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EU4GREEN RECOVERY EAST (700002623)
RECOVERY THROUGH A CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND POLLUTION REDUCTION IN THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES

EU4Green Recovery East Second Regional Assembly Meeting 1 July 2026, Paris

Summary Record

Author(s): OECD with inputs from Implementing Partners, Country and Programme Representatives.

1. Purpose and participants

The second EU4Green Recovery East Regional Assembly brought together 83 participants, both in person and online, from Armenia, Georgia¹, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine; EU institutions (DG ENEST, DG Environment and the European Environment Agency); implementing partners; international organisations; international finance institutions, and civil society. The meeting reviewed progress during the Programme's first full year of implementation (June 2025–June 2026), following the inception phase. Discussions focused on key achievements, lessons learned, governance arrangements, evolving country needs and priorities, coordination across programme components, and opportunities for collaboration with EU Member States in support of green recovery in the Eastern Partnership countries. The Implementing Partners presented progress in programme implementation based on selected examples of work.

2. Discussion highlights

The opening session demonstrated a strong sense of ownership by the partner countries, as well as the effective cooperation among them and the programmes' implementing partners. The European Commission representatives welcomed the participants and underlined the importance of regional cooperation within the Eastern Partnership framework. They also drew attention to key policy developments, in particular the EU strategic approach to the Black Sea region and the EU's Water Resilience Strategy.

The participants shared component-specific examples confirming that implementation over the past year has advanced. Also, future activities and priorities for attention by the implementing partners were outlined under each component.

The **Circular Economy** component reported progress through Moldova's pilot **industrial waste mapping** exercise in two regions. Also, the food and beverage, textile, construction, plastics, and packaging sectors were pre-selected for **value chain analysis** through a prioritisation exercise for industrial sectors, to ensure the country's circular transformation. The

¹ Online participation at the technical level.

Implementing partners:



exercise is helping to identify potential circular value chains while highlighting challenges related to limited data on industrial waste and low awareness of circular economy practices among businesses, particularly SMEs. **Future activities** will include training programmes, implementation support mechanisms through **Circular Economy Hubs and Clubs**, and policy recommendations stemming from technology foresight exercises and behavioural change studies. In this context, Moldova noted that it had commented on a draft roadmap for the implementation of the EU and other **international monitoring frameworks on the circular economy** developed under the project. Armenia noted that circular economy and waste management provisions have been incorporated into national legislation and requested continued support for implementation. In particular, **Extended Producer Responsibility** legislation currently being developed in the country requires further support in finetuning/actualisation, stakeholder engagement and studies of implementation feasibility.

Under the **Water and Economy component**, baseline assessments on wastewater and sanitation were completed in Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine, informing tailored follow-up activities, including feasibility studies at selected wastewater treatment plants, trainings, best-practice resources and awareness materials. Discussions highlighted strong links among programme components while identifying data limitations, financing constraints, and capacity gaps as persistent challenges. Activities will continue to support wastewater treatment improvements, country-specific priorities and regional cooperation. Synergies with the GEF-funded project *“Enabling transboundary co-operation and integrated water resources management in the Dniester River Basin”* were acknowledged, while Moldova and Armenia expressed interest in further alignment with the EU Nitrates Directive.

The **Legal Approximation component** showcased Ukraine’s work on air quality and the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) as a positive example of continued progress towards EU alignment. Through enhanced inter-ministerial coordination and bilateral screening processes, priority areas were identified, and Directive-Specific Implementation Plans (DSIPs) were prioritised, with preparation work on the DSIP for the Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)/Petrol Directives having started. These plans are expected to be finalised by end of 2026–beginning of 2027, although data collection constraints linked to the ongoing war may affect timelines and outputs. Planned activities under this topic include capacity building on the National Emission Reduction Commitments Directive (NEC), the Portal Regulation and the Medium Combustion Plant Directive. Participating countries welcomed the progress, with Ukraine reaffirming its commitment to meeting agreed deadlines and Armenia highlighting its efforts to strengthen its management of wastewater, air quality and waste.

