The Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP)

A Decade’s Difference

With Project Highlights from 2005-2008
With forewords by Stavros Dimas, European Commissioner for Environment; Predrag Nenezic, Former Minister of Tourism and Environment of Montenegro and Marta Szigeti Bonifert, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Center

Edited by Ana Popovic

Szentendre, Hungary
AUGUST 2009
About the REC

The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) is an international organisation with a mission to assist in solving environmental problems. The REC fulfils this mission by promoting cooperation among governments, non-governmental organisations, businesses and other environmental stakeholders, and by supporting the free exchange of information and public participation in environmental decision making.

The REC was established in 1990 by the United States, the European Commission and Hungary. Today, the REC is legally based on a charter signed by the governments of 29 countries and the European Commission. The REC has its head office in Szentendre, Hungary, and country offices and field offices in 17 beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.

The REC actively participates in key global, regional and local processes and contributes to environmental and sustainability solutions within and beyond its country office network, transferring transitional knowledge and experience to countries and regions.

Recent donors are the European Commission and the governments of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as other intergovernmental and private institutions.

The entire contents of this publication are copyright ©2009 The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe

No part of this publication may be sold in any form or reproduced for sale without prior written permission of the copyright holder

ISBN: 978-963-9638-44-0

Published by:
The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe
Ady Endre ut 9-11, 2000 Szentendre, Hungary
Tel: (36-26) 311-199, Fax: (36-26) 311-294, E-mail: info@rec.org, Website: http://www.rec.org/

Printed in Hungary by Typonova

This and all REC publications are printed on recycled paper or paper produced without the use of chlorine or chlorine-based chemicals

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.
# Table of Contents

**Executive Summary** 7  
**Acknowledgements** 13  
**Table of Abbreviations** 17  
**Foreword from the European Commissioner for Environment** 21  
**Foreword from the former Minister of Tourism and Environment of Montenegro** 22  
**Foreword from the Executive Director of the REC** 23  
**Introduction** 25  
**A Decade’s Difference: Key messages of REREp** 27  

## INSTITUTION BUILDING 43

### Environmental Investments 47
- The Priority Environmental Investment Programme 47  
- National Environmental Investment Strategy for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 50  
- Environmental Infrastructure Investment Project Preparation in the Water Sector: Available Sources of Finance for Water Infrastructure Projects in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 52  
- Pre-feasibility Studies for Strumica-Radovis and Polog Regions 54  
- Promoting Financing Mechanisms for Eco-innovation in SEE 56

### Environmental Law 57
- Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting in SEE 57  
- Approximation of Croatian Water Management Legislation to the EU Water Acquis 61  
- Capacity Building on EU Environmental Legislation at Regional/Local Level in Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 63  
- Bridging the Gaps II: Enhancing MEA Implementation in the Balkans 66  
- AIMS: Support to the Acceptance and Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in South Eastern Europe – Follow-up Phase 67
# Compliance and Enforcement

Multi-Annual Work Programmes for the Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession (ECENA, formerly known as BERCEN), for the periods 2003–2006 and 2007–2010

# Local Initiatives

Local Environmental Action Planning for Sustainability in South Eastern Europe

Our Community, Our Future: Promoting Sustainable Development of Local Communities in Croatia

Sustainable Island and Coastal Development in Sibenik-Knin: Awareness Raising, Capacity Building and Multi-stakeholder Planning for Sustainable Development and Social Transformation in Croatia

Support to Local Environmental Planning for the Liqenas and Proger Communes of Prespa Lake

Support to the Development of the Local Environmental Action Plan for the Municipality of Sokolac

Course for Local Sustainability and Action

Economic and Social Development Programme of Cetinje and Herceg Novi

Development of a Database for the State of the Environment in Municipalities

# Water Management

Additional Services for Support to Water Quality Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Wastewater Treatment with Non-conventional Technologies in Mostar

Water and Wastewater in Industry: A Training Programme

Sava River Inland Waterway Transport Study

# Climate Change and Energy

Preparation of the SEE/CCFAP — Climate Change Framework Action Plan for the SEE Region

Climate Change — Adaptation Capacity Building

Capacity Building in the Field of Climate Change in the Republic of Serbia

Legal and Institutional Support for a Designated National Authority for the Clean Development Mechanism in Albania

Climate Change and Balkan Biodiversity Conference

Financial Engineering for Cleaner Production and Energy Efficiency Projects in Croatia

Energy Efficiency in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Croatia

Fair and Clean Energy for Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) — Assistance in the Preparation of Forum 2015

# Waste Management

Support to the Public Regional Communal Service Company and Four Bosnian Municipalities

Support to the Regional Waste Management Centres in North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia

Waste Management in Dalmatian Counties in Croatia

# Sustainable Transport and Clean Fuel
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cooperation with the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles 108
Sustainable Urban Transport Policies in SEE 111
Further Support to Sustainable Urban Transport Policies in SEE 113

**Environmental Impact Assessment/Strategic Environmental Assessment** 114
Introduction to European EIA and SEA Legislation in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) 114
EIA/SEA Alumni Follow-Up Workshop for South East Europe 114

**Other Topics** 116
Promotion of, and Evaluation of Barriers to, Green Public Procurement (GPP) and the Uptake of Green(er) Products in South Eastern Europe (SEE) and Turkey 116
Reducing Environment and Security Risks from Mining in South Eastern Europe (SEE): Improving Regional Cooperation for Risk Management from Pollution Hotspots/ENVSEC Initiative in SEE 117
The Establishing of Environmental Management Centres (EMCs) in Balkan Countries — Phase 1 119
Country Survey on Environmental Integration Tools in Croatia 120
STAR — Preparation of a Social Assessment Study in the Field of Agriculture and Rural Development 122

## CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT 125

**Civil Society Organisations/NGO Support** 127
SECTOR: Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in South Eastern Europe 128
Trust Fund 1 and 2 for Locally Initiated Environmental Projects 130
Technical Assistance in Grant Scheme Management – Croatia 133

**Environmental Education** 134
Green Pack in Western Balkans: Raising Environmental Consciousness through the Environmental Education and Information Programme 134
Green Pack Junior, Promoted at the Belgrade “Environment for Europe Conference” 135
Raising Environmental Consciousness through the Environmental Education and Information Programme — the Green Pack in Albania 136
Beyond Piloting the Green Pack Albania in the Basic Education System 138
Green Pack: Education for Sustainable Development for Schools in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 140

**Public Participation** 141
Improving Public Participation Practices: Next Step in Implementing the Aarhus Convention in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia 141
Access to Information and Public Participation in Environmental Decision Making (Danube Regional Project, 3.4) 143
Promotion and Effective Application of the Rights and Responsibilities of the Albanian Population in Environmental Matters 146
Support to Small-Scale Initiatives of Non-profit Organisations Focused on Environmental and Natural Resource Protection in the Neretva Delta 148
SEA — Capacity Building in Albania and Montenegro 149
Public Participation in Environmental Decision Making; Promoting Aarhus Principles in Croatia 150
Public Awareness Raising for the Development of Tourism in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 152
Partnership for the Environment in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) 153
Sustainable Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) — Raising Environmental Awareness through a Critical, Vital and Multi-ethnic Environmental Movement 153
Seminar for Environmental Journalists and Representatives of NGOs in Serbia 154

SUPPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL REGIONAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION 157
Transboundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources 160
Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity Management in South Eastern Europe (UNEP)/ENVSEC Initiative 167
Eco-bridge between Montenegro and Albania 169
Cross-Border Cooperation through Environmental Investment and Planning 170
Cross-Border LEAPs: Environmental Planning for Peace and Stability 173
Bilateral Arrangements for the Transboundary Management of Water Resources: The Timok River 176
Setting up Instruments for Sustainable Cleaning of Solid Waste in the Drina River Basin 177

REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH THREATS AND LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY 183
Impact of Municipal Wastewater on the River Vrbas 185
Preparation of Action Plans for the Remediation of Three Heavily Polluted Areas (Hotspots) 187
Preparation of Project Documentation for the Construction of Sewage Systems and Wastewater Treatment Plants 190
Healthcare Waste Training System in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 193
Protection of Priority Wetlands for Bird Migrations in the Dinaric Arc Ecoregion — “Sharing Waters” 194
Preparation of a Study on the Natural Values of the Ezerani Nature Reserve on Lake Prespa 196
Increased Biodiversity Protection and Coastal Conservation in Kornati Archipelago, Croatia 199

REReP Task Force and Secretariat 203

Annexes 211
Annex I. List of Projects Implemented in the SEE Region with REC Assistance 213
Annex II. Donor contribution by priority area 229
Annex III. Contribution to REReP process by donors 231
Annex IV. Donor contribution to priority projects by year 233
Annex V. List of REReP Publications 235
Executive Summary

Purpose

This publication provides an overview of the activities, and highlights the achievements, of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP) from the beginning of 2005 to December 2008.

