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## **Regional Workshop**

# **Advancing sustainable resource management through community engagement in Eastern Partnership Countries**

## **Agenda**

**Date: 16-18 June 2026**

**Venue: Polytechnic University of Valencia, salón de grados ETSEAMN**

**Camí de Vera, s/n, Algirós, 46022, Valencia, Spain**

**Language: English, with interpretation to Armenian, Georgian, Romanian and  
Ukrainian**

Contact information: [veronikamacku@oikologica.com](mailto:veronikamacku@oikologica.com)

## Advancing sustainable resource management through community engagement in Eastern Partnership Countries

16-18 June 2026, Valencia, Spain

### Background

The regional workshop is organised under the EU4Environment Programme (Activity 4.2), “*Supporting the sustainable management of natural resources and economic development through local community engagement in the Eastern Partnership countries*”.

EU4Environment supports sustainable natural resource management and local economic development in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries by strengthening community engagement, improving environmental governance, and fostering climate resilience. Under this activity, work in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine includes baseline mapping of community engagement in forest and natural resource management; targeted capacity-building to strengthen practical NRM skills; and lessons learned documentation. The focus areas include ecotourism initiatives; forest and protected area management; and biosphere reserves, alongside efforts to encourage policy uptake, twinning, and regional cooperation.

### Objectives

The purpose of the regional workshop is therefore to serve as a knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and learning platform, facilitating the transfer of EU best practices to the Eastern Partnership context.

Emphasis is placed on showcasing how community engagement can contribute to sustainable NRM while simultaneously supporting local economic development, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation.

The workshop will focus on concrete areas of work where community engagement has demonstrated strong results, including but not limited to:

- community-based ecotourism and sustainable territorial branding;
- participatory forest and silvopastoral management planning;
- management of protected areas and Natura 2000 sites;
- governance of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves; and
- integrated approaches linking agriculture, forestry, water management, and ecosystem services.

By convening EU and EaP stakeholders in a Mediterranean EU setting, the workshop will facilitate peer learning and practical knowledge transfer, support regional cooperation, and contribute to EU4Environment’s objectives by advancing inclusive, resilient, community-driven approaches to natural resource management across the region.

### Organizers

The workshop is organised by the World Bank jointly with the international consulting company “OIKO”, in collaboration with leading Spanish institutions such as the Spanish Society of Organic Agriculture (SEAE), relevant research and academic partners (the Basque Centre for Climate Change (BC3) and the University of Valencia).

### Participants

Participants and speakers will include representatives of relevant ministries and public authorities from the EaP countries, local and regional governments, civil society organizations, protected area managers, research institutions, and practitioners directly involved in NRM and local development.

### Organizational arrangements

The event will take the form of a three-day in-person workshop, complemented by travel days, combining plenary sessions, thematic roundtable discussions, expert presentations, and field-based learning through site visits. The workshop format prioritizes experiential learning, allowing participants to directly observe and engage with EU case studies where community participation is embedded in planning, governance, and implementation processes.

The workshop will take place in the Valencia region of Spain. Valencia represents a highly relevant EU context for this exchange, offering a rich portfolio of community-led NRM initiatives within a Mediterranean setting. The region hosts multiple flagship sites—including the Tierra Bobal territory, the Valle del Cabriel UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and the Albufera Natural Park—where participatory governance, local stewardship, and sustainable economic activities are central to resource management strategies. These territories provide concrete and transferable examples aligned with the challenges faced by EaP countries, such as climate vulnerability, land degradation, water scarcity, and rural depopulation.

Summary of the event:

Day	Planned activities
16 June 2026	Workshop Day 1: Knowledge exchange on <b>ecotourism</b> and site visit to Tierra Bobal
17 June 2026	Workshop day 2: Knowledge exchange on <b>management plans</b> and site visit to Asociación Reserva de la Biosfera Valle del Cabriel
18 June 2026	Workshop day 3: Site visit to <b>Natura 2000</b> site (Albufera Natural Park) and event closure

#### About EU4Environment

Since 2018, the European Union for Environment (EU4Environment) Programme has helped Eastern Partnership countries turn environmental priorities into practical results—protecting natural capital, improving environmental well-being, and opening opportunities for greener growth. It has also helped strengthen policies and tools to prevent and manage environmental risks and impacts.

