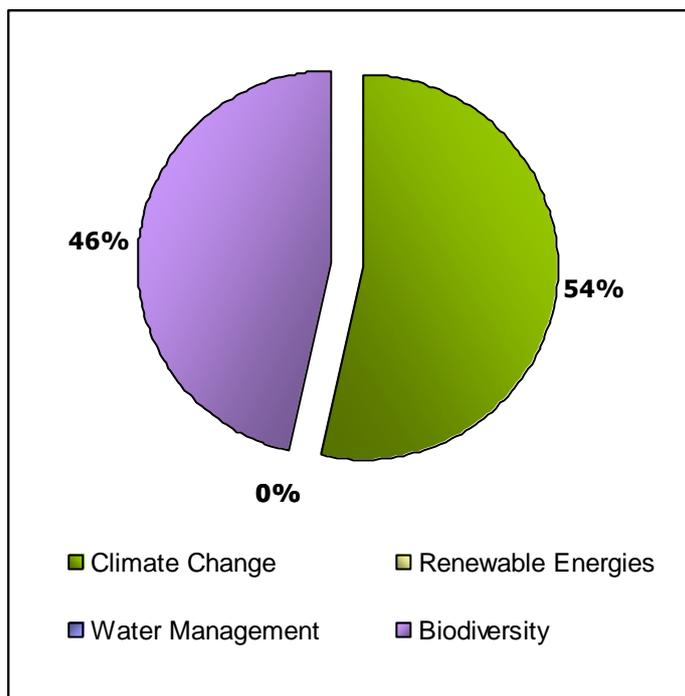
The organic agriculture sector is gradually expanding and is also predominantly concentrated in hilly and mountain regions. The area under organic management is currently 93,951 ha and produces mainly plant products rather than animal produce. Further support should help take the sector forward and also make some contribution to climate change mitigation.

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<sup>3</sup> Conversely, the intensively farmed areas in Slovakia are associated with significantly lower levels of biodiversity

The modifications introduced by the CAP HC and incorporated in the updated 2009 RDP have also further aligned the RDP strategy towards tackling climate change and related areas. With regard to specifically tackling climate change, additional support will be prioritised to better protect forests from fires in high and medium risk areas. In particular, it was identified that the extent of the forest road network needs to be further developed to enable the operation of fire prevention services. Also, as climate change has led to the deterioration in the health of certain forest tree species, support has been targeted towards the re-forestation of cleared areas with more resilient trees.

### Allocation of the additional resources per type of priority



The overall budget of the Slovakian RDP in terms of total public expenditure amounts to €2,597,053,717 of which €1,996,908,078 comprises the EAFRD contribution. This includes an additional allocation of €27,490,000 (EAFRD contribution) as a result of the new challenges raised by the HC and the adoption of the European Economic Recovery Plan (EERP). Following these changes, additional financial support to the RDP objectives related to climate change (€11.9 million which equates to 54% of the new EAFRD allocation). These new financial supports should be considered in addition to the initial RDP which was already addressing CC.

Under the enhanced RDP strategy, the main CC-related actions support prevention activities against forest fires and climate related natural disasters.

A breakdown of the total RDP budget per type of 'new challenge' it is not available. Full details of the overall RDP budget allocation can be found in the RDP fiche for Slovakia that is available at:

[http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/rural-development-policy/country-information/rural-development-policy-fiches/en/rural-development-policy-fiches\\_home\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/rural-development-policy/country-information/rural-development-policy-fiches/en/rural-development-policy-fiches_home_en.cfm)

## Mitigation

### *Activities aimed at reducing agricultural greenhouse gases emissions*

The Slovakian RDP provides comprehensive support for a range of activities which contribute towards reducing agricultural emissions (such as storage facilities for manure and solutions to overcome the prohibited use of fertilisers in protected areas), as well as protecting and enhancing forests in order to encourage better carbon sequestration. As mentioned, this latter element has been strengthened by the HC revision with activities for prevention of forests fires and re-afforestation.

One of the key measures to respond to developing mitigation activities is **measure 214** (agri environment payments). Predominantly, this will be realised through initiatives to reduce agricultural emissions and pollution. Soil protection activities, including crop rotations and converting arable land to grassland will reduce soil erosion in orchards, vineyards and arable areas. These actions will help to reduce the emission of, as well as help to sequester CO<sub>2</sub>. Environmentally friendly farming methods such as integrated production techniques and organic farming will also be supported. In addition, the HC has emphasized the requirement to enhance the protection of grassland and bird biotopes. Further support will therefore be offered for initiatives to encourage organic agriculture and integrated production.

Funding under **measure 225** (forest environment payments) will offer compensatory payments to forest owners for adopting more sustainable forestry management practices. The measure will help foster the introduction of forestry production processes with the aim of mitigating climate change, improving forestry biodiversity, protection of Important Bird Areas and conservation of forest eco-systems with high nature value.

The initiatives funded by **measure 221** (first afforestation of agricultural land) are linked to a forestry policy strategic document and are in compliance with EU measures on forestry support. In particular, farmers will be encouraged to develop the afforestation of arable land with a mixed woody species with the aim of mitigating climate change. Additional benefits will include the protection of territories damaged by water erosion, landslides and floods as well as enhancing forest resources and strengthening biodiversity.

