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THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA



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Climate change is no longer an isolated environmental issue, but a direct threat to human, economic, and social security. For the Republic of Moldova, a country that is ecologically and economically vulnerable, the effects of the climate crisis may exacerbate inequalities, destabilize local communities, and severely affect social cohesion. The European Union (EU) actively supports the Republic of Moldova in ensuring a clean and safe environment aligned with European standards by providing financial assistance, technical expertise, and partnerships across multiple sectors. EU–Moldova cooperation has intensified in key areas such as combating climate change, promoting green energy, waste management, biodiversity protection, and the sustainable green transition.

COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change has a direct impact on the Republic of Moldova, manifesting itself through severe droughts, floods, and other extreme phenomena that influence the economy and the well-being of the population [1]. The European Union supports the Republic of Moldova in addressing these challenges through **emission reduction measures** and **climate change adaptation actions** integrated into national policies. With EU assistance, local and national authorities are implementing low-carbon development and climate resilience strategies aimed at protecting communities and natural resources.

Ambitious climate targets. The Republic of Moldova has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by **68.5% by 2030** compared to 1990 levels and to achieving **climate neutrality by 2050**, in accordance with the new Climate Law [2] adopted in 2024 [3]. These targets exceed the EU average and demonstrate the country's strong determination to combat climate change.



EU-supported climate policies. With the support of the EU's EU4Climate programme (implemented by UNDP), the Republic of Moldova developed the **Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan for 2025–2030**, which was approved in February 2025. The Plan sets out concrete actions for reducing emissions and **transitioning to green energy**, including a target of **30% renewable energy by 2030** and increased energy efficiency through reduced energy consumption and annual savings of 0.8%. Developed with expertise provided through EU assistance, the document aligns the Republic of Moldova with European practices and the Paris Agreement.



Local climate initiatives. The EU also supports local public authorities in their climate-related efforts. For example, through the Covenant of Mayors initiative, cities, and municipalities in the Republic of Moldova receive technical assistance to reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts, including the development of local action plans and measures to **enhance resilience** to floods and droughts [4]. These EU-funded local efforts help communities become greener and more resilient to natural disasters.

[1] EU Green Deal 4 Moldova. EU support towards reducing the environmental footprint of human and economic activities. <https://eu4moldova.eu/en/eugreendeal/#:~:text=Climate%20change%20has%20a%20profound,and%20health%20of%20the%20population>

[2] Moldova's New Climate Law: A Milestone in Regional Climate Action and EU Integration. <https://canecca.org/en/climate-law-in-moldova/#:~:text=,zero%20emissions%20by%202050>

[3] The National Energy and Climate Plan, approved by the Government. <https://moldova.un.org/en/290415-national-energy-and-climate-plan-approved-government/#:~:text=Thus%2C%20by%202030%2C%20the%20Republic,reduced%20up%20by%20to%2088>

[4] EU Green Deal 4 Moldova. EU support towards reducing the environmental footprint of human and economic activities. <https://eu4moldova.eu/en/eugreendeal/#:~:text=Climate%20change%20has%20a%20profound,and%20health%20of%20the%20population>



Citizens can contribute to disaster management by:



Example: Within an EU4Environment project, residents in the southern regions of the country participated in training sessions on the development of community emergency response plans, while women leaders organized practical simulation exercises in schools and villages. Awareness-raising, education, and cooperation between citizens and public institutions can significantly reduce the impact of climate crises on communities.

Women in the Republic of Moldova are often the first to experience the impacts of natural disasters or resource degradation, while also being key actors in mobilizing solutions at the local level, including:

- ▶ involvement in recycling and reuse initiatives;
- ▶ environmental education in schools and communities;
- ▶ promotion of sustainable agriculture;
- ▶ coordination of disaster preparedness committees;
- ▶ initiation of green projects or eco-startups.

In conclusion, the European Union plays an essential role in ensuring environmental security in the Republic of Moldova. Through financial support, knowledge transfer, and close partnerships, the EU supports Moldova in becoming a greener, cleaner, and more resilient country. The progress achieved during 2024 - 2025, ranging from ambitious climate policies to local waste management projects, demonstrates the shared EU - Moldova commitment to a sustainable future, for the benefit of today's citizens and future generations.