The **Institutional Integration, Data Management, and Digitalisation** component reported on the progress of collaboration between Ukraine and Moldova and the European Environment Agency (EEA). This includes preparation for submitting spatial reference datasets to the Water Information System for Europe (WISE) reporting and for the future interoperability of environmental information systems in Moldova and Ukraine related to water management. Additionally, Ukraine is preparing to submit waste data to EUROSAT, which is another progress in the agreed-upon country work plan. These activities demonstrate the importance of early engagement with EU reporting requirements, as well as the challenges related to data sharing and harmonisation. Next steps involve validating the quality of accessible datasets, completing data mapping exercises, clarifying technical requirements, and preparing a comprehensive WISE 5 reporting package for the water sector. Moldova has expressed plans to enhance its data collection and monitoring capabilities and has requested additional support for environmental-economic accounting. The EEA has encouraged all participating countries to nominate focal points and thematic experts to facilitate the implementation of common projects within the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET).

The **Transboundary Environmental Cooperation and Governance** component presented Armenia's Water Code review as a key achievement. Following a request from the Government of Armenia, UNECE prepared an analytical assessment identifying inconsistencies and gaps in alignment with the EU water acquis. The analysis recommended developing a new Water Code that incorporates EU water policy principles and enhances coherence within the national water policy framework. Armenia welcomed these findings and requested program support to implement its recently signed agreement with Georgia regarding joint transboundary monitoring of surface and groundwater resources in the Khrami-Debed River basin. Additionally, other activities carried out under this component were briefly mentioned, including reviews and the identification of potential gaps in the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) in the countries. It was also noted that support was provided to these countries for producing comparable environmental data and statistics, such as biodiversity data. Finally, an important outcome to date, is the development of the integrated Prut River Basin Management Plan, which involved the participation of Ukraine, Moldova, and Romania, as well as support for Ukraine's involvement in the activities of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River.

Concerning **communication and visibility**, the team reported progress in establishing national communication strategies and increasing programme visibility through institutional channels and targeted outreach activities. However, participants recognised ongoing challenges in developing a coherent narrative across countries and programme components, as well as in measuring communication impact. Future efforts will focus on communicating tangible results and policy impacts, increasing flexibility for country-specific communication activities and further engaging implementing partners and local experts as communication ambassadors. DG ENEST recommended greater emphasis on milestones, strategic planning and cooperation with the EU NEIGHBOURS East communication network to maximise visibility during the programme's second year.

Representatives of the **Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum**, the **European Investment Bank** (EIB) and the **World Bank** expressed strong support for programme activities and interest in closer coordination. Recommendations included strengthening engagement with local civil society and NGOs; supporting environmental democracy and access to environmental information; addressing the challenges of financing small-scale water and wastewater projects in EaP countries; financing nature-based solutions; and long-term human capacity development. The World Bank, drawing on experience from its work on biodiversity through the EU4Environment programme, emphasised the importance of sustaining programme results and building links with future investment initiatives, including biodiversity restoration, ecological connectivity and climate finance projects across the region.

3. Conclusions and next steps

- The programme delivered tangible progress on EU environmental acquis approximation and institutional strengthening across Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine.
- Strong country ownership and increasing demand for technical assistance demonstrate the relevance and value of programme support.
- Progress in circular economy, wastewater management, legal approximation and environmental data reporting has established a solid foundation for further implementation.

