

# FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT – SYMPOSIUM

**Linkages between Sustainable Finance and Environmental Procedures:  
From Setting up the Rules to Impact, Verification, and Reporting**

**3 – 4 October 2024**

**Sheraton Dubrovnik  
Riviera Hotel**

**Dubrovnik, Croatia**

## INTRODUCTION

Environmental authorities and professionals globally witness a fast-growing range of sustainable finance tools that integrate financial and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria into core business and investment decisions made by financial market participants – asset managers, investment funds, retail banks, investment insurers, stock exchanges, green bond issuers, and individual investors.

To ensure adequate analytical rigour of these tools, the European Union has adopted as part of its European Green Deal an ambitious sustainable finance agenda that:

- Allows financial and non-financial companies to apply a common definition of economic activities that can be considered environmentally sustainable – the **EU Taxonomy of Sustainable Economic Activities**.
- Requires financial institutions to inform investors about their sustainability-related risks, exposures, and opportunities through **sustainable finance disclosures**.
- Improves the quality and comparability of corporate sustainability reporting by large and listed undertakings based on the comprehensive **European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS)** and the **EU Taxonomy reporting rules**.

## INVITATION

The new sustainable finance requirements will interact with environmental impact assessments, industrial emissions permitting, strategic environmental assessments, and other well-established environmental permitting and management systems that support standard investment decision-making systems in the EU and other jurisdictions for decades. Blended sustainable finance systems in low- and middle-income economies might also need to consider the environmental and social requirements of the multilateral development banks, United Nations agencies, and global vertical funds that mobilise finance for green transition.

The first conference on "Environmental Assessments and the European Green Deal '22" (Vodice, Croatia, September 2022) and its follow-up workshop on the "Practical linkages between the EU Taxonomy and EIA processes" (Zagreb, Croatia, December 2023) explored these linkages and highlighted the need of further in-depth discussion on the optimal synchronisation of all these tools that integrate sustainability considerations into decision-making.

## AIMS

The symposium will offer informative presentations and engaging discussions that unpack linkages between the ESG rating systems, the EU Taxonomy, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting, and Sustainable Finance Disclosure with environmental impact assessments, industrial emission permitting and other established tools that support public sector decision-making.

It aims to do so on both the general level and in key sectors of interest: power production, transport, water and waste management, building construction and renovation, disaster (flood) risk prevention, and biodiversity protection.

## PARTICIPATION AND REGISTRATION

The symposium has been designed for environmental authorities, financial sector participants, agencies managing EU funds, promotional banks, international financial institutions and development agencies, engineering companies, and consultancies supporting environmental and social risk management.

The symposium's thematic sessions 1-6 (see attached tentative agenda) will allow interested participants to present their lessons. Those wishing to make a presentation should follow the instructions at [www.rsfia.eu/symposium24](http://www.rsfia.eu/symposium24)

<b>Submission deadline</b>	30 June 2024 Deadline for Abstracts	1 August 2024 Abstract acceptance	15 September 2024 Final Agenda
----------------------------	--	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

Please note that the symposium can host only a maximum of 300 participants. If interested, register early at [www.rsfia.eu/symposium24](http://www.rsfia.eu/symposium24) to secure your attendance.

<b>Registration fees</b>	<b>Early Bird</b> (by 30 June 2024) 250 €	<b>Regular</b> (by 15 September 2024) 350 €	<b>Last Minute</b> (after 15 September 2024) 450 €
--------------------------	---	---	--

Public authorities receive 30% discount of the registration fee

## RSFIA PARTNERSHIP AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The symposium is hosted by the Croatian Association of Experts in Nature and Environmental Protection and the Croatian Engineering Association with support from the European Commission, European Investment Bank, United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, and the International Sustainable Finance Center.

For more information about the Regional Sustainable Finance and Impact Assessment Knowledge-sharing platform (RSFIA) or engagement/sponsorship opportunities for the Dubrovnik symposium, please contact directly the RSFIA Secretariat at:

Croatian Association of Experts in Nature and Environmental Protection (HUSZPO)  
Berislavićeva 6, Zagreb, Croatia  
[rsfia@huszpo.hr](mailto:rsfia@huszpo.hr)

## PRELIMINARY AGENDA

October 3	DAY 1		
9:00	Welcome		
9:15	<b>High-level opening</b>		
10:00	<b>Setting the rules: Linkages between sustainable finance architecture and environmental assessment and permitting</b>		
11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>		
11:30	<b>Do No Significant Harm principle under the EU budget</b> incl. linkages with the EU Taxonomy and existing environmental assessment and permitting		
12:30	<i>Lunch break</i>		
14:00	Session 1. Linkages in assessments of: <b>Energy production and transport projects</b>	Session 2. Linkages in assessments of: <b>Building construction and renovation projects</b>	Session 3. Linkages in assessments of: <b>Disaster and flood risk prevention projects</b>
15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>		
16:00	Session 4. Linkages in assessments of: <b>Water and waste management projects</b>	Session 5. Linkages in assessments of: <b>Biodiversity net positive impact projects</b>	Session 6. Linkages in: <b>Minimal social safeguards and social standards used by the IFIs and UN agencies</b>
17:30	End of Day 1		

October 4	DAY 2
9:00	Reporting from sessions 1-6: Assessment linkages
10:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00	Linkages in reporting and verification under Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and the EU Taxonomy Reporting rules
12:00	External assurance: Moving from limited to reasonable auditing of sustainability statements
13:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:30	Take-home lessons: Perspectives of environmental authorities, financial market participants and policymakers
15:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:15	Take-home lessons: Perspectives of the organizing partners
17:00	Next steps and closing remarks
17:30	End of the Symposium