[1] EUGreenDeal4Moldova. EU support towards reducing the environmental footprint of human and economic activities. <https://eu4moldova.eu/en/eugreendeal/#:~:text=Climate%20change%20has%20a%20profound,and%20health%20of%20the%20population>

[2] Moldova's New Climate Law: A Milestone in Regional Climate Action and EU Integration. <https://caneecca.org/en/climate-law-in-moldova/#:~:text=,zero%20emissions%20by%202050>

[3] The National Energy and Climate Plan, approved by the Government. <https://moldova.un.org/en/290415-national-energy-and-climate-plan-approved-government#:~:text=Thus%2C%20by%202030%2C%20the%20Republic,reduced%20up%20by%20to%2088>

[4] EUGreenDeal4Moldova. EU support towards reducing the environmental footprint of human and economic activities. <https://eu4moldova.eu/en/eugreendeal/#:~:text=Climate%20change%20has%20a%20profound,and%20health%20of%20the%20population>



PROMOTING GREEN ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The energy sector plays a crucial role, as energy production and consumption account for **more than 68%** of Moldova's greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the transition to green energy and increased energy efficiency are essential both for environmental protection and for the country's energy security. The European Union is Moldova's main partner in this field, supporting both the response to the recent energy crisis and long-term investments in renewable energy sources and building renovation to reduce energy consumption. These actions aim to reduce **dependence on energy imports**, diversify supply sources (for example, through the interconnection of electricity networks with Romania), and align Moldova with the decarbonization objectives of the European Green Deal [5].

Energy-efficient public buildings. With EU financial support, numerous public buildings, including schools, kindergartens, high schools, and hospitals, have been renovated to improve their energy efficiency. These works include **thermal insulation** of walls and windows, the installation of modern LED lighting, heating and ventilation systems, as well as the integration of renewable energy sources such as solar panels and biomass boilers. The result is a significant reduction in energy consumption, lower utility bills, and improved comfort for students, patients, and institutional staff.

Support for households and residential buildings. In 2024, the European Commission and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) launched a joint programme to reduce the cost of energy renovations in the residential sector. The EU contributed **EUR 9.5 million** in grants, subsidizing loans through the Green Economy Financing Facility (GEFF), enabling homeowners to invest in energy efficiency measures such as **thermal insulation, heat pumps, or solar panels**. Following implementation, residents may receive cashback (financial compensation from EU funds), which further incentivizes renovations. Through such projects, energy bill savings of up to **22% in Chişinău and 40% in Bălţi** have already been recorded in residential buildings where heating systems and insulation have been modernized.

Energy efficiency in rural areas. A multi-donor project launched in 2025, "*Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in the Republic of Moldova*" (E4M), supports the energy transition in rural areas. With a total budget of **EUR 25.3 million** provided by European partners (Germany, Norway, Denmark, and the European Union), E4M aims to reduce dependence on imported energy and lower household energy bills through improved energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources.

The European Union contributes **EUR 3 million** directly to this project, with funds allocated to the energy renovation of rural homes occupied by vulnerable families. The investments also include grants administered through the Residential Energy Efficiency Fund and the **EcoVoucher** programme, which assists households in replacing old household appliances with energy-efficient ones [6].

[5] EUGreenDeal4Moldova. EU support towards reducing the environmental footprint of human and economic activities. <https://eu4moldova.eu/en/eugreendeal/#:~:text=Climate%20change%20has%20a%20profound,and%20health%20of%20the%20population>

[6] Energy Efficiency Project for Moldova: The EU, Germany, Norway, and Denmark Provide €25.3 Million in Funding./ Proiect de eficiență energetică pentru Moldova: UE, Germania, Norvegia și Danemarca oferă finanțare de €25,3 milioane. <https://newsmaker.md/ro/proiectde-eficienta-energetica-pentru-moldova-ue-germania-norvegia-si-danemarca-ofera-finantare-de-e25-3-million#:~:text=Potrivit%20unui%20comunicat%20al%20Ministerului,Norvegia%2C%20Danemarca%20%C8%99i%20Uniunea%20European%C4%83>