The information presented builds upon and complements earlier REC publications that covered the period 2000 to 2005, in particular Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme (REReP): Building a Better Environment for the Future for South Eastern Europe (REC, 2001)\(^1\), Highlights of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REC, 2003)\(^2\), which covered the period 2000 to 2003, and Environmental Reconstruction and EU Approximation in South Eastern Europe: REReP Highlights 2003-2005 (REC, 2005)\(^3\). In addition, the documents Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme: Foundation for Integration\(^4\), prepared for the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, held in Belgrade in 2007, and Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme: Model for a Successful Assistance Mechanism\(^5\), prepared for the Fifth Ministerial Conference in Kiev, describe the creation of REReP, its endorsement and its unique implementation mechanism. A list of all REReP publications can be found in Annex V.

The present publication comprises five main sections. The first provides an overview of 10 years of REReP implementation. It summarises the activities implemented so far and highlights possible future steps. In 2009, the programme will be upgraded and a new mechanism, the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA), will be launched by environmental ministers of the SEE region and Turkey and the European Commission. This very positive development provides an excellent opportunity to look back over the 10 years of REReP implementation and to present key messages on the progress achieved in relation to environmental protection in the SEE region and the factors that have contributed to the success of REReP.

The other four sections present projects implemented within REReP between 2005 and 2008 based on the information made available to the REReP Secretariat at the REC. All these projects support the EU integration efforts of SEE countries. The activities are clustered in four priority areas that mirror the four priority areas of REReP:

- institution building;
- civil society support;
- support to environmental regional and cross-border cooperation; and
- reducing environmental health threats and loss of biodiversity.

All the project descriptions follow the same format: background and rationale, progress achieved, and directions for follow-up. The cut-off date for the presented activities is end of December 2008. The work accomplished from January to June 2009 and the planned future steps are reflected under “What comes next?” The REReP activities have been regularly reported on and discussed at meetings of the REReP Task Force. A list of completed and ongoing projects is continually updated by the REReP Secretariat and can be found in the REReP electronic database\(^6\).

This publication showcases REReP’s achievements and its potential as an example to be followed by other countries and regions. It also serves as a public source of information on donor contributions for the environmental reconstruction of South Eastern Europe.

Background

The idea for REReP was born in 1999. Its aim was to ensure that environmental protection was systematically considered during efforts towards physical and economic reconstruction in a region that has suffered from political and economic instability. REReP is a participatory, flexible and transparent process. It was launched as a regional initiative, not only in recognition of the fact that environmental problems needed regional solutions, but also as an early attempt to establish contact and trust between environmental actors from various countries.
In March 2000, ministers of the environment from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Romania — observed by representatives of donor countries, international organisations, institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) — met in Skopje to discuss and agree on REReP in the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (Working Table II). Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo (as defined by UNSCR 1244) joined REReP in 2001. In a joint statement, the ministers endorsed REReP and agreed on a list of immediate project priorities for implementation, as part of the Stability Pact’s “Quick Start” package of projects. The ministers also approved the terms of reference of the Task Force for the Implementation of REReP (REReP Task Force) and the REC was asked to act as the secretariat.

In 2001, the stakeholders also created a strong link to the Stabilisation and Association Process of the European Union. It was agreed that REReP should develop into “a vehicle to assist the countries of SEE in their long-term goal of integration into the structures of the European Union”. An independent external review of REReP for the European Commission was carried out four years after REReP was established. Based on the review’s recommendations, a two-year REReP work plan was approved for implementation in 2007 and 2008.

REReP was developed on the basis of a common understanding among SEE countries of their environmental responsibilities. The strong country involvement in the development and implementation of projects has resulted in broad acceptance and ownership of the programme. This approach has developed long-lasting trust and confidence among the countries and has rebuilt regional dialogue towards achieving common goals. To ensure the further commitment of the countries to the process and to reflect the needs of the region as accurately as possible, the programme’s objectives have been adjusted continuously.

The overall goals of the programme are:

- to create functioning environmental institutions and to develop a sound, effectively enforced environmental legal and policy framework that approximates to the environmental norms and standards of the EU;
- to strengthen civil society in a way that enhances environmental awareness, gives the public access to environmental information, and inspires citizens to participate in environmental decision making;
- to achieve measurably reduced levels of environmental pollution and to minimise environmental pressures arising from economic recovery, with the corresponding health benefits;
- to achieve environmental regional cooperation on cross-border issues in a way that meets the obligations of the Stabilisation and Association Process; and
- to reduce the loss of the exceptionally rich biodiversity of South Eastern Europe.

In Annexes I, II, III and IV, information is given on all projects implemented within REReP with the assistance of the REC, as well as the received donor support.

Key messages of REReP

REReP has provided a unique framework for environmental priority setting, coordination and project implementation in South Eastern Europe. REReP projects and activities are numerous and multifaceted and have often been carried out over several phases and years. One of the most important characteristics of the REReP process has been its participatory nature, flexibility and transparency. The programme aimed to help SEE countries draw closer to EU membership, in particular by providing myriad means of assistance to SEE countries in meeting their obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). This section serves as a showcase for REReP’s achievements and its potential value for other countries and regions. In this way, the REC would like to ensure the continuation, through RENA and other assistance mechanisms and programmes, of the work done so far. Naturally, it is up to the SEE countries to decide on their assistance needs, but it is the belief of the REC that this summary gives a very useful overview of environmental challenges and can be a very good basis for the continuation of the coordinated efforts of the international institutions and organisations, bilateral donors, other environmental stakeholders and beneficiaries themselves.

Progress by priority area

The sections of the book highlight the activities implemented between 2005 and 2008 in the four priority areas of the programme, which are:

- institution building;
- civil society support;
- support to environmental regional and cross-border cooperation; and
- reducing environmental health threats and loss of biodiversity.
The way in which the projects are presented in this publication was approved by the REReP Task Force. All stakeholders were invited to share the achievements of specific projects and initiatives in the region.

The development of adequate institutional capacities through **institution building** has been identified as the highest priority area within REReP and has received the most donor support. It is a precondition for the strengthening of the institutional framework, which then provides a solid foundation for the implementation of policy reforms, the drafting and enforcement of environmental legislation, and the attracting of environmental investment. Projects within this area cover assistance in policy development, including strategies and action plans, priority environmental investment planning, environmental law drafting, support to compliance and enforcement, capacity building and institutional development.

The Priority Environmental Investment Programme for SEE (PEIP), which was initiated in 2001 and endorsed by the SEE ministers in 2003, supported strategic national environmental planning in the countries through institutional strengthening, capacity building, the preparation of environmental investment projects and the attracting of financial support to handle the necessary large capital investments in infrastructure. A multi-stakeholder approach to investment planning, involving all key players in the process, contributed to the spread of international environmental norms to the SEE region. The activities under PEIP were complemented by other environmental infrastructure investment support such as the preparation of a pre-feasibility study for water supply in four municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina; capacity building of local governments and utilities in three cross-border sites between Serbia; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro and preparation of four feasibility studies for water infrastructure investments; drafting of pre-feasibility studies for two regions in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the establishment of regional integrated waste management systems and work on the drafting of the National Environmental Investment Strategy of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Financing mechanisms for eco-innovation were also promoted across the region.

Harmonising national legislation with the EU environmental acquis, as well as improving the implementation of the adopted legal acts, remain high priorities for countries in the region in the context of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP). The project “Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting” promoted the efficient and effective development of comprehensive legislative frameworks in compliance with the EU environmental acquis, as well as cooperation in the area of environmental law in the region. The project also supported the operation of the Environmental Law Approximation Network (ELAN), established in 2002. During the last two years, the REReP was implementing progress monitoring on the transposition and implementation of the EU acquis in SEE. Work related to multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in the Balkans was aimed at increasing the level of acceptance and implementation. The Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession (ECENA), the successor to the REReP Balkan Environmental Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Network (BERCEN), became a self-standing programme at the end of 2006. The multi-annual work programme (MAP) of ECENA for the period 2007 to 2010 is under implementation.

Improved resource utilisation patterns and environmental management, as well as financing for local priority projects, are achieved through REReP assistance in supporting local environmental initiatives and developing local environmental action plans (LEAPs). Over 1 million people in SEE are directly benefitting from these projects. Aid in planning activities and the direct investment of EUR 1.5 million in priority environmental projects have assisted local communities to move towards more strategic environmental and resource management, and thereby towards improved compliance with national and EU environmental standards. Some of the communities involved are Novi Travnik, Jajce, Vares, Kotor Varos and Prnjavor in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Gjilan, Gjakove, Peja, Ferizaj and Klina in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244); Probistip, Debar, Zelenikovo, Bosilovo, Vladdingo and Caska in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and Vrnjacka Banja, Trstenik, Cuprij a and Velika Plan a in Serbia. In addition, improved planning practices and environmental management, coupled with investments in local infrastructure, contribute towards reaching the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty in communities in SEE.

Professional capacity in SEE in the field of climate change and energy is still limited: intensive capacity-building activities were conducted at both the policy-making and expert levels. The impacts of climate change are already visible in the vulnerable SEE region. The Belgrade Initiative for enhancing regional cooperation on climate change was launched in 2007, followed by the adoption of the Southeast Europe Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation in November 2008. Capacity-building activities and the integration of climate change considerations into national policies were fostered.
REReP promoted the development of sustainable urban transport policies in SEE countries and provided capacity building and the sharing of best practices. Through the ongoing cooperation with the UNEP-based Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV), SEE countries were assisted to reduce vehicular air pollution through the promotion of lead-free and low-sulphur fuels and cleaner vehicle standards. Activities on the national level took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Efforts were mostly focused on the phasing out of lead. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro will phase out leaded petrol in 2009. Awareness-raising campaigns were carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and a similar campaign will be carried out in Montenegro in 2009.

