



## Annual Activities Report 2017

### WORKING GROUP 3 Environment, climate change and energy security

#### EAP PLATFORMS AND PANELS MEETINGS

##### 5th EaP Panel on Environment and Climate Change (2-3 March, 2017, Brussels)

Two delegates from EaP CSF WG3 participated in the Panel, Anna Golubovska-Onisimova from Ukrainian WG3 and Inga Zarafyan from Armenian WG3. The main topic of the meeting was the development of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Luxembourg Declaration adopted in autumn 2016.

Inga Zarafyan spoke on Green rights, which shall be a part of global projects, especially when speaking about “green” economy, “green” energy and “green” projects. “Green” rights are those rights, which shall be protected in those countries, where poor population is dominant and, thus, more vulnerable to the heavy consequences of climate change. The quality of life directly depends on the state of the environment, while deterioration of natural resources leads to the deterioration of life quality, she said. She also proposed to pay special attention to hydropower. Independent specialized examinations and results of public monitoring pointed at the problems of hydropower in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine. The list of problems includes destruction of water ecosystems, loss of biodiversity and decrease in the amount of fish reserves, disturbance of landscapes and degradation of land areas. For example, 174 operate in Armenia and this number is increasing thus expanding overload on river ecosystems.

In Georgia projects of medium and large HPPs acquired intensive development, which also have expressed negative social effect including forced resettlement of the local population. In Ukraine and Moldova plans on hydropower development on the Dniester River cause concerns. If these plans come true, around 80% of the population in Moldova and urban population in Odessa making use of the Dniester will be impacted: this problem is reflected in the Resolution 11/AA/2016 of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on the situation of Dniester river basin adopted by the Assembly of the EaP CSF on 29 November in Brussels.

EaP SCF delegation underlined the importance to support the environmental governance reform with active participation of civil society. Anna Golubovska-Onisimova stressed that despite countries progress in environmental policy reform, there is also a trend of losing already attained positions, what is a signal of vulnerability of environmental sector. One of main reason for that is a weak institutional capacity and low political weight of environmental protection institutions in the Governments. The institutional strengthening therefore needs to be included into the core of planned actions and become a part of discussions between the EU, EaP national governments and CS on setting and achieving concrete objectives of environmental reforms. The same is true for a whole cycle of policy planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, based on comparable with the EU standards data and indicators.



A set of actions was proposed by EaP CSF to be included into the draft plan's section 2. "Environmental governance". In particular, the activity 2.1.<sup>1</sup> Draw up an inventory of follow up actions on policy recommendations, legal acts, planning documents as part of technical assistance was proposed to continue with activities 2.2. Prepare an overview (report) on Environmental governance reform in 6 EaP countries based on benchmarks and focused on decision-making procedures, environmental policy integration, institutional arrangements, information provision and raising awareness, stakeholder involvement and cooperation and 2.3. Organise 2-days regional workshop on discussing benchmarks, exchanging experience, defining main challenges and common steps in achieving good environmental governance towards Good environmental governance Flagship initiative. Special attention should be paid to strengthening national administrative structures and indicator-based assessment of personnel quantity, functions division, modality of and coordination with local environmental authorities. Another comment was related to encouraging capacity building activities for EaP Environmental Ministries on good environmental governance and mainstreaming environment, climate change and SD into all policy areas via TAIEX and TWINNING instruments. EaP CSF Delegation also proposed to include the activity on preparation of the 3d public assessment of Environmental governance in 6 EaP countries and become an Action Leader for that.

Later the draft of the Action Plan was sent to WG3 for comments, which were developed before the Working Group Regional meeting in May 2017 in Brussels. During the meeting in May, Angela Bularga from DG ENV presented the first draft of the Action Plan, which was supposed to be finalized in summer 2017 and sent for the last suggestions to all the stakeholders.

#### **6th Workshop of Eastern Partnership Energy Regulatory Bodies within EASTERN PARTNERSHIP PLATFORM 3 „Energy Security“, Kiev (Ukraine), 16-17 May 2017**

The workshop focused on Continuity of Supply and Commercial Quality of Supply from a regulatory perspective. Giorgi Mukhigulishvili from WG3 Georgia, Ruslan Surugiu from WG3 Moldova and Andriy Chubyk from WG3 Ukraine were delegated on behalf of the EaP CSF to participate in the meeting.

