

"In Romania, the prevention of corruption in the context of issuing official permits related to environmental matters has been an area of focus for the government. Key measures have been put in place to ensure transparency, integrity, and accountability in the permitting process. Below are some of the primary measures:

These mechanisms not only foster trust between citizens and authorities but also promote effective governance and sustainable environmental management. Below are key aspects of how transparency and public access to information on the environment are ensured in Romania:

1. Legal Framework and Institutional Oversight

- **Environmental Protection Agency (ANPM):** The National Agency for Environmental Protection is responsible for overseeing environmental permits. The agency is committed to transparency and public access to information about environmental decisions, including permits. ANPM ensures that environmental information is made accessible to the public in a transparent and timely manner. The agency's website provides detailed reports on environmental quality, ongoing projects, and public consultations, as well as responses to requests for information.
- **The Environmental Law (Law No. 265/2006):** This law contains provisions that regulate environmental protection and establishes the conditions under which environmental permits can be granted, ensuring accountability in the decision-making process.



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- **Law No. 544/2001 on Free Access to Information of Public Interest:** This law grants the public the right to access any information held by public authorities, including information on environmental matters. It guarantees the right of citizens to request and receive information from government agencies, including those responsible for environmental protection, such as the Ministry of Environment, the National Environmental Protection Agency (ANPM), and local environmental authorities.
- **Law No. 195/2005 on Environmental Protection:** This law emphasizes the importance of access to environmental information, aligning with European Union directives and international conventions on transparency. It ensures public access to environmental documents and promotes public participation in environmental decision-making processes.
- **The Romanian Forestry Code (Law No. 46/2008),** which regulates the management, protection, and use of forests in Romania, includes several provisions aimed at preventing corruption within the forestry sector. Given the high stakes involved in forest management – such as illegal logging, mismanagement of resources, and the potential for bribery – the Forestry Code and associated legal frameworks have been designed to promote transparency, accountability, and fair management of forest resources.
- **The 2024 version of the Romanian Forestry Code** is still based on the principles of earlier laws, certain updates and changes have been introduced to align with both national goals and European Union directives. Below are the key aspects of the Romanian Forestry Code 2024 based on recent changes and ongoing efforts in forest governance:

Stronger Measures to Combat Illegal Logging

- **SUMAL System 2.0:** One of the most significant developments is the continued use and improvement of the SUMAL (System for Monitoring and Tracking the Movement of Wood), which has been modernized into SUMAL 2.0. This updated version of the system provides real-time monitoring of timber harvesting, transportation, and storage, increasing transparency and reducing opportunities for illegal logging.
- **Increased Fines and Penalties:** The new code strengthens penalties for illegal logging, timber transport without proper documentation, and forest exploitation that violates legal limits. Penalties are now higher and apply not only to individuals but also to entities involved in illegal logging, aiming to ensure greater accountability for forest-related crimes.
- **Strengthened Forest Guard:** The National Forest Guard (Garda Forestieră) has been further empowered to enforce regulations. It has increased capacity for inspections and can impose fines and seize timber in cases of violations. The Forest Guard is also involved in monitoring and reporting on forest health, biodiversity, and illegal activities.



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- **Transparency in Forest Concessions:** The allocation of logging rights and forest concessions is subject to more transparent, competitive procedures. Public bidding processes are mandatory, and there are stricter rules governing how concessions are awarded, ensuring that they are granted based on objective criteria rather than political influence or corruption.

2. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Public Consultation

- **Public Consultation Requirements:** In Romania, public consultation is a mandatory part of the process for issuing many environmental permits, particularly for projects that could have significant environmental impacts. The public is invited to comment on Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) before any permit is issued for such projects. This consultation process allows citizens and organizations to express their concerns, provide input, and participate in the decision-making process.
- **Publication of EIA Reports:** Environmental Impact Assessments, which assess the potential effects of projects on the environment, are made publicly available. These reports must be accessible to the public in a manner that is understandable and comprehensive.
- **Public Hearings:** When significant projects are being assessed, public hearings may be organized to discuss the potential environmental impacts. These hearings allow the public, NGOs, and other stakeholders to interact with project developers and decision-makers directly.

3. International Conventions and EU Compliance

- **Romania, as a member of the European Union,** adheres to international conventions such as the Aarhus Convention (on access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters). These regulations require Romania to ensure transparency in environmental governance, making it a legal obligation for the country to provide public access to environmental information and allow public participation in environmental decision-making processes.
- **Environmental Reporting Obligations:** Romania is also obliged to report regularly on environmental performance to the EU and other international bodies. These reports include a wealth of environmental data that is made publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability.



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The Romanian government, in collaboration with civil society, international organizations, and other stakeholders, has taken significant steps to prevent corruption in the issuance of environmental permits. These measures focus on transparency, accountability, clear procedures, and the enforcement of anti-corruption laws, all of which work together to create a more robust and less corrupt permitting process in the environmental sector."