In spite of difficulties in securing funds, REReP contributed to limited capacity building and investments to support integral water quality resources management and pollution reduction and control on the rivers Vrbas, Sava, Drina, Neretva, etc.; the fulfilment of the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and the Nutrients Directive; as well as active participation in international river conventions.

In most SEE countries a regional approach to integrated waste management has been adopted and waste management is slowly starting to move in this direction. REReP provided support with limited funds towards the development of national and regional waste management strategies and plans and the establishment of regional waste management centres, for example in two Croatian regions, North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia, as well as in Dalmatian counties. The support also included tailor-made legal and institutional recommendations for certain regions, training for municipalities and utility companies, and public-awareness campaigns.

REReP recently became involved in the promotion of green public procurement and the uptake of green products in the SEE region and Turkey, and the evaluation of existing barriers. Through a participatory process involving the most relevant national stakeholders, the main barriers to green public procurement were highlighted in selected countries, with proposals for the elaboration of national “road maps” for action.

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) is working towards improving regional cooperation for the management of risk from pollution hotspots. Since 2006, ENVSEC partners have focused on programmes and projects contributing to reducing environment and security risks from mining in SEE by providing in-depth risk assessments for decision makers, identifying potential hotspots and recommending priority measures for mitigation and risk management at national and regional levels.

Support to civil society is a vital element in ensuring that investments reflect broad public interest, and that democratically based institutional capacities are truly embedded. A wide variety of support projects developed within the REReP context demonstrate the breadth of the action needed to support this sector, which has been a priority of REReP from the very beginning.

The largest civil society support project is the EUR 3.7 million SECTOR programme (Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in SEE), which includes a number of support tools (training, granting, organisational development) and which is based on an extensive civil society assessment carried out in 2006-2007. Several new tools to support environmental civil society organisations are outputs of this programme, including a manual and programme on organisational assessment and development.

Several projects have financially supported NGOs in specific countries. In Albania, considerable resources are being allocated for a trust fund to support locally initiated environmental projects. The trust fund has entered its second phase with an additional EUR 1 million focusing on capacity development activities and improvement and the rehabilitation of environmental conditions through a granting programme. Financial support to NGOs has concentrated on helping them to prepare projects on sustainable development.

Support to national and regional electronic networks has included strategic planning exercises, targeted training and infrastructure provision.

As countries recognise the importance of future generations with regard to the environment, education projects have been given a particular emphasis. An extension of the Green Pack to four additional countries has begun. These highly praised teaching aids are to be delivered to schools, and teachers trained to use them, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) in 2009-2010. Including the Green Pack Junior, which was launched in Belgrade in October 2007, and the continuation of the programme in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, there are a significant number of projects supporting the education and awareness-raising priorities within REReP.

Several projects have addressed important public participation issues, such as the project in Albania on
the application of rights and responsibilities in environmental matters, and the programme on improving public participation practices in SEE and strengthening access to information and public participation in the Danubian countries.

The promotion of regional cooperation, including cross-border initiatives, is at the heart of the inspiration behind REReP, since SEE countries share not only the goal of EU integration, but also physical landscapes and borders. Through the promotion of interstate dialogue and regional cooperation, good neighbourly relations also develop and evolve. Enormous progress has been made in this area since the initiation of REReP. The number of cross-border memoranda of understanding, agreements and initiatives has rapidly increased. The effective sustainable management of shared natural resources requires cross-border cooperation and the development of long-term planning, thus senior officials and various experts have met to exchange information, views and experiences on the current status of cross-border cooperation, as well as to define priorities and needs.

The REReP project "Transboundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources" follows up on the very first project implemented in SEE under REReP. The activities focused on three types of geographical area (delta, mountain range and lake) and covered six countries neighbouring these areas. The Neretva Delta, shared by Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia; Skadar/Shkodra Lake between Albania and Montenegro; and the Stara Planina Mountain range that runs along a stretch of border between Bulgaria and Serbia. Cross-border exchanges between local organisations and regional-level technical networks were developed in order to enhance the shared management of natural resources.

Environmental cooperation has also been particularly successful in the protection of other shared natural sites, such as the cross-border management of the rivers Sava, Drina, Bojana/Buna, Timok and Danube, as well as the joint natural resources of lakes Ohrid and Prespa.

A range of cross-border forums, agreements and initiatives can be found within the increasing number of cross-border projects that are being carried out in the region, using a variety of instruments, models and approaches for joint work. The Euroregion Stara Planina has been recognised by the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), and forums for the Neretva Delta and Skadar/Shkodra Lake have been successfully established. Institutional strengthening of the established forums and capacity-building activities are being implemented via conferences, workshops, training events, eco-camps and study visits supporting regional dialogue. Cross-border cooperation has also been strengthened at different locations throughout the region with multi-stakeholder environmental investment planning and the preparation of local environmental action plans.

The project "Cross-Border Cooperation through Environmental Planning and Investment" assisted stakeholders from three cross-border areas — Zvornik, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mali Zvornik, Serbia; Debar, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Peshkopia, Albania; and Bileca, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Niksic, Montenegro — in addressing common environmental problems through the preparation of investments. Through a series of trainings and workshops, local governments and utility experts across the borders were supported to establish a cooperative approach and to develop the skills needed to identify and prepare environmental investment projects for financing. Four international standard feasibility studies were prepared and the investments were made up of three components focused on water resources protection (water supply efficiency improvement; the reduction of pollution caused by the discharge of wastewater; and the institutional strengthening of the utility). The REC assisted the beneficiaries in identifying viable financing options for the investments by contacting national authorities and financing institutions.

Cross-border local environmental action plans were developed and adopted in the municipalities of Bratunac, Ljubovija, Rudo and Priboj, belonging to the section of the Drina River basin that stretches between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several priority actions were implemented in partner municipalities with EUR 300,000 of investments.

Through ENVSEC, a multi-year project was launched in 2007 seeking to facilitate a process of dialogue and cooperation between Serbia and Bulgaria on the transboundary Timok River.

An essential element of a harmonised economic and environmental management system is an understanding of the true economic value of an ecosystem and the services it provides. However, such an understanding is very difficult to obtain, as the majority of biodiversity and ecosystem benefits are public goods with no given market price. By working together and developing economic tools that take proper account of this value, SEE countries will be able not only to manage their ecosystems in a more sustainable manner, but also to address the need for remedial action regarding species loss and ecosystem degradation. Relevant national and international governmental organisations are working on the integration of...
biodiversity considerations into SEE policies, strategies and actions, aiming to ensure that available funds work in favour of, and not against, biodiversity conservation. Projects such as “Biodiversity Protection and Coastal Conservation in the Kornati Archipelago” in Croatia, and “Protection of Priority Wetlands for Bird Migrations in the Dinaric Arc Ecoregion” are implemented in an inter-sectoral manner, inclusive of stakeholders that represent a diverse set of backgrounds including tourism entrepreneurs, members of civil society and national authorities. This open dialogue is necessary as activities related to biodiversity are cross-cutting and affect many sectors, for example agriculture and transportation as well as tourism. In addition, the initiation of dialogue and the exchange of experiences across geographical regions and national borders in Europe provide an excellent opportunity to curtail biodiversity loss while bringing communities together in a shared endeavour.

There are just a few projects within REReP that deal with health threats in SEE. This area has received very modest donor interest and support. A training programme and materials were prepared and delivered on handling healthcare waste for the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and the Ministry of Health of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The training was much appreciated; the needs for capacity building in this field remain very high. Projects dealing with pollution problems, such as the preparation of action plans for the remediation of heavily polluted areas (hot spots), also have had an impact on health.
The present REReP publication was written in collaboration with a large number of REReP stakeholders and individuals. The REReP Secretariat would like to thank the contributors listed below for their valuable comments, insight and support.

We would like to thank the European Commission for their strategic leadership and continuous support of REReP, for making this publication possible and contributing to its content. More specifically we would like to thank Soledad Blanco, Claude Rouam, Anne Burrill, Slavita Dobreva, Dagmar Kaljarikova, Carmen Falkenberg Ambrosio, Francois Delcuellerie, Bo Caperman, Andrew Murphy and Joanna Fiedler of DG Environment and Yngve Engstrom, Pascal Henry, Sofia Papantoniadou and Patrick Packet of DG Enlargement.

We are very grateful to the Montenegrin Ministry of Tourism and Environment, which is the last co-chair of the REReP Task Force.

We extend our most sincere thanks to the donor governments, agencies and international financial institutions for providing information on their support for the environmental reconstruction of South Eastern Europe. We would also like to thank the staff of the implementing agencies and international organisations for providing information on specific projects and for sharing their comments.

