

Intervention by

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**Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates,**

From the beginning, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on Environmental Policy regarding the Third Environmental Performance Review of Romania.

The Third EPR assesses Romania's environmental performance and environmental policies in the period 2012-2020, the achievements and the remaining challenges which will require further action – embedded in the specific Recommendations (for each Chapter).

I would like to mention the fruitful and productive discussions that we had during the Thirty-first session of the Expert Group on Environmental Performance Reviews (20-23 October) and the involvement of many experts.

I underline the need to strengthen administrative capacity in the area emerges from the speed with which the Carpathian Convention is developing, a development incomparable to any other environmental protection treaty. From 2003 until now, 5 protocols have been developed under the Convention and ratified by Romania. Therefore, we propose a new recommendation in Chapter 6, the Recommendation 6.7 - this will read as follows: *The Government should enhance institutional coordination and administrative capacity for the implementation of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians.*

This recommendation will allow us to increase human resources and to bring a better coordination and implementation at national level for the benefit of all countries part of the Carpathian Convention. In this respect, we have to strengthen the institutional coordination and administrative capacity for the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and the relevance of the Convention at the regional level.

The Environmental Performance Review documents the main environmental achievements that Romania has recorded since the last review. These achievements were supported by a strengthening of environmental laws and institutions.

Regarding the institutional framework for sustainable development in April 2016, the Parliament issued a Joint statement of The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate (Declaration No. 1/2016) on supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, highlighting the need for sustainable development to be at the core of public policy and expressing strong political will of Romania, at the highest political level to align with 2030 Agenda.

The institutional framework for sustainable development was strengthened by the setting up in May 2017 of The Department for Sustainable Development within the Prime Minister's Office. Further on, in 2019 the Government established the Interdepartmental Committee for Sustainable Development consisting of members of the Government, chaired by the Prime Minister. Progress has been achieved with the implementation of the SDG target 17.14 through the adoption of the Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 of Romania and the creation of the Department for Sustainable Development within the Prime Minister's Office.

**Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates,**

We are convinced by implementing the recommendations of the Third EPR of Romania we will consider revisiting and codifying environmental legislation in order to consolidate existing environmental laws and regulations and to establish efficient and effective mechanisms for inter-ministerial cooperation across all relevant ministries and departments and will ensure the continuity and coherence of environmental policy planning. Regarding institutional framework for environment, I would like to mention the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests maintains an efficient interlinkage with our subordinated institutions or under its authority.

Further efforts are needed to enhance Regulatory and compliance assurance mechanisms by reviewing the legislation on measures for the implementation of national projects, ensure its compliance with EU and international law and ensure public participation.

The Environmental Performance Review suggests that are very important the synergies between environment and R&D, technology, energy savings and resource productivity in the context of greening the economy and financing environmental protection.

In term of waste despite many difficulties, due the evolving character of the EU environmental legislation and policy, with a numerous challenge for the Government, municipalities, and companies our country has managed to introduce many of the principles of the modern waste management system since 2012. Principles of prioritization of waste generation prevention and its re-use or recovery from disposal are anchored in the legal system.

Although part of SWIMS is functional and operated, we have to encourage the remaining counties and Bucharest to implement and operate solid waste integrated management systems to substantially reduce the adverse impact of waste on human health and the environment, and to increase the rates of separate collection and recycling in municipal sector.

**Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates,**

Given these time constraints, I'd like to refer on a couple of issues that have a particularly important: climate change and biodiversity.

Regarding climate change, the EU legislation on climate change has been transposed in Romanian legislation. The National Strategy on Climate Change and Economic Growth Based on Low Carbon Emissions for the period 2016–2030, the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy on Climate Change and Economic Growth Based on Low Carbon Emissions for the period 2016–2020, and the draft National Energy and Climate Plan are key policy documents on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Recommendations made in the second EPR of Romania on the adoption of new strategies and action plans and the necessary improvements of the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory System have been implemented. Good progress has been made in achieving SDG target 13.2 by the adoption of the National Strategy on Climate Change and Economic Growth Based on Low Carbon Emissions 2016–2030, the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy and other sectoral strategic documents.

However further efforts are needed to set up a monitoring framework for the evaluation and reporting of the state of implementation of the National Strategy on Climate Change and Economic Growth Based on Low Carbon Emissions for the period 2016–2030, to enhance the share of energy from renewable sources, to improve the energy efficiency targets and the energy efficiency of old district heating systems in buildings, and also to encourage municipalities to invest in better public transport with lower GHG emissions.

Regarding biodiversity, Romania has a rich biodiversity and a high proportion of intact natural ecosystems, almost half of the country's ecosystem being covered with natural and semi-natural ecosystems. Also, our country possesses the largest areas of virgin forests in Europe. The results of the second forest inventory show that the forest coverage has increased since the first cycle inventory. Most of the 30 national and natural parks are located in forest land and more than 2.6 million ha of forest area is included in EU Natura 2000 Network.

The implementation of the proposed recommendations will help us to assess the results of the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for 2014–2020 and to establish a national level system to elaborate studies on species and habitats and monitor their trends. We have to increase the expenditures related to biodiversity, forests and ecosystems conservation and to develop a dedicated budget for the management of protected areas, especially in Natura 2000 sites.

However, the Environmental Performance Review suggests that will be necessary to develop a comprehensive long-term strategy for protected area management.

In concluding my remarks, I would like to mention the Third EPR of Romania is very important for us because it offers the ways to achieve our policy goals more efficiently and effectively.

**Thank you!**