The overall aim of the workshop was to share experience and best practice of quality of supplies regulations. Eastern Partnership countries were invited to present their experience with quality of supply activities. Furthermore, Council of European Energy Regulators

(CEER) presented the results of its latest benchmarking report<sup>2</sup> on quality of supply, which was published in September 2016.

CEER representatives Mr. Radovic and Mr. Westermann presented key findings of the benchmarking report:

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<sup>1</sup> All numeration mentioned is provisional for the time being and could be changed at the later stage.

<sup>2</sup>



✓ **In Electricity Sector**

- Short interruptions are monitored by a minority of countries;
- Continuity of supply indicators and data collecting procedures should be harmonized to facilitate easy benchmarking;
- Regulators should implement adequate incentive schemes in order to maintain continuity of supply levels or improve them if economically viable;
- Regulating voltage quality includes setting standards and minimum requirements, implementing rewards/penalties, publishing and setting obligations;
- Only a few countries publish statistics based on voltage quality;
- Based on the monitoring of quality indicators, requirements and compensations vary a lot depending on the customer type;
- Commercial quality is mainly focused on the DSO's relationship with customers, but the focus needs to be wider than the DSO's written responses to customers;

✓ **In Gas Sector**

- Customer information, customer care and activations to the network are key considerations;
- For the future it is recommended to perform regular reviews of national regulations;
- It is recommended to pursue the harmonization of commercial quality indicators to make comparisons more reliable in the future;
- Furthermore a greater protection through guaranteed indicators with automatic compensation for customers should be ensured;
- Availability of indicators for continuity of supply and safety is not uniform across Europe;
- Monitoring should be extended to more countries so that broader comparison is possible;
- Number of parameters in use across Europe are outside of what is allowed by European Committee for Standardization (CEN) standards;
- Making CEN standards binding might contribute to reducing restrictions in cross-border gas flows, but it might prove costly.

During a first day of the workshop each representatives from the Regulatory Bodies and relevant institutions of EaP countries as well as the delegation from EaP CSF (including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) presented the role and main functions of their institutions in the field of quality of supply of electricity and gas and the experience attained.

### **17th Meeting of the Eastern Partnership Platform 3 on Energy Security, 23 June 2017, Brussels, Belgium**

The 17th meeting of Platform 3 on Energy Security of the Eastern Partnership took place in Brussels on 23 June 2017. The meeting gathered participants from partner countries, from EU Member States as well as from other European entities.

In the opening part, information was shared on the main political developments in the Eastern Partnership in the run-up to the 2017 Eastern Partnership Summit, to take place on 24 November in Brussels, and on progress on the European Energy Union.



Under the section “Regional energy cooperation” participants were informed on the progress and future work of the regional energy programme EU4Energy.

The thematic session was dedicated to the role of consumers and notably to the question of how the energy transition in both Eastern Partnership countries and EU MS could be optimized through an increasing engagement of the energy consumers.

Finally, participants were debriefed on the 2017 edition of the Eastern Partnership workshop of energy regulatory bodies. They were also updated on the four studies which are currently being carried out under the High Quality Studies to support the Activities under the Eastern Partnership (HiQSTEP) as agreed in the Platform meeting of December 2015.

During a Thematic Session: Optimizing the energy transition through increasing engagement of consumers, EaP countries presented information about the consumers in the current and future energy markets in the Eastern Partner countries. Toni Vidan, Member of the European Economic and Social Committee presented the future energy markets from the consumers perspective'. He welcomed the discussion on the increasing role on consumers in the energy area which 5 years ago would still not have been possible. He observes a tendency that sooner or later customers would seek to become self-sufficient and leave the energy systems if their needs are not taken into account. It is therefore in the governments', the public sector's and the energy providers' interest to seek improving cooperation with the consumers. He therefore calls for improving public consultations, new technology to be driven by local governments, more support towards the concept of energy communities and finally not to forget to integrate rural households into future smart energy systems.

In the broader picture, Ms Anne-Charlotte Bournoville, Head of Unit for International Relations and Enlargement at DG Energy, European Commission recalled the ongoing preparations towards the Eastern Partnership Summit on 24 November and the upcoming Informal Policy dialogue on Energy Efficiency in Moldova on 10 July. She welcomed the work of EU4Energy which is expected to significantly contribute as a key tool in our energy cooperation under the Eastern Partnership.

