

From commitments to results

A final dissemination event on the EaP GREEN SEA/EIA activities in the Republic of Moldova

15 December 2017

Summit Events Centre

Chisinau, Republic of Moldova



Event Report

December 2017

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1. Background information

The “Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighborhood” (EaP GREEN) project was launched in 2013 to support the six European Union’s Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine – to progress faster towards a green economy through better management of natural capital supporting a higher economic productivity and competitiveness. The above listed EaP GREEN countries made their commitments related to the transition towards a green economy in the 2011 and 2013 Declarations of the EU Eastern Partnership Summits and on other international fora.

The EaP GREEN has supported countries in developing methodological, legal, and conceptual material based on international good practice adapted to the country conditions and needs. In-country pilot projects have also been implemented to demonstrate how relevant policies and tools can be applied in practice. The EaP GREEN has been funded by the European Union and supported by several EU and OECD countries. It has been jointly implemented by four international organizations: the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The outcomes of the EaP GREEN show a significant progress made both in the EaP countries and at the regional level, in particular related to following principal objectives of the EaP GREEN:

- To promote the use of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) at the strategic and project level;
- To mainstream sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and green economy principles in national development plans, sectoral legislation and regulatory framework;
- To facilitate the greening of selected economic sectors, with a special focus on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
- To mobilize national and international financing and make returns on environmental investments attractive to the private sector.

A final dissemination event on the EaP GREEN SEA/EIA activities in the Republic of Moldova was carried out as a part of the overall final EaP GREEN event jointly organized by the UN Environment, UNECE, the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development, and Environment, and the Ministry of Economy, to present the results and outcomes achieved during the EaP GREEN project implementation in the Republic in Moldova and to discuss way forward to further reinforce the transition of the country to the green economy.

The event brought together high-level government officials, development partners and NGOs, experts, practitioners, and officials involved in specific EaP GREEN activities. The representatives of the EU Delegation to Moldova, Government of the Republic of Moldova, Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, governmental agencies, implementing organizations (UNECE, OECD, UN Environment, and UNIDO), NGOs and other international organizations also participated.

Altogether 80 participants attended the event (see the list of participants in Annex I to this report), and approximately 50 participants were present during the session on SEA and EIA component.



2. Objectives of the event

The final dissemination event on the EaP GREEN SEA and EIA component, facilitated by the UNECE, aimed to:

- Take stock of key results and impacts of the EaP GREEN implementation in the field of environmental assessment in Moldova since 2013;
- Highlight good examples and lessons learned as well as to summarize remaining challenges;
- Outline how Moldova can further increase efficiency of SEA and EIA application.

Conclusions from the discussions shall be integrated in the SEA/EIA national capacity development roadmap to be finalized by the end of 2017. The roadmap shall outline next steps and actions towards national SEA and EIA system meeting the requirements of international legal framework – especially the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA, and EU SEA and EIA Directives.

As it can be seen in the agenda (Annex II to this report), the event combined presentations by the national and international experts with discussions in groups and presenting results of the discussion at the plenary meeting.

3. Minutes of the event

3.1 Opening session

The overall final event was opened by Mr. Vasile BÎTCA, Minister of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE), who emphasized the importance and impact of the EaP GREEN to all three domains under the minister's sphere of competence i.e. agriculture, regional development, and environmental protection. He underlined the coordination role, which the Ministry has in this process, due to the Inter-ministerial Working Group on Sustainable Development and Green Economy and selection and promotion of the National Green Economy Objectives at the Batumi Ministerial Conference in 2016. The ministry will further support organic agriculture and sustainable regional development by promoting the integration of environmental requirements in all economic sectors. Instruments the ministry has available, in particular SEA and EIA, will help to mainstream environmental and health issues into decision making and project design, among other actions, by addressing alternatives. Efficient application of SEA and EIA should result in reduced pollution and less environmental degradation.



Mr. Aneil SINGH, Head of Operations, Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova, highlighted the potential of the Republic of Moldova towards Green Economy promotion – organic agriculture, greening SMEs, EIA and SEA implementation. Continuity and sustainability have to be ensured, the Government and business community have to acknowledge and implement necessary actions in above



areas. Opportunities, provided by the Eastern Partnership and Association Agreement, as well as the transfer of best practices have to be further explored. It should help the businesses to save finances, reduce energy and water consumption and decrease GHG emissions.

