



COUNTRY UPDATES SERIES • SUMMER 2015



Greening economies
in the EU Eastern Partnership countries

BELARUS

RECENT AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The EaP GREEN programme



How can the EU Eastern Partnership countries progress faster on their path to green economy? Which environmental policies and management approaches are available to support a coherent national green economy framework? How do local stakeholders benefit from the long-standing expertise of EaP GREEN's implementing partners?

The “**Greening Economies in the European Union's Eastern Neighbourhood**” (EaP GREEN) programme supports the six the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries to move towards green economy by decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation and resource depletion. These countries are: **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.**

The programme is structured around three components:

- **Governance and financing tools** for sustainable production and consumption (SCP) and green economy;
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** accompanying SCP policy implementation; and
- **Demonstration projects.** Governments and the private sector are the key target groups of EaP GREEN.

The EaP GREEN programme has two focal points in each participating country: one from a national ministry of environmental affairs, and another one nominated by the national ministry of economy related matters.

The Programme's Steering Committee (SC) oversees the programme implementation. Its members include the National Focal Points, the European Union and representatives of the four implementing partners. The SC meets annually. Such meetings are open to the NGO community and donors, as well as other international organisations.

The programme is financially supported by the European Union and other donors. It is jointly implemented by four international organisations - the **OECD, UNECE, UNEP, and UNIDO.**

More information: www.green-economies-eap.org



The **European Union** is the world's largest donor of official development assistance. The European Commission's Directorate General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) manages the majority of the Union's financial and technical assistance to the neighbourhood and enlargement countries. By implementing assistance actions in Europe's eastern and southern neighbourhood, DG NEAR supports reform and democratic consolidation, and strengthens the prosperity, stability and security around Europe. DG NEAR helps to promote EU values, policies and interests in this region, and to contribute to developing the special relationship of the EU with its neighbouring countries. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/about/directorate-general/index_en.htm

Governance and financing tools



Key topics:

Strategic policy setting • Green growth indicators • Reforming environmentally harmful subsidies • Creating market incentives for greener product • Access to green finance and investment • Greening SMEs

MILESTONES

- The regional report on “Sustainable production and consumption policies and initiatives in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus: Review of progress and way forward” was presented to policymakers from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus on 18 June in Moldova. The report takes stock of moves towards sustainable consumption and production policies and could provide a platform for the exchange of good practices for the EaP region. The report aims to fill knowledge gaps on SCP policies and practices which can be designed to tackle economic, social and environmental challenges. (UNEP)
- Representatives of government agencies and research institutes were trained on **green economy (GE) simulation modelling** in a workshop held on 2 July 2014. (UNEP)
- The Economic Research Institute of the Ministry of Economy of Belarus was appointed to **develop a green economy simulation analysis**. (UNEP)
- Following **two consultation meetings** on green economy and sustainable consumption and production in 2013 and 2014, the **scope and methodology for a quantitative analysis of identified priority sectors** for a shift to green economy policies - namely energy demand and electricity supply - were discussed in December 2014. **Comprehensive data sets** were collected and first modelling results were presented to and reviewed by national experts in Belarus in April 2015. (UNEP)

RECENT & UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- A regional expert meeting on “Access to private finance for green investments in EU Eastern Partnership countries” was held on 5-6 June 2014 in Paris to discuss about environmental credit lines. Belarus was represented through one delegate from the Ministry of Economy. The report “**Environmental lending in EU Eastern Partnership countries**” was published in October 2014. (OECD) <http://bit.ly/1t5JASC>
- A regional expert meeting titled “**Shared environmental information system and green growth**” was held in Paris on 10-11 March 2015 with the participation of two delegates from Belarus. The development and use of 6-7 headline indicators for the region was agreed. (OECD) <http://bit.ly/1erNRQ0>
- A regional expert meeting on “**Promoting better environmental performance of SMEs**” took place on 12 February 2015 in Kiev, Ukraine. Subsequently, the **Environmental Policy Toolkit on Greening SMEs in EU Eastern Partnership countries** was released in May 2015. (OECD)
English version: <http://bit.ly/1HDpRD8>
Russian version: <http://bit.ly/1Ke1353>
- A **simulation analysis report on green economy** will be finalised and presented to government representatives and stakeholders in the second half of 2015. (UNEP)
- A **national stakeholder workshop on SME greening** is planned to take place in Belarus in October 2015. (OECD)
- A **survey of energy subsidies in the EU Eastern Partnership countries** will be launched in 2015. An international consultancy firm was selected through open tender to roll-out the project in the region. (OECD)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)