Special thanks are extended to the REReP focal points in SEE countries and to all ministerial staff members responsible for project implementation and for making this publication complete and focused: Auron Meneri, director of the Minister’s Cabinet, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration, Albania; Senad Oprasic, head of the Environmental Protection Department, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (MoFTER), Bosnia and Herzegovina; Kalin Iliev, head of Coordination on EU Affairs Department, Ministry of Environment and Water, Bulgaria; Mira Medic, Directorate for Strategic and Integration Processes, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction, Croatia; Muhamet Aliu, former permanent secretary, Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244); Gordana Kozuharova, former head of European Integration Department, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Biljana Djurovic, senior advisor, Department for Environmental Protection, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Protection, Montenegro; Alberto Silviu Simion, head of unit, Directorate for Structural Funds, Ministry of Environment and Water Management, Romania; Sasa Dragan, former minister, Ministry of Environment; current minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Serbia; Jelena Cvetkovic, assistant minister, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Spatial Planning, Serbia.


We also acknowledge the work of the key contributors to the publication listed below and apologise for the accidental omission of any individual who contributed.

Contributors by chapter
A Decade’s Difference Approaching 10 years of REReP — key messages

Writing
Ana Popovic, Project Manager, REReP Task Force Secretariat, REC; Oreola Ivanova-Nacheva, former Deputy Executive Director, Strategy and Development, REC

Contributors
REReP focal points in SEE countries, donors and international organisations; REC team

Institution Building
Introduction and editing
Ana Popovic; Oreola Ivanova-Nacheva

Contributors
Ruslan Zhechkov, senior expert, Environmental Financing, REC; Dusan Sevic, project manager, Environmental Financing, REC; Tsvetelina Borissova Filipova, senior project manager, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC; Cecile Monnier, Miriam Markus-Johansson, project managers, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC; Diana Culo, former project assistant, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC; Zsuzsanna Ivanyi, senior expert, Climate Change, REC; Mihail Dimovski, senior expert, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC; Srdjan Susic, senior expert, Local Initiatives, REC; Jozef Szlezak, senior expert, Sustainable Consumption and Production, REC; Wioletta Szymanska, project manager, REC; Radoje Lausevic, deputy executive director, REC; Mihallaq Qirjo, director, REC CO Albania; Jasna Draganic, director, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Djordje Vojinovic, project manager, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jasna Draganic, director, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Djordje Vojinovic, project manager, REC FO Banja Luka, Andrea Bevanda-Hrvo, project manager, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Irena Brnada, director, REC CO Croatia, Zeljka Medven, project manager, REC CO Croatia, Katarina Stojkovska, director, REC CO the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kornelija Radovanovic, Ana Petrovska, project managers, REC CO the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Srna Suda Viliotic, director, REC CO Montenegro, Jovan Pavlovic, director, REC CO Serbia, Zeqir Veselaj, director, REC FO Kosovo, Isabelle Sorg and Shannon White, interns at the REC, Jelena Beronja, project manager for SEE, ENVSEC Regional Desk Officer, UNEP.

Civil Society Support

Introduction
Robert Atkinson, former director, Civil Initiatives, REC

Editing
Ana Popovic, project manager, REReP Task Force Secretariat, REC

Contributors
Robert Atkinson, former director, Civil Initiatives, REC, Jerome Simpson, senior expert, Information, REC, Klement Mindjov, senior expert, Education and Capacity Building, REC, Christelle Kapoen, Education and Capacity Building, REC, Magdolna Toth Nagy, senior expert, Public Participation, REC, Mihallaq Qirjo, director, REC CO Albania, Inka Persic, Information and grant manager, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lejla Pulic, Project/grant Officer, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Enisa Pulic, financial manager, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Irena Brnada, director, REC CO Croatia, Kornelija Radovanovic, project manager, REC CO Montenegro, Jovan Pavlovic, director, REC CO Serbia, Zeqir Veselaj, director, REC FO Kosovo, Zorica Korac, project manager, REC CO Serbia, Shannon White, intern at the REC.
Support to Environmental Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation

Introduction and editing
Ana Popovic, project manager, REReP Task Force Secretariat, REC

Contributors
Srna Sudar Vilotic, director, REC CO Montenegro, Mira Puric, Jelena Perunicic, project managers, REC CO Montenegro, Vesselin Drobenov, project manager, REC CO Bulgaria, Zoran Mateljak, project manager, REC CO Croatia, Jovan Pavlovic, director, REC CO Serbia, Aleksandra Mladenovic, project manager, REC CO Serbia, Djordje Vojinovic, consultant/project manager, REC FO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Banja Luka, Nirmela Musa, Lejla Pulic, financial manager assistants, REC CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Venelina Varbova, project manager, REC, Srdjan Susic, senior expert, Local Initiatives, REC, Tsvetelina Borissova Filipova, senior project manager, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC, Cecile Monnier, project manager, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC, Diana Culo, former project assistant, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC, Shannon White, intern at the REC.

Reducing Environmental Health Threats and Loss of Biodiversity

Introduction and editing
Ana Popovic, project manager, REReP Task Force Secretariat, REC

Contributors
Jasna Draganic, director, CO Bosnia and Herzegovina, Irena Brnada, director, REC CO Croatia, Zeljka Medven, project manager, REC CO Croatia, Kornelija Radovanovic, Ana Petrovska, project managers, REC CO the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Jovanka Ignjatovic, project manager, Water Management, REC, Tsvetelina Borissova Filipova, senior project manager, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC, Cecile Monnier, project manager, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC, Diana Culo, former project assistant, Environmental Law/Enforcement and Compliance, REC, Shannon White, intern at the REC, Jelena Beronja, project manager for SEE, ENVSEC Regional Desk Officer, UNEP.
Table of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEBR</td>
<td>Association of European Border Regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AECEN</td>
<td>Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AECID</td>
<td>The Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIMS</td>
<td>Acceptance and Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in South Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAT</td>
<td>Best available techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDE</td>
<td>Bureau for Development Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEF</td>
<td>Baltic Environmental Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BERCCEN</td>
<td>Balkan Environmental Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMU</td>
<td>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARDS</td>
<td>Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCFAP</td>
<td>Climate Change Framework Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCPC</td>
<td>Croatian Cleaner Production Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDM</td>
<td>Clean Development Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEA</td>
<td>Croatian Environment Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE</td>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFCU</td>
<td>Central Finance and Contracting Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Country office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil society organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW</td>
<td>Croatian Waters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG</td>
<td>Directorate General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISF</td>
<td>Danube Investment Support Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNA</td>
<td>Designated national authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Drina River Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSS</td>
<td>Decision support system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAR</td>
<td>European Agency for Reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBRD</td>
<td>European Bank for Reconstruction and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECENA</td>
<td>Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECNC</td>
<td>European Centre for Nature Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEA</td>
<td>European Environment Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EECCA</td>
<td>Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFE</td>
<td>Environment for Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIA</td>
<td>Environmental impact assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIONET</td>
<td>European Environment Information and Observation Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELAN</td>
<td>Environmental Law Approximation Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELDNSO</td>
<td>Environmental Law Drafting Network of Senior Officials in SEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELTIS</td>
<td>European Local Transport Information Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMC</td>
<td>Environmental Management Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSI</td>
<td>Energy Saving International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVSEC</td>
<td>Environment and Security Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPEEF</td>
<td>Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPER</td>
<td>European Pollutant Emission Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPIS</td>
<td>Electric Power Industry of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-PRTR</td>
<td>European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEF</td>
<td>Global Environment Facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHG</td>
<td>Greenhouse gases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMOs</td>
<td>Genetically modified organisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPP</td>
<td>Green public procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ</td>
<td>German Agency for Technical Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCW</td>
<td>Healthcare waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAIA</td>
<td>International Association for Impact Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICLEI</td>
<td>International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICPDR</td>
<td>International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEB</td>
<td>European Investment Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFIs</td>
<td>International financial institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIED</td>
<td>International Institute for Environment and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPEL</td>
<td>Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INECE</td>
<td>International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTENSE</td>
<td>Intelligent Energy Saving Measures for Municipal Housing in Central and Eastern European Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPPC</td>
<td>Integrated pollution prevention and control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRBM</td>
<td>Integrated river basin management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISES</td>
<td>International Solar Energy Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISG</td>
<td>Infrastructure Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISWM</td>
<td>Integrated solid waste management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUCN</td>
<td>The World Conservation Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCP</td>
<td>Large combustion plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Local environmental action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Local and regional administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSG</td>
<td>Local self-government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>Multi-criteria analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAs</td>
<td>Multilateral environmental agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEPP</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MESP</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIP</td>
<td>Multi-annual indicative programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoAFWM</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (Montenegro)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoEFWA</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration (Albania)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoFTER</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (Bosnia and Herzegovina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCEIA</td>
<td>Netherlands Commission for Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCTs</td>
<td>Non-conventional technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDF</td>
<td>Neretva Delta Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEAP</td>
<td>National environmental action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECEMA</td>
<td>Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement in Maghreb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEIS</td>
<td>National Environmental Investment Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIP</td>
<td>National implementation plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFP</td>
<td>National focal point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIS</td>
<td>Newly Independent States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NISECEN</td>
<td>NIS Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCan</td>
<td>Natural Resources Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAT</td>
<td>Organisational assessment tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official development assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODP</td>
<td>Organisational development plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for European Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCFV</td>
<td>Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEIP</td>
<td>Priority Environmental Investment Programme for SEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PILOT</td>
<td>Planning Integrated Local Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPC</td>
<td>Project preparation committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-private partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPU</td>
<td>Programming and Planning Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTR</td>
<td>Pollution release and transfer register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REC</td>
<td>Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RENA</td>
<td>Regional Environmental Network for Accession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP</td>
<td>Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP TF</td>
<td>Task Force for the implementation of REReP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMCEI</td>
<td>Recommendations for minimum criteria for environmental inspections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWMCs</td>
<td>Regional waste management centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Stabilisation and Association Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAA</td>
<td>Stabilisation and Association Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Strategic environmental assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTOR</td>
<td>Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in South Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE</td>
<td>South Eastern Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEENN</td>
<td>South Eastern European Environmental NGO Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEIA</td>
<td>Impact Assessment Stakeholders in South East Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPA</td>
<td>Serbian Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and medium-sized enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPUTNIC</td>
<td>Strategies for Public Transport in Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWM</td>
<td>Solid waste management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAIEX</td>
<td>Technical Assistance Information Exchange Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNECE</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFCCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USEPA</td>
<td>United States Environmental Protection Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWWWT</td>
<td>Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VROM</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFD</td>
<td>Water Framework Directive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMS</td>
<td>Waste Management Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WQM</td>
<td>Water quality management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWFMedPO</td>
<td>World Wide Fund for Nature Mediterranean Programme Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWTP</td>
<td>Wastewater treatment plant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS has been made in recent years in South Eastern Europe in addressing environmental threats. Nevertheless, many serious challenges still remain: polluted soils, illegal dumping of waste, poor water quality and outdated industrial production methods. In addition to all that, climate change is causing droughts and floods on the one hand, and forest fires and water shortages on the other.

