

15 YEARS OF LEGAL RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

Multiannual Report
2013-2017



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FOREWORD



SIIM VAHTRUS

CHAIRMAN

In 2017-2018, Justice & Environment put together its new strategy for the next 5 years. Among other things, this provided a good opportunity to take a step back and see what the role of such a network should be for its members and where our place in the larger landscape of environmental NGOs and networks is. Now that this process has successfully been completed, the role and place we found seem rather unique.

On the one hand, J&E is not a large network by European standards, not covering the whole of EU and as a rule only having one member per Member State. Neither do we currently have a permanent base in Brussels as many of our bigger partners (e.g. EEB, WWF, BirdLife etc.) have.

On the other hand, however, we are a tightly-knit group of extremely professional environmental law experts working in the non-governmental sector which as a species is as rare as large carnivores in Europe. Due to our small numbers, we work together often and intensively and know and respect each other more than just another set of partners. Spending a bulk of our time working on the national level in addition to being aware of developments in Brussels prevents us from getting lost in a “bubble” and instead allows us to remain firmly rooted to what is actually happening on national and local levels.

In the past few years we have and continue to in near future focusing a lot on working closely together with our partners – bigger, Brussels-based networks – providing them with our legal and national/local knowledge in exchange for our ideas and arguments being better represented with EU-level decision-makers. It is my strong belief that in this cooperation the whole can be greater than just the sum of its parts.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AARHUS CONVENTION – Access rights for the public

J&E has always paid the issue of access rights particular attention and worked in all three pillars of Aarhus Convention to different degrees of intensity, but all with one ultimate goal - to ensure that citizens have a voice at the table.

Access to information

J&E has long been interested in how Member States comply with their obligations stemming from EU law. Luckily, basic information on this is readily available at the European Commission in the form of compliance monitoring data, tables of concordance, infringement procedure data and the like. This does not mean that appropriately detailed and up-to-date information needed to assist the protection of the public interest and allow the public to play its key role as a watchdog is available – quite the opposite. Thus while we invested considerable efforts in getting access to infringement information from the Commission, we have received none. Also our efforts to find judicial remedies against the refusal of our requests failed at the Member State and the EU judiciary alike.

Participation in decision-making

J&E greeted the adoption of the Aarhus Regulation (the EU law translating the Aarhus Convention into obligations for EU bodies and institutions) and immediately started to apply its provisions in practice. J&E was the first ever who successfully submitted an admissible Request for Internal Review, a legal instrument designed to request the EU to reconsider its standpoint in certain matters. But as time passed, we had to share the standpoint of all those others who tried this legal avenue: the Request for Internal Review is a very limited and not very effective tool, it does not deliver on its goal, and it surely does not guarantee public participation in EU level decision-making.

Access to justice

As lawyers we believe that you may have rights but what matters is how far you can enforce them and that is why we need access to justice. We have analyzed a number of issues, including how much it costs to exercise your right to justice in a series of studies called “The Price of Justice”. Most importantly, we have paid

particular attention to convince EU legislators to regulate access to environmental justice on the Member State level through conducting our in-house impact assessment on a possible EU directive, through advocacy at the Commission, and through watchdogging the latest actions of the Commission in the matter.

▶ Access to justice is in the forefront of negotiations

While the foregoing actions did not bring about actual changes in EU legislation, all the more because the EU explicitly refused legislating in the matter of access to environmental justice, our activities and those of like-minded NGOs on the EU level resulted in bringing the issue of justice to the forefront. After the considerable pressure on the EU Commission, the latter eventually adopted a Guidance Document on access to justice in environmental matters in 2017 that provides advice on how to apply this important right. We followed up on that Guidance, submitted an in-depth and comprehensive reply, pointing out both the Guidance’s achievements, as well as its gaps and short-comings.

▶ Visegrad 4 Aarhus Center

Aarhus Centers are offices that help the public exercise its access rights to information, participation and justice. J&E believes that such a service is vital in ensuring the proper implementation of the Aarhus Convention. Therefore we named the coalition of our member organizations from the V4 region the “Visegrad 4 Aarhus Center.” Our member organisations give legal advice and legal representation to clients in environmental matters and provide quality environmental legal service to citizens.

Challenges for the future

Whenever there is an environmental dispute that the public concerned takes to a legal level, there is a need for environmental lawyers. This is especially true in issues so complicated as access to justice. The challenge in this field is obvious and two-fold: will there be motivated NGOs to stand up for their rights and will there be lawyers dedicated and devoted to help the public in its fight for a more effective implementation of their rights? As we look at the European landscape, we see alarming and worrying trends of shrinking civic space, curbed participatory rights and overall, a growing shadow of illiberal, hybrid democracies. The general challenge that affects so many areas is here in environmental matters as well, and we, environmental lawyers can only stand up against it if we have rights guaranteed by laws, usable in practice, and effective.

ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS OF COMMON INTEREST - Towards clean energy for all Europeans

One of the main topics where J&E has been active in the last few years is the European energy policy and specifically the creation of a “Trans-European Energy Network”. This network is meant to contribute to the achievement of Europe’s climate goals and promote the transition towards a carbon-free energy system in the decades to come. A list of infrastructure projects (e.g. electricity lines, gas pipelines, hydro-pumped storages, oil pipelines) which are in the common European interest shall be the main tool to achieve these goals and additionally enhance security of supply by allowing countries to receive energy from a greater number of sources and increase competition in energy markets by offering alternatives to consumers.

Projects of Common Interest (PCI) benefit from faster licensing procedures, improved regulatory conditions and access to financial support totaling €5.85 billion from the Connecting Europe Facility. Yet, the first PCI List showed about a hundred gas projects and other projects being harmful to the environment or which are quite controversial from an energy policy perspective (e.g. powerline supplying energy from coal plants or nuclear power plants). Additionally, the PCI selection process itself was carried out behind closed doors between the project promoters, the European Commission and Member States. Bearing in mind the far reaching consequences that the PCI status once awarded can have, in 2013 J&E started to claim

- a transparent process where information is provided to civil society groups and decisions on projects can be made comprehensible to the public;
- an inclusive process where environmental and other local stakeholders’ concerns on candidate PCIs are taken into due account when deciding;
- a selection process that takes environmental and social costs of candidate PCIs into account;
- a list of projects that shall be restricted to those contributing to the EU’s energy and climate goals.

► A PCI selection process allowing civil society to participate

J&E monitored and assessed the PCI selection process in the past years. The network raised awareness on the PCIs of national and EU level civil society and NGO groups. The knowledge gathered and the partnerships created thereby were used to push the EU towards opening the PCI selection process and integrating the voice of civil society:

- the European Commission opened to civil society groups and started a constructive dialogue;

- information on the PCI process is provided now actively by the Commission to interested civil society groups;
- a participation timeline has been drawn up to make steps in the process and the participation opportunities foreseeable to stakeholders;
- regional group meetings are now partly open to civil society organizations;
- a Public Online Consultation is scheduled very early in the process;
- additional trilateral meetings between project promoters, Member states and civil society organizations, including environmental NGOs, are organized by the EC for very controversial projects.

► Awareness on EU and national levels on the potential and existing conflicts between energy transition and environmental protection

J&E collected cases from EU countries, assessed projects that gave rise to conflicts with other goals, especially goals for protection of biodiversity, supported national NGOs and informed decision makers on problematic PCIs:

- the PCI decision-making body EG Energy of the Commission was made aware of several PCI projects in conflict with the EU’s environmental and biodiversity goals;
- the European Commission started to consider how to integrate environmental and social costs of projects into the PCI evaluation scheme;
- NGOs and civil society groups began working on conflict-rich projects (renewable energy resources vs. biodiversity or dirty energy), are aware of the content and meaning of the PCI designation process and are able to bring in their arguments.

Challenges for the future

Participation in PCI matters has to be supervised so it does not get stuck as a pro forma participation.

In connection to this it should be ensured that also Member States have a structured planning and selection procedure for energy infrastructures and potential PCI projects in place.

Against the background wherein numerous gas projects are on the PCI List, the problem remains that the list is not coherent with the EU’s climate goals.

On the other hand, Member States have to be prevented from misusing the PCI status in planning and permitting procedures, for example by taking the public interest in energy infrastructure development as more important than the interests of biodiversity and water protection.

ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITY DIRECTIVE

Since 2011, J&E has dealt with various theoretical and practical aspects of the Environmental Liability Directive. One common element of these comparative studies, case studies, concept notes, newsletters is that the effective and efficacious implementation of ELD has not yet been achieved. Disagreements on concept or terminology, lack of preparedness of the competent authorities, insufficient financial guarantees and many other factors contributed to the unsuccessful implementation of this directive. These shortcomings have been raised by J&E lawyers, confirming the outcomes of large international studies commissioned by DG Environment in almost all years since the ELD entered into force. The respective literature reflects our view as well.

One of the recurring statements in the official documents of the European Commission is that there is a lack of satisfying amount of information concerning the actual implementation of ELD in the Member States. This lack of information is owed to the fact in our view that there are only a few ELD procedures having been initiated in the majority of the countries. Data on a number of ELD cases in certain countries might be an artefact, mainly because other administrative procedures that address prevention and remedying environmental damage are categorized as ELD cases by a typical statistical mistake. Such way, the real problem is not just missing data on ELD implementation but, actually, missing ELD cases.

