

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE PROJECT “TAI AND DEVELOPMENT”

14 July 2008,

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, Vilnius

Participants : Mr. Jonas Skardinskas (MOF)
Ms. Neringa Majauskaitė (MOF)
Mr. Žymantas Morkvėnas (BEF)
Ms. Jurgita Mačiūnaitė (EIC)
Ms. Audronė Alijošiutė (ECAT)
Ms. Elena Taločkaitė (ECAT)
Ms. Judita Akromienė (NGDO platform, Eurohouse)

1. Opening

ECAT representative A. Alijošiutė presented the TAI initiative, ECAT activities and the TAI and Development project.

2. Introduction

Participants introduced representing organizations.

Representative of Eurohouse E. Akromienė presented NGDO platform, formed in 15 January 2008. Platform is just starting its activities and considers environmental issues as of high importance in development and assistance policy.

MOF representative J. Skardinskas introduced legal framework for Lithuanian development cooperation and humanitarian assistance and Development Cooperation Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Lithuania for 2006-2010.

It was stressed that according to the Guidelines, Lithuania's development policy is based on Lithuania's domestic and foreign policy, EU external policy guidelines and the Millennium Development Goals. Lithuanian Government allocated 3,3 mln. euro for development assistance in 2008. 50% of that assistance is reserved for Afghanistan. According to the guidelines geographically, Lithuania focuses first and foremost on Eastern Europe (Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine) and Southern Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) but assistance is also provided to countries that face natural disasters, military conflicts or damage caused by human action.

Priority cooperation areas are:

- Promotion of democracy and human rights;
- Rule of law and good governance;
- Sustainable development;
- Education
- Protection of cultural heritage.

3. Lithuanian development policy and environmental access rights

Participants agreed that at present moment environmental access rights are not directly taken into consideration in formulation and implementation of Lithuanian aid policy.

A. Alijošiutė presented findings of the TAI assessment evolution report in Thailand. The proposition was raised that donor country decisions on international aid should take into account environmental access rights.

4. Discussion

MOF representatives stressed that present project evaluation criteria are created taking into account applicants' capacity and donor country needs and up till present moment environmental access right issue was not in the agenda. Also it has to be pointed out that most of the projects are small-scale projects.

NGO representatives proposed to include environmental democracy issues in international development aid policy documents.

All participants agreed that development aid policy revision has to take into account "TAI and development" project outcomes.

It was also stressed that capacity on environmental democracy in Lithuania and also priority donor countries is rather low and capacity building projects are the priority activities.

It was decided to continue discussion with NGDO platform and come up with common the proposals to MOF in 2009.

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