

The European Union supports Ukraine and Romania's commitment to addressing environmental impacts in a transboundary context

Kyiv/Bucharest/Geneva, 17 March 2021

A virtual "Training Workshop on the Practical Application of Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Bilateral Agreements on Transboundary EIA" organised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine and the Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests of Romania on 16-17 March 2021 supports Ukraine and Romania in accelerating and completing the work on the preparation of a draft bilateral agreement on transboundary EIA. The event provides opportunities to discuss the agreement in light of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context ([Espoo Convention](#)) and the [European Union Directive on EIA](#), which is a key part of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. It will build on examples of relevant agreements among EU Member States.

Ukraine and Romania have committed to applying environmental impact assessment (EIA), including in a transboundary context. Such commitments arise from Ukraine's Association Agreement with the European Union, Romania's membership in the European Union, as well as from the Espoo Convention to which both countries are Parties. A few years ago the two countries initiated negotiations on a bilateral agreement for the effective implementation of transboundary EIA procedures.

Speaking in the opening session, **Chloe Allio, Head of the Economic cooperation, energy, infrastructure and environment section at the EU Delegation to Ukraine** noted: *"The principle of environmental integration, including in a cross-border context, is a cornerstone of the European Green Deal. The importance of the EIA procedure as the main tool for ensuring proper integration of environmental concerns into the decision-making will only continue to grow. The EIA Directive is also a key part of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and we continuously support Ukraine in the implementation process. The bilateral agreement between Ukraine and Romania that the EU will help prepare will contribute to both countries' implementation of the Espoo Convention and ultimately to a stronger European Green Deal."*

The European Union, in cooperation with UNECE, helps both countries in further preparing a draft bilateral agreement on transboundary EIA and in facilitating its finalisation. With this support, the two governments can reconcile national legislative requirements and procedures for effective transboundary EIA. This assistance is a part of the European Union funded [EU4Environment](#) programme, launched in 2019.

Mr. Roman Shakhmatenko, Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine noted: *"It is symbolic that this workshop takes place today, as it is exactly 30 years ago Ukraine signed the Espoo Convention in Finland on February 26, 1991. Since that moment, Ukraine has achieved a*

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lot. At the same time, the practical application of the provisions of the Convention may be challenging, as too many issues remain open for discussion. We hope that this workshop would help us to develop common approaches to the transboundary consultations between our countries and would bring our cooperation within the framework of the Espoo Convention to the qualitatively new level."

Mr. Ionuț Banciu, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests of Romania remarked: *"In order to consolidate the bilateral relationship, Romania and Ukraine need an agreement to provide for the concrete actions to undertake when proceeding with transboundary environmental impact assessments. The bilateral agreement should be tailored to the specific geographical context and the experience accumulated by the two countries during the last 20 years."*

At a time when the COVID-19 pandemic overshadows other crises like climate change, a biodiversity crisis and increasing pollution, environmental assessments play an important role in building a green and sustainable future. With the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, the need for systematic and effective environmental assessment of recovery initiatives remains pressing. Transboundary environmental assessment benefits people and nature beyond national borders and helps strengthen good neighbourly relations and cross-border cooperation.

Background:

EU4Environment Action, funded by the European Union, aims to support Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine to preserve and better use their natural capital, increase people's environmental well-being, and grasp new development opportunities. With a budget of some EUR 20 million for all six countries, EU4Environment is carried out from 2019 to 2022 with implementation support by five international partners: OECD, UNIDO, UNEP, UNECE and the World Bank.

For additional information on this event please contact EU4Environment Project Manager at UNECE Leonid Kalashnyk at leonid.kalashnyk@un.org.

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