

Advancing nature-positive investments: Progress and challenges ahead in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood

Brussels, Belgium | Online
9 June 2026 (09:00 – 16:00, CEST)



Objectives

The workshop aims to present the evidence base on forest ecosystem service values, national targets, and financing needs in the EU's Eastern partner countries. It will discuss financing instruments that can help bridge funding gaps, exchange national priorities and enabling conditions for investment, and share international experiences from EU Member States and other forest-rich countries. The workshop will also facilitate dialogue among policymakers and partners to identify priority recommendations, strengthen regional cooperation, and support the mobilisation of public and private finance for sustainable forest management.

Participants

The workshop aims to bring together government officials from ministries of environment, representatives of EU institutions, international organisations, experts, academia, and civil society organisations.

Practical arrangements

The meeting will be held in person with the possibility of online participation. Participants are requested to register in advance using the [registration link](#).

The meeting will be conducted in English with simultaneous interpretation in Armenian, Romanian, and Ukrainian languages.

About EU4Environment

Since 2018, the “European Union for Environment” (EU4Environment) Action has helped the Eastern Partnership countries 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 programme was funded by the European Union and principally implemented over the 2019-2024 period by OECD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO and the World Bank. Over 2025-2026 period, the World Bank will finalise the implementation of the programme's Result 4 area.

For more information please visit: www.eu4environment.org

Opening remarks and scene-setting

09:00 – 09:30

Framing the discussion by outlining why ecosystem services, forests, and other priority ecosystems matter for a nature-positive economy; what the country studies show; where the financing gaps are; and which instruments can help mobilise investment.

- Angela Bularga, Program Manager, Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST), European Commission
- Fisseha Tessema Abissa, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, EU4Environment Task Team Leader, World Bank

Session 1: Country spotlight – key results and insights from Georgia

09:30 – 10:15

Forests beyond timber: understanding the multiple values of ecosystems.

- Ekaterine Kakabadze, Climate Change and Protected Areas Expert

Session 2: Country spotlight – key results and insights from Ukraine

10:15 – 11:00

How can Ukraine unlock more financing to bridge the funding gap in the forest sector and support ecosystem services under conditions of war?

- Liubov Poliakova, Forest Policy Expert, and Christian Held, Senior Forest Economist, Unique Land Use GmbH

Session 3: Managing nature-related financial risks and scaling up investment for nature

11:00 – 11:20

This session will present recent OECD work on nature-related financial risks and on approaches to scaling up investment for nature, highlighting key messages and practical relevance for Eastern Partnership countries.

- Takayoshi Kato, Policy Analyst, OECD

11:20 – 11:35 – Coffee break

Session 4: Country spotlight – key results and insights from Armenia

11:35 – 12:20

How can Armenia close the financing gap for restoration and ecosystem services?

- Erik Grigoryan, Environmental Economist and PES Expert, Chief Executive Officer, Environment Group

Session 5: Country spotlight – key results and insights from Moldova

12:20 – 13:05

Balancing self-financing and the funding of ecosystem services in the context of sustainable forestry in Moldova.

- Bernd Wippel, European Union Forest Policy Expert, Unique Land Use GmbH

13:05 – 14:05 – *Lunch*

Session 6: Nature-based solutions for water management in the Eastern Partnership countries

14:05 – 14:25

This session highlights how Nature-based Solutions can improve water management and climate resilience through ecosystem protection and restoration at basin scale. It will present selected examples and practical insights relevant to Eastern Partnership countries.

- Yannick Pochon, EU4Green Recovery East programme

Session 7: International experience and transferable approaches to financing ecosystem services

14:25 – 15:45

Presentation of examples from EU Member States and other countries on financing instruments, incentives, and policy approaches for forests and other priority ecosystems.. Discussion of their relevance for Eastern Partnership countries.

- Metodi Sotirov, Senior Researcher and Associate Professor, Chair of Forest and Environmental Policy, University of Freiburg and Laqiqige Zhu, Senior Environmental Economist

Closing remarks

15:45 – 16:00

Summary of key workshop insights, reflections on relevance for Eastern Partnership countries, and next steps.

- Angela Bularga, Program Manager, DG ENEST, European Commission
- Fisseha Tessema Abissa, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, EU4Environment Task Team Leader, World Bank