

**Joint EC/UNDP/UNECE Project  
Supporting Kazakhstan's transition to a green economy model**

**High-level Roundtable "Green Economy" in the Republic of Kazakhstan:  
"Prospects for development of "Green Economy" in the Republic of  
Kazakhstan:**

**Strategic environmental assessment) in Kazakhstan**

**6 April 2017, 9h-14h30h**

**Marriott Hotel, room "Balkash", 3rd floor Agenda**

Honorable Member of the Mazhilis, M. Schegelskyi,

Dear Vice-Minister Mirzagaliev,

Dear Ambassador Szabo,

Dear Mr Rakhimov,

Dear Ms Santer,

Dear distinguished participants,

On behalf of Ambassador Traian Hristea, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Kazakhstan, I am honored to welcome you all today to this event expected to raise grounds for the application Strategic Environmental Assessment in Kazakhstan.

I would like to thank our partners from the UNDP, UNECE, and the OSCE who came today to show support to Kazakhstan moving forward and joining the countries abiding to Strategic Impact Assessment in their legislation.

Let me recall that environmental threats do not respect national borders. Governments have realized that to avert this danger they must notify and consult each other on all major projects under consideration that might have adverse environmental impact across borders. In a nutshell, the Espoo Convention is a key step to bringing together all stakeholders to prevent environmental damage before

it occurs. The Convention entered into force in 1997 and Kazakhstan is one of the 45 countries which are currently part of it.

The Convention was complemented in 2003 by the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to which 31 countries or regional organisations are part of. Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is undertaken much earlier in the decision-making process than project environmental impact assessment (EIA), and it is therefore seen as a key tool for sustainable development. The Protocol also provides for extensive public participation in government decision-making in numerous development sectors. It therefore integrates environmental consideration into decision making - and makes plans and programmes "greener". It allows for participation and consultation of relevant public authorities, increasing therefore the transparency in decision-making due to involvement of all levels of society. It equally helps to comply with the requirements of specific environmental policy, and to check the coherence with other environmental policies.

In the EU, the Protocol entered into force in 2004 and calls for a specific procedure which can be summarized as follows: an environmental report is prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment and the reasonable alternatives of the proposed plan or programme are identified. The public and the environmental authorities are informed and consulted on the draft plan or programme and the environmental report prepared. As regards plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment in another Member State, the Member State in whose territory the plan or programme is being prepared must consult the other Member State(s). The environmental report and the results of the consultations are taken into account before adoption. Once the plan or programme is adopted, the environmental authorities and the public are informed and relevant information is made

available to them. In order to identify unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage, significant environmental effects of the plan or programme must be monitored.

Jointly with UNECE, the EU is currently actively assisting the countries of the Eastern Partnership - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine - to adopt and implement the SEA Protocol and join the club of advanced countries which give full consideration to environmental issues to the benefit of their citizens, neighbours and economical actors.

Similarly, the EU is funding a 7.1 million EUR project dedicated to supporting the transition of Kazakhstan to the green economy model following the ambitious plans in the field announced by the country in 2013. The UNDP and UNECE are the implementing partners of the project runs from 2015 to 2018. We would welcome very much that his tax payer money from the EU effectively assist Kazakhstan making significant progress towards adopting and implementing the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In doing so, Kazakhstan would also continue showing the way forward in the broader Central Asia in which the interest for the adoption of the Strategic Environmental Assessment is equally growing. It seems to us that there is a window of opportunity for a real take-off at the regional level and this momentum should be developed.

Having briefly introduced what is at stake, I will stop my address here.

I look forward to hearing the contributions from all participating stakeholders and I wish you an open, interactive and productive debate.

Thank you for your attention.