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# Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991)



## CASE STUDY FACT SHEET #2

### Undersea Methane Pipeline between Croatia and Italy

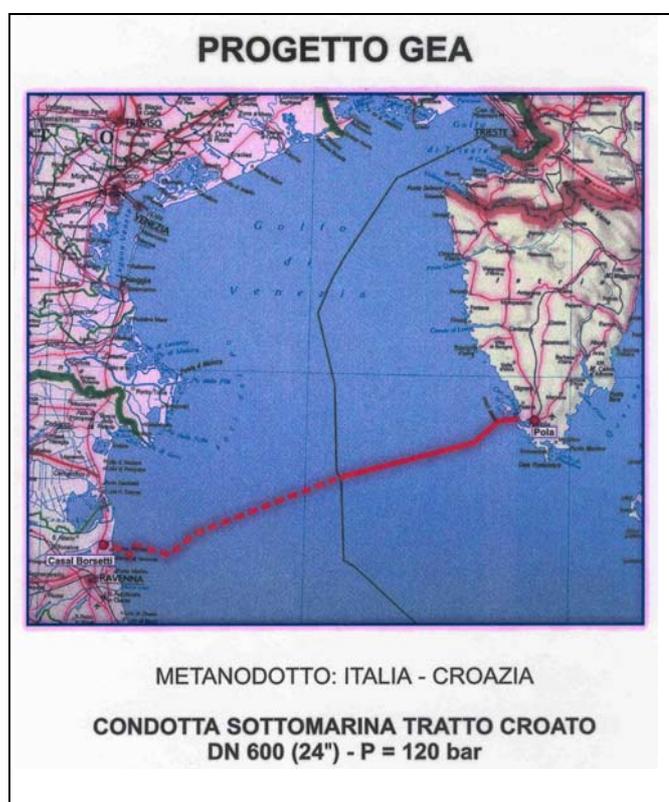
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#### THE PROJECT

The undersea pipeline between Croatia and Italy will provide for the transfer across the Adriatic Sea of methane gas from Pola to Casal Borsetti. Gas Energy Adria, a joint private Croatia-Italian company developed the project, with the support of the Croatian and Italian governments.

#### INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Both Italy and Croatia are Parties to the Espoo Convention on EIA in a Transboundary Context. In October 1998, a Joint Body was established under a bilateral agreement to represent both governments. The Joint Body oversaw the transboundary EIA procedure for this project.



#### EIA PROCEDURE

The proponent notified the public authorities and the public in Croatia and Italy at a very early stage of the procedure, according to national rules and in accordance with the European Union's EIA Directive. Even though the EIA procedure concerned the whole project, the final decision was taken by each state only in relation to its own part of the project.

The public notice provided general information on the proposed activity and indicating where and for how long the relevant documentation was available, as well as the practicalities regarding public participation. The notice was published in both national and local newspapers in both countries.

The project proponent translated all EIA documentation into both Croatian and Italian. The EIA documentation was made available in the Ravenna (Italy) harbour office and in the offices of Primorsko-Goranska County in Rijeka (Croatia), in accordance with national EIA regulations.

The public of each country had access to detailed EIA information on the potential environmental impact on their territory and to a summary of the EIA information for the other country. In addition, a non-technical summary of the EIA documentation was made available. In Croatia, there was a public hearing for two weeks in the county offices in Rijeka. In Italy there was no real public hearing, nevertheless the public has been allowed to consult the documents in the harbour office, as provided for under the current national EIA regulation.

In both cases the public had thirty days to provide written comments to the competent authority in their country, but this deadline was not enforced and all comments received before the final decision on the project were taken into account. The competent authorities in the two countries then exchanged the comments received. The project proponent was responsible for the translation of the comments. Comments by the Italian public mainly focussed on the Italian section of the project, with most referring to the enlargement of the compression station located inside a national park. There were no comments received in Croatia. However, once the procedure had been completed, the local community began to challenge the proposed location of a compressor unit on the Croatian coast and negotiations began outside the transboundary EIA procedure.

According to national legislation, the project proponent was also responsible for publishing the final decision – which was positive – in both countries.

The whole transboundary EIA procedure took six months. All costs – publications of notice and decision, preparing EIA documentation, translation and interpretation, public hearings, etc – were borne by the project proponent.

## LINKS

Italian EIA decision report website (in Italian):

[http://www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori\\_azione/via/legislazione/decreti.htm](http://www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori_azione/via/legislazione/decreti.htm)

Italian EIA report where statements from several authorities are available (in Italian):

[http://www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori\\_azione/via/legislazione/docs/decreto\\_24\\_08\\_01\\_6384.pdf](http://www.minambiente.it/Sito/settori_azione/via/legislazione/docs/decreto_24_08_01_6384.pdf)

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[www.unece.org/env/eia](http://www.unece.org/env/eia)