► Raising awareness

If the authorities fail to use the ELD tool in larger numbers, who can we expect to initiate such administrative cases? Local communities and environmental NGOs have a key role in ensuring the widespread and effective use of this key Directive of the European Union. The “only” problem is that the ELD procedures have numerous legal and professional ramifications, and these complicated issues entail quite intensive needs for resources. In every year, J&E has issued several newsletters and we kept contact with major networks of environmental NGOs (like the EEB, ClientEarth, Greenpeace etc.) in order to harness their exponential function to forward our messages about the actual implementation of the ELD. Based on our multiannual experiences and a targeted set of case studies, in 2017 we set up a toolkit that introduces and guides the civil sector into the world of actual and successful implementation of ELD, which can significantly help this situation.

► Helping the European Commission

In April 2016, the Commission issued the REFIT evaluation for the ELD. Although this evaluation found a lot of shortcomings, the political situation does not allow drafting an amended legal text, not even the annexes could be touched. Leading EU experts acknowledged however, that for the time being ELD performs at 20 % of its possible capacity. Their esteem is that better implementation could add in itself another 40 %, while refining the text could do the rest. J&E continuously made efforts to support these evaluations, primarily by being active and taking part in the ELD events of the Commission and the European Parliament. Thus, we actively participated in the last two ELD Stakeholders’ Meeting in May 2016 and in October 2017 with lectures, comments and position papers.

Challenges for the future

J&E strives to keep the issues of refining and implementing ELD rules afloat, in order to

- gather more evidence and information on the functioning and use of ELD;
- have a European liability system in place which follows the polluter pays principle;
- improve the practical application of ELD in Member States via increased awareness of the instrument by national law enforcement bodies (authorities) and NGOs;
- increase participation of EU level NGOs in environmental liability matters;
- get national level NGOs to know and implement the ELD;
- integrate environmental NGOs’ position into a potential revision of the ELD;
- provide valuable inputs to key decision-makers at the EU level and stakeholders on the application of ELD.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

One of the cornerstones of the EU environmental policy is the precautionary principle. A key manifestation of that principle in EU environmental laws is the presence of different types of ex ante environmental assessments. The 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP) of the EU acknowledges the importance of environmental assessments, amongst others as a key tool to integrate environmental concerns in decision-making in an early stage. To this end the EAP calls for carrying out ex ante assessments of policy initiatives also on the Member State level and fully implement the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Environmental Impact Assessment Directive.

J&E has worked on different environmental assessments since the creation of the network. In 2006, J&E prepared an EIA transposition analysis supported by case studies that ultimately fed into a position paper submitted to the European Commission. This was complemented in 2008 with additional country analyses and case studies, while in 2010 and 2011 J&E mostly worked on demonstrating how the EIA system works in EU Member States. In 2012, J&E had held a number of presentations on EIA in Brussels at a workshop dedicated to the renewal of the EIA Directive, and this was the year when we started our EIA Newsletters. We continued our work with legal analyses, implementation analyses and comparative studies, all in order to support and influence the EIA Directive review process. This motivated us to use new tools of advocacy targeted at the European Union institutions. In 2015, J&E summarized the new points of the EIA Directive amendment as well as created national summaries on how Member States legislation comply with the requirements of the new EIA Directive provisions. Our work on SEA was more limited, comprised primarily of legal analyses and case studies in 2007 and again in 2012, and a number of presentations and trainings on SEA.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is one of the major instruments of the EU for the protection of the environment and health. The revised EIA Directive (2014/52/EU) entered into force on 15 May 2014 and it aims to simplify the rules for assessing the potential effects of projects on the environment. J&E as a network and both its members on national level are concerned with the EIA practice – in cases and legal consultations – and law.

In 2013 and in the preceding years J&E:

- participated very intensely in the EU-wide revision procedure of the EIA Directive;
- collected national case law examples on the application of the current legislation;
- prepared recommendations for the EU decision-makers;
- organized meetings with stakeholders at the national and at the EU level;
- lobbied intensely together with other NGOs to contribute to a better and more efficient EIA regime.

Because there has been a new directive adopted, it is no question that the best level to affect the future of this legal instrument is the EU, therefore the EU added value is clear; Since the de facto application of this law will rest upon the Member States, we are also directing capacities to monitoring and supporting the national level processes as well.

► **Transposition of the EIA Directive**

Our members were active in the process of transposition of the Directive which was going on in 2017 by promoting the topic on national level through publications, seminars and similar, giving recommendations for optimal solutions to national decision-makers, advocacy and participating in public discussions about regulation related to EIA. The EIA working group monitored the progress of transposition that was going on in some Members States.

► **Gaps in compliance of the transposed regulations with the revised Directive**

In 2016, we initiated awareness raising about the new EIA solutions and also investigated how national laws comply with the requirements of the revised Directive and for best national practices to contribute to good transposition process of EIA directive solutions. We conducted a [survey “New Directive, Better EIAs?”](#) in the second half of 2017 in order to find the major gaps in compliance of transposed regulations with the revised Directive and we [informed](#) the European Commission about our observations.