Key topics:

Revision of existing national regulatory and legislative frameworks • Capacity building on SEA and EIA procedures • Strengthening administrative capacities of national authorities

MILESTONES

- Belarus is a **Party to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment (Espoo Convention)** since 2005, but has not joined its Protocol on SEA yet. EaP GREEN assists the country in **aligning the national legislation** to the requirements, and thereby facilitates the **accession to the Protocol on SEA** since the begging of the project in 2013. (UNECE)

- A **review of the existing environmental legislation in Belarus** was prepared by a team of international consultants and national authorities. Subsequently, a **round-table meeting of stakeholders** - held on 5 September 2013 - contributed to gathering comments and preparing a final version of the report. (UNECE) <http://bit.ly/1Gv4MqN>

- Based on the results of the review the EaP GREEN has been providing further **assistance in the drafting of SEA provisions to the Law on State Ecological Expertise** - the legal instrument which currently guides the assessment of the environmental impact of projects and plans in Belarus. On 29-30 April 2015, consultations were held to **prepare initial proposals for amending the law**. (UNECE) <http://bit.ly/1Gv4MqN>

- The consultations lead to the **development of a new law** with the aim to align the national legislative framework with the requirements of the Protocol on SEA, the Espoo Convention and relevant EU Directives. It is planned that the drafting process and consultations on the draft law will be completed by the end of October 2015 and the draft law will be submitted to the Parliament by January 2016. (UNECE)

- In the course of 2015 – 2016 the Project will support preparation of a Guidance document **on the practical application of SEA** and offer additional **training** at the national level. (UNECE)

- A **joint pilot project on post-project analysis (under the EIA procedure)** of the exploitation of the **Khotislavskoye quarry** was implemented in close collaboration with the national authorities of Belarus and Ukraine during the period of April 2013 – April 2014. (UNECE) <http://bit.ly/1wFgJr4>

- The **report and the draft recommendations on improving post-project analysis** were discussed at a task force meeting in Minsk in December 2013. The task force consisted of national authorities of both Belarus and Ukraine. Further to this, a **public consultation workshop** was held on 21 February 2014 in Malorita. The pilot project evaluation and the recommendations were released in April 2014. (UNECE) <http://bit.ly/1zfsNUO>

- **Five experts from Belarus attended the EaP GREEN study tour in the Czech Republic on the application of SEA** at the national level in the urban planning, waste management, and energy sectors that took place on 1-5 December 2014. They learned about the Czech SEA system and discussed challenges and success factors. (UNECE) <http://bit.ly/1t5IoyJ>

RECENT & UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- In September 2015 EaP GREEN will support the negotiations between Belarus and Poland on the bilateral agreement on a trans boundary EIA procedure under the Espoo Convention. The recommendations on the post project analysis developed under the above mentioned pilot project will be incorporated. (UNECE)

- Two back-to-back EaP GREEN regional events will be organized in Georgia in the beginning of November 2015. A **conference on developing legislative frameworks SEA** in will provide an opportunity to exchange experience in drafting SEA / EIA legislation and barriers on adoption of the legislation (November 2, 2015). The conference will be followed by a **“Training of Trainers” workshop on the design and delivery of training events on SEA** (November 3 – 6, 2015). Altogether five participants from Belarus have been invited to attend the events. After the training the participant will be able to further support the development of the SEA system in Belarus and provide national level training on SEA for various stakeholders (planned for spring 2016). (UNECE) <http://bit.ly/1G5cUoM>

Study tour in the Czech Republic on the application of SEA at national level (Photo: ©UNECE)



Demonstration projects

Key topics:

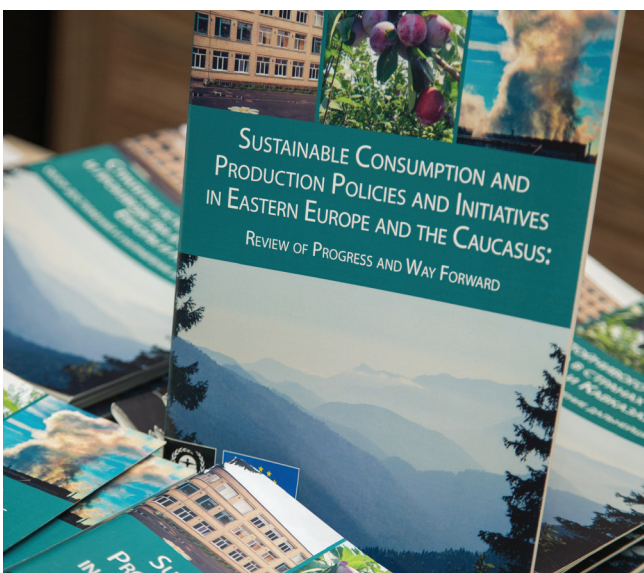
Capacity development for resource efficient and cleaner production (RECP) • RECP implementation, dissemination and replication • RECP technology support • Sustainable public procurement (SPP) • Promotion of organic agriculture: trade and access to markets

MILESTONES

- An **inception workshop for sustainable public procurement** was organised in Minsk on 17-18 July 2014 where the national project implementation plan for sustainable public procurement (SPP) was agreed. (UNEP)
- EaP GREEN was one of the main sponsors of the **5th International Conference on Organic Sector Development in Central/Eastern European and Central Asian countries** held on 16-17 April 2015. A **break-out session** dedicated to organic agriculture and green economy featured speakers from Armenia, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Ukraine. The session discussed strategies for organic market development, organic agriculture as a tool for greening the economy, and organic legislation development in the region. (UNEP) <http://bit.ly/1PRWkdu>
- In the light of the **new project schedule**, the **sustainable public procurement (SPP) project implementation plan** was revised and approved by the Steering Committee members at their meeting on 11 June 2015. (UNEP)

RECENT & UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- A **status assessment report for sustainable public procurement** will be produced in autumn 2015 with the help of the **UNEP status assessment questionnaire** and based on information collected from Chief Procurement Officers. (UNEP)
- A **study of the country's public procurement legal framework** is currently being conducted to identify the legal barriers and opportunities for the implementation of SPP. The report will include proposed **amendments to the existing regulations** to mainstream sustainability. (UNEP)
- A **preliminary selection of sustainable groups of products and services** to be introduced in the public procurement system will be discussed during a **"Prioritisation Workshop"** tentatively scheduled for October 2015. (UNEP)
- On 4 August, 2015 in the town of Molodechno a **regional information RECP seminar for representatives of industrial enterprises** in the region took place, with the support of the local municipality. The seminar was held at a local dairy factory "Molodea", a participant in a demonstration programme since August 2014. The information seminar was attended by 11 companies, most of which expressed an interest to participate in the RECP programme in 2015 – 2016. (UNIDO)
- An **exchange of knowledge, experiences success stories and challenges** among NGOs, government agencies, and business associations of all six participating countries was facilitated at the **special session on organic agriculture** held within the **Fourth EaP GREEN Steering Committee meeting** on 18 June 2015 in Chisinau, Moldova. (UNEP)



Demonstration projects (continued)

Key topics:

Capacity development for resource efficient and cleaner production (RECP) • RECP implementation, dissemination and replication • RECP technology support • Sustainable public procurement (SPP) • Promotion of organic agriculture: trade and access to markets

MILESTONES

- An **RECP awareness raising seminar** was organized on 12 December 2014 in Minsk. The event focused on the **environmental and economic benefits of RECP**. It promoted programme ideas and objectives among local authorities and enterprises. (UNIDO)
- **Two rounds of training seminars** for national RECP experts and candidates were held in May and July 2014, respectively. Nearly **30 participants** attended in total. The trainings included **joint visits of experts to companies in the priority sectors** - food processing, chemicals and construction materials - for the practical application of the knowledge in RECP assessment gained during the training. National experts and enterprises involved in RECP demonstration programmes received an **UNIDO award certificate**. (UNIDO)
- A **national conference** titled “**Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production for Better Enterprises, Cleaner Environment and Green Economy**” took place in Minsk on 25 May 2015. **Success stories of RECP pilot applications** were presented, for example from the food industry, including the project on sweet water re-use in Komunarka - the country’s leading confectionery producer. (UNIDO) http://recp.by/index_en.html
- The national RECP conference was followed on the same day (25 May 2015) by a **consultative dialogue on the domestication of RECP concepts and methods**. The meeting aimed at **defining further actions for RECP implementation** in Belarus, including the recruitment and training of new experts, and the extension of activities to new demonstration companies. (UNIDO)

