



Trans Adriatic Pipeline

MEDIA RELEASE

11.04.2011

TAP BEGINS ESIA SUBMISSION PROCESS IN ALBANIA **Pipeline committed to meeting European Best Practice Guidelines**

Baar, Switzerland. The Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) today announced that it has begun the formal Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process, with the submission of the Scoping Report. The document was presented to the Albanian national and regional authorities, as well as to more than 100 other relevant stakeholders. It meets the Best Practice Guidelines laid down by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

The report includes a detailed description of the preferred route for the TAP pipeline, identified during extensive refinement studies in Albania in 2009-2010. It also contains a comprehensive explanation of the possible environmental and social impacts of the chosen route and suitable mitigation measures. In particular, special consideration was given to the avoidance of sensitive natural habitats. As a direct result, TAP will bypass the Hotova National Park and the Vjosa river valley.

Entering from Greece at Miras in the Korça region, the Albanian section of the route stretches a total of 209km to the coast, north-west of Fier. The offshore section will be 60km in length, crossing the Adriatic Sea entering southern Italy. In addition to having submitted the scoping report to the Albanian Government and a wide variety of stakeholders, NGOs and international development organisations such as the World Bank, GTZ and EBRD, TAP has also organised a series of national and regional consultation meetings from 11th – 28th April. These sessions will take place in Tirana, Korça, Çorovoda, Berat and Fier.

TAP will be one of the largest foreign direct investments in Albania and it will help to develop the country's energy infrastructure and thereby foster economic growth by creating employment and developing local skills. The pipeline can facilitate Albania in meeting its domestic energy needs by bringing Caspian gas to the Albanian market and providing a stimulus for future gas infrastructure in the country.

Commenting, Dr. Kai Schmidt Soltau, TAP's CSR & Environmental & Social Impact Assessment Manager, said: "By actively involving government and local communities in the route selection process from the beginning of the project, the Trans Adriatic Pipeline has been able to gain a lot of support and trust in Albania. From the earliest stages, all interested parties have been able to discuss their concerns with us, and to genuinely input into our chosen route."

Martin Ferguson, Health, Safety and Environment Director at TAP added: "This process sets a great example for other international companies looking to do business in Albania. By communicating and engaging with all stakeholders and ensuring that we have met international best practices at every stage, the Trans Adriatic Pipeline has enjoyed great success. We look forward to continuing to work with the Albanian Government and people in the future."

Following the feedback received on the Scoping Report, TAP will submit the full ESIA Report to the Albanian government in the third quarter of 2011. TAP anticipates receiving the official approval of the ESIA well in advance of start of pipeline construction.

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How to provide comments on the Scoping Report for the ESIA

Any individual or group that has an interest in the TAP project is invited to download the Scoping Report and provide their comments.

Scoping report for ESIA in Albanian: www.trans-adriatic-pipeline.com/albania/esia_scoping

Scoping report for ESIA in English: www.trans-adriatic-pipeline.com/albania/esia_scoping/english

Comments should be provided by June 30th 2011.

By email:

esia-comments@tap-ag.com

By post:

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About the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP)

The Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) is a natural gas pipeline project. The 520km long pipeline will transport gas from Caspian region via Greece and Albania and across the Adriatic Sea to southern Italy and further to western Europe. The project is aimed at enhancing security of supply as well as diversification of gas supplies for the European markets. TAP will open a new so-called Southern Gas Corridor to Europe and establish a new market outlet for natural gas from the Caspian Sea.

The project is designed to expand transportation capacity from 10 to 20 bcm per year depending on throughput. The TAP project also envisages physical reverse flow of up to 8 bcm and the option to develop natural gas storage facilities in Albania to further ensure security of supply during operational interruptions of gas deliveries.

TAP's shareholders are Swiss EGL (42.5%), Norwegian Statoil (42.5%) and German E.ON Ruhrgas (15%).

For more information, please visit our website or follow us on Twitter.

www.trans-adriatic-pipeline.com

www.twitter.com/tap_pipeline