Challenges for the future

The simple adoption of a new law is not necessarily a solution to a problem. There are other problems that persist, and J&E is ready to find an answer to them. Key challenges that remain are the following:

- the so-called “implementation gap”, i.e. the high number of cases of non-compliance (including cases where despite formal transposition, the aims of EU legislation are not being achieved) with the EU law on ex ante assessments in the Members States;
- coherence of different assessments’ requirements. There are a number of crucial differences in the rules that provide the legal framework for different assessments, i.e. rules on public participation, requirements on experts etc. Although some of them are justified by the different nature of the assessments, in some cases these cases of non-coherence are unjustified and should be addressed;
- it is also important for all parties involved that the assessments are reliable and good quality. Although in the end there is a number of factors that will influence the quality of the assessments (including non-legal aspects such as level of scientific knowledge), the rules on assessments should provide robust guarantees for ensuring the good quality of outputs.

NATURA 2000 - BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

The cornerstones of biodiversity conservation in the EU are the EU Directives on Birds and Habitats. Under those directives, a pan-European network of protected areas, the Natura 2000 network, has been created and is being managed. Although the network has been established to a degree, challenges with its management are still abundant, including protecting these sites from human activities that may be detrimental to protected habitats and species. Articles 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive set out specific procedures, called appropriate assessment, for assessing the impacts of potentially harmful plans and projects. However, its application has been uneven and at times contrary to the interpretations of the EU Courts.

The years 2013-2017 were crucial from the point of view of these directives, as in early 2014, the European Commission issued a mandate for the review and possible amendment of the directives (REFIT). In the general anti-environmental climate that prevailed at this point in Brussels, this was seen as a barely disguised attack on the directives.

In the period of 2013-2017, J&E worked on two main goals:

- to have a positive ending to the REFIT exercise (no weakening of the legislative acts);
- to ensure that appropriate assessment practice corresponds to the standards set by the case-law of the EU Courts.

► Successful intervention in REFIT

The REFIT exercise is a big success story for the whole environmental movement in the EU. In the end, the fears of weakening the directives did not materialize, among others, due to strong public pressure created by NGO campaigns. J&E was not one of the leading partners; however, we did contribute strongly to the campaign and follow-up actions. Among others, our participation helped to forge strong ties to other NGOs working on this field, as evidenced by an action plan for improvement of appropriate assessments, submitted by us, EEB, CEEweb and ClientEarth to the European Commission at the beginning of 2017, with some of our suggestions being reflected in the Commissions’ Action Plan as well.

► Overview of EU Courts’ case-law

Another activity worth mentioning here is the short overview of EU Courts rulings on appropriate assessment, which in an easy-to-read manner summarizes the most important interpretations of the Courts. The guidance, aimed at mostly NGOs and citizens and translated into 7 other languages besides English, has received a warm welcome from the NGOs.

Challenges for the future

In the coming years, abundant challenges remain. The EU will in most likelihood miss its 2020 target of halting biodiversity loss. There are many contributors to this, including climate change, urban sprawl and industrial agriculture. As a network of legal NGOs, J&E intends to continue its work on appropriate assessments as the key legal tool, addressing shortcomings on the national level and sharing good practices.

OUR PUBLICATIONS

Justice and Environment mainly publishes:

- legal analyses that examine a prevailing legislative framework in a given topic, usually both on the EU and the Member State levels, and attach an expert opinion to the situation analysis;
- case studies that investigate a real life case thus demonstrating the practical application of EU and/or national laws;
- position papers are succinct presentations of our expert opinion on a situation after the analysis of legislation and practice, usually submitted to the EU or a Member State;
- strategic complaints that are targeted at a special problem and raise an issue to be decided by the respective EU or national authority;
- case materials that were produced in cases where either J&E or its member organizations were applicants in legal procedures;
- guidance materials and toolkits that aim at raising public awareness by teaching members of the public how to use their rights;
- training materials, usually transcripts or slide shows of presentations made at events we organized or attended;
- newsletters.

Find our publications on our [website](#).

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The Annual General Meeting of the network in 2018 adopted a strategy for the period up until 2022. Unlike in the past, it focuses only on three areas – access to justice, environmental assessments and energy & climate. Each of these has a set of objectives we strive for in the coming years:

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Topic Leader:
CSABA KISS
J&E / HUNGARY



Co-leader:
KATHARINA SCHARFETTER
J&E / AUSTRIA



- Barriers to access to justice are properly identified and removed in all EU MS (either by adopting a horizontal directive or some other means, which is as effective);
- Sectoral access to justice rules (EIA, ELD, IED) are being actively used by citizens, civil society organizations (CSO);
- Citizens and CSOs using their access rights are not being harassed by public authorities or companies.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Topic Leader:

SIIM VAHRUS

J&E / ESTONIA



Co-leader:

SENKA SIFKOVIC VRBICA

J&E / SLOVENIA



- Environmental impact assessments are objective and science-based;
- Effective public participation takes place in EIA and SEA procedures, especially in transboundary cases;
- Independence of the consultants is guaranteed.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE

Topic Leader:

ENES ČERIMAGIĆ

J&E / CROATIA



Co-leader:

ZSUZSANNA BERKI

J&E / HUNGARY



- EU laws acknowledge and provide solutions for avoiding conflicts between renewable energy production/transmission and other environmental objectives;
- Effective guidance is provided on avoiding aforementioned conflicts and using safeguards;
- State aid rules and environmental quality standards are properly applied to fossil fuel-based (esp. coal-based) and nuclear energy production;
- NGO partners in the Energy Community are self-sufficient in fighting harmful projects with arguments based on EU law.

ORGANIZATION AND NETWORK

J&E is a European network of environmental law organizations working in Europe and consisting of NGOs from different countries dealing with environmental law solely or as one of their core activities.

In a connected world, in a connected Europe, one cannot make progress alone, without sharing the burdens and benefits of working for the common interest. Perhaps this inspired the Dutch NGO Milieukontakt Oost-Europa in late 2002 when it called together the major public interest environmental law offices from the four Visegrad countries to a meeting to discuss opportunities and challenges of working as environmental legal defenders in the wake of the EU enlargement. That was the time when J&E was established in Brno, the Czechia, in January 2003 as an informal network and with the provisional name Network of Central European Environmental Law Organizations (ELOnetCE). This informal network was subsequently incorporated in September 2004 with the name Justice & Environment at the Chamber of Commerce of Amsterdam under Dutch law. While J&E had its own proper decision-making bodies and internal structure, in the first few years we heavily relied on the mentoring by Milieukontakt. It involved coordination of the network's actions, facilitation of internal and external communication, fundraising and administration.

As early as in 2005, J&E submitted its first major successful funding application to the EU's LIFE NGO Grants funding scheme that enabled us to implement our first Annual Work Plan in 2006. Since then, every year, except one, J&E has been a beneficiary of this major funding source for European level NGOs and could meaningfully contribute to the improvement of EU environmental legislation and implementation, serving the public interest and raising public awareness in legal issues.

Later, in 2008 we set up its office in Brno, the Czechia and in 2014, we moved our seat from the Netherlands as well. The organization was re-registered in its new home country but continued its operation as a successor of the original association.

OUR MISSION

J&E uses its legal expertise and experience to improve EU environmental laws and their implementation for the benefit of the environment and people across Europe.

Since the beginning, when J&E was established as a loose cooperation framework of like-minded environmental legal NGOs who had their separate fields of interest as well as separate spheres of work, we have gone through a number of stages of development that can be characterized by the following steps:

2003 - personal network. Members knew each other personally and trusted each other without having built structures or processes in the network.

2004 - information sharing network. Members share their information, knowledge, experience, and harvest it once needed.

2005 - content sharing network. Members work on common causes and common works, and each member contributes with knowledge.

2006 - cooperative network. Each member has its own preferences but at the same time promotes the common goals of the network which is now distinct of the sum of particular goals.

2007 and onwards - organized network. The network is more like an organization, having concrete functions, staff and has its distinct features, goals, preferences.

The clearly defined need in J&E to move along this scale as much as possible was to improve effectiveness and output, and maximize impact in real world processes. This common goal was facilitated by our internal structure where each and every body within the organization contributes to the common success and shares the lessons of common challenges.

MEMBERS

Austria

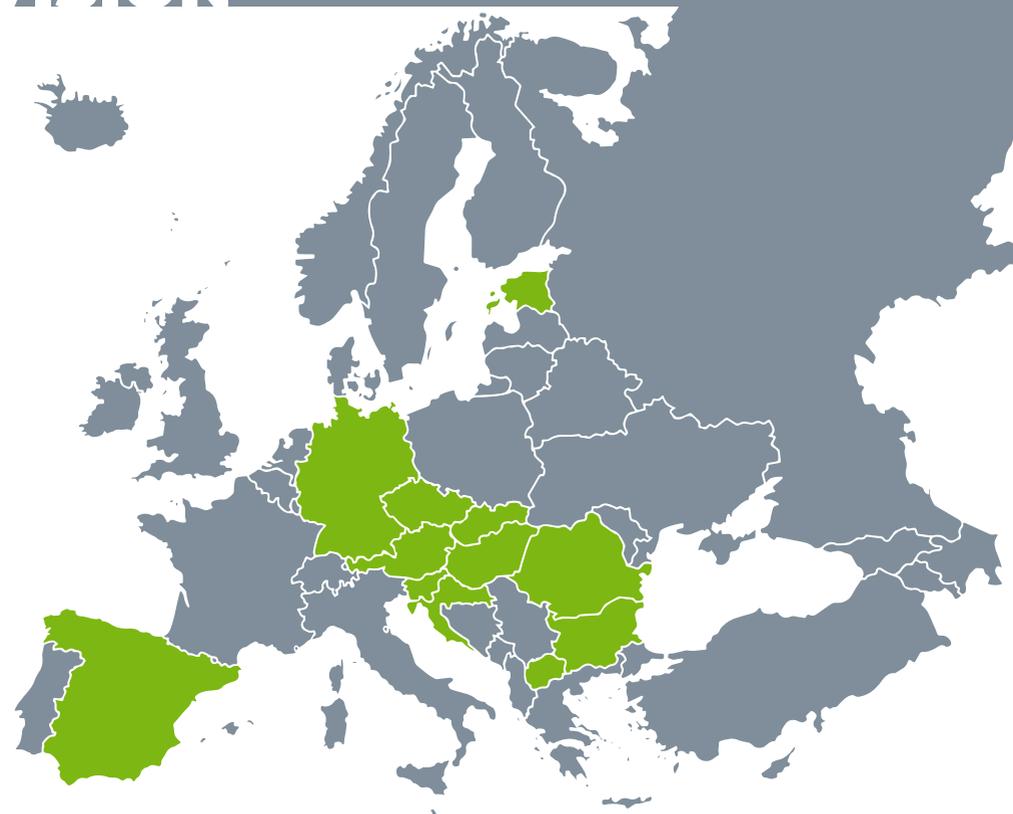
ÖKOBÜRO – Allianz der Umweltbewegung

ÖKOBÜRO is the alliance of the Austrian Environmental Movement. It is comprised of 17 Austrian organizations engaged in environmental, nature and animal protection like GLOBAL 2000 (Friends of the Earth Austria), FOUR PAWS, Greenpeace and WWF. ÖKOBÜRO works on the political and legal level for the interests of the environmental movement.



OUR VISION

EU environmental laws protect the planet and the people, doing so in a transparent, participatory and accountable way.



Bulgaria

Фондация “БлуЛинк”



BlueLink is a foundation in public interest established in 1998 in Bulgaria to uphold civil society, democracy, shared European values and environmental sustainability in EU, in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. BlueLink strives to achieve its purpose by supporting internet networking, public interest journalism, policy advocacy and research. BlueLink maintains the BlueLink Civic Action Network- a networking, coordination and information exchange hub. It supports civil society participation, access to information and justice, and stakeholder engagement through the strategic use of internet and other activities. The foundation operates a virtual newsroom to publish Evromegdan (in Bulgarian) and BlueLink Stories (in English, for Central and Eastern Europe) as e-magazines for ethical journalism in the public interest. BlueLink fosters research and analysis of internet freedom, technological and social change, civil society, democracy and sustainable development, and of the policies shaping them.

Croatia

Zelena Akcija - Friends of the Earth Croatia



Green Action - Friends of the Earth Croatia is a leading non-governmental organization for environmental protection in Croatia. Founded in 1990, it is headquartered in Zagreb. Zelena Akcija (ZA) is active on local, national and global levels and promotes the protection of nature and the environment, while advocating for sustainable development in Croatian and other communities. It also focuses on activities that foster public participation in decision-making processes with the aim of improving the quality of life in Croatia. ZA also provides pro bono legal support to citizens in dealing with environmental problems and cases.

Czechia

Frank Bold Society



The predecessor of Frank Bold Society, Environmental Law Service (ELS) was a civil association that was founded informally in 1995 as a student volunteer group. It became professional in 1997 as a non-profit organization dealing with legislative issues connected to the protection of the environment and human rights. Gradually, ELS developed into the biggest watchdog organization in the Czechia, focusing mainly on the environment and democratic processes on the level of both the Czechia and the EU. From 17th October 2013 ELS was renamed Frank Bold Society and has its seat in Brno.



Estonia

SA Keskkonnaõiguse Keskus

Estonian Environmental Law Center (EELC) was founded in November 2007 as a successor of the environmental law activities of one of Estonia's biggest environmental NGOs - Estonian Fund for Nature. EELC, based in Tallinn, is a non-profit non-governmental organization, the aim of which is to provide legal expertise for creation and application of environmental laws, speaking out for the public interests. Activities of EELC include legal analyses in the field of environmental law, collection and dissemination of information on environmental law, trainings about environmental law, environmental legal services and participation in environmental legislative processes and other environmental decision-making processes.

North Macedonia

Front 21/42 Zdruzenie na gragani



Front 21/42 is an Environmental Law Citizens' Association based in Macedonia. Its ultimate mission is the harmonization of the society with nature. Front 21/42 is the only civil society organisation practicing environmental law in Macedonia. In 2017, Front 21/42 had a major success with the strategic case "the Ohrid region - the only UNESCO site in Macedonia". Using national and international environmental law, Front 21/42 succeeded to suspend the planned infrastructure projects in the protected area. Another great achievement in 2017 was the invitation to be part of the Industrial Emissions working group and participate in the drafting of the new Law on Industrial Emissions.