Mr. Valentin GUZNAC, Deputy Secretary General of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, pointed out the direct link and synergy between the EaP GREEN and the process of Moldova 2030 Development, by adjusting processes and indicators towards the nationalisation of Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030. He passed the best regards to the participants from Ms. Lilia PALII, General Secretary of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, and the EaP GREEN National Focal Point, who started and coordinated this process, and has acted as a co-chair of the inter-ministerial Working Group from the Ministry of Economy. He expressed the gratitude of the Government of Moldova to the EU, EC and OECD, UNECE, UN Environment, and UNIDO for the financial and methodological support of the project.

As Ms. Iuliana DRAGALIN, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, could not join the opening session due to invitation to Prime Minister's office, the major statements from her speech were presented by the moderator of the session. The Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure will further promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, green industry, greening SMEs, environmental management at enterprises, cleaner production and resource efficiency. Ms. Iulia COSTIN, General State Secretary for Economy, will co-chair the Inter-ministerial Working Group on behalf of the Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure.

Mr. Jan DUSIK, Director, UN Environment Regional Office for Europe (through his video message), mentioned that there were intensive five years of implementation, which mobilized capacities in various institutions in the government, and resulted in the development of the Green Economy Program. Moldova became part of the BIG-E Initiative. He presented the links of the process with priorities formulated by the United National Environmental Assembly (Nairobi, Kenya, December 2017) to fight pollution and achieve sustainability. Moldova, as small country with a big potential, could advance in sustainable public procurement and organic agriculture. UN Environment is looking forward to work with Moldova in the second phase of the project.

Mr. Martin SMUTNY, EaP GREEN coordinator, UNECE consultant, highly acknowledge a progress Moldova has made towards introducing a system of environmental assessment, which would be fully in line with the Espoo Convention, its Protocol on SEA, and the EU SEA and EIA Directives. He briefly mentioned key activities supported by the UNECE Espoo Convention secretariat during the EaP GREEN project, including – among others – development of a new legislation on SEA, two pilot SEAs, and organizing training and awareness raising event. He also emphasized that further efforts are needed to keep a momentum and further development SEA and EIA schemes in the country.

Ms. Iordanca-Rodica IORDANOV, Executive Director, PA EcoContact, focused the attention of the participants to the role of NGOs in the EaP GREEN implementation, and emphasized SEA and EIA as important tools to be used for ensuring participation of the civil society in planning and decision-making. EcoContact was involved in two pilot SEA projects within EaP GREEN, represents environmental NGOs in the Inter-ministerial Working group, and promoting of green economy is included in the institution's development strategy.



3.2 Final SEA and EIA dissemination event

The section on SEA and EIA element (i.e. the final dissemination event on SEA and EIA, scheduled from 11.00am until 13.00) was opened by Mr. Martin Smutny, briefly introducing the agenda. In a follow up presentation, Mr. Michal Musil, international consultant to UNECE, presented the key principles of efficient SEA and EIA. He outlined main benefits of SEA and EIA application, their added value and importance for the mainstreaming environmental and health considerations in economic development.

The video on the Protocol on SEA and benefits of SEA, which had been prepared in Romanian language, was then showed to the participants.

Mr. Martin Smutny presented two case examples of SEA good practice. Both examples were from the transport sector – SEA of the National Transport Strategic Plan of Slovakia until 2030 and SEA of Kosice City Municipal Transport Strategy. The presentation provided examples of analyses carried out, and outlined main outcomes and results – among others, spatial guidelines on ‘sensitivity of the area on the transport infrastructure projects’ formulated by SEA at the national level, or measures regarding air quality formulated for Kosice City. He emphasized that timing of SEA procedure to ensure that SEA can follow the planning process and provide timely and well-focused inputs to planning is essential to achieve efficient assessment. In follow discussion, reflecting a question from the representative of the EU Delegation, he added that consultations with relevant stakeholders played an important role in both SEA cases, and contributed to successful SEAs.