Assistance offered by **measure 111** (vocational training and information activities) makes specific reference to disseminating knowledge to farmers about agri-environment measures, reducing climate change and achieving sustainable forestry management.

Another key measure which clearly seeks to support mitigation activities (although this is not explicitly mentioned) is **measure 121** (modernisation of agricultural holdings) which provides financial aid for the procurement of energy efficient technologies and equipment, as well as other activities such as the construction of facilities and purchase of equipment for the storage and application of animal manure.

A number of other measures do not directly mention climate change, but also fund mitigation activities

Support provided by **measure 122** (improving the economic value of forests) offers access to equipment and technology minimising negative effects on biotopes and rationalising cultivation and protection of forests; machinery for forest renewal, handling young vegetation and fire prevention; repairs for forest roads; and storage for forest reproductive materials. The continued maintenance of good quality forest will contribute to tackling climate change.

The same argument applies to **measure 224** (Natura 2000 payments – forest land) which grants support to forestry owners within Natura 2000 sites to overcome the disadvantages

associated with the Natura 2000 directive namely the prohibition of tree felling, using fertilisers and intervening in the forest coppice.

The objective of measure 114 (use of advisory services) is to offer advisory services to farmers to improve the general environmental management of their enterprises in relation to implementing regulatory standards associated with the environment and animal welfare. This includes the improved application of artificial fertilisers, crop rotations and manure storage – all of which make a contribution to tackling climate change.

## **Adaptation**

### *Prevention of, and coping with, potential impacts of climate change on agriculture*

In terms of adapting to cope with the potential impacts of climate change a number of actions have received support through the RDP. Opportunities for funding activities include accessing modernised irrigation systems; protection of bird species and biotopes; vocational training and advisory services in relation to agri-environment measures and norms; and improving water quality.

One of the key aims of **measure 214** (agri-environment payments) is to facilitate protection of the environment, address climate change, conservation of biodiversity and natural and cultural heritage. Activities therefore include support for conserving the biodiversity of bird species, endangered animals and biotopes in natural grasslands and semi-natural grasslands.

**Measure 226** (restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions) will grant financial assistance for activities which will restore the productive potential of forests damaged by natural disasters and fires, as well as introducing preventative measures. Initiatives will include introducing remedy measures in forest areas damaged by disease; renewal of forests areas which have experienced disease; construction and maintenance of roads to prevent fires; building and maintaining fire breaks. In addition, support provided by the Health Check has further defined actions for protection against forest fires and climate-related natural disasters. This is mainly for the development of better forest road networks and the re-forestation of cleared areas with more disease resilient trees.

Through support provided by **measure 121** (modernisation of agricultural holdings) financial aid will be provided to help modernise irrigation systems (in compliance with the Water Framework Directive) and facilities for the safe storage and processing of wastewater and animal manures. Although this measure clearly responds to the threats associated with climate change this is not explicitly mentioned in the measure description.

Equally the management activities supported by **measures 213** (Natura 2000 payments and payments linked to Directive 2000/60/EC on water policies) and **224** (Natura 2000 payments – forest land) will contribute to sustainable development in designated Natura 2000 sites and help to improve water quality, maintain biodiversity and sustain high nature value farming and forestry – all of which play a part in overall adaptation to climate change.

Activities implemented under **measure 125** (infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry) aim to facilitate land consolidation to enhance the business conditions for agriculture and forestry. Such activities can play an increasingly important role in adapting to climate change, particularly regarding improvements in water supply and management for agriculture and forestry.

### Main RDP measures which contribute to addressing CC mitigation/adaptation issues

Axis/Measure	Description	Type of operation	Potential effects
<b>Axis 1</b>			
Measure 111	Vocational training and information actions	Support for dissemination, demonstration and exchange of knowledge on agri environment measures; reducing climate change; preserving biodiversity and water quality; sustainable agriculture; and using new technologies.	Large number of participants successfully trained / educated to better understand the potential impact of the RDP measures and to ensure the sustainability of agriculture and forestry, including specific reference to climate change.
Measure 121	Modernisation of agricultural holdings	Investment in energy efficient technologies and more efficient storage of manure  Modernisation of irrigation systems.	Reduce emissions of GHG on farm level  Improve energy and water consumption.
Measure 122	Improvement of the economic value of forests	Investments in equipment and technology to rationalise cultivation whilst minimising negative effects on biotopes; provision of machinery for forest renewal, handling young vegetation and fire prevention; repair for forest roads; and storage for forest reproductive materials.	Continued maintenance of good quality forest will greatly enhance carbon sequestration
Measure 125	Infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry	This measure aims to facilitate land consolidation to enhance the business conditions for agriculture and forestry.	Improvements in water supply and management for agriculture and forestry
<b>Axis 2</b>			
Measure 214	Agri-environment payments	The measure will support environmentally farming methods such as organic farming and integrated production; soil protection activities in orchards, vineyards and arable lands, as well as conversion of arable land to permanent grassland; and the preservation of biotopes, grasslands and bird species.	Significant proportion of agricultural land under improved environmental management contributing to improved water quality, reducing climate change, avoiding marginalisation / abandonment of land, uptake of organic and integrated production and improving soil quality. The impact of this will be reducing biodiversity decline, preserving high