Funded by the European Union, the programme was delivered mainly in 2019–2024 by OECD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO and the World Bank. In 2025–2026, the World Bank is completing the Ecosystem Services and Livelihoods workstream (the area where it provided support).

For more information, please visit our website: [www.eu4environment.org](http://www.eu4environment.org).

**AGENDA**  
**(16-18 June 2026)**

CEST time	<b>DAY 1: Tuesday, 16 June 2026</b>
	<b>Venue: Polytechnic University of Valencia and field trip to Tierra Bobal</b>
Time	Item
8:40-9:00	<i>Registration</i>
9:00-9:20	<p><b><i>Opening remarks:</i></b> Welcome address and introduction to the workshop <i>Moderated by Veronika Macku, Sr. Project Manager, OIKO Lógica</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Débora Domingo, Vice-Rector of the Polytechnical University of Valencia</li> <li>• Constanza Rubio Michavila, Director of Graduate School, Polytechnical University of Valencia</li> <li>• Fisseha Tessema Abissa, Sr. Natural Resources Management Specialist / EU4Environment Task Team Leader, World Bank</li> <li>• Miguel Trillo, Director, Sr. Natural Resources Economist, OIKO Lógica</li> </ul>
9:20-10:00	<p><b><i>Learning from Valencia: Context and lessons learned</i></b> Knowledge sharing from Valencia's regional administrations regarding advancing sustainable resource management through community engagement <i>Speakers: Alfons Domínguez, Mayor of Alzira, Alzira Municipality; Aina Calafat Rogers, Policy manager, SEAE</i> Q&amp;A</p>
10:00-10:40	<p><b><i>Advancing eco-tourism in Armenia: From strategic assessment to practical development</i></b> Presentation of a comprehensive roadmap based on strategic review, spatial and territorial analysis, participatory consultation, and applied tools. <i>Speaker: Grigor Janoyan, Country Coordinator / Project Technical Lead, REC Caucasus – Armenia; and Nune Harutyunyan, Executive Director, REC Caucasus - Armenia</i> Q&amp;A</p>
10:40-11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00-11:40	<p><b><i>Advancing eco-tourism in Georgia: From strategic assessment to practical development</i></b> Presentation of a comprehensive roadmap and practical framework for its implementation. <i>Speaker: Ketevan Tsereteli, Peace Forest Initiative Regional Program Manager; Head of the Forest Landscapes and Land Stewardship Department, REC Caucasus – Georgia</i> Q&amp;A</p>
11:40-12:20	<p><b><i>Learning from Naturalwalks: Knowledge sharing on sustainable tourism</i></b> Showcasing eco-tourism experiences and territory-based methodology from Naturalwalks, an independent research and knowledge-sharing organization focused on tourism, development, and sustainability. <i>Speakers: Evarist March, Director of Naturalwalks and Naturalwalks school</i></p>

	Q&A
12:20-13:20	<p><b>Roundtable discussion on developing eco-tourism</b></p> <p>Insights on challenges, opportunities, and good practices for designing eco-tourism models that balance environmental conservation, community benefits, and economic viability.</p> <p><i>Discussion facilitator: Miguel Trillo, Director, Natural Resources Economist, OIKO Lógica</i></p> <p><i>Speakers: Grigor Janoyan, Project Technical Lead, REC Caucasus – Armenia / or Nune Harutyunyan, Executive Director, REC Caucasus – Armenia; Ketevan Tsereteli, Peace Forest Initiative Regional Program Manager, Head of the Forest Landscapes and Land Stewardship Department, REC Caucasus – Georgia; Mayor of Alzira, Alzira Municipality and Evarist March, Director of Naturalwalks and Naturalwalks school</i></p> <p>Q&amp;A</p>
13:20-13:30	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p> <p>Wrap up of Day 1 and logistics for the site visit</p> <p><i>Speaker: Adele Antoni, Project Manager, OIKO Lógica &amp; Rosa Valero Atienza, Responsible of project, SEAE</i></p>
13:30-14:30	Lunch: Polytechnic University of Valencia
14:45-15:45	Bus trip to Tierra Bobal <sup>1</sup> : Finca Calderón Enoresort (Requena)
15:45-19:30	<p><b>Site visit of Tierra Bobal dedicated to eco-tourism</b></p> <p><i>Moderated by Rosa Valero Atienza, Responsible of project, SEAE</i></p> <p>This is a territory made up of nine municipalities that have coordinated to develop a joint cultural and tourism offer.</p> <p>The vineyards are complemented by wineries offering tastings and field visits; restaurants feature local products; hotels promote local activities; and each year a Cultural Festival is organized, with events rotating among the different municipalities.</p> <p>The visit will include a winery visit and, if weather permitting, a visit to a vineyard, as well as an exchange with local councillor(s) or mayor(s) from the area.</p>
19:30 – 21:00	Dinner: Finca Calderón Enoresort
21:00 – 22:00	Bus trip to Valencia

