

Working Group on EIA and SEA
Sixth meeting, 07-10 November 2016

ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE
UN ENVIRONNEMENT POUR L'EUROPE
ОКРУЖАЮЩАЯ СРЕДА ДЛЯ ЕВРОПЫ
გარემო ევროპისათვის
BATUMI, 8-10 June 2016



Eighth Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference

Batumi, Georgia, 08-10 June 2016

Matters relevant to the Espoo Convention and the SEA Protocol

Zaal Lomtadze
Secretary to the Batumi Conference



UNECE

Environment for Europe (EfE): History

- EfE process launched in 1991
- Has been supporting countries' efforts to advance in environmental governance
- Unique partnership of:
 - Member States within the ECE region
 - Organizations of the United Nations system represented in the region
 - Other intergovernmental organizations and bodies
 - Regional Environmental Centres
 - Non-governmental organizations
 - The private sector
 - Other major groups
- ECE has been closely associated with the EfE process since its inception and serves as its secretariat

EfE: the Process

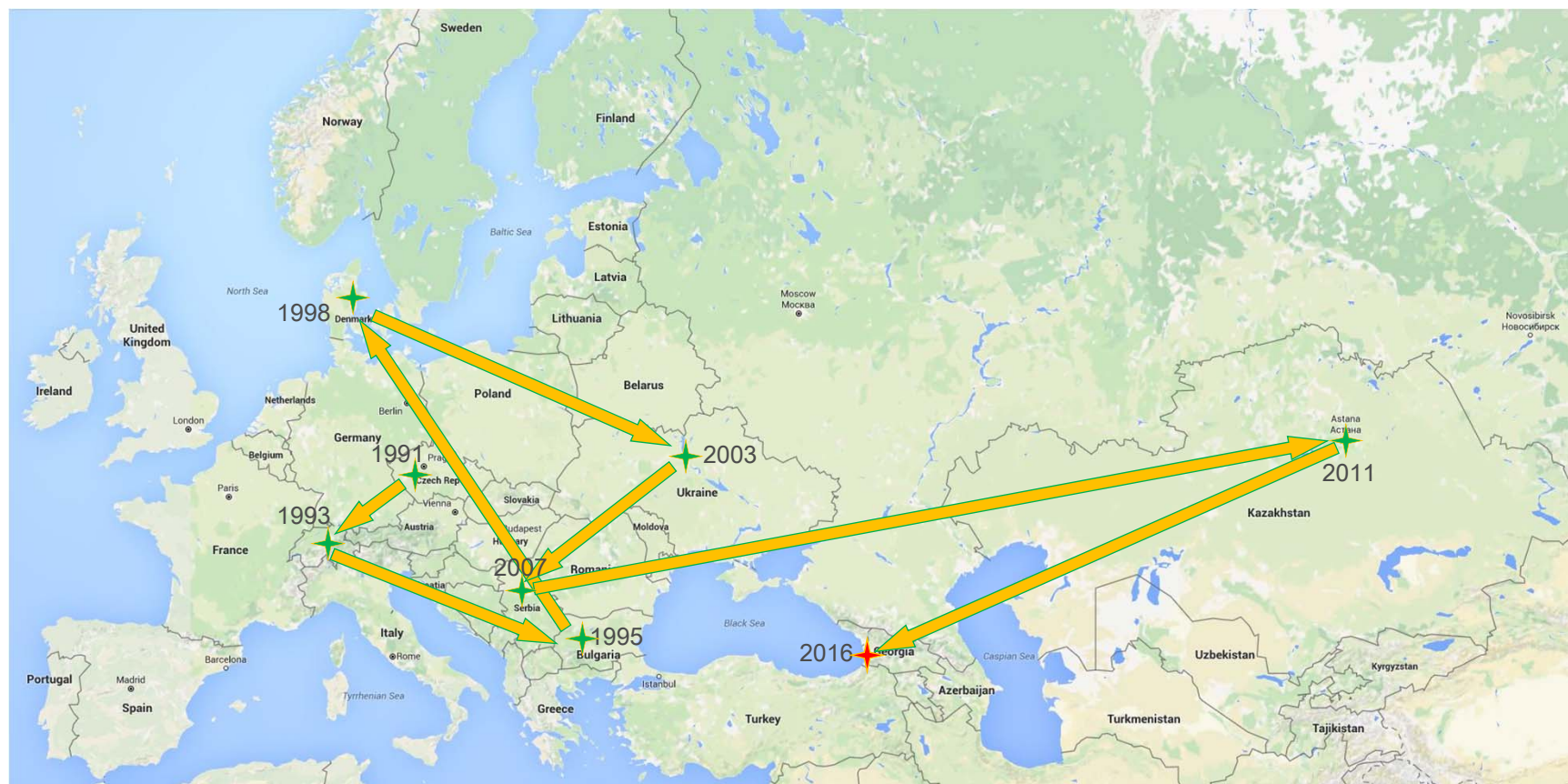
- The process and its ministerial conferences provide an effective high-level platform for stakeholders
- At the same time, the process focuses on supporting the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in their efforts to raise environmental standards and comply with international commitments
- The process continues to provide the framework for the development of:
 - governance policies and initiatives
 - legal instruments and policies
 - practical actions and tools
- Member States in lead
- Conference organizing: Committee on Environmental Policy (since 2009)
- Secretariat: UNECE

25 years of EfE process: Outcomes

- The ECE Programme on Environmental Performance Reviews;
- The ECE programme on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment;
- The Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy;
- The Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention);
- The Protocols on Heavy Metals and Persistent Organic Pollutants to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution;
- The Pan-European Strategy to Phase-out Leaded Petrol;
- The ECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development;
- [The Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context](#);
- The Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Aarhus Convention;
- The Protocol on Civil Liability to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention);
- The Environment Strategy for Eastern European, Caucasian and Central Asian countries;
- The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians;
- a series of guidelines and recommendations to Governments.

