



Environmental Knowledge and Policy Innovation between East and West Lessons Learned and not?

Minsk, 28-30 May 2019



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A conference will take stock of the transfer of expertise and policy innovation related to environmental management and governance between the European Union and Eastern Europe and Russia.

The conference is organised by GRASS - EU governance of natural resources: geopolitics, regions and sectors (<http://grass.pskgu.ru/>), together with National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Pskov State University (Russia), and IALE Chapter in Belarus (to be launched on the conference).

The latest conference updates, abstract submission and registration procedures are available from the conference web site <http://west2east.pskgu.ru/>



Background and objectives

The scope of the transfer processes of expertise and policy innovation related to environmental management and governance between the European Union and Eastern Europe and Russia is broad and includes direct, and indirect interactions, as well as intentional and unintended transfers of environmental governance knowledge and innovation. For instance:

- EU neighbourhood policies and other cooperation and partnership mechanisms (EaP, common spaces with Russia, enhanced partnership and cooperation agreements, EU association agreements etc.)
- Multilateral environmental agreements and treaties promoted by the EU and partly based on EU policies, in particular treaties of the Council of Europe, such as the European Charter of Local Self-Government, and UNECE, such as Air, Water, Industrial Accidents, Environmental Assessment and Public Participation conventions, and others like HELCOM.
- EU-driven regional cooperation initiatives and programs (such as Euroregions and INTERREG)
- Cross-border cooperation between neighbouring countries: top-down vs. bottom-up dynamics.
- Funded programs by EU institutions like the EU framework programs, H2020, INTAS, Tempus, Erasmus+, EuropeAid, Renewable Energy/Efficiency programs, as well as individual member states or regional organisations like the Nordic Council or Visegrad Group.
- EU-supported or promoted environmental standards, certification and verification systems, organisations and monitoring systems.
- International research panels, science-policy interfaces and assessments supported by the EU, such as IPBES, IPCC, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, FAO.

All these mechanisms resulted in numerous policies, national legislation, administrative arrangements, cooperation mechanisms, management guidelines and practices, as well as sets of indicators, criteria and methods for monitoring, mapping, and research in general. However, the transfer of expertise has not been balanced, and not always did the expertise and policy innovation fit the context of the areas it has been transferred to.

This conference aims at presenting a comprehensive overview of the challenges in environmental knowledge transfer between the EU and its Eastern neighbour region, and to discuss the implications for environmental management, governance, research and education in Eastern Europe and Russia. It will also reflect on how global policies on sustainable development, like the Sustainable Development Goals impact the transfers or context.

Keynote speakers

Frank Biermann (Utrecht University, The Netherlands), Aleh Cherp (Lund University, Sweden), Ruben Mnatsakanian (Central European University, Hungary), Christine Fürst (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany), Olga Likhacheva (Pskov State University, Russia), Indra Øverland (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Norway), Malte Timpfe (Leibniz Museum of Natural History of Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity Research, Germany), Alexander Prischepov (University of Copenhagen, Denmark), Kalev Sepp (Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonia), Anna Sidorovich (National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Belarus), Alexander Sergunin, St.-Petersburg State University, Russia

Call for Sessions & Papers

We are calling for paper and session proposals addressing the conference theme, where relevant, in a broader international context, or based on local case studies. Priority will be given to submissions related to:

- **Biodiversity and water management and governance**, including indicators, quality objectives and criteria, and research methods promoted by EU actors, and their applicability in biophysical and/or institutional contexts of partner countries
- **Energy security, management and governance**, including incentive systems, financial and policy mechanisms, technological options
- **Urban planning** and quality of urban environments, including nature-based solutions
- Cooperation on environmental issues in the **Baltic region and the Arctic**
- **Environmental monitoring** and research networks, assessments and reports, including the issues of transparency, legitimacy and allocation

We welcome proposals of sessions (for 120 minute time-slots) via the online submission system available from <http://west2east.pskgu.ru/>. Proposals should include a title, an abstract of max. 400 words, the name of a chair, eventually a discussant, and 2-4 presenters.

We also welcome proposals for individual paper presentations which will be clustered in sessions of related research questions by the conference organization. Proposals with an abstract of max. 400 words can be submitted via the online submission system available from the site <http://west2east.pskgu.ru/>.

The call for sessions and papers is open until **25 January 2019**. All submissions will be reviewed by the conference organizers. The decision on acceptance will be communicated in early February 2019.

Excursions

The National Academy of Sciences will arrange excursions to Biarezinski Biosphere Reserve (<http://www.berezinsky.by/en/>), which is one of the two sites in Belarus awarded the European Diploma for Protected Areas.

Practical Information

The conference registration fee is EUR 65 for the participants coming from OECD countries, and free for the participants from non-OECD countries. The registration fee includes the conference program and access to conference e-materials, access to all the sessions, coffee breaks, lunches and (subject to a confirmation) also the conference dinner. Conference excursions will be charged extra (expected c.a. EUR 15-20 per excursion).

Participants will have to cover their own travel and accommodation costs. A limited number of travel grants will be available for outstanding participants from developing countries and countries in transition.

The conference venue is the IBB Conference Centre in Minsk (<http://ibb.by/en/conference>). The Centre is conveniently located in a green area of Minsk next to an underground metro station. It is a comfortable and fashionable conference venue with up-to-date technology, and catering and first rate accommodation facilities available right at the venue.

Minsk is the capital of Belarus and, with its population close to 2 million people, is one of the most important cities in the region. Although it was almost completely destroyed during the World War II, it still holds some interesting pre-war architecture ranging from fine baroque to masterpieces of functionalist architecture of 1920-30s. After the War Minsk became a scene of huge urban planning and design project, with a single team of planners and architects working on the development of a consistent “Stalinism Empire” architectural ensemble on the of tens of square kilometres. This is a candidate site for the UNESCO World Heritage recognition.

Nowadays Minsk is a vibrant and trendy place and an emerging top city break destination: in 2018 the Belarusian government had introduced 30-day visa waiver for citizens of 80 countries (including all the EU & EEA area, USA and Canada, see details on <http://mfa.gov.by/en/visa/visafreetravel/eOced19bb1f9bf2c.html>), and travelling to Minsk, with its large international airport, became easier than ever. Tourist and hotel infrastructure received a major upgrade during the preparations to the ice hockey championship of 2014, and its development is continuing.

Conference Steering & Organising Committee

- Kalev Sepp, Estonian University of Life Sciences – the conference chair
- Attila Katona, Central European University, Hungary
- Viktor Kireyeu, NGO Ekapraekt, Belarus / St.-Petersburg State University, Russia
- Olga Likhacheva, Pskov State University, Russia
- Ruben Mnatsakanian, Central European University, Hungary
- Anton Shkaruba, Estonian University of Life Sciences
- Anna Sidorovich, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Belarus
- Hanna Skryhan, Belarusian-Russian University, Belarus
- Ruben Zondervan, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

The Conference is endorsed by:

