Belgrade 22 February 2018

**Note for the file**

**Subject: Post-2020 generation of CBC programmes**

During the CBC Regional Consultative Forum held in Struga (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) on 17-18 October 2017, there was one session devoted to sound out the opinion of the Western Balkans CBC stakeholders on the strategic options about the post-2020 generation of CBC programmes. These options had been opened to internal discussion at DG NEAR and are displayed in this note with additional, preliminary points proposed by CBIB+ for discussion. The whole discussion was indeed triggered by the following recommendations of the 2007-2013 evaluation of the CBC programmes:

* Border areas have specific needs and EU support through CBC is highly visible – CBC must be maintained as a distinctive form of pre-accession assistance;
* The delineation of cross-border areas (and programmes) is rather static – the move from (only) bilateral to trilateral/multilateral programmes should be considered;
* IPA-IPA CBC has a limited impact – there is a need for more strategic interventions;
* CBC programmes work as stand-alone programmes – there is a need for better synergy with other forms of interventions;
* Streamlining programme management of IPA-IPA CBC programmes is essential to simplify the institutional set-up and maximise the effectiveness and value for money;
* The prioritisation process of the IPA CBC programmes at intra-Western Balkans borders needs to be more focused to maximise the benefit of EU funding;
* Results measurement of IPA CBC is weak – a robust performance framework must be established.

As the programming exercise for the next generation of CBC programmes is envisaged to take place in the course of 2019 and there are plans to hold a regional event to brainstorm[[1]](#footnote-1) on the characteristics of those post-2020 programmes before summer 2018, this note comes up at the right moment to present the four strategic options, discussed during the last CBC Forum. It also seeks to initiate their examination through consultations and exchange of views amongst the members of this dedicated technical working group (TWG).

Please feel free to propose any other option or variant to the options already included in this note.

For the time being, four strategic options have been identified for the future set-up of CBC programmes between two or more current IPA beneficiaries. In a series of tables below, you can find the options identified. Members of the TWG are highly advised to copy and paste these tables on a document of their own where they would shortly write down their opinion on each of the options within the appropriate columns. Please justify your answer with suitable arguments. CBIB+ Phase II project team will collect these opinions by **5 March 2018** and create other tables displaying the summaries at regional level.

The CBIB+ Phase II project team

**Option 1a**: The current set-up of the IPA II CBC programmes is maintained (i.e. bilateral CBC programmes) and the financial allocation of the programme is increased to fund more sizeable projects.

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**Option 1b**: The current set-up of the IPA II CBC programmes is maintained but with a revised geographical and programmatic coverage (i.e. trilateral, quadrilateral or even multilateral/transnational programmes), as well as an increased financial allocation that would allow funding more sizeable projects.

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**Option 2**: The management of the programmes is centralised by one single management or contracting authority at regional level, while the financial allocation of the programme is increased to fund more sizeable projects.

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**Option 3**: The CBC programmes are integrated into national sector programmes or in multi-country programmes and their financial allocation is increased for more sizeable projects.

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1. Along with representatives from EU Member States, DG REGIO and Interact. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)