- Data availability, financing constraints, institutional capacity and coordination requirements remain key challenges across all countries.
- Cooperation with the EEA, international financial institutions and civil society organisations provides important opportunities to increase impact and sustainability. More work can be done to strengthen relationships in these areas.
- Communication efforts have improved programme visibility, although stronger results-based messaging and impact measurement are needed.
- DG ENEST reminded partners and countries of the upcoming Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) assessment for EU4Green Recovery East, noting that coordination will be needed to meet challenging deadlines. It was noted that this process serves transparency and accountability purposes, highlights areas to strengthen implementation, thereby identifying benefits for participating countries, implementing partners and the European Commission.
- Based on the outcomes of the discussion, the participants outlined the following next steps and planned upcoming major events:

3.1. Next steps

N°	Task	Who	Tentative target
1	The assessment process for the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) system will take place in participating countries and with each implementing partner.	ARM, MLD, UKR and EU4Green Recovery East implementing partners	Q3 2026
2	Deliver online circular economy training programmes, establish implementation hubs and clubs, develop policy recommendations through technology foresight, and conduct a behavioural study on circular economy practices. Finalization of circular economy monitoring roadmaps and first monitoring round.	EU4Green Recovery East – UNIDO, UBA, UNECE	Q1-2 2027
3	Advance wastewater and sanitation activities, including recommendations for wastewater treatment improvements, implementation of country-specific actions and strengthened regional cooperation	EU4Green Recovery East EU4Green Recovery East – UNIDO/OiEau/UBA	Q2-3 2027
4	Continue supporting Moldova's accession-related environmental reforms, Armenia's environment acquis approximation and Ukraine's Chapter 27 implementation efforts.	ARM, MLD, UKR, EU4Green Recovery East – UBA/OECD	Q2 2027
5	Strengthen engagement with EEA monitoring and reporting processes. Countries to designate focal points for	ARM, MLD, UKR, EU4Green Recovery East – UBA/OECD	Q2 2027

N°	Task	Who	Tentative target
	environmental data reporting and cooperation. Strengthen engagement with UNECE environmental monitoring, data and reporting processes.	ARM, MLD, UKR, EU4Green Recovery East – UNECE	
6	Refocus communication activities on high-impact, results-oriented stories, increase country-level flexibility in communications, and strengthen collaboration with implementing partners and EU communication networks.	ARM, MLD, UKR and EU4Green Recovery East implementing partners	Q2 2027
7	Enhance engagement with civil society organisations and local stakeholders, particularly in consultation processes and environmental information sharing. Consider programme participation in the EaP CSF meeting in Q3 2026.	ARM, MLD, UKR and EU4Green Recovery East implementing partners EaP Civil Society Forum	Ongoing
8	Discuss human capital and water-related education needs with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education in each partner country, identify and implement support measures.	ARM, MLD, UKR, EU4Green Recovery East - UNECE	Q1/2 2027

3.2. Upcoming major events

N°	Task	Who	Tentative target
1	Ukraine National Policy Dialogue (online) with possible side events organised by UNIDO	EU4Green Recovery East – UNECE, UNIDO	13 October 2026
2	National Circular Economy Conference (Moldova)	EU4Green Recovery East – UNIDO	22-24 October 2026
3	Armenia National Policy Dialogue and possible side events	EU4Green Recovery East – OECD/UBA/UNECE AM, DG -ENEST, UNECE	December 2026
4	Discuss follow-up activities for AM-GE Khrami-Debed(a) transboundary monitoring	EU4Green Recovery East – OECD/UBA/UNECE AM, DG -ENEST, UNECE	December 2026
5	Moldova National Policy Dialogue and possible side events	EU4Green Recovery East – OECD/UBA	Q1/2 2027
6	Regional Circular Economy Conference: Baseline assessment and way forward	ARM, MLD, UKR and UNIDO/UNECE	May, 2027

About the EU4Green Recovery East programme

The EU4Green Recovery East programme is a regional programme supporting the EU's Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries on their path towards a greener, more resilient, and competitive economy.

EU-funded programme of EUR 21.3 million (2025-2028), it builds on the results of a decade of EU support for better water management and green economy adoption and focuses on five key components: (1) promoting a circular economy, (2) ensuring water is managed as a critical resource, (3) advancing legal approximation with EU environmental legislation, (4) strengthening integration into EU-wide environmental cooperation and data exchange, and (5) fostering cross-border environmental cooperation.