<sup>1</sup> <https://tierrabobal.es/>

CEST time	<p><b>DAY 2: Wednesday, 17 June 2026</b></p> <p><b>Venue: Polytechnic University of Valencia and field trip to Asociación Reserva de la Biosfera Valle del Cabriel</b></p>
09:00-09:10	<p>Opening: Summary from Day 1  <i>Moderated by Veronika Macku, Sr. Project Manager, OIKO Lógica</i>  <i>Speaker: Adele Antoni, Project Manager, OIKO Lógica</i></p>
09:10 – 09.50	<p><b><i>Natura 2000 and Emerald Networks: two sisters networks</i></b>  Presentation on the common points, including the harmonization of the new SDF and the reporting process, and the current differences among them.  <i>Speaker (online presentation): Laura Patricia Gavilán Iglesias, EU Nature and Biodiversity Consultant / Natura 2000 Specialist, Independent Consultant</i>  Q&amp;A</p>
09:50-10:30	<p><b><i>Advancing community based NRM in Moldova: Strengthening silvo-pastoral and forest management systems</i></b>  Presentation of key insights on legal framework challenges, policy analysis, ecosystem services integration, and local stakeholder engagement.  <i>Speaker: Galupa Alexandru, Engineer, Forest Management Department, Forestry Research and Management Institute of the Republic of Moldova – ICAS</i>  Q&amp;A</p>
10:30-10:50	<p><i>Coffee break</i></p>
10:50-11:30	<p><b><i>From Forests to Local Development in Ukraine: Strengthening Community Engagement in Forest Governance and Sustainable Livelihoods</i></b>  Presentation of key insights on forest governance, community engagement and sustainable local development opportunities in Ukraine, including lessons from pilot communities exploring tourism, secondary succession forests and non-timber forest products as pathways supporting local development and sustainable livelihoods.  <i>Speakers: Tetiana Pyvovar, Deputy team leader of the project, Analyst, NGO "ForestCom"</i>  Q&amp;A</p>
11:30-12:10	<p><b><i>Knowledge sharing on forestry management plans</i></b>  Showcasing knowledge on climate change and natural resource preservation experiences, with a focus on forest management for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Interaction between agriculture, livestock and the environment from an interdisciplinary &amp; transdisciplinary approach.  <i>Speakers: Eduardo Rojas Briones, Chair of the Board of Directors PEFC International (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification), Professor at the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV) and Dean-President of the Official College of Forestry Engineers</i>  Q&amp;A</p>
12:10-13:10	<p><b><i>Roundtable discussion on developing forestry management plans</i></b>  Insights on approaches, challenges, and tools for effective forest management planning at local and regional levels.</p>