Throughout the last decade, since the end of the armed conflict, the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP), established by the European Commission and other donors, has helped to improve the environment in the region and has been very successful in re-establishing and facilitating regional dialogue. It has supported the progress made at national level in transposing and preparing to implement EU environmental legislation and identifying infrastructure projects for protecting the environment. It has enabled stakeholders to become partners in developing and implementing environment policy. The success of REReP is largely due to the initiative of SEE countries and their sense of ownership of the process. The European Commission has provided guidance as well as technical and financial assistance.

Now, in close cooperation with the REReP partners, we are reforming our regional cooperation to take account of the changed geopolitical context. We propose to move forward this regional environmental dialogue into a network driven by the prospect of EU accession to be known as the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA).

It is my firm belief that extending the geographical scope of the existing regional environmental cooperation and enhancing coherence and synergies will bring us closer to our ultimate goal of protecting the environment and facilitating the EU accession process.

I welcome this publication as a testimony to the hard work and achievements of REReP and as a valuable input for the future work of RENA.

Stavros Dimas  
European Commissioner for the Environment
IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, the countries of South Eastern Europe have made great progress in achieving their fundamental goals. Our part of Europe is moving in the direction of lasting stability and development. I am convinced that all the states in this part of Europe remain committed to the European path, and that their faithfulness to European values will help all of us to reach our goals. The regional cooperation process in the field of environment is certainly of assistance in reaching these aims, and the readiness that the European Union has expressed confirms that all sides are prepared to fulfill their promises and commitments.

The purpose of regional cooperation is not for the states of South East Europe to merge into some kind of association for this part of Europe: its purpose is rather the adoption and promotion of European values in the framework of regional environmental cooperation. When speaking about states that are not yet members of the EU, regional cooperation, as the foundation of long-term political stability, security and economic development, will enable them to more easily and quickly reach European and Euro-Atlantic goals.

Only with functional regional coordination is it possible to achieve the kind of positive results as those achieved under the umbrella of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP). When assessing REReP, the first regional cooperative mechanism, which was established in 1999, it can be said that SEE countries have made great progress in regional cooperation. Under REReP there has been very successful cooperation in the areas of environmental investment planning and preparation, the strengthening of environmental legislation, environmental enforcement and compliance, environmental education and information, and the protection and management of shared natural resources. Now that REReP’s mission has been successfully finalised, we are obliged to continue to build on the previous positive experiences. REReP attracted significant assistance to the region, many professional networks were established and are continuing to operate, and capacity building on regional, national and local level was implemented. The greatest benefit is that, by undertaking these activities, SEE countries have acquired the growing sense that regional cooperation is the best way to promote our aspirations for EU integration.

After the significant changes that came within the process of reconstruction and stabilisation, accession to the EU is clearly recognised as the main goal of all the countries in the region. The fulfilment of the Copenhagen political and economic criteria and acceptance of the EU environmental acquis represent a major driver of the overall reforms at the national and regional level.

It is therefore important to put in place a new mechanism that will support our activities in the context of the Stabilisation and Association Process. In this respect, Montenegro strongly supports the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA) to serve as the regional informal environmental dialogue between the European Commission and the candidate countries and potential candidates. RENA will facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices between the member states and the region, as well as among the participating countries.

SEE countries attach great importance to strengthening cooperation in environmental protection, in particular through the systematic exchange of information, the implementation of concrete projects and the conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements. It is in our best interest to coordinate our work on environmental matters among ourselves and with the EU in order to achieve EU environmental standards throughout the region.

Predrag Nenezic
former Minister of Tourism and Environment of Montenegro
SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE has changed significantly since 1999, the year in which the idea for REReP was born. The end of major military conflicts in the countries comprising the former Yugoslavia presented not only fresh opportunities to reach regional political solutions, but also unprecedented possibilities to identify and address the region's most pressing environmental concerns.

One of the biggest impacts in the SEE region has been the countries' declared prioritising of EU membership: Bulgaria and Romania have joined the EU; “candidate country” status has been granted to Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) has been signed with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.

The speed with which so many countries have gained or moved toward EU accession makes it easy to overlook just how much environment-related and other work needed to be done at the time of REReP’s conception, formation and development. The programme was, in fact, a direct response to the immediate and imminent need for environmental protection in SEE. Apart from support to accession countries in SEE, regional cooperation was also increased to incorporate and support the accession efforts of Turkey. A main characteristic of the process was to be its participatory nature, flexibility and transparency. Specifically, the programme aimed to help SEE countries draw closer to EU membership, in part by providing myriad means of assistance to SEE countries in meeting their obligations under the SAA. Having lived up to and often surpassed expectations, REReP will formally end with the 2009 debut of the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA).

The achievements of REReP create an excellent foundation for the start of RENA, the launch of which will surely be a new milestone on the way to the EU integration of SEE countries.

Marta Szegi Bonifert
Executive Director of the REC
This publication provides an overview of the activities, and highlights the achievements, of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP) from the beginning of 2005 to December 2008.


The present publication comprises five main sections. The first provides an overview of 10 years of REReP implementation. It summarises the activities implemented so far and highlights possible future steps. In 2009, the programme will be upgraded and a new mechanism, the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA), will be launched by environmental ministers of the SEE region and Turkey and the European Commission. This very positive development provides an excellent opportunity to look back over the 10 years of REReP implementation and to present key messages on the progress achieved in relation to environmental protection in the SEE region and the factors that have contributed to the success of REReP.

The other four sections present projects implemented within REReP between 2005 and 2008 based on the information that was made available to the REReP Secretariat at the REC. All the projects supported the EU integration efforts of the SEE countries. Activities are clustered in four priority areas that mirror the four priority areas of REReP:

- institution building;
- civil society support;
- support to environmental regional and cross-border cooperation; and
- reducing environmental health threats and loss of biodiversity.

All the project descriptions follow the same format: background and rationale, progress achieved, and directions for follow-up. The cut-off date for the presented activities is the end of December 2008. The work accomplished from January to June 2009 and the planned future steps are reflected under “What comes next?” The REReP activities have been regularly reported on and discussed at meetings of the REReP Task Force. A list of completed and ongoing projects is continually updated by the REReP Secretariat and can be found in the REReP electronic database.

This publication showcases REReP’s achievements and its potential as an example to be followed by other countries and regions. It also serves as a public source of information on donor contributions for the environmental reconstruction of South Eastern Europe.
Ministers of the environment from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Romania endorsed REReP in the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. The ministers adopted the terms of reference for the Task Force for the Implementation of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP Task Force) and asked the REC to provide secretariat support.

July 2000
The first REReP Task Force meeting was held in Cavtat, Croatia. The Task Force decided to include Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) and Montenegro in the programme in line with other Stability Pact activities.

November 2000
The second REReP Task Force meeting was held in Brussels. The Task Force decided to invite the European Investment Bank and similar financial institutions to its meetings. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia became a full member of REReP.
Introduction

Since its inception in 1999, REReP has provided a unique framework for environmental priority setting, coordination and project implementation in South Eastern Europe (SEE). It was initiated under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and endorsed by SEE ministries of the environment at a meeting in March 2000 in Skopje. Recognising that environmental problems need regional solutions, REReP was also an early attempt to establish contact and trust among various actors in the region. After an initial period devoted to the setting up and shaping of the REReP mechanism, the programme’s real potential began to emerge. A range of activities were developed under the programme areas — institution building, cross-border cooperation, civil society building and biodiversity and health protection. In order to maximise efficiency, emphasis was placed on networking, investment planning and the development of sound project management. REReP has been extremely successful in attracting assistance to South Eastern Europe. For example, from the beginning REReP to date, projects worth nearly EUR 55 million were implemented in the region with the assistance of the REC (for details, see Annexes I, II, III and IV). REReP has also proved to be a successful mechanism for coordinating donors’ assistance to the priority projects of regional assistance and encouraging regional cooperation on environmental issues.

