

Statement of Albanian EIA system and specific actions for the future developments

Implementation of the provisions of the ESPOO Convention in Albania

Being party to the ESPOO Convention since 1991 Albania has worked to establish and strength the national system on EIA and in transboundary context as well. Started everything from nothing and having no experience in this field actually we are working to improve continuously our EIA system and to make it available to the transboundary context. We are aware that an efficient EIA system would be a strong base for the sustainable development of our country. The assistance provided by the activities of ESPOO Conventions and European Countries as well is appreciated.

Very shortly I would like to introduce what Albania has done to implement the ESPOO Convention. As the most important are the efforts done to improve the legal framework on EIA.

The basic Law on Environmental Protection in Albania was approved in 1993. The second chapter of this Law defines provisions on EIA procedure but in general terms and does not include detailed information. Although EIA is considered as a pollution control instrument the Law needed for further elaborations of specific provisions and developing the regulations for well implementation of it.

Considerable attempts have been made to prepare draft EIA regulations during 1994. A draft law on EIA has also been prepared based fully on EU approach with the assistance of PHARE program. This draft Law foresees the detailed procedures

this point is very important if we take into consideration the regional projects related with the construction of roads, highways such as the construction of North - South highway (Albania - Greece) or West - East highway (Albania - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Bulgaria).

The performance of the EIA Draft Law, the entrance into force, is an imperative duty for Albania. We hope that this Law will enter in force in 2001.

We are conscious that the developing process in our country can have transboundary environmental impacts in the region. Being a country that has land, sea and lake in common with neighbours, that have specific national systems to implement EIA Convention, with specific needs for improvement of the methodological aspects etc., it is very important to improve the collaboration between us in order to meet the EIA Convention's requirements.

We hope that through the collaboration activities all the countries will profit a lot. Some significant points for Albania can be:

- criteria for determination the significance of the transboundary effects of activities with an environmental impact
- lists of the activities that require an environmental impact assessment in transboundary context
- updating the regulations / procedures for various phases of the EIA process: notification, scoping, provision for comments by the public and authorities, preparation of final report, final decision on EIA

Any assistance to cover all mentioned elements is welcomed. Harmonisation of the policies and measures for the protection of the environment would be appreciated as well, in order to have similarities in standards and methods related to the implementation of the EIA.