

MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

«COMPLIANCE WITH THE ESPOO CONVENTION WHEN UNDERTAKING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES PRODUCING TRANSBOUNDARY IMPACTS AND DISCUSSION OF LEGAL RECOMMENDATIONS»

Date: 3 December 2010

Venue for the Conference: The Conference Hall of the National Library of Belarus,
116 Nezavisimosti Avenue, Minsk

Chairman of the Workshop: Aleksander Andreev, Head of the Department of the
State Environmental Assessment of the Ministry of Natural Resources and
Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus

Agenda: enclosed

Attendance: 50 persons (the list is enclosed)

Opening the conference, Aleksander Andreev, Head of the Department of the State Environmental Assessment of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Ministry, presented the experience of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for the Nemnovskaya Hydropower Plant and informed about preparation of bilateral agreements for the implementation of the Espoo Convention.

Vadim Lojetchko, Task Coordinator, noted that it would be reasonable to elaborate legal recommendations and the draft bilateral agreement for the implementation of the Espoo Convention between the Republic of Belarus and Republic of Poland taking into account the requirements of the international law and pointed out to the interrelation between these efforts and the project activities on dissemination of information about the implementation of environmental conventions and treaties. The published Guidelines on the implementation of the Espoo Convention in the Republic of Belarus when undertaking an environmental impact assessment which was discussed at the workshop «Experience of international environmental impact assessment for the Nemnovskaya Hydropower Plant and discussion of the Guidelines on the implementation of the Espoo Convention» held on 5 November 2010 in Minsk (Belarus) as well as the Methodological Guidelines on Strategic Environmental Assessment were also presented to the participants of the conference.

In addition to the Belarusian participants, the workshop was attended by representatives of the environmental protection authorities of the Republic of Poland.

Sergei Balashenko, Dean of the Law Faculty of the Belarusian State University, made a presentation on relevance of elaborating legal recommendations and the draft bilateral agreement for the implementation of the Espoo Convention

between Belarus and Poland taking into account the requirements of the international law and public participation in decision-making.

Maia Gachechiladze-Bozhesku, an international expert (Ukraine) made a presentation on the evaluation of the procedure and the Report on EIA for the Nemnovskaya Hydropower Plant and presented some recommendations.

Albert Zhloba, Assistant Professor of the Department of Environmental and Agrarian Law of the Belarusian State University made a presentation on collaboration between Belarus and Poland in the field of EIA in a transboundary context.

Andrei Andrusevich, an international expert (Ukraine), made a presentation on legal and practical aspects of the implementation of the Espoo Convention in the context of environmental assessment and EIA.

The presentations induced a constructive discussion of the draft legal recommendations. The participants made various proposals and comments and the most relevant ones were reflected in the Recommendations.

Closing the conference, Aleksander Andreev thanked the Polish delegation for productive work on preparation of the agreement for the implementation of the Espoo Convention between Belarus and Poland within the framework of the consultations held in Minsk on 1-2 December 2010 as well as all participants for active participation, comments and proposals on the legal recommendations that are being prepared.

The Conference decided:

1. To accept the relevant comments and proposals.
2. To endorse in general the draft legal recommendations and the draft bilateral agreement for the implementation of the Espoo Convention between the Republic of Belarus and Republic of Poland taking into account the requirements of the international law and public participation in decision-making that have been prepared by the Project Team.
3. To finalize the Report on the legal recommendations taking into account the submitted comments and to furnish the draft Recommendations to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection for examination and approval.
4. To post the recommendations on the Project website www.ecorazvitie.by to make it available to the public.
5. To draw up the Minutes summarizing the results of the Conference and to send it to all stakeholders.

Aleksander Andreev



Head of the Department
of the State Environmental Assessment
of the Ministry of Natural Resources
and Environmental Protection
of the Republic of Belarus