



Annual Report 2018

1. Annual Conference – Sofia – 16 -17 November 2018

The 2018 Conference of the Forum was held in Sofia on the topic of *Training and Specialisation in Environmental Law*. This year we received the support of the European Commission in the form of organisational and substantive assistance by the service provider Milieu Ltd.

The program, the questionnaire, the national and general reports, the presentations and other relevant documentation can be found on our website:

https://www.eufje.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38:sofia-2018&catid=10:conferences&Itemid=219&lang=en

DG Environment of the European Commission was able to refund the travel and accommodation costs for one judge per EU Member State participating in the Conference through the service contract with Milieu.

2. Co-operation with the EU in the framework of the Environmental Compliance Assurance Action Plan

EUFJE is a member of the European Environmental Compliance and Governance Forum. EUFJE attended an initial meeting of DG ENV with networks representatives on 1-2 February 2018 in Brussels on the Environmental Compliance Assurance Action Plan.

It was represented and delivered a Statement at the Inaugural Meeting of the Environmental Compliance and Governance Forum (Brussels 13 March 2018).

It participated in the following workshops:

- 1st Workshop on Complaint handling, Brussels 8 June 2018
- 2d Workshop on Complaint handling, Brussels 11 – 12 October 2018
- 1st Workshop on Combatting Environmental Crime, Brussels, 3 July 2018
- 2d Workshop on Combatting Environmental Crime, Brussels, 16 - 17 October 2018

Secrétariat – Secretariat :

<http://www.eufje.org>

Furthermore there was a planning meeting with the EC and IMPEL on October 19th in Brussels.

3. Cooperation with the “European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment” (ENPE)

ENPE (<https://www.environmentalprosecutors.eu/>) with the support of the EU LIFE programme, is undertaking a 5 year project to develop its network and to undertake a programme of support for the operative work of prosecutors. It is a multi-partner project that will improve compliance with EU Environmental Law by addressing uneven and incomplete implementation across Member States through improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of prosecutors and judges in combating environmental crime. The project is led by the England-based Environment Agency (EA) in Bristol and involves a consortium of 4 other partners: the European Union Forum of Judges for the Environment (EUFJE); the Irish EPA; the Office for Serious Fraud and Environmental Crime of the National Public Prosecutor’s Office (FP, Netherlands) and the National Environmental Crimes Unit at the Swedish Prosecution Authority (REMA).

The working groups will run for three years, presenting interim and final findings at the ENPE Annual conferences as they move forward.

Working Group 4 – Sanctioning, Prosecution & Judicial Practice looks at ongoing practical issues around enforcement of the Environmental Crime Directive, and how best to tackle these through capacity building and other means. This WG is chaired by EUFJE in the person of Dr. Carole Billiet. In 2018 it published its 1st Interim Report: *Sanctioning Environmental Crime (WG 4). Prosecution and judicial practices, 2016/17, 80 p.*

EUFJE attended the project board meetings of 2 March 2018 and 4 June 2018 (Brussels).

EUFJE was also represented and delivered some presentations at the ‘Protecting habitats and endangered species in Europe through tackling environmental crime’ Conference (Heraklion, 23 and 24 October 2018) organised by four different projects, all with the common purpose of improving the environment: European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE), the LIFE Natura Themis project, the IMPEL Water Crimes Group and the LIFE Reason for Hope project.

<https://www.environmentalprosecutors.eu/conference2018/index.html>

4. EU - Support for Cooperation with National Judges in the Field of Environmental Law

EUFJE is participating in the *Steering Committee* of the by DG Environment of the EC sponsored project “Support for Cooperation with National Judges in the Field of Environmental Law” that is executed from 2013 onwards by the Academy of European Law (ERA) in Trier. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/law/training_package.htm

The following workshops have been organised in 2018: “EU Nature Protection Law – Focus on Species Protection under the Habitats and Birds Directives”, Trier, 23-25 April 2018 and “How to handle Court Proceedings invoking non-compliance with Environmental Assessment Law” Warsaw, 11-13 June 2018

5. UNECE - Aarhus Convention – Task Force on Access to Justice

EUFJE attended the Tenth Meeting of the TF Access to Justice of the Aarhus Convention (Geneva, 27-28 February 2018).

EUFJE is involved in the activities of the Task Force: analytical studies on different aspects of the implementation of the Aarhus Convention, developing best practices, further development of the database on Aarhus case law, preparation of training workshops....

<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/tfaj11.html>

EUFJE attended also and gave a presentation at the Special Segment of the Working Group of the Parties on the 20th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Aarhus Convention, Geneva, 20 June 2018

<https://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/wgp22.html>

6. UNEP/IUCN/GJIE

The Charter of the *Global Judicial Institute for the Environment* has been finalised during 2016. EUFJE followed the activities related to its further development. EUFJE attended the First Meeting of the Interim Governing Committee of the Global Judicial Institute on the Environment (Brasilia 17-18 March 2018) and contributed to the “Judges and Prosecutors Subprocess) of the 8th World Water Forum (19-21 March). It contributed to the development of the *Brasilia Declaration of Judges on Water Justice Meeting*. It is involved in the development of the Judicial Portal of the GJIE and attended the meeting of the steering committee in Vienna on 24 July 2018.

<https://www.iucn.org/commissions/world-commission-environmental-law/wcel-resources/global-judicial-institute-environment>

<https://www.iucn.org/commissions/world-commission-environmental-law/events-wcel/conference-judges-and-prosecutors-water-justice>

<https://www.iucn.org/news/world-commission-environmental-law/201808/global-judicial-institute-environment-advances-judicial-portal>

7. Other activities

- Contribution to the evaluation of the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking on request of the European Commission
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/pdf/progress_report_EU_action_plan_wildlife_trafficking_en.pdf

- A representative of EUFJE attended the BRIG Meeting of Heads of EPA's, Dublin, 18 April 2018
- Présentation au Colloque Minute, dix ans de PRE, Cours de Justice de Mons, 7 September 2018, « Le forum des juges de l'union européenne pour l'environnement »
- Conférence « Le commerce illégal d'espèces sauvages », Senate, Brussels, présentation « La justice, résultats et coordination européenne »
- EUFJE Statement during Expert meeting « Implementation of EU Environmental legislation » European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, 8 October 2018
- Cooperation with the EJTN – European Judicial Training Network Contact Point meeting - EU Pilot Project on European Judicial Training – LOT 4
- OSCE Judicial Seminar in Almaty (Kazakhstan) on the Aarhus Convention, 17 Augustus 2018
- Co-operation with the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative, Informea, UN Environment (Steering Committee Meeting Montreux, Switzerland, 5 June 2018)

8. Running business

This comprises 2 meetings of the board (Paris 14 April 2018- Sofia 16 November 2018), updating the website, informing members and running the secretariat.