Mr. Andrei Isac, national expert on SEA, provided details on SEA and EIA-related activities implemented within the EaP GREEN in Moldova. He explained how SEA was carried out for the Green Economy Road Map, and how SEA supported the process of development of the document, assisted in organizing consultations and identification of necessary data, and facilitated dialogue with planning experts on relevant environmental issues.

Ms. Rodica Iordanov, Executive Director, PA EcoContact, presented main features of the Law on EIA (in force since 2015) and the Law on SEA, which shall enter in force in March 2018. She also provided details on the Guidelines on EIA and SEA, which shall support implementation of the legal framework. The Guidelines on SEA were developed within the EaP GREEN project, supported by the UNECE Espoo Convention secretariat.

In his introduction to the second part of the SEA and EIA session, which was dedicated to the discussion on remaining challenges and future priorities, Mr. Smutny provided that the results of the group work shall be used in developing the capacity building strategy on SEA and EIA. He explained that the capacity building strategy should

- Identify existing challenges in current SEA and EIA system and practice in Moldova;
- Outline priorities (and possibly also specific activities) for further capacity building on SEA and EIA in the country.

He invited participants, sitting already in the groups, to discuss following topics:

- Main existing challenges related to SEA/EIA in Moldova and the ways to overcome them;

- Benefits and costs of application of SEA/EIA in Moldova,
- Actions needed to make SEA and EIA operational (i.e. that is it applied as a standard tool)?

Approximately 20 minutes were provided for the discussion in the groups,

After the group discussion, each group presented their opinion (see section 4 of this report).

At the end of the event, Mr. Martin Smutny, briefly summarized the session and emphasized a need of further efforts to enhance SEA and EIA schemes in the country. He also thanked the participants for their active involvement.

4. Conclusions

Following conclusions can be summarized from the discussions within the event:

Further development of the SEA system in the Republic of Moldova will require continuation of capacity building to coordinate and carry out SEA procedures – environmental and health authorities, planning agencies, as well as experts and practitioners can be considered as the key target groups. Awareness raising on SEA benefits and the importance of public participation among decision-makers and the public, respectively, is also needed. For this, pilot SEAs may provide opportunity for hands-on experience for relevant stakeholders and can be efficiently combined with trainings and workshops.

Similarly, despite the progress made, further effort is needed to enhance an EIA system in the country ensuring EIA is applied as a standard tool for projects which may have significant impacts on environment and health. The priorities would include support to EIA practitioners in using relevant methods and tools for evaluating the likely impacts, enhancement of the quality control in EIA, and arrangements for participation of the health authorities in EIA processes.

As a result of the group work, following specific challenges were mentioned:

- There is a limited institutional capacity in the central governmental authorities and in the MARDE (one person on EIA, one person on SEA) to coordinate and implement EIA/SEA processes. Increased number of SEA and EIA cases present a problem for capacity of the Ministry, decentralization of SEA/EIA coordination and management might be considered;
- Limited information on EIA and SEA and a lack of correct perception of SEA and EIA concepts among the planning authorities/decision makers and project developers;
- There is a limited capacity of consultancy companies, authorities and practitioners to carry out SEA and EIA (again, increased demand can be expected after the Law on SEA enters into force);
- There is a lack of data, in particular spatial/GIS data, disaggregated local level data, and insufficient data and information on environment and health status of population, which are required for EIA and SEA analyses;
- The costs of additional steps in SEA/EIA procedures (screening, scoping, potential transboundary consultations, more extensive public consultations) need to be considered in further governmental/ministerial budgeting process and/or external support;
- Unclear procedural steps as well as roles and responsibilities of main actors involved in SEA and EIA (i.e. who should do what and when);
- Weak monitoring and post-project analysis schemes (i.e. no control process in place on how SEA/EIA conclusions are implemented in practice);
- Non-existence of SEA/EIA database, open for the public;
- Non-existence of national environmental assessment network or association and experts authorization process;
- Limited international/bilateral collaboration in field of EIAA/SEA (Romania, Ukraine, EU/Black Sea region and Moldova).