Important characteristics of the REReP process were its participatory nature, flexibility and transparency.

The programme aimed specifically to help SEE countries to draw closer to EU membership, in particular by providing them with assistance to meet their obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union in 2007. The European Council has also granted the status of candidate country to Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Since the end of 2005, accession negotiations have been underway with Croatia. Stabilisation and Association Agreements have been signed with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.

A Decade’s Difference: Key messages of REReP

A Decade’s Difference:

Key messages of REReP

September 2001
The third REReP Task Force meeting was held in Sarajevo. The REReP mechanism was reviewed and adjusted to ensure a link between environmental reconstruction and the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) in South Eastern Europe.

April 2002
The fourth REReP Task Force meeting was held in Brussels. A decision was taken that REReP be presented as a successful assistance mechanism at the 2003 “Environment for Europe” ministerial conference in Kiev.

January 2003
The fifth REReP Task Force meeting was held in Tirana. A discussion paper was presented on the future directions of REReP and its links to SAP.

May 2003
REReP was presented at the Kiev “Environment for Europe” conference through the category II document REReP: Model for a Successful Assistance Mechanism and the publication Highlights of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe.
The successor to REReP

In view of the changing political situation in the region with respect to candidate countries and potential candidates for EU accession, and in order to continue approximation to EU environmental requirements in the most effective manner, the need has arisen to further develop REReP. Building on the programme’s achievements and lessons learnt, while strengthening and reforming its operations to better address specific challenges related to EU accession, the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA) will be launched by the end of 2009 and its activities will start in the first half of 2010. The successor programme will focus more sharply on the transfer and exchange of experience in the field of the environment concerning preparatory work for future EU membership. As a result, it is planned that RENA will be open not only to SEE candidate countries and potential candidates, but to Turkey as well. To ensure the transfer of lessons learned from EU approximation in the environmental field, Bulgaria and Romania will be invited to continue their participation as observers.

The European Commission prepared a discussion paper, the so-called RENA Road Map, outlining the proposal for future regional cooperation between candidate countries and potential candidates and the European Commission, and proposing ways to further support these countries. The 11th and final REReP Task Force

REReP stakeholders and partners

- The countries of the region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro, Serbia and Romania. After joining the EU in 2007, Bulgaria and Romania changed their status within REReP.
- The European Union member states and the European Commission.
- The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (from spring 2008 the Regional Cooperation Council).
- The European Environment Agency and the European Agency for Reconstruction (until winter 2008).
- Other donor countries: Norway, Switzerland, USA, Japan.
- International organisations: UNEP, OSCE, IUCN, UNDP, UNESCO.
- International financial institutions: the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the Council of Europe Development Bank.
- Non-governmental organisations.

Key steps in the REReP process (continued)

November 2003
The sixth REReP Task Force meeting was held in Brussels. It was agreed that REReP needed to increase its focus on regional cross-border cooperation, as well as on broader political issues and development.

January 2004
An independent external review of REReP was carried out.

September 2004
The seventh REReP Task Force meeting was held in Belgrade. The independent external REReP review was discussed, with recommendations for future work.

January 2005
The European Commission issued a Future Paper on REReP based on the review recommendations, comments and discussions.

June 2005

September 2005
The eighth REReP Task Force meeting was held in Brussels, and the Future Paper on REReP was discussed and adopted.
meeting, held in Montenegro in November 2008, provided an opportunity for Task Force representatives from ministries of the environment to further discuss the RENA Road Map. At the REReP Task Force meeting, a number of priority issues were discussed that are proposed to be addressed by RENA:

- **strategic planning** of the pre-accession process, including the identification of capacity-building needs;
- **public participation** — environmental impact assessment (EIA), strategic environmental assessment (SEA), the Espoo Convention, the Aarhus Convention etc.;
- **climate change** — technical assistance for the establishment of greenhouse gas inventories, energy efficiency actions, the preparation of mitigation and adaptation strategies, capacity building for administrative structures etc.;
- **cross-border cooperation** on the environment — Natura 2000, the Water Framework Directive etc.; and
- **preparation of environmental investment projects** — the prioritisation of projects, cooperation with international financial institutions (IFIs), public-private partnerships.

It was also proposed that the **Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (ECENA)** be under the umbrella of RENA, as well as the **progress monitoring** exercise on the adoption and implementation of environmental legislation.

In all the activities planned within the framework of the future RENA, it is important to take into consideration the different status of countries in the region in terms of EU membership, as well as their specific needs. These needs must be further elaborated through work plans and agreed upon between the countries participating in RENA and the European Commission, while taking into account the planned available funds and avoiding the potential duplication of activities within other existing initiatives.

The first activities under RENA are expected to start in the first half of 2010.

### Activities implemented within REReP and proposed future steps

Based on experience acquired during the REReP process and its achievements, and taking into consideration the situation in the region, a number of key issues can be highlighted as having a significant potential for further strengthening, thereby helping countries better to address environmental challenges to EU accession.

Over the last 10 years, the REC has been deeply engaged in ensuring the successful implementation of REReP. The knowledge and experience of the organisation were put to the service of the SEE region in order to address the priorities identified by SEE ministers. The REReP Secretariat regularly presented reports to the REReP Task Force meeting on the progress of all projects and their outcomes. The text that follows is based on these reports. It summarises the activities implemented so far and highlights the need for future steps. Through RENA and other assistance mechanisms and programmes, the REC would like to ensure the continuation of the work done so far. It is, of course, up to the SEE

#### Key Messages of REReP

- **March 2006**
  - Publication of Environmental Snapshot of South Eastern Europe: REReP Country Profiles.
- **June 2006**
  - An extraordinary REReP Task Force meeting on environmental investments in SEE was held in Budapest to discuss existing obstacles to and possibilities for the developing and financing of environmental investment projects.
- **September 2006**
  - The ninth REReP Task Force meeting was held in Skopje. The REReP work plan for 2007–2008 was discussed and approved.
- **June 2007**
  - The European Commission prepared a discussion paper on future regional environmental cooperation with the candidate countries and potential candidates. At a meeting of the ministers of environment of the SEE region and Turkey with Commissioner Dimas, it was decided to upgrade REReP and launch the Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA).
countries to decide on their assistance needs. However, the REC believes that this summary provides a useful overview of the environmental challenges they face and could be a good basis for the continuation of the coordinated efforts of international institutions and organisations, bilateral donors, other environmental stakeholders and the beneficiaries themselves.

Further assistance in environmental law drafting in the region should cover the promotion of environmental law reform; the adoption of and compliance with the EU environmental acquis; the formulation of a common strategic regional approach to approximation with the environmental acquis; capacity building; assessment of the transposition, implementation and enforcement of European Community environmental law in SEE countries (e.g. conformity checking and progress monitoring); and the transfer of experience and lessons learned.

In 2001, "Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting in South Eastern Europe" was REReP’s first regional assistance project to bring together senior officials and legal experts from the SEE region for the purposes of drafting environmental legal systems in accordance with EU norms and standards. Activities started with the prioritisation of environmental law drafting needs in SEE, since which time targeted legal assistance has been provided and the identified priorities regularly reviewed. Bearing in mind the current challenges in terms of secondary legislation and its enforcement, support to the development of national legislation needs to be a continuous process, building on what has been achieved so far. The Environmental Law Approximation Network (ELAN), established under REReP and in operation since 2002, should provide a forum for continued assistance in the sharing of experience of environmental approximation in candidate countries and potential candidates.

Once set down on paper, laws must be respected and properly enforced. Alongside the drafting of environmental legislation in SEE there was therefore a crucial parallel effort to create a mechanism for efficient enforcement. Under the auspices of REReP, the Balkan Environmental Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Network (BERCEN) was established in Tirana, Albania, in December 2001 to assist countries to better implement the complex EU environmental legislation. Early BERCEN efforts provided SEE countries with the necessary capacity via trainings, exchange programmes and various assessments such as peer reviews. The network provided a platform for better cooperation and the exchange of experience with the projects of the EU’s Network for the Implementation of Environmental Law (IMPEL). BERCEN was enlarged with the addition of Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey and was transformed in March 2005 into a new mechanism, the Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession (ECENA). It was recognised as the successor to the candidate country Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (ACIMPEL), which provided similar assistance to the former accession countries, now new EU member states. ECENA is an informal network of environmental authorities from new EU member states, EU candidate countries and potential candidates for EU accession, the European Commission also being a member. ECENA became a self-standing programme outside REReP at the end of 2006. The multi-annual work programme (MAP) of ECENA for the period 2007 to 2010

Key steps in the REReP process (continued)

October 2007
Publication of the REReP brochure “Foundation for integration”.

