



## Welcome to the 3rd STEP2CleanPlan newsletter!

Explore the latest project highlights and upcoming opportunities:

- **Joint Guide for Local Policy Makers** – A practical tool to support climate-focused local governance (page 2)
- **One-Day Seminars** with local stakeholders in each partner country (page 3)
- **Study Visits in Bulgaria** – Fostering cooperation for smart and sustainable mobility (pages 4-5)
- **Open Call for Mentees** – Join our Capacity Building & Mentoring Program on Climate Change Adaptation (page 6)

**Stay tuned** for more updates as we continue strengthening climate resilience in the Black Sea Basin through innovation, collaboration, and local action.

The project **Cooperation for Sustainable Energy and Climate Actions' Planning and Monitoring in BSB** is a key initiative focused on strengthening climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies at the local and regional levels. It aims to improve climate resilience in regions across Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria by fostering close cooperation among local authorities and stakeholders.

By promoting collaboration, knowledge sharing, and strategic planning, the project supports the development and implementation of sustainable energy and climate action plans. These efforts are aligned with the European Green Deal and other relevant EU strategies, ensuring a forward-looking and integrated approach to sustainability.

Through a series of analyses, training sessions, and stakeholder engagement activities, STEP2CLEAN enhances the capacity of local authorities to respond effectively to the challenges posed by climate change, while supporting a greener, more resilient future for the Black Sea Basin region.

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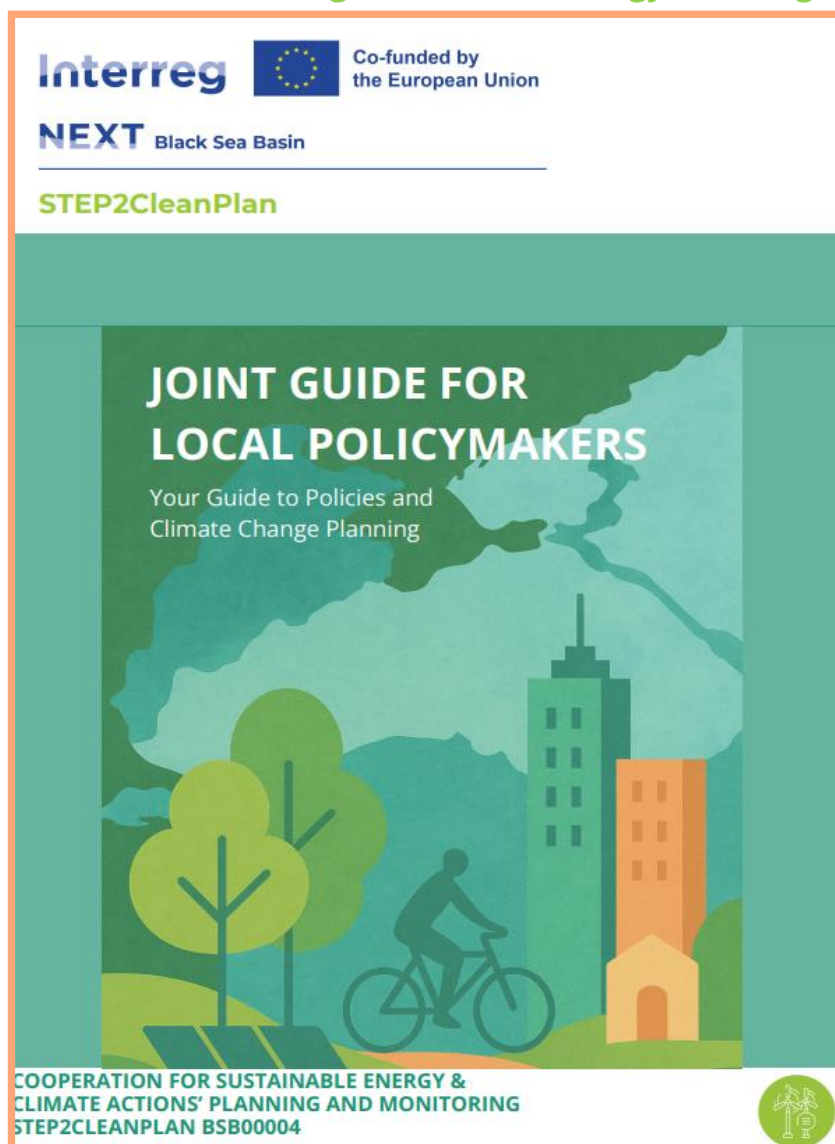
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**NEXT** Black Sea Basin

**Step2CleanPlan**

## JOINT GUIDE FOR LOCAL POLICY MAKERS

### Advancing Climate and Energy Planning in the Black Sea Basin



The Joint Guide for Local Policy Makers has been officially released under the framework of the “Step2CleanPlan – Cooperation for Planning and Monitoring Sustainable Energy and Climate Actions in the Black Sea Basin” project, co-financed by the Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin program.

