

9th Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention and 5th Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on SEA

High-level segment

Agenda item 7. Statements by ministers and high-level representatives

Statement by the European Commission

Madame Chair, Excellencies, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to join previous speakers in expressing the appreciation to all the staff of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and especially to the Secretariat for the Espoo Convention, for making this successful event possible with such relentless and admirable efforts.

The event is indeed very timely with just following some important events from which I would wish to highlight just a handful and share with you some of my thoughts on how the Espoo Meeting of the Parties is particularly relevant in light of these recent developments.

With the recent conclusion of the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in the United Arab Emirates we saw some major achievements and manifestation of major ambition both at political and expert levels.

We saw the remarkable commitment made by over 110 nations to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030.

Indeed, we should be inspired by such a commitment and be strong and united in responding to the climate and energy challenges by accelerating the delivery on a sustainable green energy transition by finding short and long term solutions to the new challenges we are facing.

Our actions, and I can talk about the EU, include measures to save energy, accelerate the deployment of renewables and diversify our energy supply.

Of course, delivering on our ambitious goals should be fully compatible with the obligations under the international legal framework.

Correct implementation of the Espoo Convention and its Protocol is an important building block in our fight against climate change.

We need to ensure that projects are genuinely sustainable and negative environmental impacts are avoided or reduced to a minimum, while social, climate and economic effects duly considered. Any decision-making process for such projects should be handled in a transparent and democratic way, respecting the environmental rule of law.

I am convinced that when decision-making is inclusive, at the same time assessing climate and environmental impacts also with a view to international commitments, huge resources can be saved.

Madame Chair, Excellencies, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assessments deriving from the Espoo Convention and its Protocol help ensure an adequate level of environmental protection and reduce the impacts of climate change while reconciling diverging interests of stakeholders.

Our meeting today is more timely than ever, I wish us perseverance, strength, patience, an eye for detail and wisdom to also see the big picture. All this and more will be essential to achieve our shared vision for all our sakes, keeping in sight interests of all present and future generations.