



## **New studies show gaps in EU fight for climate protection**

**[Brussels, Dec 20th]** As the end of the year is drawing closer, NGO Justice and Environment has just released a dozen case studies showing how the legal aspects of the fight against climate change are implemented on the ground, both at national and EU level. Results show there is still a long way to go before authorities efficiently curb climate change.

This set of 11 case studies – each focusing on one Member State, mainly from Eastern Europe – have been prepared over 2012 and aim at shedding light on the impact of large greenhouse gas (GHG) emission sources on climate.

J&E has been studying the practical implementation of two directives: mainly the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) one – dealing with particular projects such as motorways, airports, etc. - and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive – focusing on public programmes. The common principle underlying both Directives is “to ensure that plans, programmes and projects likely to have significant effects on the environment are made subject to an environmental assessment, prior to their approval or authorization” [1].

The green law group found that neither the national nor the European laws they have scrutinized provide clear guidance on the GHG emission threshold supposed to trigger an analysis of an individual project’s impact on climate. In order to be efficient, such threshold should be based on a reasonable comparison of the GHG source with other sources – either of the same size or using the same technology - rather than with global GHG emissions.

J&E Chairman Thomas Alge deplored: “The lack of such threshold would lead to the absurd conclusion that there is no reason to reduce the GHG emissions of any single source of GHG emissions because of its “low level” or its “marginality” compared with global emissions.”

J&E calls on the competent authorities [2] to put more emphasis on designing alternative scenarios to support the reduction of emissions and foster climate protection.

All the case studies are available here:  
<http://justiceandenvironment.org/publications/climatechange2012>

## **ENDS**

### Notes to editors:

[1] Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/home.htm>

[2] At the EU level, the competent authorities mean the European Commission. At the national level, first and foremost the environmental authorities responsible for the EIA procedures and then those for the SEA procedures are urged to take climate aspects into account.

Justice and Environment (J&E) is a European Network of Environmental Law Organizations ([www.justiceandenvironment.org](http://www.justiceandenvironment.org)). J&E covers 12 countries within and outside the European Union and has 13 members that deal with environmental law solely or as one of their activities. J&E aims for a better legislation and implementation of environmental law on the national and European Union (EU) levels to protect the environment, people and nature. J&E does this by enhancing the enforcement of EU legislation through the use of European law and exchange of information on the national, cross-border and wider European levels.

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