

# ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES IN THE EU INTEGRATION PATH - SERBIA -



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## SERBIA – status in EU integration process and membership

- October 2005 - negotiation on Stabilization and Association Agreement started
- April 2008 – SAA signed
- September 2013 – SAA entered into force
- 10 out of 35 chapters opened so far
- Most demanding Chapter 27 (ENV) – not opened yet
- Expected full membership after 2020
- Member of *Energy Community* (EU + WB6 + Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine)
- Goal: creating **integrated energy market** and **regulatory framework**
- Paris Climate Agreement signed in 2016, ratified in May 2017



# Current environmental policy

- 3 major issues:

- *lack of political conscience and will,*
- *available information and public participation,*
- *investments in infrastructure.*



- Only 0.25% of the total GDP allocated for environmental protection (min.1.25%)
- Ministry of Environment – finally independent (a separate department)
- Administrative potentials are weak, investments in human resources
- „*Environmental Package*“ of laws adopted in 2004, copied from EU legislative
- More than 700 laws and bylaws still to be adopted
- Never fully implemented, constantly amended, now obsolete
- 10-15 billions EUR necessary for achieving of EU ecological standards (2 bill invested so far)
- In 15-20 years, projected investments EUR 14 billion, out of which EUR 9 billion in the water sector

## There are certain improvements...

- Constant alignment of domestic laws with the Aarhus Convention (the latest alignments of the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Publicly Available Information)
- Reestablishment of „*Green Fund*“, first time after 2012 (a budget fund, a competence of the Ministry of Finance, a lack of bylaws)
- Civil sector is very active in raising of public awareness and education of the interested public, Coalition 27
- Adoption of new laws (Law on Chemicals, Law on Biocide Products, etc.)
- A new Law on Inspection, which was expected to harmonize the rules governing inspection



## ...but we are still far from our goals..

- Limited public participation in the process of (Strategic) Impact Assessment and short terms prescribed under the applicable laws
- Lack of educated administrative staff, professional training necessary
- Horizontal nonconformity of domestic laws and a lack of communication between the authorities
- **Waste water treatment facilities – close to 0 (zero)**
- **Hazardous waste treatment facilities – 0 (zero)**
- Problems with the issuance of integrated permits
- A small number of PPPs, significant for environmental projects
- Inspection and misdemeanor policy to be reinforced e.g. avoidance of payment of eco taxes
- Strategic documents, national strategies and action plans (such as a national strategy on climate changes) to be adopted.



# Conclusion

- **Understanding** importance of environmental protection is essential
- **Training** and communication between the competent authorities
- We need to strengthen our **infrastructure** through investments
- There will be no progress without **cooperation** between the government – private sector – civil organizations
- We need further alignment with EU regulations, but without mechanisms to apply them in practice, **laws** are only a nice wishes
- strict **misdemeanor policy** for the polluters





THANK YOU !!!

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