



European Union Network for the Implementation
and Enforcement of Environmental Law

Prague Ukraine Support Conference

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Introduction to IMPEL

The European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL) is an international non-profit association of the environmental authorities of the European Union (EU) Member States, and of other European authorities, namely from acceding and candidate countries of the EU and European Economic Area (EEA). The association is registered in Belgium and its legal seat is in Brussels, Belgium.

IMPEL was set up in 1992 as an informal Network of European regulators and authorities concerned with the implementation and enforcement of environmental law. The Network's objective is to create the necessary impetus in the European Community to make progress on ensuring a more effective application of environmental legislation. The core of the IMPEL activities concerns awareness raising, capacity building and exchange of information and experiences on implementation, enforcement and international enforcement collaboration, as well as promoting and supporting the practicability and enforceability of European environmental legislation.

During the previous years, IMPEL has developed into a considerable, widely known organisation, being mentioned in a number of EU legislative and policy documents, e.g. the 8th Environment Action Programme that guide European environmental policy until 2030, the EU Action Plan: "Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil" on Flagship 5 and the Recommendation on Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections.

The expertise and experience of the participants within IMPEL make the network uniquely qualified to work on both technical and regulatory aspects of EU environmental legislation.

Information on the IMPEL Network is also available through its website at: www.impel.eu



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Executive Summary <p>During the conference a number of presentations have been given. The topics of the presentations were based on the needs that were identified during the IMPEL Review Initiative held in August 2024 and presentation from partner organisations that have programmes already in place to support Ukraine.</p> <p>Based on the discussion during the conference the following conclusions were made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To create a network of experts that can support Ukraine through IMPEL's Basecamp2. Establishing Coordination Support Group for Ukraine (CSGU)	
Participants <p>The Conference was attended by colleagues from the following IMPEL member countries and partner organisations: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Malta, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, The Netherlands, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Germany, OECD and ELI.</p>	
Disclaimer <p>This report is the result of a project within the IMPEL network. The content does not necessarily represent the view of the national administrations or the European Commission.</p>	



1. INTRODUCTION

The main goal of the conference was to identify how IMPEL and her partners can support the State Environmental Inspectorate of Ukraine.

To understand better what the most important issues are and where support could be given, an IRI (IMPEL Review Initiative) has been executed in August 2024 in The Hague. During this IRI the following issues have been identified:

- Reform and transformation process of SEI;
- Improvement of the organisational setting of Sei and coordination with other authorities;
- SEI as a learning organisation;
- The use of General binding rules (GBR) in Ukraine;
- The possibilities for more cost neutral inspection activities;
- The reform of SEI's legal status as law enforcement agency;
- A communication strategy to improve the image of SEI;
- SEI as a data driven organisation;
- To further professionalise SEI's risk assessment method;
- Setting up a strategy for compliance assurance;
- To define outcome driven goals to prioritise the work and allocate staff;
- To increase the sanctions for non-compliances;
- To establish a 24/7 system to react on accidents, incidents and complaints;
- To look for modern technologies to perform inspection tasks;
- To prioritise work based on risk and make use of smart IT solutions to support inspection tasks;
- To consider the role of the inspector in permitting process;
- To reform the authorisation to access facilities or entities by inspectors';
- To execute routine inspections at facilities/entities.

This list above is by no means complete but does give a good direction for support to the state Environmental Inspectorate of Ukraine at this moment.

The conference was kicked off by the Ukraine delegation that demonstrated the current stet of play. IMPEL experts addressed good practices on the issues that are listed above and where identified during the IRI in August 2024. The OECD and Sweden as partner organisation and Member State presented their support programmes for Ukraine. The Environmental Law Institute presented the criminal and financial accountability for wartime environmental damage. See chapter 2 for a brief overview. All presentations can be found in chapter 4. The conference was concluded with formulating the next steps. See chapter 3.



Family picture of the participants of the Ukraine Support Conference held on 10 December 2024 in Prague.



2. OVERVIEW OF THE UKRAINE SUPPORT CONFERENCE

This chapter gives a very short overview of the presentation that were held in session 2 to 12 (see agenda annex 2).

Session 2: Introduction to the Ukrainian State Environmental Inspectorate (SEI) & a need for change-Ukraine's Journey So Far (presented by Ihor Zubovych, Adrii Moroz, Maksym Zhelezniak, Oleksandr Fedorenko, Oleksandr Subbotenko)

What already works:

- Working in projects gives SEI inspectors the chance to learn what is possible
- Advisory from IMPEL in building legislative framework
- Sharing and networking in IMPEL conference are important and gives possibilities to have open and honest conversations
- Meetings are motivators for SEI staff
- It assists the way to become member of the EU
- Role of public in environmental inspections (Institute of public inspectors)
- Criteria for assessing the degree of risk from conducting business activities and determining the frequency of inspections
- Unified form of the Environmental Act on inspections
- ECO threat mobile application to report threats to the environment

Suggestions of SEI:

- Establishment IMPEL Support Group for Ukraine (SGU) (IMPEL coordination)
- Develop a funding base for establishment Reform Support Team for SEI
- SEI can share professional experience and non-classic approaches like:

Session 3: OECD Recommendation on Environmental Compliance Assurance and practices in the Eastern Partnership Region (presented by Olga Olson)

- Recommendations on environmental compliance assurance (adopted in 2023) to help designing tools for promoting, monitoring and enforcing compliance
- Assessment of Ukraine's draft law on State Environmental Control
- OECD's Ukraine Country Programme to give further support to promote Ukraine's alignment and adherence with OECD Environmental Instruments, support implementation of Ukraine's post-war Recovery and reconstruction plan and help Ukraine's EU integration requirements
- EU4Environment to strengthen inspectorates
- New projects: Promoting green deal readiness in the Eastern Partnership(1/2024 – 4/2028)

Session 4: Swedish Environmental Protection Agency: Sweden-Ukraine Institutional Cooperation Project (presented by Annakarin Lindberg and Jenny Hakansson)

- Sweden to support EU accession of Ukraine and strengthen waste management in Ukraine – timeframe 9-2024 to 8-2027.



- Activities within the institutional cooperation are:
 1. EU accession process
 2. Waste management legislation
 3. National waste management plan
- Main partner is ministry of environment in Ukraine but SEI is very important here
- Activities on EU accession chapter 27
 - Preparations for bilateral screening 6-2025
- Waste:
 - Initial phase: study visit to Sweden and workshops
 - National waste management plan
 - Waste legislation, policies and guidance
 - Technical and institutional capacity
 - Control, traceability and waste crime

Session 9 – Environmental Law Institute US) Criminal and Financial Accountability for Wartime Environmental Damage in Ukraine: Opportunities and Challenges (presented by Carl Bruch, Susannah Dibble)

- Environmental damage of dams and other infrastructure, pollution, wildfires and pillage of natural resources
- Possible causes of action in criminal and civil court
- Possible forums are Ukrainian courts, international criminal court, international court of justice, other courts and tribunals and register of damage.
- Call to action to provide technical assistance and capacity building for data collection and processing and share legal and economic expertise on prosecuting.

Session 5 to 8 and 10 to 12: IMPEL members

- Strategic Alignment (presented by Simon Bingham)
- Inspection planning and risk assessment (presented by Vladamir Kaiser)
- Inspection protocols (SOP) (presented by Mark Sultana)
- Building a learning organisation (presented by Gabriëlle Kuhn)
- Drone program (presented by Janar Aleksandro)
- IT-solutions (presented by Herbert Dekkers)
- Advanced analytics in inspections (presented by Jasper van Vliet)



3. Outcome and the next steps

The conference concluded on the following outcome and next steps:

- 3. To create a network of experts that can support Ukraine through IMPEL's Basecamp**
- 4. Establishing Coordination Support Group for Ukraine (CSGU)**

Ad 1) For IMPEL to open an area within their communication platform Basecamp where SEI staff can freely ask questions and where information and knowledge is exchanged with dedicated group of IMPEL experts. Translation or interpretation needs to be organised.

Ad 2) To setup a Coordination Support Group for Ukraine that could consist of the following partners:

- Ukraine
- IMPEL
- OECD
- UNEP
- EU Commission
- Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Note: not all organisations have confirmed their participation.

The role of CSGU could be to:

- Identification of the needs
- Look for finance / investments
- Develop or initiate projects to fulfil the needs
- Bring this to the Environmental Investment Conference (May, June 2025 Rome)

Some first Ideas:

- Capacity building to support SEI in their reform including a reform support team
- Support in the opportunities for development as listed in the IRI report



3. PRESENTATIONS UKRAINE SUPPORT CONFERENCE

During the Conference 15 presentations have been given. In this chapter the slides of all the presentations can be found.

Session 2: Introduction to the Ukrainian State Environmental Inspectorate (SEI) & a need for change- Ukraine's Journey So Far

**Presentation by Ihor Zubovych,
Acting Head of the State Environmental Inspectorate, Ukraine**