



Action funded by
the European Union

EU4Environment

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine

Launch of the EU4Environment in Azerbaijan

15 April 2019, Baku, Azerbaijan

Brief summary of the meeting

Action implemented by:



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Background

The “European Union for Environment” (EU4Environment) Action aims to help the six partner countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, to preserve their natural capital and increase people's environmental well-being, by supporting environment-related action, demonstrating and unlocking opportunities for greener growth, and setting mechanisms to better manage environmental risks and impacts.

The Action will run over four years as of January 2019. It is implemented by five international organisations: OECD, UN Environment, UNECE, UNIDO, and the World Bank based on a budget of around EUR 20 million provided by the European Union and co-financing from other sources.

In March and April 2019, national meetings to officially launch of the EU4Environment were held in six EaP countries with the aim to:

- present the context, objectives and the main elements of the EU4Environment,
- discuss national priorities for implementation the six EaP countries and
- identifying synergies with ongoing relevant activities.

Meeting in Baku

Participants

The official launch the EU4Environment Initiative in Azerbaijan took place on 15 April in Baku. It gathered about 40 participants from several government agencies (environment, economy, agriculture, energy, industry, SMEs development, public procurement), representatives of the private sector (SOCAR, independent experts), international partners (UNDP, GIZ), civil society and academia. The meeting was opened by:

- Mr. R. Hajiev, Deputy Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources,
- Ms. S. Gatti, Minister-Counsellor from the EU Delegation in Azerbaijan, and
- Mr. M. Rupp, Head of Sector-Connectivity, EC/DG NEAR, Brussels.

The EU4Environment project team was represented by OECD, UNIDO and the World Bank.

Back to back with the EU4Environment meeting, the EU4Climate Action was launched in the same venue and with mostly the same participants. The EU4Climate is implemented by UNDP.

Results of the meetings

The meeting in Baku achieved its main objectives of presenting the context, objectives and the main elements of the EU4Environment, discussing national priorities for implementation in Azerbaijan and identifying synergies with ongoing relevant activities (including with EU4Climate).

The presentation of the Project element-by-element allowed the participants to engage in the discussion about ongoing priorities and those activities that would be most suitable for the country. Priorities that were signalled put emphasis on those that can help the diversification of the economy, building capacity of civil servants and the institutional capacity of environmental institutions. There were requests for working with SMEs but also with large enterprises, such as SOCAR which is the main state oil producer and distributor. For more detailed account of the discussion see Annex 1.

It was agreed that a detailed list of priority activities would be developed jointly by the Ministry of Environment and of Economy and send to the OECD by 15 May.

During the bilateral meeting with the Ministry of Environment and of Economy the EU4Environment team discussed the institutional arrangements for the Project implementation, including the identification of the National Focal Points from both Ministries, inter-ministerial co-ordination, local project co-ordination and support as well as the Project visibility and communications.

Follow up

The follow up of the meeting in Baku will include an intensive exchange with the Azerbaijani partners about the detailed list of priority activities and the arrangements for in-country project support.

A draft work plan for Azerbaijan, as for all other EaP countries, will be presented at the meeting of the EU EaP Panel of Environment and Climate Change (27-28 May, Vienna). The final adoption of the work plans is planned at first meeting of the EU4Environment Regional Assembly (27-28 June, Brussels).

Further contacts will be pursued with the EU Delegation who requested close co-ordination of the EU4Environment work with other EU funded projects. The Project official registration is not required in Azerbaijan.

Annex: Priority issues raised during the discussions on specific Results of the EU4Environment

1. Green Decision Making

- Green economy
 - Understanding on green growth and green economy is still low among civil servants; therefore trainings targeting enhancing their knowledge would be welcomed.
- SEA/EIA
 - The development of the legal provisions for the implementation of the Espoo Convention is important as the provisions are spread out in different laws.
 - Need for training and capacity building of experts who carry the EIA procedures.
 - Awareness raising about the requirements for EIA procedures.
- Awareness and education:
 - Importance of raising awareness on environmental laws and support access to information on environment.

2. Circular Economy and New Growth Opportunities

- SMEs
 - The recently established Agency for the Development of SMEs could be an important partner for collaboration.
 - The Ministry of Economy is in the development of a Country Framework Program with UNIDO, where there is a good opportunity for synergies.
 - The representative from SOCAR asked that the project does not limit support to only SMEs but also considers large companies that can have big contributions to climate change and the environment.
- Waste Management:
 - Waste management, including plastic waste and chemical waste management, were identified as priorities by the MENR
 - There is potential for cooperation with a waste management/ waste to energy project being implemented by the Ministry of Economy.

3. An Environmental Level Playing Field

- Smart regulations and compliance promotion
 - Full support to work on “smart” regulations, linked to EU IED, BAT based approaches and integrated permitting for large companies.
 - Environmental regulations as tools to facilitate green investments.

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- Need for capacity building of inspectors and new approaches to inspections based on risk analysis.
 - Development of approaches to calculating and applying environmental liability.
 - Green finance
 - Review of national funding entities that provide green funding to increase the efficiency and scale.
 - Need to develop strategies and instruments for green finance by large companies, assistance to the green bankable projects preparation
 - Benchmarking of best practices in green finance.

4. Ecosystems and Livelihoods

- Development of modalities for community forest management and protection;
- Regional cooperation for expansion and improved management of protected areas network;
- Support to the development of natural capital conservation financing strategies; learning from best practices.

5. Knowledge Sharing and Co-ordination

- Need to continue work on green growth indicators in co-operation with various agencies.
- Need to establish coordination with EU4Climate, especially in investments.

List of participants¹

Government representatives		
Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Rauf HAJIYEV Deputy Minister	
	Emin GARABAGHLI Head of IR department	emin.garabaghli@gmail.com
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	Leyla ALIYEVA Environmental Policy Division	
Ministry of Economy		
Parliament	Shamil HUSEYNOV	
Ministry of Agriculture	Teymur NAGHIBEYLI	
	Namig GADIROV	
Ministry of Energy	Leyla ISAYEVA	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Serkhan ISMAYILOV	
Ministry of Health	Şervin ŞAKURI	
Ministry of Internal Affairs	Temzar ALIYEV	

¹ List of participants may be further completed (subject to verification by national counterparts).

Ministry of Transport, Communication and High Technologies	Khayala PASHAZADA	
State Agency on Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources	Cəmil MƏLİKOV	
	Sahib XƏLİLOV	
	Fəqan ABDURƏHMANOV	
State Statistics Committee	Rena LAZIMOVA	
Civil society / Academic community / Experts		
Expert	Azer GARAYEV TBC Former FLEG National Coordinator	
National Academy of Sciences (Institute of Geography)	Ramiz MEMMEDOV	
	Meherrrem HESENOV	
State University of Economics of Azerbaijan (UNEC)	Valida MEHDIYEVA	
Relevant stakeholders, including private sector		
“ABAD” (ASAN Support to Family Business)	Camid MÖVSÜMOV	
SOCAR	Fuad YUSUFLU	
	Məhərrəm MEHTIYEV	
	Rüstəm RÜSTƏMZADƏ	

European Commission and EU Delegation to Azerbaijan		
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