### **Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, Working Group 3 Environment, climate change and energy security, 29-30 May 2017, Brussels**

The meeting was attended by 15 members of WG3 from all the 6 EaP countries. 3 participants have not attended the Annual Assembly in 2016 and were representing colleagues from the NGOs, which attended AA. The issues which were included in the agenda of the event were the following:

- ✓ Internal preparatory session for the Discussion of the Action plan and EaP CSF policy brief with external stakeholders
- ✓ Presentation of the EaP CSF 2017 Regranting projects
- ✓ Presentation of the EaP Index
- ✓ Discussion of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Luxemburg Declaration with external stakeholders



- ✓ Discussion of the EaP CSF policy brief elaborating on Joint Staff Working Document “Eastern Partnership – Focusing on key priorities and deliverables” with external stakeholders
- ✓ Defining priorities for Civil Society Declaration on Eastern Partnership Summit and proposals to the agenda of the Annual Assembly of EaP CSF to be held in Tallinn, October 2017
- ✓ WG3 operation in all the 6 EaP countries and optimization of operation of WG3 activities, possibility to delegate representatives of WG3 to EaP regional TA projects SG; Discussing aspects of possible reforms of the EaP CSF mechanisms
- ✓ Report of the members of WG3 on the Workshop on Energy Regulators, Kiev, 16-17 May 2017 – follow-up activities (reporter Giorgi Mukhigulishvili)

During the meeting, the main documents discussed by the representatives of WG3 with the external stakeholders were the draft of the Action Plan for the implementation of the

Luxembourg Declaration adopted in autumn 2016 and Deliverables for 2020. Also proposals for the agenda to Annual Assembly in Tallinn in October 2017 were discussed. The participants were asked to develop proposals for the Declaration to AA by the end of July 2017.

Optimization of operation of WG3 was discussed during the meeting as well as the possibility to increase the number of members in the group, the number of members of which was decreased due to the application of only one participant from Belarus, while other EaP countries applied in a larger number of participants, the number of applicants from Moldova being 12. Thus the quote for participation for WG 3 for the Annual Assembly was determined to be 2 applicants from each EaP country from WG3. It was decided to increase the number of members in WG3 by encouraging more environmental NGOs to apply for net AA.

### **Informal policy Dialogue, Chisinau, R. Moldova, 10 July 2017**

For the Informal Policy Dialogue, attended by Ina Coseru, regional coordinator of WG3, all the national coordinators of WGs in EaP countries were asked to submit information about energy efficiency projects and results in this field achieved in EaP countries. The information was presented at IPD and is presented below:

Under accession protocol Georgia has to implement the Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency before the end of 2018. However, there is no EE legislation or dedicated institution in place. In Georgia recently the first National Energy Efficiency Action Plan was developed which is currently under government approval. Many donors work on these issues, but there is hardly any serious scale investment specifically in EE on demand side. So the needed activities relate not only to legislation but also to development and establishment of energy efficient technologies and equipment, while for energy producers and consumers incentivizing regulation must be set up.

In recent years, the Moldovan Parliament transposed the entire EE and RES *acquis communautaire* having adopted a series of legislative acts in the energy field, including the Law on Energy Efficiency, the Law on Energy Performance of Buildings etc. Moldovan authorities had reviewed in 2016 the Energy Efficiency Program with a more realistic approach by setting lower targets. The deficiencies in this field still refer to the residential sector which has no proper legal and institutional framework that would enable to develop



and implement EE projects on multifamily buildings. Commercial sources are too expensive for EE projects and IFIs support is needed.

In Ukraine several laws were adopted in this field such as the Law on energy efficiency of buildings in 2017, laying out legal and organizational grounds to perform the audit of buildings for further renovations with final aim of increasing energy efficiency of constructions, the Law on Energy Efficiency Fund, passed in 2017. The Fund would be supported by 120 million EUR of the technical assistance from the EU. What is really missing is the outreach to communities: changes are happening rapidly at a national scale but in municipalities, with such pace of communication, they will not be implemented soon.

The promotion of energy efficiency in Azerbaijan is one of the main priorities of the state's energy policy direction. In terms of energy consumption, the country is committed to energy efficiency improvement measures aimed at reducing energy costs and emissions, and increasing export capacity and energy savings. Energy consumption in buildings is very high in Azerbaijan. Soviet era norms and standards are far below current energy efficiency standards and targets. Some of the gaps to be overcome are the following: lack of public information, weak legal framework and limited access to capital for consumers which often face up-front costs for energy efficient systems.

The National Program on Energy Saving and Renewable Energy of Armenia was adopted in 2007. During 2010–2015, International financial institutions (IFIs) provided more than \$87.96 million energy efficiency lending through local financial institutions. Still, the outreach to communities is important for Armenia as well as implementation of EE legislation, but also its improvement according to EU standards. Hydropower energy as one of RES should be carefully balanced with the environmental concerns in terms of irreversible impact on water resources of Armenia.

