

PRESS RELEASE

EU-funded projects brings Eastern Partnership Countries, Latvia and European Commission together at Climate Change Meeting in Riga

Riga, 27 June 2015 – The EU-funded Clima East project, which supports support the Eastern Partnership countries¹ to be better prepared to deal with climate change impacts, organised a meeting to discuss ongoing United Nations negotiations on Climate Change.

The two-day meeting was attended by representatives of the ministries dealing with Climate Change from the six Eastern Partnership countries as well as the officials from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia and the European Commission's Directorate General for Climate Action.

The participants discussed progress towards a possible legally binding and universal agreement on climate to be negotiated at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 21) in Paris later this year. They also discussed each country's national priorities and contributions to reducing emissions and adapting to climate change impacts.

The meeting provided the opportunity for officials to share best practices and to discuss what funding and support was needed to fulfil each country's objectives.

Speaking after the event, Zsolt Lengyel, Team Leader of the EU-funded Clima East project said:

“While all of the Eastern Partnership countries have begun to address climate change challenges by developing national strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation, meetings such as this allow us to look for a common approach as well as to share best practices from both inside and outside the European Union. It is essential as countries prepare for the upcoming Paris climate convention meeting of December 2015, that countries discuss openly their detailed suggestions for the international climate agreement as well as their own climate action commitments, called INDCs in the climate jargon. Our Riga workshop allowed for such exchange of views between the EU and the six eastern partnerships countries.”

Mr Suleymanov, Head of Climate change and ozone centre, National Hydrometeorological Department, Ministry of ecology and natural resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan, shared his feelings about the workshop:

¹ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

"It was particularly interesting for me to learn about the positions of the other countries and of the EU regarding climate change policies, as in our future plans we will be trying to approximate our positions with the ones of the EU. Workshops like this one help us understanding and planning to approach the EU's position. Presentations made by other countries were also of great interest to us, as observing other countries' situations and positions is helpful to us. Sharing experience is always helpful!"

Mr Samkharadze, National key advisor from the GIZ Support programme in Georgia, highlighted the space left to the participants to share their experience during the workshop: **"People actually got the opportunity to share their experience and opinions and at this high time of INDC preparation. Presenters and speakers were all very into the subject and the knowledge and experience we received from them is going to be of great use at this time of preparation."**

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Clima East is a € 19.2 million EU-funded package consisting of two components: the first consists of a number of Pilot Projects that support the development of ecosystems-based approaches to climate change; the second is a Policy component that seeks to foster improved climate change policies, strategies and market mechanisms in the partner countries by supporting regional cooperation and improving information access to EU climate change policies, laws and expertise.