



THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
for Central and Eastern Europe

**COOPERATIVE GRANTS PROGRAMME
“ON THE ROAD TO KIEV 2003”**

CALL FOR COOPERATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) hereby announces a call for proposals to support non-governmental organisation (NGO) cooperative projects in the run up to the Kiev Ministerial Conference 2003. This project is financially supported by the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

NGOs from European Union candidate countries and Balkan countries are invited to apply. The maximum grant amount per project is EUR 35,000 and the total amount available is EUR 163,000 (EUR 87,500 for candidate countries NGOs and EUR 75,500 for Balkan countries NGOs). **The deadline for application is August 16, 2002.**

BACKGROUND

The next summit of the Environment for Europe process will be the Fifth Ministerial Conference to be held in May 2003 in Kiev, Ukraine. This represents a next step in the process that started in 1991 with the Dobris conference (former Czechoslovakia) followed by three more summits in Lucerne (Switzerland), Sofia (Bulgaria) and Aarhus (Denmark).

NGOs have played an important part in the Environment for Europe process from the very beginning. The involvement of the NGOs in the process as well as the dialogue between NGOs and governments improved significantly with each summit that took place. Their participation in the negotiations and the decision-making process has provided more thorough and effective results. The last Ministerial Conference in Aarhus included for the first time a special session during which NGO representatives had the opportunity to speak directly with environmental ministers present there. Extensive preparatory work also contributed to the summit's success.

The upcoming conference in Kiev is important to the whole UNECE region, although particular attention is given to the Newly Independent States (NIS) and CEE countries that are not part of the pre-accession process. The conference is expected to result in decisions on specific tools and instruments for promoting the integration of environmental and health considerations into sectoral policies.

Numerous documents are now being prepared for signing or adoption in Kiev. They include, among others: the protocol on strategic environmental assessment, guidelines on strengthening compliance and enforcement of new global and regional environmental agreements, legally binding instruments on civil liability for trans-boundary damage caused by hazardous activities and pollutant release and transfer registers to the Aarhus Convention.

To ensure that NGO and participation at the summit and the special NGO session are effective and comprehensive, the REC is offering grants of up to EUR 35,000 to help NGOs prepare for Kiev and beyond.

ELIGIBILITY

Only registered NGOs from Balkan and European Union candidate countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Macedonia, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Yugoslavia and Turkey) whose work focuses primarily on the environment may apply. NGOs must propose a project that includes cooperation with an NGO partner in at least one other eligible country. The duration of the project may be no longer than 10 months.

The NGOs making the proposals must have the institutional capacity, personnel, time and commitment to support international cooperation and communication. The lead organisations of the projects must be able to prove that they have the trust and support of a broad swath of the environmental NGO community in their region (e.g. those that lead coalitions and working groups). Also, they should have a good knowledge of and previous experience with the Environment for Europe process.

LIMITATIONS

1. NGOs may not submit more than one application as a **lead NGO** and cannot take any role in more than two applications. They may apply as a **partner NGO** in two separate applications.
2. When an organisation is involved in two applications, the NGO must appoint different project coordinators for each project proposal.

THE SCOPE OF THE GRANT CALL

The main goals of this cooperative grant programme are to enable NGOs from Balkan and EU accession countries to prepare themselves for Kiev 2003 and the NGO session at the Kiev Ministerial Conference. To ensure an efficient, cooperative NGO effort in preparing for the NGO session and the conference as a whole, NGOs must work with their regional counterparts to establish position statements which represent views and opinions that can be shared with the NGOs of NIS and Western countries. By facilitating network-building and open communication and cooperation, the NGOs can strive to ensure that environmental matters and the voice of the public in the Balkan and accession countries are adequately presented at the Kiev Conference.

Only NGOs from eligible countries working on **cooperative** projects can apply for a grant. NGOs from at least two different countries will work together to address an issue related to Environment for Europe Process and preparations for Kiev summit.

THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECTS

It is recommended that the projects contribute to one or more of the following objectives:

- 1) To make possible a well-defined and properly implemented NGO session at Kiev 2003, including the NGO session with the ministers.
- 2) To facilitate cooperation and networking between NGOs in the target region and Eco Forum in defining the actions, lobbying strategies and collaborative work with the established working committee for Kiev 2003.
- 3) To define and agree on the main NGO agenda topics, with a proper input from NGOs in Balkan and EU accession countries.
- 4) To prepare well-organised, representative and professional input of NGOs from Balkan and EU accession countries at the Kiev Environment for Europe Conference.
- 5) To establish region-wide, East-West NGO cooperative networks which will work together to prepare for the Conference.
- 6) To support the participation of NGOs from Balkan and EU accession countries in the Kiev Conference.

Examples of activities that might be considered for a successful project include:

- Developing and implementing methods of informing and involving the public from Balkan and EU accession countries in the Environment for Europe process;
- Meeting to prepare position papers and trying to reach consensus on priority issues for Kiev;
- Exchanging information and communicating with the NGO steering committee for Kiev;
- Preparing analyses or surveys and reviewing key policy issues on the Kiev agenda (the protocol on strategic environmental assessment, legally binding instrument on civil liability for trans-boundary damage caused by hazardous activities and pollutant release and transfer registers to the Aarhus Convention);
- Investigating the progress in Balkan and EU accession countries towards commitments made in Aarhus and before (Aarhus Convention, EAP, PEBLDS);
- Contributing to the discussions on strategies such as Education on Sustainable Development.

Projects that are mainly meant to provide the financial coverage of the costs related to NGOs' participation in the Kiev conference are not acceptable.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The guidelines for preparation of the application can be found on the REC website <www.rec.org> or can be requested by mail at the address below. The lead NGO is responsible for submitting the complete original application to the **REC Head Office in Szentendre, Hungary**. The application must be sent by mail (fax and e-mail submissions will not be considered). The complete application must arrive at the REC Head Office by the end of the day on August 16 or it will not be accepted.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT PROPOSALS (September 6, 2002)

The selection of applications is a competitive process. The proposals are pre-screened by REC staff for completeness. Then an expert panel will score and rank the proposals based on standard criteria:

- **Feasibility:** Will the applicants be able to accomplish the goals of the project on schedule and within budget? Is the implementation plan realistic?
- **Relevance:** Are the issues addressed by the project relevant to the Environment for Europe process in general and Kiev 2003 in particular?

- **Extent of cooperation:** How will the NGOs share the responsibilities for implementing the project? Were there any coalitions established? How many NGOs and other stakeholders are involved in the project?

The complete list of criteria will be provided in the application guidelines.

WINNERS MEETING AND START OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION (September 27, 2002)

Grant winners will be notified and invited to the REC Head Office in Szentendre, Hungary for a “winners’ meeting”. At this meeting, NGOs will present their joint projects to the other grantees and the REC. During the winners’ meeting the NGOs will review and sign an award agreement. This document specifies the reporting conditions and disbursement schedule. The grantees will meet the grant officer and financial assistant from the REC Head Office who will work closely with them throughout the project’s implementation.

Grant winners should expect the first grant instalments no sooner than one month after the award agreement is signed.

Additional Information

For more information on this programme, interested parties should contact Cerasela Stancu at the REC Head Office (E-mail: cstancu@rec.org; Tel: [36-26] 504-000; Fax: [36-26] 311-294). The original application should arrive by mail at the REC Head Office (Ady Endre ut 9-11, 2000 Szentendre, Hungary) **by the end of the day on August 16, 2002**. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.