



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA  
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

# Bilateral agreements – experience of Estonia

**Rainer Persidski**

Environmental Management Department

Senior Officer

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# Agreements

- Agreement between Estonia and Latvia
  - entered into force in 1997.
- Agreement between Estonia and Finland
  - entered into force in 2002.
- Espoo Convention (1991)
  - for Estonia entered into force in 2001.

# Legal texts

- Detailed arrangements to implement the provisions of the Convention.
- Follow the structure of the Convention.
- List of activities, including e.g.:
  - EE-LV: water regulation projects on certain rivers;
  - EE-FI: underwater pipelines in the Baltic Sea.
- In general the agreements are similar.

# Articles on... (1)

- Objective of cooperation
- Competent authorities
- Field of application
- Joint commission on EIA
- Notification
- Informing the public of affected Party
- EIA documentation

# Articles on... (2)

- Participation of the public of affected Party
- Consultations
- Decision
- Joint EIA
- Post-project analysis
- Responsibilities of Parties
- Dispute settlement

# Joint commissions

- General task: implementation of the agreement and advisory role.
- Regular meetings.
- Co-chairs from both sides.
- EE-FI is more detailed:
  - six members from each Party;
  - convenes at least once a year.

# Practical benefits (1)

- Apart the formal requirements in the agreements practical issues are also dealt with within the joint commissions.
- In the form of specifying the provisions, mutual agreements, introducing good practice, etc.
- E.g. translation and content of documents; exchange of information vs notification; etc.

# Practical benefits (2)

- Long-standing reliable contacts have been established.
- If necessary early communication:
  - e.g. planning the transboundary EIA procedure as Party of origin.
- In any case quick and constructive communication.



# Practical benefits (3)

- Possible problematic situations – if at all – are tackled in a viable manner.
- Cooperation is the keyword in securing effective public participation and also the good quality of the EIA documentation.
- Relevant topics besides transboundary EIA.

# Joint EIA

- Project: Balticconnector natural gas pipeline between Finland and Estonia.
- Ad hoc working group was established.
- Coordination of national EIA procedures in the context of transboundary EIA.
- Joint EIA programme.

# Conclusion

- Bilateral agreements have proven to be helpful instruments in practice – efficient and effective cooperation.
- So far more transboundary cases with Finland.
- Agreements on transboundary SEA?



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Thank you!