Germany

Unabhängiges Institut für Umweltfragen



The Independent Institute for Environmental Issues is both a scientific institute and a citizen-based organization having its headquarters in Berlin. UfU was initiated in November 1989 by a group of nearly 40 enthusiastic East German scientists. With its roots in the GDR environmental movement, its impetus is to advocate for a transparent environmental policy, planning and managing process and environmental awareness at a grassroots level. Its mission is to keep an eye on the limits of the planet, decarbonize society and contribute to a democratic society by supporting public participation. Approximately 30 employees are currently working at UfU in the four departments: Energy Efficiency & the Energy Transition, Climate Protection & Transformative Education, Environmental Law & Participation, Nature Protection & Environmental Communication. UfU mainly works on research assignments and model projects financed by federal ministries, federal states and municipalities as well as foundations. In addition to its scientific activities, the institute initiates and engages in local and international projects and networks.

Hungary

Környezeti Management és Jog Egyesület



Environmental Management and Law Association (EMLA) is a membership association registered in Hungary and having approximately 120 individual members. EMLA, established in 1992 and having its office in Budapest with a staff

OUR MISSION

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of four environmental attorneys and an environmental engineer, is a non-profit NGO working in environmental law and environmental management on national, European and international levels. The main activities of EMLA are public interest environmental legal advice and litigation, environmental legal research, consulting and education, and carrying out environmental management projects. EMLA is also a member of The Access Initiative and Nuclear Transparency Watch.

Romania

Asociația Bankwatch România



Bankwatch Association Romania aims to prevent the negative environmental and social impacts of public and private projects and to promote sustainable alternatives and public participation in decision-making. The association was established in September 2012 by Bankwatch CEE Romania and individuals. Bankwatch Association Romania has its headquarters in Bucharest.

Slovakia

Via Iuris



Via Iuris is a non-governmental, non-profit organization promoting access to justice and broad public participation in decision-making about public issues since 1993. Its vision is a society in which the legal system enables people to effectively exercise their rights, people know their rights as well as the ways of claiming them, courts and other state authorities decide on citizen rights not only in accordance with the wording of a law, but also in line with its spirit, respecting human rights and the principles of the rule of law. The goal of Via Iuris, seated in Banská Bystrica is to promote systemic changes in the legal system to ensure it guarantees transparency and public participation in decision-making on public issues, and to ensure that at the same time it gives the citizens effective tools to control power as well as access to justice.

Slovenia

Pravno-informacijski center nevladnih organizacij



Slovenian Legal-Informational Centre (PIC) for NGOs is a non-governmental organization established in 1997. The primary working areas of PIC can be described as the legal protection of the environment and human rights (rights of vulnerable groups as

OUR VISION

EU environmental laws protect the planet and the people, doing so in a transparent, participatory and accountable way.

disabled persons, foreigners and asylum seekers, women victims of violence, socially underprivileged individuals etc.). PIC, seated in Ljubljana, is active on the strategic level (through advocacy and lobbying in legislative procedures, civic initiatives etc.) and on the operative/implementation level by offering legal counseling and legal support to individuals and NGOs. One of its main activities is providing comments and recommendations during the adoption of important laws and strategic documents in the field of environmental protection and spatial management and proposing systemic changes in particular towards a better inclusion of the public in decision-making processes and improvements of access to effective legal remedies.

Spain

Asociación para la Justicia Ambiental



Environmental Justice Association is a non-governmental, non-profit organization established in 2004 to promote environmental justice by enforcing environmental law and defending environmental rights at the administrative level and in the courts. One of its main fields of work is the implementation and enforcement of the Aarhus Convention in Spain in different ways: publishing handbooks and studies for authorities, the public and lawyers, organizing seminars for lawyers and judges about the Convention in Spain or assisting small NGOs to ask for their rights on the national or international levels. Nowadays AJA is working in Murcia region in the south of Spain to demand the rule of law regarding coastal protected areas and big impact urban projects using public participation and access to justice tools.

Instituto Internacional de Derecho y Medio Ambiente



International Institute for the Law and the Environment is a non-profit organization registered in Spain, seated in Madrid and established in December 1996 to contribute to environmental protection and to promote sustainable development through the study, development and effective implementation of environmental law. The Institute emphasizes an international and multidisciplinary approach in its activities. IIDMA has been accredited to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) since 1998. In 2001, it was declared a public utility organization by the Spanish Ministry of Home Affairs. IIDMA designs and launches its own projects as well as attends the requests from public and private institutions and organizations requiring support in the design and implementation of environmental protection mechanisms based on environmental law and policy tools.