Axis/Measure	Description	Type of operation	Potential effects
			nature value farming, reducing the nitrogen content in water and reduction of GHG emissions.
Measure 226	Restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions.	Investments will be made to restore the productive potential of forests. This includes remedy measures in forest areas damaged by disease; renewal of forests areas which have experienced disease; construction and maintenance of roads to prevent fires; re-forestation with disease resilient species; building and maintaining fire breaks.	There will be an increase in the quality of the infrastructure to help to prevent forest fires as well as a greater number of disease resilient tree species. This will help to reduce negative effects of climate change on forests.
Measure 225	Forest environment payments	Compensatory payments will be offered to forest owners for adopting more sustainable forestry management practices	Supported area of forest will be under successful land management that will lead to enhanced biodiversity, maintenance of high nature value forestry, improving water quality and contributing to sustaining an important sink for CO <sub>2</sub> .
Measure 221	First afforestation of agricultural land	Support will lead to afforestation of arable land with mixed woody species.	Supported area of forest will be under successful land management that will contribute to improving water quality, high nature value farmland and forestry, enhancing biodiversity and increasing forest resources which will lead to greater carbon sequestration.
Measure 224	Natura 2000 payments – forest land	Support will be granted to overcome the disadvantages associated with the Natura 2000 directive namely the prohibition of tree felling, using fertilisers and intervening in the forest coppice.	Supported area of forest will be under successful land management that will lead to maintenance of high nature value forestry, improving water quality and contributing to sustaining an important sink for CO <sub>2</sub> .

Axis/Measure	Description	Type of operation	Potential effects
Measure 213	Natura 2000 payments and payments linked to Directive 2000/60/EC on water policies	Provide payments to overcome problems of Natura 2000 requirements linked to prohibited use of fertilisers and pesticides, as well as seeking to improve water quality and biodiversity.	The potential effects will lead to maintaining high nature value farming, improved biodiversity and water quality and decreasing GHG production.

## Renewable energies

*Electricity, heating and transport fuels produced from biomass (such as biofuels, biogas) and other renewable sources (solar, wind, geothermal).*

The Slovakian RDP specifically encourages the development of the renewable energy sector. This includes efforts to maintain and expand the viability of renewable sources, such as growing woody species and developing preventative measures against hazards facing forests. In addition, activities also aim to enhance the capacity of the sector by providing relevant infrastructure, equipment and training, and finding new ways to develop biomass products.

Through support provided by **measure 121** (modernisation of agricultural holdings) actions will be implemented to enhance the development of renewable energy sources and thereby address climate change. This particularly focuses upon the establishment of fast-growing woody species on less productive land (which will facilitate sustainable agriculture whilst decreasing the risk of enlarging the share of non-farmed agricultural land). In addition, support will be made available for the procurement of technical equipment for the establishment and use of geo-thermal energy.

Assistance provided by **measure 123** (adding value to agricultural and forestry products) aims to diversify the forestry industry towards using biomass for renewable energy production. This includes activities relating to improving facilities, processing methods, equipment and technologies.

**Measure 311** (diversification into non-agricultural activities) aims to diversify the rural economy, develop alternative incomes and increase employment. In relation to developing the renewable energy sector, relevant technologies and machinery will be made available including for geo-thermal wells.

Support delivered through **measure 331** (training and information for economic actors operating in the fields covered by axis 3) aims to develop rural human resources by providing training activities related to environmental protection such as alternative sources of energy and use of biomass.

As a result of the preventative actions, as outlined above, implemented under measure 226 – *restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions* it is intended that a key outcome will be the maintenance of renewable energy resources.

### Main implemented RDP measures related to the development of RE sources

Axis/Measure	Description	Type of operation	Potential effects
<b>Axis 1</b>			
Measure 121	Modernisation of agricultural holdings	Investments in renewable energies (with the exception of wind, solar and hydropower energy) and in production of woody species on less productive soils; procurement of equipment for geothermal wells.	Increase in the number of farms using new techniques, as well as the increase of the area of woody species and use by farmers of renewable energies.
Measure 123	Adding value to agricultural and forestry products	Investments for development of renewable energy products including facilities, processing methods, equipment and technologies.	Increase in the number of firms introducing new products or techniques targeted towards the development of renewable energy products.
<b>Axis 3</b>			
Measure 311	Diversification in non-agricultural activities	Support for the development of the renewable energy sector (with the exception of wind, solar and hydropower energy) through the supply of relevant technologies and equipment for geothermal wells.	Increase in the number of jobs connected to the establishment and supply of renewable energy.
Measure 331	Training and information for economic actors operating in the fields covered by axis 3	Delivery of training related to environmental protection including use of renewable energy sources and biomass.	The number of successfully trained individuals which are informed of useage of renewable energy and biomass.