Managing the energy crisis and the green transition. In the short term, the European Union has also provided emergency assistance to protect citizens from rising energy prices. At the beginning of 2025, the EU agreed on an energy support package of **EUR 310 million** for the Republic of Moldova, of which **EUR 250 million** was allocated directly to compensate energy bills for the population on the right bank of the Nistru River (until the end of 2025), and **EUR 60 million** to cover the energy needs of the region on the left bank of the Nistru. This support contributes to protecting vulnerable households and ensuring supply stability, while at the same time enabling the authorities to continue reforms aimed at strengthening energy independence and developing alternative energy sources, including investments in large-scale photovoltaic power plants scheduled for construction by 2025.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management represents a critical sector for environmental security and public health. The transition from outdated practices - such as uncontrolled landfilling or open burning of waste - towards a modern system aligned with European Union standards is currently underway in Moldova [7]. The EU supports national and local authorities in developing **integrated waste management systems**, emphasizing the reduction of waste sent to landfills, **increased recycling**, and the proper treatment of hazardous waste. These improvements directly benefit citizens through cleaner communities, less polluted water and soil, and a healthier environment.

Local sanitation systems. In July 2024, under the EU4Moldova: Local Communities program, the EU financed the provision of modern waste management equipment to the city of **Iargara** (Leova District) and five neighbouring communes.

Pollution reduction and increased recycling. At the national level, the EU assists Moldova in establishing an integrated waste management system aligned with the principles of the European circular economy. A *twinning project* launched in 2024, involving experts from EU member states, supports Moldovan authorities in accelerating the adoption of EU legislation in this sector and in strengthening the capacity of environmental institutions [8][9]. The objective is to ensure that an increasing proportion of waste, such as paper, plastic, and glass, is sorted and recycled, with landfilling used only as a last resort.



These reforms will reduce soil and air pollution (for example, by preventing uncontrolled waste burning that contributes to atmospheric pollution) and will bring the Republic of Moldova closer to European environmental standards.

[7] EU4Moldova: Local Communities” – Integrated Waste Management in Iargara, Equipment Handover Ceremony. <https://eu4moldova.eu/eu4moldova-comunitati-locale-managementul-integrat-al-deseurilor-la-iargara-ceremonia-de-inmanare-a-echipamentelor/#:~:text=,viitor%20mai%20durabil%20pentru%20%C8%9B%C4%83>

[8] Twinning Project “Air Quality and Environmental Protection.”/ Proiectul Twinning „Calitatea aerului și mediului înconjurător”. <https://eu4moldova.eu/projects/eu-project-page/?id=2408>

[9] Ibidem

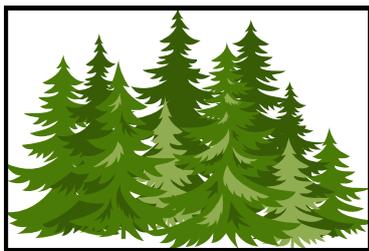


BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION

Biodiversity, the variety of plants, animals, and ecosystems, constitutes the foundation of a healthy environment. In Moldova, **forests** play a crucial role, sheltering approximately 80% of the country's wild species and protecting soils and watercourses [10]. Nevertheless, Moldova has limited forest coverage (around 13% of its territory), and overexploitation, historical deforestation, and climate change (including heatwaves and droughts) pose significant threats to these ecosystems. The European Union is a long-standing partner of Moldova in nature conservation, supporting initiatives for **afforestation, protection of natural habitats, and the preservation of endangered species**.



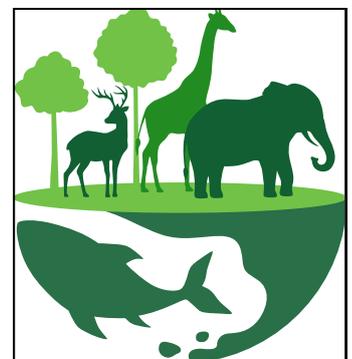
Joint efforts aim not only to conserve nature for future generations but also to enhance the quality of life of the population, which depends on ecosystem services such as clean air and water, soil fertility, and resilience to natural disasters.