November 2007
The tenth REReP Task Force meeting was held in Brussels. The REReP work plan for 2007–2009 was endorsed. The European Commission announced preparations for the RENA Road Map.

May 2008
A regional meeting on energy and climate change in SEE was held in Brussels, providing information on EU climate and energy policy and discussing possibilities for cross-border cooperation in SEE.

November 2008
The eleventh and final Task Force meeting was held in Montenegro. An overview of activities carried out since the launch of REReP and the draft RENA Road Map were discussed.

May 2009
A regional meeting on Natura 2000 in SEE was held in Sarajevo, at which opportunities for cross-border cooperation in SEE were discussed.
is under implementation. It focuses on the implementation of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive, the Seveso Directive and other directives, as well as other key documents such as the recommendation for minimum criteria for environmental inspection. The programme has a special cluster on the prevention of environmental crime.

An innovative aspect of REReP was the recognition of the importance of public participation and the integration of support to civil society in its list of priority areas. This approach has highlighted that environmental reconstruction also requires the understanding and involvement of citizens; and, in particular, that diverse views among civil society should be heard and considered alongside the opinions of government and business. Support to civil society focuses on strengthening the environmental NGO movement in particular and represents a vital element of REReP. The findings of the 2007 Civil Society Assessment reiterated the need for continuing support to environmental civil groups. In the future, further support to civil society can be envisioned under the Civil Society Development Facility (CSDF), launched by the European Commission in April 2008. Any work undertaken under the RENA umbrella should take into consideration the sup-

---

**BOX 2**

**Donor contributions** (in EUR)

- Austria: 730,307
- Belgium: 160,000
- Canada: 520,000
- Croatia: 232,585
- Czech Republic: 38,912
- The Netherlands: 10,178,074
- Sweden: 10,054,144
- Switzerland: 3,692,148
- USA: 1,101,500
- UK: 113,628
- BiH: 71,714
- EU: 7,879,021
- Montenegro: 14,852
- FYR Macedonia: 132,780
- Norway: 3,343,289
- Japan: 260,446
- Italy: 2,852,430
- Germany: 2,008,187
- Spain: 531,560
- Slovakia: 14,542
- Canada: 520,000
- Czech Republic: 38,912
- The Netherlands: 10,178,074
- Sweden: 10,054,144
- Switzerland: 3,692,148
- USA: 1,101,500
- UK: 113,628
- BiH: 71,714
- EU: 7,879,021
- Montenegro: 14,852
- FYR Macedonia: 132,780
- Norway: 3,343,289
- Japan: 260,446
- Italy: 2,852,430
- Germany: 2,008,187
- Spain: 531,560
- Slovakia: 14,542
port given through the CSDF in order to prevent duplication and to enhance support to environmental groups.

Apart from the SECTOR programme supporting environmental civil society organisations in SEE, REReP’s more notable civil society programmes in the last decade include such topics as: the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in SEE and the improvement of public participation practices; access to information and public participation in environmental decision making (e.g. in the Danube River basin); strengthening NGOs; electronic networking (Balkan Bytes); press and publications; environmental legal advocacy; locally initiated environmental projects; environmental education (the Green Pack); and support to civil society organisations (CSOs) through regional and national grants.

Regional support to civil society in SEE countries reached EUR 1.6 million in the last 10 years, funding grants, trainings and exchange programmes. In addition, national support exceeded EUR 3 million.

The REC has supported the development of CSOs by identifying and addressing their needs; supporting their involvement in international and regional processes; enabling their direct actions at national and regional levels through granting; assisting in improving their organisational capacities and professional skills through trainings; promoting dialogue and cooperation with other stakeholders; facilitating networking and their partnership within and outside the SEE region; and promoting their access to information. Examples of projects in this area include “Democratic stabilisation and civil society support in the Western Balkans: Development of regional NGO activities for sustainable development in the Western Balkans”; four years of the “Training for Young Environmental Leaders” programme; and the “Danube River Basin Grants” programme.

In the field of environmental education and education for sustainable development, the following activities can be envisaged: the development of a political framework
and capacity building at national and regional level aiming at the successful implementation of the UNECE Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development; the development of specific educational tools promoting sustainable development values through a holistic and interdisciplinary approach; the strengthening of teachers/educators through training, the sharing of experience, and cooperation; and awareness raising among the general public by developing tools and campaigns to increase public knowledge and awareness of sustainable development issues.

An excellent education tool on environment and development that is already available and in use is the Green Pack. This multimedia product is intended primarily for teachers and their students (aged between 10 and 15). Since 2001, it has been produced in 15 local languages as well as in English. More than 20,000 teachers in Europe have received training on how to use the Green Pack, and around 2 million students have been educated using its interactive multimedia materials.

National versions of the pack have been developed and implemented in Bulgaria, Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. By the end of 2009, the Green Pack will also be available in country-specific formats for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro and Serbia. In all the above-mentioned countries, the REC has implemented the Green Pack projects in close and efficient cooperation with the national ministries of education and of the environment as well as a number of local experts and educators. The innovative product “Green Pack Junior”, intended for use among younger students and their teachers, was launched at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in Belgrade in 2007.

Recently the suggestion has been made to develop a new product — the so-called Changing with Climate Pack. It will comprise a set of educational/awareness-raising materials on climate change in several European languages. The product will include downloadable written, audiovisual as well as computer-based materials — all of them available on a CD-ROM and website. The materials will include class and outdoor activities, tests, role-playing games, dilemma cases, interactive illustrations, video clips, films, ideas for community actions and special advice on cooperation with local mass media, business and administration. The material will support the implementation of the EU Green Paper on Climate Change as well as national action plans for mitigation and adaptation to changes in climate. The Changing with Climate Pack would primarily be intended to raise awareness and to encourage citizens to be more proactive and to initiate campaigns on climate change.

Through RReP, the REC has been involved in activities to build environmental impact assessment (EIA) capacity and develop strategic environmental assessment (SEA) systems since 2000 in order to ensure that strategic decision making is carried out in a sustainable and environmentally sound way. The results have been wide ranging, based mainly on: levels of EIA system development in each target country; the influence of country specifics on EIA trajectory; and the training of national experts capable of delivering national EIA workshops and developing country-specific, local-language EIA materials. The most effective principles of SEA application were introduced to the region, resulting in the improved integration of planning for future sustainable development. The first SEA training manual for SEE was developed in 2001 and was made available online. It was adaptable to one-day and two-day training seminars. The manual has been reviewed on several occasions by a network of EIA/SEA trainers. In 2007, the manual was published and presented at the Belgrade “Environment for Europe” conference. It contains a wealth of practical tips and examples, and is extremely versatile for SEA training purposes throughout the region. Between 2002 and 2006, a series of advanced month-long SEA courses were organised for SEA professionals and administrators from SEE countries. Since 2000, REC has also performed actual SEAs of regional and sectoral strategies and programmes in countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Lessons learned were transferred to the SEE countries.

For 2009 and beyond, the REC is preparing national and regional projects for EIA and SEA capacity building. Compared to past trainings, which provided the basis for EIA and SEA for a wide spectrum of actors, the upcoming projects are targeted at specific topics and specific audiences. For example, representatives of the competent authorities and members of technical committees will be offered courses for EIA and SEA quality reviewing. EIA and SEA consultancies and experts will be offered specific methodology courses on, for example, the assessment of impacts to water bodies, soil, the atmosphere, ecosystems and climate; the selection and implementation of appropriate indicator lists for various social and economic sectors in the case of SEA, and for various industries and environmental media in the case of EIA. At the regional level, two parallel regional studies are envisaged for the CEE region and the SEE region. The regional studies will assess and compare the state of current legislation, enforcement structures and actual practice in different countries; outline gaps; and recommend improvement measures. Two projects will aim at creating an impact assessment network in CEE countries, and at supporting a
recently established network in SEE (the SEEIA network). The regional studies will serve as a discussion basis for regional conferences that will, at the same time, involve members of the above-mentioned networks. In 2009, the REC will also work in close cooperation with representatives of SEE environmental ministries who are responsible for EIA, SEA and international cooperation to achieve the ratification of relevant international agreements such as the Espoo and Aarhus Conventions; as well as the initialising and/or finalising the similar bilateral agreements. These efforts may result in proposing an SEE regional project for the creation of another network — in this case comprising ministry representatives relevant to transboundary EIA and SEA.

The impacts of climate change are already visible in the vulnerable SEE region. Human capacity in SEE countries in terms of dealing with climate change is still limited, and intensive capacity building is needed both at policy-making and expert level. The representation and involvement of SEE countries in international climate negotiations should be strengthened in the future. With the agreement of interested countries, RENA might facilitate the reactivation of the Open Balkan Group in international climate negotiations. A guidance manual for politicians in international climate change negotiations could be an informative and useful tool and would definitely contribute to expressing the interests and needs of SEE countries and to strengthening their negotiating position.

