



MINISTRY OF  
AGRICULTURE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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***Ms Maria do Carmo Figueira***  
***Vice-Chair***  
***Implementation Committee***  
***Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context***  
***Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment***

Secretariat:  
Ms Elena Santer  
UNECE Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

*Transferred only electronically*  
*e-mail: [eia.conv@un.org](mailto:eia.conv@un.org)*

Ref.: SEA/IC/CI/1 Serbia – Hungarian response to the letter of the IC of 26 Nov, 2020

***Dear Ms do Carmo Figueira,***

I am writing to you concerning the letter of the Chair of the Implementation Committee of 26 November, 2020 with regard to the case SEA/IC/CI/1.

I would like to thank you for the updated information as well as for the status play of the assessment of the Implementation Committee concerning the *Energy Sector Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2025 (2030)* (hereinafter referred to as Energy Strategy) and the related *Implementation Programme 2017-2023* (hereinafter referred to as Implementation Programme).

***Ad 1. on the Energy Strategy 2025 (2030)***

Considering that more than five years has passed since the Energy Strategy had been adopted in Serbia, and its measures are already partially implemented, Hungary does not see a necessity and consequently does not wish to reopen the procedure by repealing the Energy Strategy, in order to be able to participate in the transboundary procedure under Article 10 of the Protocol.

However, we are pleased to be informed that Serbia is preparing a new energy strategy (hereinafter referred to as New Energy Strategy) in the near future. It is known that Serbia's water and nature network is closely linked to its neighbouring countries' networks affecting the ecological status of the concerned areas. Moreover, the UNESCO Transboundary

Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube is jointly maintained by Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia and Serbia, meaning that these countries have equal responsibility to conserve this area. Taking into account that the impact of the New Energy Strategy is unknown yet, indeed, Serbia could not exclude significant environmental and health effects of the previous Energy Strategy either in transboundary context in 2013, therefore, Hungary would like to be notified during the SEA procedure of the New Energy Strategy in the future according to the Article 10 of the Protocol, and wishes to take a decision on whether or not to participate in the transboundary procedure.

***Ad 2. on the Implementation Programme 2017-2023***

We do not see a point and therefore do not request Serbia to reopen the SEA procedure of the Implementation Programme either. Considering that the Implementation Programme includes measures for the Serbian energy sector until 2023, and that significant transboundary effects cannot be excluded on Hungary's territory due to specific activities of the Implementation Programme, Hungary would like to be informed and officially notified by Serbia based on Article 3 of the *Convention on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context done at Espoo (Finland) on 26 February 1991* (known as Espoo Convention), during the implementation *at project level*. Therefore, Serbia is kindly asked to send official information when a project falling under the scope of the Implementation Programme 2017-2023 – *with likely direct or indirect adverse transboundary environmental impacts* – comes to environmental licensing phase. Hungary as a potentially Affected Party would like to take a decision on participating in the environmental licensing procedure of these projects *on a case-by-case basis* according to the relevant provisions of the Espoo Convention.

***Ad 3. on notification and correspondence between Parties***

In order to ensure faster and efficient administration, Hungary prefers direct e-mail correspondence with regard to notifications and further correspondence under the Espoo Convention and the SEA Protocol through the up-to-date network of contacts indicated on the official website of the UNECE (<https://unece.org/environment-policy/environmental-assessment/points-contact-regarding-notification>).

***Ad 4. on having a good working relationship between Hungary and Serbia***

I would like to highlight here once again that Hungary and Serbia have got a prosperous working relationship on transboundary environmental assessment, as we have carried out several procedures on EIA (e.g. Paks2 NPP) and SEA (mainly in the field of water management, water transport, river basin management).

Information above is kindly asked by the Implementation Committee to be taken into consideration in further discussion on the case. Implementation Committee is hereby authorised to share this information and all correspondence done in this regard with Serbia. In case you need any further communication, please, do not hesitate to contact me.

Budapest, 19 January, 2021

*Your sincerely,*



HoD, National focal point  
to the Espoo Convention and Kiev Protocol