Expansion of Forested Areas. In May 2024, the European Union, together with the World Bank, supported the Government of Moldova in adopting the National Forest Expansion and Rehabilitation Program (NFERP) 2023–2032. This ambitious plan aims to increase the country's forest coverage from **13.8% to at least 17%** of its territory over the next decade.

Specifically, the program foresees the planting of **110,000 hectares** of new forest and the rehabilitation of **35,000 hectares** of degraded forestlands, on both public and private lands. Beyond the ecological benefits, including habitat restoration, water protection, and prevention of soil erosion, these activities are expected to generate nearly **14,000 jobs** in rural communities, providing local populations with an economic incentive to engage in environmental protection. The Forest Expansion Program aligns Moldova with the objectives of the *European Green Deal* and the EU's new Forest Strategy for 2030, which emphasizes the crucial role of forests in achieving climate neutrality and sustainable development.

Ecosystem and Species Conservation. To identify the most valuable natural areas and ensure their effective protection, the European Union funds scientific studies and pilot projects through the regional **EU4Environment** program. A recent study (2023), conducted with EU support, mapped Moldova's **forests of high natural value**, revealing that **approximately 47% of the country's forested area** (around 175,500 hectares) meets ecological criteria of particular importance, including rich biodiversity and rare habitats.



[10] The European Union and the World Bank support Moldova in restoring biodiversity for sustainable future and citizens' well-being. <https://www.eu4environment.org/ro/news/the-european-union-and-the-world-bank-support-moldova-in-restoring-biodiversity-for-sustainable-future-and-citizens-well-being/>



These data assist authorities in directing conservation policies, for example, by expanding the network of **protected areas**. Moldova collaborates with the European Union to develop its **National Ecological Network** and to include new sites in the pan-European **Emerald Network**, thereby ensuring legal protection for valuable habitats and species at the continental level. At the same time, community-based projects, such as local afforestation initiatives, shelter belts, and ecological restoration of wetlands along river courses, receive EU funding, engaging citizens in active nature conservation.



Such efforts also contribute to the country's adaptation to climate change: healthier ecosystems enhance the capacity to mitigate floods and droughts while providing resources, such as timber, honey, and medicinal plants, sustainably.

SUPPORT FOR A SUSTAINABLE GREEN TRANSITION

A sustainable green transition requires the integration of environmental considerations across all aspects of economic, social, and administrative development. As an EU candidate country, the Republic of Moldova has committed to adopting **European environmental standards and values**, ranging from ambitious climate policies to **green economy** initiatives and sustainable agriculture. The European Union supports this transformation through a comprehensive approach, assisting Moldova in aligning its policies, institutions, and practices with EU environmental norms and sustainability objectives: substantial funding, technical assistance for reforms, educational programs, and the engagement of local communities and civil society in environmental initiatives. Collectively, these measures contribute to the development of a resilient, **environmentally sustainable economy** that provides citizens with both **prosperity** and a healthy environment.

Massive Green Investments

Harmonization of Environmental Legislation and Institutions

Innovation and Smart Communities for the Environment

The European Union is the largest donor and development partner for Moldova, channelling significant resources into sustainable projects. From 2021 to the present, the EU has mobilized over **€2.2 billion** for Moldova in the form of grants and loans, through instruments such as direct budget support, macro-financial assistance, EU programs, and guarantees for projects with international financial institutions. A substantial portion of this assistance supports the country's *green transition*. Under the EU Economic and Investment Plan for the Eastern Partnership (EIP), €1.6 billion has already been mobilized for investments in strategically important projects, identified in collaboration with Moldovan authorities.



These projects target, among other areas, green infrastructure (water and sanitation in rural areas), clean energy (for example, energy interconnections with the EU to access cleaner electricity), and the sustainable development of communities [11].