The programme is implemented by five partners: Expertise France with the French International Office for Water (OiEau), OECD, UNECE, UNIDO, and the Environment Agency Austria (UBA), as the consortium coordinator.

<https://www.eu4greenrecoveryeast.eu>

Disclaimer

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4. Annexes

AGENDA

Time	Item	Speaker
14:30 -15:00	Session 1: Opening remarks and Implementation Phase overview Welcome remarks and adoption of the agenda • Moderator: Mr. Matthew Griffiths, Senior Programme Manager, Environment Directorate, OECD	• Ms. Angela Bularga, DG ENEST, European Commission • Mr. Andrzej Januszewski, DG Environment, European Commission • Mrs. Lilit Abrhamyan, Head of the Water Policy Department, Ministry of Environment, Armenia • Ms. Nvard Vardanyan, Deputy Chair of the Water Agency, Armenia • Mrs. Victoria Gratii, State Secretary, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova • Mr. Viktor Kantsurak, Deputy Head of the State Agency of Water Resources of Ukraine
15:00-15:15	Session 2: Interactive discussion on the Programme's first year of Implementation Highlights from the first year of the programme's Implementation Phase June 2025-June 2026 • Moderator: Mr. Matthew Griffiths, Senior Programme Manager, Environment Directorate, OECD	• Mr. Gerhard Pulfer, Programme Lead for EU4Green Recovery East, UBA
Time	Item	Speaker
Session 3: Highlights by thematic areas of county work plans and interactive discussion. To note: A background document detailing these achievements will be provided in advance for participant information and review. Following each highlight presentation, feedback or questions from all participants will be invited. • Moderator: Mr. Matthew Griffiths, Senior Programme Manager, Environment Directorate, OECD		
15:15-15:30	Circular Economy promotion along the full lifecycle approaches	• Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya, UNIDO
15:30-15:45	Water as a critical resource for the economy	• Mr. Yannick Pochon, OiEAU
15:45-16:15	Support to legal approximation and implementation	• Ms. Josipa Krizanovic-Cimesa, UBA

16:15-16:30	Coffee Break	
16:30-16:45	Institutional integration in EU-wide environmental cooperation, data management and digitalisation	Ms. Sabah Nait, UBA
16:45-17:00	Transboundary environmental cooperation	Ms. Tamara Kutonova, UNECE
17:00-17:15	Communication and Visibility Strategy	Ms. Chloé Dechelette, OiEau
17:15-17:45	Feedback from Civil Society, International and Financial organisations, other regional projects and European Member States.	- Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum - Project partners including EU-Member States and IFIs
Session 5: Conclusions and closing remarks		
17:45-18:00	The European Commission and Implementing Partners will summarise the discussions and outline next steps.	- Mr. Gerhard Pulfer, Programme Manager for EU4Green Recovery East, UBA. - Ms. Angela Bularga, DG ENEST, European Commission
18:00-20:00	Networking cocktail hosted by OECD	

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Total: 83 participants (50 women and 33 men)

Name	Organisation/Ministry (Armenia)
Lilit Ahrhanyan	Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Armenia
Nvard Vardanyan	Deputy Chair of the Water Committee of Armenia
Lusine Avetisyan	Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Armenia
Nelli Baghdasaryan (online)	Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia (ARMSTAT)
Arevik Tadevosyan (online)	Head of the Water Quality Monitoring Service of ArmHydromet
Sona Ohanyan (online)	Water Quality Monitoring Service of ArmHydromet

Name	Organisation/Ministry (Georgia)
Maia Javakhishvili (online)	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
Mariam Makarova (online)	Head of the Water Division, Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia

Name	Organisation/Ministry (Moldova)
Victoria Gratii	State Secretary
Valeria Hutuleac	Deputy Secretary General
Paula Tatamirov	Head, International Relations
Aurelia Donos (online)	Acting Head, Division of Policies for IWRM, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova
Gabriela Capcelea (online)	Head of Circular Economy Policy and Economic Instruments Section, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova
Victoria Danila (online)	Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization of the Republic of Moldova

