

May 2019

- Espoo Convention holds intermediary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties
- Espoo Convention Implementation Committee continues review of the compliance by the Parties

## Bringing Espoo Convention to Citizens

This is the title of the project started on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 by three organisations, namely European ECO Forum, Resource & Analysis Center "Society and Environment" (RACSE) and Oekobuero (Austria). The project primarily aims at countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA).

### The project objectives are:

- To raise awareness of civil society organisations in EECCA about the developments under the Espoo Convention and its SEA Protocol, as well as about tools they may use to have their voice heard and environment protected;
- To strengthen their capacity to act by enhancing exchange of best practices and advising them on obstacles they face.

The project was funded by the German Federal Environmental Ministry's Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP) for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union. It is supervised by the German Environment Agency (UBA).

The responsibility for the content of this Newsflash lies with the authors.



## Espoo Convention holds intermediary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties

Intermediary sessions of the MOP to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol) were held from [5 to 7 February 2019](#) in Geneva (IS MOP).

The key reason to gather this intermediary IS MOP was the failure of the Minsk MOP (2017) to adopt (non-)compliance decisions. Key decisions were related to nuclear projects: Belarus (Ostrovets NPP) and UK (Hinkley Point C).

The IS MOP adopted all relevant draft decisions, in particular on non-compliance by the UK and Belarus, two confirming non-compliance on Ukraine. The IS MOP also took decision to confirm the mandate of an ad hoc working group on life time extensions of nuclear power plants. The ad hoc working group is to present a draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants for the adoption at next MOP.

Yet, the decisions on the UK and Belarus were re-drafted by the EU, which may limit the scope of their application in the future. Belarus delegation was furious at the re-drafting process and made a [statement](#) – after the vote on the decision concerning Belarus.

Civil society organizations from all across Europe came to observe closely the proceedings of this Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention and SEA Protocol. Their impressions were summarized in a [statement](#) delivered on behalf of the European ECO Forum.

Next MOP is provisionally scheduled for 8–11 December 2020.



Photo courtesy of the Information and Digital Diplomacy Office at the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Image credit: Emerging Europe, July 28, 2018 from the article by Yoan Staney



Image credit: photo by AFP from Kyiv Post



Link to the advance copy of the report of the Implementation Committee on its forty-fourth session:

<https://bit.ly/2JEamUz>

## Espoo Convention Implementation Committee continues review of compliance by the Parties

The Implementation Committee for the Espoo Convention and its SEA Protocol held its first session after the IS MOP from [12 to 15 March, 2019](#). The committee continued to consider a number of issues and cases, including all non-compliance cases considered by the IS MOP earlier in 2019.

One of the new issues brought to the Implementation Committee's attention was Nord Stream II project. The issue was discussed on the basis of the letter from Ukraine, which, in particular, requested establishment of inquiry commissions (in accordance with article 3 (7) and appendix IV of the Convention) to consider whether the planned construction of the Nord Stream 2 project in Denmark, Germany and Finland was likely to have a significant transboundary impact on Ukraine.

The committee also continued its consideration of the cases related to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants in Bulgaria and Ukraine.



Source: European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas ([www.entsoe.eu](http://www.entsoe.eu)) July 2017



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