[11] Moldova. Membership status: candidate country. https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/countries-region/moldova_en?prefLang=ro



Massive Green Investments

Harmonization of Environmental Legislation and Institutions

Innovation and Smart Communities for the Environment

A successful green transition also requires a robust policy and regulatory framework. The EU provides technical assistance and expertise to align Moldova's environmental legislation with the **EU acquis**. In 2024, a **twinning project** in the environmental sector was launched, pairing experts from an EU Member State with the Moldovan Ministry of Environment. The project aims to accelerate the adoption and implementation of legislation on air quality, waste management, hazardous chemicals, and environmental reporting. It also strengthens the capacity of Moldovan institutions, including ministries and environmental agencies, to **monitor pollution**, enforce environmental laws effectively, and **inform the public** about environmental conditions [12].

Massive Green Investments

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Innovation and Smart Communities for the Environment

The EU further supports the green transition by fostering innovation and local initiatives. Dedicated programs fund **start-ups and eco-innovation projects**, including youth-led ideas for waste recycling, organic agriculture, and low-emission transport. At the community level, initiatives such as **EU4Moldova** have assisted local authorities in implementing **smart city solutions**: energy-efficient street lighting, electric or hybrid public transport, smart utility meters, and the digitalization of local services to reduce waste. The EU also actively engages citizens in environmental initiatives, from **awareness campaigns**, such as the European Sustainable Energy Week held in Moldova, to school programs on recycling and nature conservation.



These actions foster a culture of sustainability among the population, ensuring that the green transition is not only a technical transformation but also a social shift, delivering long-term benefits.

Conclusion: The European Union plays a pivotal role in ensuring environmental security in the Republic of Moldova. Through funding, knowledge transfer, and close partnerships, the EU supports Moldova in becoming a greener, cleaner, and more resilient country. Progress achieved in 2024–2025, from ambitious climate policies to local waste management projects, demonstrates the joint commitment of the EU and Moldova to a sustainable future, benefiting current and future generations.

[12] Twinning Project "Air Quality and Environmental Protection." / Proiectul Twinning „Calitatea aerului și mediului înconjurător”. <https://eu4moldova.eu/projects/eu-project-page/?id=2408>



USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

EU CIVIL PROTECTION AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

- **UE Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM).** The official page on the mechanism and the way in which the Republic of Moldova is involved in crisis management
<https://civil-protection-humanitarianaid.ec.europa.eu>
<https://igurinue.md+4westernbalkans-infohub>.
<https://eu+4eufundingoverview.be+4>

- **The Republic of Moldova became a participating state in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)** (agreement signed in September 2023, entered into force in January 2024), enabling rapid access to equipment, generators, and logistical support: *EEAS News – Moldova joins the EU Civil Protection Mechanism*.
<https://maisigurinue.md>
<https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/>

CLIMATE POLICIES AND ADAPTATION

- **EU4Climate Moldova** – a programme supporting the development of a long-term strategy on emissions reduction and climate change adaptation, including technical and financial assistance for the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs):
<https://eu4climate.eu/moldova>
<https://erc.undp.org>
<https://eu4climate.eu>

- **UNDP Climate Promise – Moldova** – information on the involvement of UNDP and the European Union in updating national climate strategies and NDCs: <https://climatepromise.undp.org>.

EUROPEAN FUNDING CALLS AND SUPPORT

EU4Environment
– a platform providing access to regional environment and climate projects (including risk reduction):
<https://eu4environment.org>.

ODIMM – programmes supporting green entrepreneurship, start-ups, and local businesses:
<https://odimm.md>.

Green for Growth Fund (GGF) – EU-backed financing for energy efficiency and green investments:
<https://ggf.lu>.

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs – an EU mobility programme for entrepreneurs, including those in the green sector:
<https://erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu>.



INFORMATION AND LOCAL SUPPORT

Eurocentres (European Information Centres) –

local contact points providing information on EU calls for proposals and advisory support

Enterprise Europe Network Moldova

guidance on project proposal writing and support in identifying business and project partnerships

Startup Moldova

a digital ecosystem promoting start-ups, including green and climate-focused initiatives:
<https://startupmoldova.digital>.



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