



Funded by
the European Union

PRESS RELEASE

Kick off for EU4Environment – Water Resources and Environmental Data

Regional launch online event on 9 February 2022

08/02/2022

The post-COVID-19 green recovery is at the center of a new European Union programme in the Eastern Partnership country that is about to start with a regional kick-off meeting on 9 February 2022. *EU4Environment – Water Resources and Environmental Data* will contribute to longer-term environmental, climate, and socio-economic resilience. The programme aims to improve human health and wellbeing, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The regional kick off meeting will be held in an online format and will be followed by a series of national meetings with representatives of each participating country.

EU4Environment – Water Resources and Environmental Data builds upon the success of previous programmes like the European Water Initiative Plus and the Shared Environmental Information System Phase II. It will further support Eastern Partnership countries in the preservation of natural resources in line with the European Green Deal and a post-COVID-19 green recovery.

The EUWI+ project has helped countries implement their existing Agreements with the EU, or gradually adopt EU water management practices where formal agreements are not in place. Under EUWI+, around 30 million citizens (40% of the countries' population) on over 500,000 km² (50% of the countries' land surface) have benefited from 11 new or revised River Basin Management Plans, a planning tools that helps protect water resources and share them between the different water uses. Twenty-five organisations in the 6 countries have benefitted from 400 units of state-of-the-art equipment items for water monitoring and analysis. Six water laboratories (in 4 countries) were renovated, and more than 1000 sites were covered by surveys carried out in rivers, ground- and coastal waters.

The ENI SEIS II East project supported implementation of the principles and practices of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) to strengthen the production of environmental data, indicators and assessment reports in biodiversity, water, land, waste and air. The project developed countries' institutional capacity in environmental assessment and accounting, and as an example introduced new tools for improving the accessibility and use of air quality measurement data in the region based on the EU Air Quality Directives and the European Air Quality Index.

The European Commission and the implementing partners look forward to continuing their engagement with the Eastern Partnership countries under this new European Union support. Together they will strengthen the management of water resources and environmental data to benefit the environment and wellbeing of citizens in the Eastern Partnership region.

The programme is part of the Team Europe Initiative on Water and Zero Pollution, which aims at moving towards a toxic-free environment for all citizens.

Background information

The *EU4Environment – Water Resources and Environmental Data* programme is part of the co-operation framework of the European Union with the Eastern Partnership and has a total budget of 12.75 million Euros. It will be implemented in the period 2022-2024 by a Consortium of European Union Member States (Environment Agency Austria (UBA), Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and International Office for Water - France (OiEau)), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

For more information please contact: Alexander.Zinke@umweltbundesamt.at