This Guide, result of a collaborative effort by all project partners, is designed to strengthen the ability of local authorities to effectively plan and monitor sustainable energy initiatives and climate adaptation measures. It contributes to building more resilient, energy-efficient, and environmentally conscious communities.

The Guide supports inclusive governance, encourages community involvement, and promotes the mainstreaming of climate considerations into local planning agendas. It stands as a valuable resource for municipalities and regional administrations across the Black Sea Basin.

As a hands-on reference tool, the Guide features:

- Key insights from both local and EU-level practices
- Policy instruments and planning methodologies
- Noteworthy examples from Greece, Turkey, and Bulgaria
- Strategic recommendations from stakeholders and technical experts

It addresses critical topics such as:

- Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs)
- Urban resilience and sustainable mobility
- Integrated water, flood, and waste management
- Deployment of Renewable Energy and energy-saving measures
- Application of European platforms like Climate-Adapt and the Covenant of Mayors



# Key Milestones and Activities

## Local Action for Climate Resilience: Tools, Training, and Cooperation



### Municipal Climate Action Seminar – Planning and Implementation | Thessaloniki, Greece

On Tuesday, April 29, 2025, ANATOLIKI S.A. organized the event "Addressing Climate Change at the Municipal Level – Planning and Implementation" as part of the European project STEP2CleanPlan. The event brought together representatives from local authorities, relevant institutions, and citizens.

The aim of the event was to present actions and tools that support municipalities in implementing climate change policies, as well as to highlight best practices and the challenges encountered in practice.

The first part of the event focused on the project's key activities, the Common Guide for Local Policy-Making Stakeholders, and the training program designed for officials involved in local policymaking. The institutional framework and the importance of the Sustainable Urban Development Observatory of the Central Macedonia Region" were also emphasized.

The second part featured a roundtable discussion with representatives from the Municipalities of Kalamaria, Thessaloniki, Thermaikos, and Ampelokipi-Menemeni, who presented selected projects and initiatives related to energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, green infrastructure, and environmental education.

A common theme across all presentations was the need for adequate

funding, technical support, and enhanced cooperation between municipal departments and citizens. The importance of participatory governance, environmental awareness, and inter-municipal synergies was also highlighted.

The event concluded with a proposal to establish an inter-municipal network among the eight municipalities of Metropolitan Thessaloniki, aimed at improving coordination and strengthening joint actions for climate change adaptation.

ANATOLIKI S.A. reaffirmed its ongoing support to local authorities in building a sustainable and resilient future.



## Seminar with the stakeholders from Burgas region

On 24.04.2025 in the premises of District Government Burgas a seminar was held with the regional stakeholders from Burgas region.

The project team presented the existing planning capacity and implementation of the adaptation strategies/plans, the progress of the local policymakers in strategic planning and the existing mitigation initiatives, the activities that the local authorities could implement for mitigating climate change effects, etc.

During the seminar was also shared the project brochure and information about the prepared Guide. During the seminar the summaries of the guide were discussed with the stakeholders.

Information about the project activities, expected results, the EU funding support and the objectives of the Black Sea Basin Programme was also shared. The seminar has more than 35 participants from local authorities, regional institutions, etc. - Regional agriculture directorate, Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture, Regional information center Burgas, Science agriculture center Sredets, Labour office Burgas, Burgas state university, Regional forestry directorate Burgas, Regional inspection for environment and water, Agriculture institute Karnobat, as well as PR experts and citizens.

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## Key Milestones and Activities

### Study Visits in Bulgaria: Strengthening Cooperation for Smart and Sustainable Mobility

On May 7, the towns of Varna and Byala welcomed participants for a study visit under the INTERREG NEXT Black Sea Basin – STEP2CleanPlan project, aiming to foster the exchange of experiences and showcase good practices in addressing climate change at the local level. The visit was hosted by the BIO NETWORK Association, Bulgaria.

The guest delegation included representatives from: The Municipality of Uzunköprü, Turkey, ANATOLIKI S.A., Organization for Local Development, Greece, and the District Government of Burgas, Bulgaria

As part of the project, the BIO NETWORK Association is supporting the Municipality of Byala in developing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Strategy. Accordingly, the main topic of the study visit focused on green transport solutions and the balance between innovation and safety for local communities.



#### Session in Varna

The meeting in Varna was officially opened by Mrs. Janislava Shopova, Mayor of the Odessos District in Varna. In her welcome address, she emphasized the significance of the topic and the value of mutual cooperation.