EfE: 8 Ministerial Conferences

1991-2016



8th EfE Ministerial in Batumi: Figures

- Held 08-10 June 2016 in Batumi, Georgia
- More than 700 registered delegates (excluding UNECE and Host Country)
- 44 national delegations + EC
- UN- and other international organizations
- NGOs, academia, business
- 33 side-events (number had to be limited due to the decision not to run side-events in parallel to the Conference sessions)
- 7 thematic exhibitions

8th EfE Ministerial: Themes

- Two main themes:
 - greening the economy in the pan-European region
 - improving air quality for a better environment and human health
- High-level Segment:
 - on the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development
- Also discussing:
 - Developing the Shared Environmental Information System across the pan-European region
 - Pan-European regional assessment of the Sixth Global Environmental Outlook, a joint collaboration of UNEP and UNECE
 - The assessment report under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution
 - The second and final report on the implementation of the Astana Water Action

8th EfE Ministerial: Official Outcomes

The Conference decided, and agreed to:

- endorse the voluntary Pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy;
- welcome the Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E), which consists of voluntary commitments to operationalize the Strategic Framework(BIG-E);
- endorse the voluntary Batumi Action for Cleaner Air
- invite countries and other stakeholders to implement the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA) in close cooperation with the ECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution;
- acknowledge the important contribution of the ECE Environmental Performance Review Programme over the past 20 years;
- welcome progress in developing the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS)
- launch the GEO-6 Assessment for the Pan-European region;
- acknowledge progress in implementing the Astana Water Action.
- The High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries also adopted the Batumi Ministerial Statement on Education for Sustainable Development and the Framework for the Future Implementation of ESD in the UNECE region.

Across the board - clear commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

MEAs at Batumi

PLENARY

- Agenda item 2. “The environment dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — moving forward in the pan-European region”: (a) “Multilateral environmental agreements, mechanisms, policies and institutions supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Wednesday, 8 June, 10.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m. (2 hours)
- Background document on the contribution of UNECE MEAs to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: “Mapping of the Environment subprogramme processes and activities that support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/1);
- The discussion focused on instruments that will be used to support efforts to achieve one or more of the SDGs, including by strengthening integration and intersectoral cooperation.

Espoo/SEA in Background document

Information document ***“Mapping of the Environment subprogramme processes and activities that support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals”***

(ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/1);

(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2016/ece/ece.batumi.conf.2016.inf.1.e.pdf>)

- “The ECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and, in particular, its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA) **provide a framework for the comprehensive integration** of environmental and health concerns into a wide range of policies and legislation, programmes, plans and development activities in all economic sectors, thus helping countries to ensure the alignment of development with the SDGs.
- As the secretariat to these treaties, ECE will assist countries in their efforts to accomplish sustainable development by provision of technical assistance and capacity development, including:
 - (a) Facilitation of legal reforms;
 - (b) Pilot projects;
 - (c) National and local training-of-trainers courses aimed at strengthening institutional and human capacities among Government officials and other experts;
 - (d) Organization of subregional and national experience-sharing and awarenessraising events;
 - (e) Development of recommendations and guidance materials on the basis of good practices identified by Parties and other stakeholders. “

The Convention and the Protocol are mentioned as a cross-cutting instruments, and also across a number of SDGs

Batumi ministerial declaration

- “8. We **appreciate** progress achieved under the ECE multilateral environmental agreements and recognize the need to strengthen the participation of civil society and the private sector in their implementation. We **invite** countries to ratify, implement and provide adequate resources for the relevant multilateral environmental agreements, inter alia, the Air Convention and its three most recent protocols. We **recognize** the opportunities provided by multilateral environmental agreements to implement Agenda 2030.”

Chair's summary

II. The environment dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — moving forward in the pan-European region

A. Multilateral environmental agreements, mechanisms, policies and institutions supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- 11. [...] The ECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context ([Espoo Convention](#)) and its [Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment](#) enabled the integration of environmental considerations in sectoral policies and projects. The [Espoo Convention](#), the ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and the ECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents were seen as [important for promoting transboundary cooperation in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals](#). [...] [Concerted action](#) between the Conventions, seeking substantive and institutional [synergies](#) at both the international and national levels, would improve the effectiveness and efficiency of those instruments.

Chair's summary (cont-d)

IV. Greening the economy in the pan-European region

- 34. ... Regular review and long-term analysis of the environmental and social impacts of policymaking and decision-making, as well as holistic thinking, were **necessary for a successful green economy transition**
- 35. Delegates also emphasized the need for the effective integration of environmental considerations into legal and regulatory frameworks, institutional mechanisms that allowed for cross-sectoral coordination and the harmonization of conflicting interests of different stakeholders. **Strategic environmental assessment and environmental impact assessment, based on the Espoo Convention and its Protocol, were helpful tools for that purpose.**

Side events

- One high-level side event on SEA “The role of Strategic Environmental Assessment in greening the economy”: UNECE, the Dutch Commission on Environmental impact assessment, with participation of Ministers from Georgia, Moldova, the Netherlands, and the UNECE Executive Secretary
- Two side events organized under EaP Green by OECD with participation of UNECE:
 - “Greening Economies in Eastern Partnership Countries”;
 - “Implementing Green Growth in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia”.



8th EfE Ministerial: Site



More information at:

- www.unece.org – UNECE secretariat
 - (UNECE -> Environmental Policy -> Environment for Europe -> EfE Conferences -> Batumi Conference -> Welcome)
- www.efebatumi.com – Host Country Secretariat
- efe@unece.org – EfE secretariat