In order to address some of the issues above, following actions were proposed by the participants:

- To establish a specialized subdivision within the MARDE (this subdivision/department should employ at least 5 persons, and another 5-10 persons to be involved in SEA and EIA-related matters should join the relevant department of the Environmental Agency), which should result in reducing bureaucracy, and higher awareness of necessity of both procedures;



- To create special funds for SEA and EIA at the national level and introduce necessary budgetary provisions (otherwise there is a risk the tools will not be implemented and authorities will avoid it) – besides funding SEA and EIA application, the financial resources should also be allocated to promotion and awareness raising;
- It would be needed to enhance involvement of CSOs in SEA and EIA (through providing timely information, providing training opportunities, etc.);
- Permanent training scheme for relevant persons (e.g. practitioners, governmental experts, experts from universities and NGOs, etc.) shall be established;
- Cooperation with the working group for development of SEA/EIA.

All proposals and findings will be included in the draft the SEA and EIA Capacity Building Roadmap on of the Republic of Moldova.



5. Public visibility of the event

The information about the workshop has been spread to reach a wider range of the interested public via the following sources:

- News page of the Ministry of Agriculture, regional Development and Environment: <http://www.madrm.gov.md/ro/content/conferin%C8%9Ba-na%C8%9Bional%C4%83-de-totalizare-proiectului-ue-eap-green-%C3%AEn-republica-moldova>
- National Press Agency IPN: <http://ipn.md/ro/economie-business/88255>
- News of Teleradio Moldova - Moldova 1 TV: <http://tvr moldova.md/social/video-proiectul-eapgreen-a-fost-implementat-in-sase-tari-ale-parteneriatului-estic/>
- News page of the Agrobusiness Association: <https://agrobiznes.md/sustinere-europeana-pentru-cresterea-verde-in-republica-moldova.html>
- Facebook of the Public Association EcoContact: <https://ro-ro.facebook.com/EcoContact/>



6. Annexes

6.1 Annex 1: List of participants

Greening Economies in the European Union`s Eastern Partnership Countries (EaP GREEN):
From Commitments to Results

Final National EaP GREEN Conference

Start Date: Friday, December 15, 2017

End Date: December 15, 2017

Participants: 74

Female participants: 42

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6.2 Annex 2: Agenda

GREENING ECONOMIES IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

‘From Commitment to Results’ Final National EaP GREEN Conference

15 December 2017

Summit Events Centre¹, Red Room, 49/3 Tighina Street
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Background

The “Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighborhood” (EaP GREEN) project was launched in 2013 to support the six European Union’s Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine – to progress faster towards a green economy through better management of natural capital supporting a higher economic productivity and competitiveness. The above listed EaP GREEN countries made their commitments related to the transition towards a green economy in the 2011 and 2013 Declarations of the EU Eastern Partnership Summits and on other international fora.

The EaP GREEN has supported countries in developing methodological, legal, and conceptual material based on international good practice adapted to the country conditions and needs. In-country pilot projects have also been implemented to demonstrate how relevant policies and tools can be applied in practice. The EaP GREEN has been funded by the European Union and supported by several EU and OECD countries. It has been jointly implemented by four international organizations: the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The outcomes of the EaP GREEN show a significant progress made both in the EaP countries and at the regional level, in particular related to following principal objectives of the EaP GREEN:

- To promote the use of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) at the strategic and project level;
- To mainstream sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and green economy principles in national development plans, sectoral legislation and regulatory framework;
- To facilitate the greening of selected economic sectors, with a special focus on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
- To mobilize national and international financing and make returns on environmental investments attractive to the private sector.

The final event is jointly organized by the UN Environment, UNECE, the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development, and Environment, and the Ministry of Economy, to present the results and outcomes achieved during the EaP GREEN project implementation in the Republic in Moldova and to discuss way forward to further reinforce the transition of the country to the green economy.

¹ <https://summit.md/en/>

The section on SEA and EIA component, facilitated by the UNECE, will aim to:

- Take stock of key results and impacts of the EaP GREEN implementation in the field of environmental assessment in Moldova since 2013;
- Highlight good examples and lessons learned as well as to summarize remaining challenges;
- Outline how Moldova can further increase efficiency of SEA and EIA application.

The section on Promotion of Green Economy will present the Green Economy programme for the Republic of Moldova, supported by the UN Environment, and disseminate a wide range of results and achievements of the EaP GREEN activities in the Republic of Moldova.

Participants

The event will bring together high-level government officials, development partners and NGOs, experts, practitioners, and officials involved in specific EaP GREEN activities.

