Preface

Slovenia enjoys extraordinarily rich biodiversity and landscapes due to its location at the junction of several ecological systems. However, pressures on these environmental resources have intensified as a result of rapid economic growth over most of the last decade. This OECD Environmental Performance Review, *the first since Slovenia became a member of the OECD in 2010, provides an opportunity to take stock of the country's progress in environmental management and identify remaining challenges.*

Overall, Slovenia has made good progress in reforming its environmental policies and enhancing the environmental quality of life of its people. However, major challenges remain and many of them stem from Slovenia's highly decentralised governance system combined with only limited controls on local development. For example, this configuration has fostered a relatively high use of road vehicles. This has helped to lock the transport system into a highly carbon-intensive pattern that will take many years to change, and contributed to the emergence of air pollution hot-spots in some urban centres. Small, fragmented local communities have also found it difficult to realise economies of scale for environment-related infrastructure, such as for waste and wastewater treatment.

The central economic policy challenge facing Slovenia is how to boost the productivity and competiveness of its economy. Meeting this challenge requires shifting to higher value-added forms of production, and developing and applying modern technologies, including the green technologies of the future.

This OECD Environmental Performance Review *aims to provide further support for Slovenia's environmental progress, with special emphasis on green growth, climate change, and waste management. Some of the Review's key recommendations are:*

- *Strengthen oversight by the Ministry of the Environment of local spatial planning, and provide financial incentives for municipalities to develop joint regional spatial plans.*
- *Urgently develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce energy use in, and related emissions from, the transport sector.*
- *Assess how capacity for eco-innovation could be enhanced in light of the conclusions and recommendations of recent OECD work in this area.*
- *Carry out an assessment of the value of ecosystem services and assess how greater use of market-based approaches could help to better integrate biodiversity and sectoral policies.*
- *Expedite the adoption and implementation of the Climate Change Act.*
- *Develop an overarching waste management strategy, balancing EU requirements and conditions in Slovenia.*

This Review is the result of a rich and co-operative policy dialogue between Slovenia and other members and observers of the OECD Working Party on Environmental Performance. We are confident that this collaborative effort will contribute to the policy debate on how to tackle the shared environmental challenges faced by OECD members and their partners.

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