Name	Organisation/Ministry (Ukraine)
Viktor Kantsurak	Deputy Head of the State Agency of Water Resources of Ukraine
Vita Kovtunenکو	Water Resources Advisor
Yuliia Hrytsak (online)	Director of the Department of European Integration
Olga Lysiuk (online)	Head of Water Resources Usage Department State Agency of Water Resources of Ukraine
Inna Stelmakh	Water Resources Management Advisor
Vitalii Zhuk (online)	Ukraine Institute Environmental Recovery
Hanna Khabarova (online)	Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture, Ukraine
Oleksandr Kalifitskyi (online)	Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture, Ukraine
Anastasiia Kovriha (online)	Recovery and Reform Support Team at the Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine
Yuliia Nazarenko (online)	Programme Support & Government Liaison with UNHCR & OSCE
Оксана Борецька / Oksana Boretska (online)	State Statistic Service of Ukraine

Name	EU Institutions
Angela Bularga	European Commission, DG ENEST
Andrzej Januszewski (online)	European Commission, DG Environment
Marcela McAndrew (online)	European Commission, DG Environment
Bruno Declercq (online)	European Union Delegation to Moldova
Galina Georgieva (online)	European Environment Agency (EEA)
Luna Kalas (online)	European Environment Agency (EEA)
Adam Kadduri (online)	European Commission, DG ENEST
Yana Brovdiy	Policy and Advocacy Manager, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
Elena Culighin	Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, National Environmental Center, Moldova
Marco Beros (online)	European Investment Bank
Daphne Voss (online)	European Investment Bank

Name	International Partners
Henna Haapala (online)	Ministry of Environment, Finland
Sanna Koljonen (online)	European Commission, DG ENEST
Harri Pietarila (online)	Finnish Meteorological Institute
Jean Pr��at (online)	Minist��re de la Transition ��cologique, France
Oliver Schoenweger (online)	GIZ
Ralf Juelich (online)	Particip Consulting, Germany

Name	International Partners
Cecilia Stafsing (online)	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Gábor Schneider (online)	Stockholm Environment Institute
Anna Zhovtenko (online)	Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE)
Tetiana Dehodia (online)	Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production Centre (RECPC) Ukraine
Oksana Kovalenko (online)	World Bank

Name	Implementing Partners and Project Staff
Vahagn Tonoyan	EU4Green Recovery Programme Representative (Armenia)
Andrei Isac	EU4Green Recovery Programme Representative (Moldova)
Nataliia Zakorchevna	EU4Green Recovery Programme Representative (Ukraine)
Gerhard Pulfer	Environment Agency Austria (UBA)
Josipa Krizanovic Cimesa	Environment Agency Austria (UBA)
Florian Wolf-Ott	Environment Agency Austria (UBA)
Gabriele Vincze	Environment Agency Austria (UBA)
Daniel Trauner	Environment Agency Austria (UBA)
Sabah Nait	Environment Agency Austria (UBA)
Shabbaz Noc	Expertise France
Arnaud Bonmarchand	Expertise France
Yannick Pochon	Office International de l'Eau (OiEau)
Patrick Laigneau	Office International de l'Eau (OiEau)
Bénédicte Roy	Office International de l'Eau (OiEau)

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Krzysztof Michalak	OECD
Guy Halpern	OECD
Douglas Herrick	OECD
Lupita Johanson	OECD
Aliia Osorova (intern)	OECD
Can Aydogan	OECD
Chohye Shin	OECD
Tamara Kutonova	UNECE
Alexander Belokurov	UNECE
Christine Ingebrigtsen	UNECE
Carolin Sanz Noriega	UNECE
Tatiana Chernyavskaya	UNIDO
Arsha James	UNIDO
Tamara Avellan	UNIDO, Individual expert
Andrii Vorfolomeiev (online)	UNIDO
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