The representatives of the EU Delegation to Moldova, Government of the Republic of Moldova, Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, governmental agencies, implementing organizations (UNECE, OECD, UN Environment, and UNIDO), NGOs and other international organizations will also participate.

Representatives of media will also be invited.

The English-Romanian interpretation will be provided during the meeting.

Agenda

Time	Issue	Speaker/moderator
8.30 – 9.00	<i>Participants registration and dissemination of materials</i>	
9.00 – 9.30	Official opening	<p>Mr Vasile BÎTCA, Minister of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE)</p> <p>HE Ambassador Peter MICHALKO, Head of the Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of Moldova</p> <p>Mr. Valentin GUZNAC, Deputy Secretary General of the Government of the Republic of Moldova</p> <p>Ms. Iuliana DRAGALIN, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure</p> <p>Mr. Jan DUSIK, Director, UN Environment Regional Office for Europe (video message)</p> <p>Mr. Martin SMUTNY, Consultant, UNECE Secretariat to the Espoo Convention</p> <p>Ms. Iordanca-Rodica Iordanov, Executive Director, PA EcoContact</p>
9.30 – 10.15	<p>Session 1. Major outcomes of the EaP GREEN Project in Moldova:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Economy, EIA/SEA, GGIs 	<p>Presentations made by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Andrei Isac, Consultant, EaP GREN • Ms. Lucia SOP, Director, RECP Centre



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaner Production • Greening SMEs • Sustainable Procurement <p>Q&A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Liudmila STIHI, Head of Division, ODIMM • Mr. Ruslan MALAI, Director, Public Procurement Agency
10.15 – 10.30	Festive handing of the EaP GREEN Awards	
10.30 – 11.00	<i>Coffee break (vegetarian/ fasting food)</i> <i>Press conference</i>	
11.00 – 13.00	<p>Session 2. Promotion of SEA and EIA in Moldova:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of SEA and EIA • Video on benefits of SEA Protocol • SEA good practice examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEA of Green Economy Program pilot from Moldova – Program on Green Economy • Examples from transport and energy sectors • Legislative framework on SEA and EIA and Guidelines on SEA • Road Map on Capacity Building on EIA and SEA in Moldova <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Group work • Discussion, conclusions and follow up <p>Q&A</p>	<p>Moderator: Mr. Martin SMUTNY, Consultant, UNECE</p> <p>Presentations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michal Musil, Consultant, UNECE • Representatives of NGOs EcoContact <p><i>The group work will address following topics:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Main existing challenges related to SEA/EIA in Moldova and the ways to overcome them; 2. Benefits and costs of application of SEA/EIA in Moldova, 3. Actions needed to make SEA and EIA operational (i.e. that is it applied as a standard tool)?
13.00 – 14.00	<i>Buffet Lunch (vegetarian/ fasting food)</i>	<i>Summit Events Restaurant</i>
14.00 – 15.30	<p>Session 3. Promotion of Green Economy in Moldova:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Program on the promotion of Green Economy in Moldova • Video on Circular Economy • RECP implementation and outcomes (examples from companies) 	<p>Presentations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Andrei Isac, Consultant, EaP GREEN • Mr. Oleg MANCAS , RECP • Mr. Valentin UNCU, CEO • J.S.C. ORHEI-VIT • Consultants within EaP GREEN • Mr. Mihai ROȘCOVAN, Prezident, BCI



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the National GGIs report • Green Investments in Moldova: challenges and opportunities • Discussion/Q&A 	
15.30 – 16.00	<i>Coffee break (vegetarian/ fasting food)</i>	
16.00 – 17.00	Green economy in the context of Agenda 2030 and NDS Moldova 2030 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remaining Q&A • Next steps • Concluding remarks closure of the event 	
17.00 – 19.00	Festive Reception on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, UN Environment, UNECE, OECD and UNIDO.	
<p>General information about EaP GREEN: http://www.green-economies-eap.org/</p> <p>The event will be held in the GREEN meeting and paper less format: http://www.greeningtheblue.org/sites/default/files/GreenMeetingGuide.pdf and http://www.ecoprocura.eu/fileadmin/editor_files/Sustainable_Events_Guide_May_30_2012_FINAL.pdf</p>		