



Priority sector:
Climate Change and Renewable Energy

EEA GRANTS 2009-14

The EEA Financial Mechanism shall contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area, and to strengthening the bilateral relations between the EEA EFTA States – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – and the Beneficiary States. The programme area shall contribute to these two overall objectives.

Renewable Energy

Objective

Increased share of renewable energy in energy use

Expected outcomes

- A less carbon-dependent economy
- Increased renewable energy production
- Increased use of renewable energy in the transport sector
- Increased feed-in of renewable energy to existing energy infrastructures
- Developed strategies to improve the use of green investment schemes
- Improved capacity at national, regional and local level on renewable energy solutions
- Increased awareness of and education in renewable energy solutions

Relevance of support

Renewable sources of energy – wind power, solar power (thermal, photovoltaic and concentrated), hydro-electric power, tidal power, aero-thermal, geothermal energy, and biomass – are essential alternatives to fossil fuels. Their use reduces greenhouse gas emissions and diversifies the energy supply. The growth of renewable energy sources also stimulates employment in Europe, the creation of new technologies and increased trade. The introduction of renewable energy will contribute as such to a necessary energy source shift towards a less carbon-dependent economy.

Currently only a small proportion of the renewable energy potential is utilised in the Beneficiary States.

The Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC), part of the climate-energy legislative package adopted in April 2009 by the European Parliament and the Council, sets a target for at least a 20% share of energy that should come from renewable sources in the Community's gross final consumption of energy in 2020. Moreover the directive sets a target of a 10% share of renewable energy specifically in the transport sector. Towards 2020 the EU Member States will be required to submit policies and plans to promote renewable energy.

Increased production of renewable energy that should be based on integrated management plans to ensure minimum damage to nature and maximum cost efficiency. In order to increase use of renewables it is important to allow for the integration of renewable energy production into existing energy systems.

The EEA and Norway Grants 2004-09 support for greenhouse gas reduction projects was reviewed in 2009/10. The EEA and Norway Grants were considered to be a well-managed and well-received programme. The review found that projects were strongly aligned with national environmental priorities, and represented a cost efficient contribution towards the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases. The review suggested that a more narrow and prioritised focus would increase the impact.

Suggested activities

- Activities to increase the use of bio-based solutions
- Measures for increased use of renewable energy
- Measures for increased use of renewable energy in transport (e.g. biofuels)
- Infrastructure development (e.g. networks) relevant for renewable energy
- Capacity-building, e.g. in respect of developing plans and policies
- Co-processing in industry, e.g. by using waste as an energy source

Programme area specificities

- Particularly relevant for civil society involvement
- Suitable for involving small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Reduce economic and social disparities
Strengthen bilateral relations