Belarus adopted EE Law (1998/ 2015), Concept of energy security (2007/ 2014), Energy potential strategy to 2020 (2010) and National Programme on Energy Savings for 2016-2020. However, Belarus faces such challenges in fostering EE as lack of information and knowledge, lack of statistics, accounting, monitoring and of data quality and experts. Other challenges relate to lack of coordination, overlapping responsibilities, weak institutional capacity and gap between regulation and implementation.

The EU promotes cogeneration in order to improve energy efficiency in Europe. This practice is missing in the whole EaP region, causing serious environmental pollution. We urge to promote necessary legal and technical capacity to implement this practice in the EaP countries.

### **Collecting information about the experts of WG3**

Information for experts and their field of expertise was collected in 2017 by the regional coordinator in order to facilitate the rapid nomination of experts to various Panels and Platforms on environment, climate change and energy issues.





## KEY TOPICS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED:

### In Armenia

- WG3 actively participated in protests to protect Sevan lake and disseminated [the petition “SOS Sevan”](#)
- Members of WG3 organized a meeting with EEAS and DG Trade mission on GSP+ and discussed the “Assessment Reports on Armenia’s Compliance with GSP+ obligations. The progress of reforms on environmental rights and protection.”
- In May 2017 a joint meeting of WG2 and WG3 took place on issues related to energy security, rational use of natural resources, environmental protection, climate change and green economy. The participants signed a Memorandum of collaboration to jointly achieve the set up objectives:
  - ✓ To promote green economy and green energy
  - ✓ To promote equal access of citizens to natural resources
  - ✓ to promote efficient use of natural resources
  - ✓ to promote environmental protection in line with European standards and norms
  - ✓ to research with experts economic, environmental and health consequences of mining activities.
- In March 2017 a meeting of WG3 was held on the environmental platforms of political parties which participated in Parliamentary elections in Armenia, [calling future MPs of National Assembly to make environmental promise come true](#)
- The members of the Armenian National Platform including the national coordinator of WG3 Inga Zarafyan organized meetings in Lory region of Armenia to promote the activities of the National Platform as well as its goals and objectives. 5 new NGOs joined WG3 as a result of these and other activities in 2017.

### In Azerbaijan

WG3 participated in the meetings of the National Platform of EaP CSF of Azerbaijan. No other activities were held by WG3 due to very difficult conditions of operation for the NGOs in Azerbaijan which are not loyal to the Government.

### In Belarus

The WG3 National Coordinator was selected for a fellowship program for 1 year in USA and left the group, which was given into the coordination by other representatives of Green Network of Belarus, though no coordination of the WG3 activities was carried out during 2017.



## In Georgia



Our Working Group has organized and held about 7 meetings with working group members and provided its member organizations updated, factual, objective, reliable and comparable information regarding Environmental, Energy, Dam Safety and Climate Change, Biodiversity Conservation, Waste Management, Weather constrains, Black Sea and Waters Sanitation, Pollutions caused by overused and falsified pesticides and other chemicals of groundwater's and soils and etc.

The working group initiated some important meetings with Ministry of Energy with its Members for reviewing policy papers elaborated by the WG last year. Members of the Working Group have carried out expertise of the environmental impact of construction of different Energy projects. This includes environmental aspects during the Construction of Qsani-Stepantsminda Transmission line 500 kw and its impact on Environment and Health of Local Population.

Our Working Group provides independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use of natural resources, environment and in particular their environmental and environmental impacts; 3 WG has analysed the construction of Energy projects - Hydro Power Nenskra Hydro and other Dams with various environmental dimensions and problems caused by Construction of Dams.

Our working Group has initiated some ideas regarding environmental adaptation to climate change. Therefore, the experts of WG3 made attempts to calculate impacts of materials used in construction of Dams, Buildings, including Green Buildings to reduce emissions and use of toxic materials.

Our Working Group has initiated creation of Intergovernmental working Group with Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Issues and Ministry of Agriculture for managing uncontrolled monitoring of overused and falsified pesticides and other chemicals in Georgia. WG3 also participate in the initiatives implemented by the Government and EU Delegation of Georgia in the frame of Georgia EU DCFTA Agreement, with local authorities and policy makers.

Special Meeting with Group Members was dedicated on Forest Fires and their frequency in Georgia in summer 2017. WG has prepared priorities for High Level Meeting organised by the Government to be held in November 2017.