RECENT & UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- A **market study** focusing on the **retained sustainable products** will be produced by mid-November 2015. A **National SPP Policy and Action Plan Workshop** will be organized in December 2015 to discuss the recommendations of the draft SPP Action Plan. (UNEP)
- A **regional information seminar** of the RECP demonstration programme was held on 29 April 2015 at the City Committee of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection in Minsk. During the seminar the **benefits of RECP** were presented and **co-operation opportunities** were explored with chief representatives and engineering staff from enterprises in the priority sectors. (UNIDO)
- A **preliminary scoping of technology support activities for SMEs** was carried out in the first half of 2015. **Ongoing RECP projects add value to enterprises** in priority sectors by increasing human and institutional capacities, and facilitating further practical demonstration, dissemination and replication of RECP principles. (UNIDO)
- A brochure with highlights and lessons learned from completed **RECP assessments and implementation projects at SMEs** will be released before the end of 2015. (UNIDO)
- **Regional RECP clubs will be established in order to bring together groups of SMEs**. The goal is to enable companies to develop and implement RECP action plans on their own initiative. (UNIDO)
- A **bilingual English/Russian RECP website** is available to disseminate information regularly on latest news and events. (UNIDO)
www.recp.by

Recent and upcoming publications

- **OECD: Creating Market Incentives for Greener Products** (Available in English and Russian)
<http://www.oecd.org/env/outreach/economic-instruments.htm>
- **OECD: Environmental Lending in EU Eastern Partnership Countries** (Available in English and Russian) <http://www.oecd.org/environment/outreach/regionalmeeting-june-2014.htm>
- **OECD: Environmental Policy Toolkit for Greening SMEs in EU Eastern Partnership countries** (Available in English and Russian)
<http://www.oecd.org/environment/outreach/Greening-SMEs-policy-manual-eng.pdf>
- **UNEP: Sustainable production and consumption policies and initiatives in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus: Review of progress and way forward** (Available in English and Russian)
<http://www.unep.org/roe/Publications/tabid/54616/Default.aspx>
- **UNEP: Resource Efficiency Economic Outlook** (Available in English and Russian)
http://www.grid.unep.ch/products/3_Reports/REEO_for_EECCA.pdf
- **UNECE: Review of legislation on strategic environmental assessment of Belarus with regard to implementation of the Protocol on SEA to the Espoo Convention** (Available in English)
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/eia/documents/EaP_GREEN/1_Homepage/Report_SEA__Belarus_final_unedited.pdf
- **OECD: Inventory of Energy Subsidies in EU Eastern Partnership Countries** (Forthcoming in 2015)
- **UNECE: Benefits and myths about strategic environmental assessment** (brochure, forthcoming at the end of 2015)

On the calendars

Save the Date

- OECD: 7-8 October 2015 - **Annual meeting of the Environmental Action Programme (EAP) Task Force** (Tashkent, Uzbekistan)
- UNECE: 2 November 2015 - **Sub-regional conference on developing legislative frameworks for the strategic environmental assessment in conformity with the Protocol on SEA** (Georgia)
- UNECE: 3-6 November 2015 - **“Training of Trainers” workshop on the design and delivery of training events on strategic environmental assessment** (Georgia)

Planned international meetings in 2015 - 2016

- UNEP: **Second Eastern Europe Regional Meeting on the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP)** - Second quarter of 2015
- UNIDO: **Global RECP Networking Conference** - 12-15 October 2015 (tbc), Switzerland
- EaP GREEN Partners: Participation in the **8th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference** - 8-10 June 2016 (Batumi, Georgia)

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Key features include: information on recent and upcoming events, topics pages with updates from all implementing partners, and a searchable resource library.