	<p><i>Discussion facilitator: Aina Calafat Rogers, Policy Manager, SEAE</i></p> <p><i>Speakers: Alexandr Gupta, Engineer, Forest Management Department, Forestry Research and Management Institute of the Republic of Moldova – ICAS; Tetiana Pyvovar, Deputy team leader of the project, Analyst, NGO "ForestCom"; Eduardo Rojas Briones, Chair of the Board of Directors PEFC International (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification), Professor at the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV) and Dean-President of the Official College of Forestry Engineers Q&amp;A</i></p>
13:10-13:20	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p> <p>Wrap up of Day 2 and logistics for the site visit</p> <p><i>Speaker: Adele Antoni, Project Manager, OIKO Lógica &amp; Rosa Valero Atienza, Responsible of project, SEAE</i></p>
13:20-14:30	Lunch: Polytechnic University of Valencia
14:30-16:00	<i>Bus to Valle del Cabriel Valley<sup>2</sup></i>
16:00 – 17:00	<i>Visit to the interpretation center “Valle del Cabriel Biosphere Reserve”</i>
17:00 – 18:00	<i>Trip to Casas del Rio (inside the natural park)</i>
18:00 - 19:00	<i>Visit part of the natural park</i>
	<p><b>Site visit of Asociación Reserva de la Biosfera Valle del Cabriel dedicated to forest management plans</b></p> <p><i>Moderated by Rosa Valero Atienza, Responsible of project, SEAE</i></p> <p>The field trip will take place in the Cabriel Valley, designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve to harmonize the conservation of biological and cultural diversity with economic and social development.</p> <p>This initiative also involves coordinated management across multiple administrations from different Autonomous Communities, as well as collaboration between the public sector and private initiatives.</p> <p>The visit will include guided tours of two municipalities in the valley, led by local experts responsible for ensuring proper forest management and for the recently approved Management Plan,<sup>3</sup> as well as by entrepreneurs/farmers whose businesses operate within the Reserve, and a representative from the responsible public administration.</p>
19:00 – 19:30	<i>Trip to restaurant</i>
19:30- 21:00	Dinner: Restaurante La Pinada
21:00-22:00	<i>Bus trip to hotel</i>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cabrielbiosfera.org/en>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cabrielbiosfera.org/eventos/webinario-plan-gestion-valle-del-cabriel>

CEST time	<p><b>DAY 3: Thursday, 18 June 2026</b></p> <p><b>Venue: Field trip to Albufera Natural Park</b>  <b>Meeting point – bus trip: 8.30 at Hotel Ilunion Aqua 3, reception</b>  <b>Meeting time and place – field visit start: 10:00 at Tancat de La Pipa</b></p>
08:30-09:15	<i>Bus trip to Puerto de Catarroja.</i>
09:30 – 10:00	<i>Transfer to the Tancat de la Pipa in a fishing boat from the Albufera</i>
10:00-11:30	<p><b><i>Site visit of Albufera Natural Park dedicated to Natura 2000 field visits</i></b></p> <p>This site visit will take place at the Albufera Natural Park. This site represents one of the most emblematic Mediterranean coastal ecosystems in Spain and provides a highly relevant example of how biodiversity conservation can be effectively combined with local economic activities and community engagement.</p> <p>The Albufera Natural Park is characterized by its unique lagoon, wetlands, and surrounding rice fields, forming part of the Natura 2000 network. Its management illustrates integrated approaches linking water management, agriculture, fisheries, and ecosystem services, while addressing key challenges such as climate change, water scarcity, and land-use pressures—issues that are highly relevant to Eastern Partnership countries.</p> <p>The visit will highlight participatory governance mechanisms involving local communities, farmers, fishermen, civil society organizations, and public authorities, demonstrating how stakeholder engagement is embedded in planning, decision-making, and day-to-day management of the protected area.</p> <p>Participants will take part in guided visits across key areas of the park. The visit will be led by park managers, local stakeholders, and technical experts, offering first-hand insights into the implementation of management plans, Natura 2000 governance, and community-based approaches to natural resource management.</p>
11:30-12:30	<p><b><i>Closing session: Reflections and lessons learned (Tancat de La Pipa, Albufera National Park)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of visits on Day 2 and Day 3</li> <li>• Intervention from each partner country with lessons learnt, opportunities and challenges of transferring this experience into EaP context</li> <li>• Special speaker: María Dolores Raigón Jiménez, Professor in the field of Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry at the UPV, member of the European Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production</li> <li>• Closing remarks</li> </ul>
12:30 – 13.30	<i>Transportation from the Tancat de La Pipa to the restaurant including a boat trip around the Albufera lagoon</i>
13:30-14:30	Lunch: Casa Baina (Port de Catarroja)
14:30-15:00	<i>Bus trip to hotel</i>