## In Moldova

[A meeting of the Working Group 3 was organised on the 27<sup>th</sup> December 2016 to discuss the new Law on Waste of Moldova](#) and the necessity to reintroduce co-incineration in the new Law on Waste as a common practice of waste elimination used in all the countries of EU. It was attended also by the members of the Parliamentary Commission on Environment and Climate Change and French Cement Factory LaFarge, which could co-incinerate solid municipal waste in case the law allows for it.

Another meeting was organised on the [16<sup>th</sup> March 2017 to develop the text of the Declaration of the Moldovan National Platform not to merge the Ministry of Environment of Moldova](#) with the Ministry of Agriculture in the new structure of the Government of Moldova. Declaration was sent to the Government and the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, to the EU Delegation in the Republic of Moldova and to the group of experts who were in charge of the institutional reform led by Iurie Ciocan.

- **Participation in protests**



On the 14<sup>th</sup> March members of WG3 participated in the [protest against the construction of hydropower plants on the course of Dniester river upstream Novodnestrovsk hydropower plant built](#) on Dniester river in Ukraine, which leaves Dniester river downstream the plant on the Moldovan territory without water.

The text of the declaration which was issued and signed by the protesting organisations could be found here:

[https://secure.avaaz.org/ru/petition/Obrashchenie\\_k\\_parlamentu\\_pravitelstvu\\_prezidentu\\_Ukrainy\\_Spasite\\_reku\\_Dnestr\\_otmenite\\_stroitelstvo\\_novyh\\_GES/?ftEQzMkb](https://secure.avaaz.org/ru/petition/Obrashchenie_k_parlamentu_pravitelstvu_prezidentu_Ukrainy_Spasite_reku_Dnestr_otmenite_stroitelstvo_novyh_GES/?ftEQzMkb)

- **Advocacy meetings**

WG3 organised a meeting with the group of experts led by Iurie Ciocan on the institutional reorganisation of the Moldovan Government on the 5th June 2017 in order to discuss the declaration of WG3 on merging the Ministry of Environment with the Ministry of Agriculture.

In July and in September members of WG3 participated in the Economic Council of Prime-minister of the Republic of Moldova to advocate for co-incineration of solid municipal waste and re-introduction of co-incineration of waste in the new Law on Waste of Moldova from 2016, which was developed according to the EU legislation and according to the Association Agreement signed between Moldova and EU.

- **Study visits**

Members of WG 3 participated in the study visits to Brinzenii Noi village of Telenesti rayon to see the illegal hydropower plant built on Raut river, tributary of Dniester river in



September 2017. A commission was set up from members of the Parliament, Government and civil society (WG3) to investigate the case and stop illegal construction of the hydropower plant. [Ziarul de Garda newspaper published articles about the visits organised to the illegal hydropower plant built on Raut river.](#)

There are 25 organisations in the group, 6 new organisations were invited to take part in the activities of the group, out them 3 organisations working in the field of energy security. A subgroup was created on energy security issues in 2017.

The members of the group received the draft of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Luxembourg Declaration adopted in autumn 2016, for comments and the draft of the paper on deliverables for 2020. No comments were received back on deliverables 2020, comments received for the implementation of the Action Plan on Luxembourg Declaration were sent to the representatives of DG ENV who are developing the Action Plan.

### In Ukraine

In January, a first internal meeting of WG3 has highlighted 3 main priorities:

- a. environmental governance (Following the "Ministerial Declaration")
- b. energy, namely energy policy, energy efficiency, renewable energy
- c. climate change and adaptation to climate change (following the "Paris Agreement").
- d. also ideas for joint projects of WG3 members were discussed.

A second meeting took place in May and was dedicated to the projects which are implemented by the Ukrainian partners with the goal to inform all the participants about the projects and expected outputs.

During the Day of Europe in Kyiv has been held an educational demonstration event of WG3 members: Helicopter platform. This event has constituted the only eco-informative point during Europe Day, when the capital was visited by many foreigners and local guests. The event was initiated and coordinated by WG3 Coordinator - Alexandra Gumenyuk "Good Deeds". National Ecological Center of Ukraine has provided all necessary presentation equipment. National Ecological Center, NGO MAMA-86, Center for Partnership and Innovation "Synergy", Strategy 21, as well as other environmental organizations joined the event. In total there were 11 performances, enabling a wider range of people to learn about the Eastern Partnership CSF WG3 activities.