ADVISORY BOARD



TANWEER ALI holds an M.A. degree in Mathematics from the University of Oxford as well as the CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) and FRM (Financial Risk Manager) designations. He is a lecturer of the Empire State College, State University of New York in Prague since 2003, teaching undergraduate courses in finance and mathematics, supervising bachelors' theses, participating in curriculum review.



LUDWIG KRAEMER was a German judge from 1969 to 2004; he served on secondment as the European Commission's Chief Counsel on the environment, working with the Commission for three decades. He has written more than 200 articles on EU environmental law and authored 20 books, including a classic treatise and casebook on the subject. He has lectured on the subject of environmental rights and law in more than 50 universities in Europe and North America.



FRITZ KROISS studied law at the University of Vienna and wrote his Doctorate thesis on the European framework for a sustainable Austrian transport policy. He worked as the Environmental Policies Director in ÖKOBÜRO, an umbrella organization of green NGOs in Austria. His current position is as a specialist of international environmental law at the legal department of the Austrian Environment Agency.



LANA OFAK earned her Ph.D. in Public Law and Public Administration from Faculty of Law in Zagreb in 2012. She is a member of the Avosetta Group and the Environmental Law Network International and the European Environmental Law Forum. She is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Croatia.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The executive decision-making and management body of J&E is the Executive Committee with its currently 4 members who do not represent member organizations but rather a joint, common interest of the network.



SIIM VAHTRUS
Estonian
Environmental Law
Centre / J&E Estonia



ZSUZSANNA BERKI
Environmental
Management and
Law Association /
J&E Hungary



ZELJKA LELJAK GRACIN
Zelena Akcija -
Friends of the Earth
Croatia / J&E Croatia



PRISKA LUEGER
ÖKOBÜRO/ J&E
Austria

GENERAL MEETING

J&E has a body called General Meeting consisting of all its full members who exercise their membership rights (right to initiative, to comment and to vote) mostly online, but once every year, we come together at an Annual General Meeting in person. These are the fora of major strategic and important administrative decision-makings, in addition to setting goals and plans for the upcoming years, monitoring fundraising and going through important internal organizational development steps.

SECRETARIAT



CSABA KISS
Coordinator



KATRE LIIV
Communications



LUBICA MOCKOVA
Financial Manager

ACCOUNTS

BALANCE SHEET (in EUR)

ASSETS	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1. Subscribed capital unpaid					
2. Fixed assets (2.1+2.2+2.3)	0	0	0	0	0
2.1 Intangible fixed assets					
2.2 Tangible fixed assets					
2.3 Financial assets					
3. Current assets (3.1+3.21+3.22+3.3+3.4)	95 565	111 418	116 506	255 355	144 895
3.1 Stocks					
3.2.1 Debtors due after one year					
3.2.2 Debtors due within one year	66 106	71 084	56 483	82 697	67 987
3.3 Cash at bank and in hand	29 458	40 335	60 023	172 658	76 909
3.4 Other current assets					
Total assets (1+2+3)	95 565	111 418	116 506	255 355	144 895
LIABILITIES	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
4. Capital and reserves (4.1+4.2+4.3+4.4)	5 420	10 471	12 277	17 808	9 328
4.1 Subscribed capital					
4.2 Reserves					
4.3 Profit and loss brought forward	-2 433	5 420	10 471	12 277	14 453
4.4 Profit and loss for the financial year	7 853	5 051	1 807	5 530	-5 125
5. Creditors (5.11+5.12+5.21+5.22)	90 145	100 948	104 229	237 547	135 568
5.1.1 Long-term non-bank debt					
5.1.2 Long-term bank debt					
5.2.1 Short-term non-bank debt	90 145	100 948	104 229	237 547	135 568
5.2.2 Short-term bank debt					
Total liabilities (4+5)	95 565	111 418	116 506	255 355	144 895
PROFIT AND LOSS (in EUR)					
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
6. Turnover					
7. Variation in stocks					
8. Other operating income	244 295	291 155	251 816	323 416	293 552
9. Costs of material and consumables	176 087	211 997	170 335	230 542	213 546
10. Other operating charges					
11. Staff costs	65 332	76 245	77 388	87 675	83 066
12. Gross operating profit (6.+7.+8.-9.-10.-11.)	2 876	2 913	4 092	5 199	-3 060
13. Depreciation and value adjustments on non-financial assets					
14. Net operating profit (12.-13.)	2 876	2 913	4 092	5 199	-3 060
15. Financial income and value adjustments on financial assets	7 595	4 498	1 733	2 249	5 825
16. Interest paid	2 618	2 360	4 019	1 917	7 890
17. Similar charges					
18. Profit/loss on ordinary activities (14.-15.-16.-17.)	7 853	5 051	1 807	5 530	-5 125
19. Extraordinary income and charges					
20. Taxes on profit					
21. Profit/loss for the financial year (18.+19.-20.)	7 853	5 051	1 807	5 530	-5 125

Association Justice and Environment

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