Participants engaged in a discussion on green transport solutions—such as bicycles, electric scooters, and other micro-mobility options. While the benefits of these modes of transport were recognized, several challenges were also raised, including:

- Lack of appropriate infrastructure
- Insufficient regulation and enforcement regarding pedestrian safety
- Absence of systematic data collection on users
- No clear categorization for more powerful electric scooter models

These issues were identified as common concerns in both Bulgaria and Greece.

Participants also explored the role of cooperation between businesses and public authorities in developing regulations for shared electric vehicles. Additional attention was given to bicycle use, especially in the context of the future Black Sea Route—an upcoming tourism project of regional significance. This initiative holds promise not only for sustainable mobility but also for enhancing tourism across the Black Sea basin. The guests enjoyed a test drive of e-bikes, produced by a Bulgarian company based in Varna.



#### Visit to Byala

The programme continued in the town of Byala, where participants learned about the unique challenges faced by this small yet ambitious municipality. In particular, the town struggles with urban congestion during the peak summer season due to the influx of vehicles. The discussions on sustainability expanded beyond transportation to include environmental concerns such as separate waste collection. This topic is expected to be the focus of the next study visit in Greece.

Guests enjoyed exploring the velo paths, built in Byala under the Via Pontica route and watched the birds crossing the Byala bay.

As the sun set over the Black Sea, the study visit wrapped up with new ideas exchanged, challenges identified, and inspiration gathered. While the road to greener cities may be long and winding, it's much more enjoyable when travelled together—with shared scooters, a few laughs, and a clear vision for a cleaner, smarter future.





## Key Milestones and Activities

### Study Visits in Bulgaria: Strengthening Cooperation for Smart and Sustainable Mobility

#### Visit to Burgas

On May 8, 2025, the District Government of Burgas hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the study visit in Bulgaria to the city of Burgas. Representatives from all partner organizations took part in the event, including Uzunköprü Municipality (Turkey), ANATOLIKI S.A. – Organisation for Local Development (Greece), accompanied by delegates from four Greek municipalities: Kalamaria, Thermi, Pilea-Hortiatis, and Thermaikos, as well as the Association BIONetwork from Varna.

The programme was officially opened by the Governor of the Burgas Region, Mr. Vladimi Krumov. The study visit began with a presentation by the Center for Energy Efficiency – EnEffect, highlighting strategic planning efforts and various initiatives in energy efficiency. Participants were informed about the measures implemented in the city center of Burgas, including the development of a fully electric public transportation system.



The programme was officially opened by the Governor of the Burgas Region, Mr. Vladimi Krumov. The study visit began with a presentation by the Center for Energy Efficiency – EnEffect, highlighting strategic planning efforts and various initiatives in energy efficiency. Participants were informed about the measures implemented in the city center of Burgas, including the development of a fully electric public transportation system. During the visit, participants had the opportunity to explore BurgasBus, a successful model of sustainable urban mobility, and St. Anastasia Island, which serves as an example of sustainable tourism, energy efficiency, and resource conservation.

The visit provided valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange, networking, **and future collaboration among partners.**



# Key Milestones and Activities

## Capacity Building & Mentoring Program on Climate Change Adaptation Planning

### Open Call for Mentees

Are you a strategic planner, policymaker, or municipal expert working on sustainability, energy, mobility, or climate change?

This program is for you if you want to:

- ✓ Build practical skills in climate adaptation
- ✓ Gain insights into resilience planning
- ✓ Improve your institution's capacity
- ✓ Connect with a transnational expert network
- ✓ Influence local and regional climate policy



#### What's included:

Three training modules:

1. Climate Adaptation Planning
2. Urban Mobility & Energy Efficiency
3. Emissions Assessment & EU-aligned Reporting Tools

#### Format:

- Combination of online and in-person sessions (including asynchronous learning)
- Two full training days per week
- Comprehensive training materials provided

#### Program runs: June-September 2025:

10 candidates from each country will be selected to participate.

If you wish to be one of the candidates,  
please click the link corresponding to your country  
and submit your application

**Thessaloniki,  
Greece**

More info [here](#):

[Candidate Registration  
Form – Greece](#)

**Uzunkopru, Turkey**

More info here:

[Candidate Registration form -  
Türkiye](#)

**Varna & Burgas,  
Bulgaria**

More info [here](#)

[Candidate Registration Form -  
Bulgaria](#)

## A glimpse into the future" / Timeline and next steps

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### Step2CleanPlan

Study Visit in Greece: May, 28-29

Capacity Building and Mentoring Program in partners'  
countries: June –September 2025

Development of four strategic frameworks and plans,  
including:

- Urban Mobility Plans – Uzunköprü Municipality (Türkiye) and Municipality of Byala (Varna Region, Bulgaria)
- Energy Efficiency Monitoring Framework – Burgas (Bulgaria)
- Carbon Footprint Reduction Plan – Municipality of Kalamaria (Thessaloniki, Greece)

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