At expert level, the most urgent issue is to provide support to the drafting of the national communication to be submitted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Capacity must be strengthened for the preparation of a greenhouse gas emissions inventory. As for mitigation, the use of a relevant project-based mechanism, such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), is envisaged by most SEE countries. The establishment of the necessary legal and institutional background is under way, but further actions are needed. An assessment of CDM potential in different sectors is to be made and the most feasible technologies are to be identified. In the field of adaptation, information is still missing for the most vulnerable economic sectors. As a next step, adaptation measures/strategies are needed. It goes without saying that adaptation is, and will be, a crucial issue in the region and the request by the countries for adaptation guidelines should be addressed in the near future.

The REReP regional meeting on climate and energy in SEE was held in May 2008 in Brussels, gathering representatives of SEE countries, donor governments, international organisations and international financial institutions. Discussions covered EU climate and energy policy and general SEE needs in terms of climate and energy, and priorities were drafted at national and regional level. Cross-border cooperation between candidate countries and potential candidates in SEE in addressing common climate and energy challenges was encouraged.

The existing Belgrade Climate Change Initiative could provide an institutional background for establishing closer cooperation among SEE countries in order to share experiences/good practices in combating climate change. An example of such cooperation is the Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation for South Eastern Europe (CCFAP), which was adopted in November 2008 at the ministerial conference in Sarajevo organised by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the REC. Capacity-building needs, in order for countries to achieve compliance with reporting obligations for the EU and UNFCCC, should also be considered in the short term. As part of the Stabilisation and Association Process, the transposition of energy and climate-related EU directives will hopefully contribute to combating climate change and offer more favourable conditions for sustainable economic growth.

Relevant national and international governmental organisations should further integrate biodiversity considerations in their policies, strategies and actions, and ensure that available funds allocated for the SEE region work in favour of, and not against, the conservation of biodiversity. Concrete and far-reaching measures should be implemented in order to strengthen ecological and landscape resilience in the SEE region, including the concrete establishment and management of protected areas and ecological networks. Particular focus should be given
to the most vulnerable areas. National authorities should therefore work together with relevant international organisations to support the protection and sustainable development of mountain regions in SEE. Rural community nature conservation practices in the region should be improved through community development — vision, assessment and action. The development of local environmental and nature conservation action plans can improve nature conservation, environmental planning and management in those communities with the highest level of biodiversity and the greatest need for nature conservation.

The development of a strong and concrete action plan on climate and biodiversity for SEE would be welcomed, built on ongoing initiatives including the Belgrade Climate Change Initiative, adopted at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, held in October 2007, and initiatives by the EU, the UN and the Council of Europe. Awareness and education activities in relation to climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem services are of vital importance in order to reach the public, politicians, policy makers and economic sectors. There need to be more such actions, implemented at regional, national and sub-national levels, while adopting a multi-stakeholder approach. Actions should be undertaken to fill basic gaps in information and knowledge about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity in the SEE region, including via focused and extended multidisciplinary research, policy analyses, modeling and scenario building, and adequate biodiversity monitoring at regional, national and sub-national levels.

Water is one of the most comprehensively regulated areas of EU environmental legislation. The new European Water Policy, and its operative tool the Water Framework Directive, are based on a “combined approach” — the precautionary principle, the preventive principle, the principle that environmental damage should, as a priority, be rectified at source, as well as the principle that environmental conditions in the various regions be taken into consideration.

Human competence in the SEE region in dealing with water management is still limited, and intensive capacity building is needed both at policy-making and expert level. Significant efforts are needed in relation to the implementation and enforcement of EU water legislation. In line with key deadlines for the implementation of the various actions set out under the directive, RENA might facilitate support to local authorities in introducing and implementing the programme of measures defined by the river basin management plans at local level. With respect to the adaptation of water management to the effects of climate change, urgent consideration should be given to strengthening capacity and coordination at national and local levels regarding water quality protection as well as pollution control and risk management.

In order to provide support at expert level, the most urgent issue is to implement training programmes on environmental compliance and enforcement for water management inspection. Capacity should be strengthened in the field of prevention, control and mitigation. The transfer of knowledge, training and support on the environmental acquis is required at all levels. Contemporary protocols, set up for the Danube basin level, are an advantage and an obligation for all riparian countries and should still be entered into force in most of the SEE countries. The establishment of the required legal and institutional background is under way: further actions are needed, particularly at regional and local levels.

In spite of difficulties in securing funds, REReP contributed to limited capacity building and investments to support integral water quality resources management; pollution reduction and control; the fulfilment of the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and the Nutrients Directive, as well as active participation in international river conventions.

Waste issues remain very important and are high on the agenda of governments in the region. Hotspots have been identified and there is a significant need for investments. In most countries a regional approach to integrated waste management has been adopted and waste management is slowly starting to move in this direction. Feasibility studies are being prepared in SEE countries on integrated regional waste management. Although the final
documentation needed to secure funding from available instruments, or instruments that will be available in SEE in the near future, is being prepared, the capacity of local governments in terms of investment preparation should be further strengthened. REReP provided support with limited funds towards the development of national and regional waste management strategies and plans and the establishment of regional waste management centres. It also included tailor-made legal and institutional recommendations for certain regions, training for municipalities and utility companies, and public-awareness campaigns.

The further harmonisation of related legislation with EU directives, along with institution building, remain priorities in many SEE countries. There are only a few landfills in the region that comply with minimal standards and that can be regarded as requiring upgrading. In most cases, countries have not started to close or remediate old landfills, or only initial efforts have been made in this direction. In the majority of cases, no assessment has been carried out of the funds needed to close and remediate illegal dumpsites. National and local policy makers and authorities would benefit from further exchange of experiences and transfer of knowledge, including in the areas of waste prevention and specific waste streams such as biodegradable municipal waste and construction and demolition waste. Data on waste are very limited and are mainly estimated using methodologies that are not well developed. A clear methodology needs to be developed, and a proper monitoring and reporting system needs to be implemented starting with municipal waste and landfill sites. The region still lacks a system for monitoring hazardous waste.

With respect to cross-border and regional cooperation, countries in the region have recognised their mutual responsibilities and common challenges, some of a cross-border nature. There are considerable benefits to be gained by addressing issues of common relevance in a cooperative manner, and by developing regional ties. Further assistance is needed in solving cross-border environmental problems through training, technical assistance and enhancing cooperation across national borders and stakeholder groups. Regional cooperation is also a specific requirement under the stabilisation and association agreements and is a cornerstone of the EU policy framework that offers countries of the region the possibility of future EU membership. Countries must be further supported to maximise their opportunities to use available funding sources such as neighbourhood programmes and Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) multi-beneficiary and cross-border programmes, including possible bilateral assistance.

“Promotion of Cross-Border Cooperation, Networking and Exchanges in South Eastern Europe” was the very first project to be implemented in SEE following the endorsement of REReP and its list of priority projects. The project, later referred to as “Transboundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources”, drew significant funding and focused on three types of geographical area (delta, mountain range, lake) and six countries neighbouring these areas. The Neretva Delta, shared by Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia; Skadar/Shkodra Lake between Albania and Montenegro; and the Stara Planina range that runs along a stretch of border between Bulgaria and Serbia. Cross-border exchanges between local organisations and regional-level technical networks were developed in order to enhance the shared management of natural resources. Environmental cooperation has been particularly successful in the
protection of other shared natural sites as well, such as the cross-border management of the rivers Sava, Drina, Bojana/Buna, Timok and Danube, as well as the joint natural resources of lakes Ohrid and Prespa. Enormous progress has been made in the area of cross-border cooperation since the initiation of the programme and the work needs to continue.

The project “Cross-border cooperation through environmental planning and investment” assisted stakeholders from three cross-border areas — Zvornik, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mali Zvornik, Serbia; Debar, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Peshkopia, Albania; and Bileca, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Niksic, Montenegro — in addressing common environmental problems through the preparation of investments. Through a series of trainings and workshops, the REC helped local governments and utility experts across the borders to establish a cooperative approach and to develop the skills needed to identify and prepare environmental investment projects for financing. Four international standard feasibility studies were prepared and the investments were made up of three components focused on water resources protection (water supply efficiency improvement; the reduction of pollution caused by the discharge of wastewater; and the institutional strengthening of the utility). The REC assisted the beneficiaries in identifying viable financing options for the investments by contacting national authorities and financing institutions. These investments have progressed towards development and implementation. The project methodology, which combined capacity building with investment preparation and active stakeholder involvement, proved to be very successful and can be replicated in other municipalities in SEE, especially in rural and cross-border areas that often have tremendous environmental problems but limited skills and a lack of trust across the borders, which often has a deterrent effect to solving those problems.

The participation of neighbouring EU member states in RENA is very important in terms of the sharing of experiences relating to certain complex issues such as strategic environmental assessment and Natura 2000. The final RReP cross-border meeting in 2009 focused on Natura 2000 key issues according to the priorities agreed among SEE countries during Task Force meetings.

Continuing to target the challenge of priority environmental infrastructure investments in SEE will be of great importance, as the need for support to the planning and preparation of environmental infrastructure projects will remain in the coming years. Although there has been steady progress in the process of transposing the environmental acquis into national legislation, and in the development of environmental infrastructure projects, many challenges and barriers still exist. In the light of EU accession, the development of environmental infrastructure projects and approximation to EU standards are of major importance. Further assistance is needed at all levels — international, national, regional and local — to deepen communication with donor and financing institutions as well as in the coordination and establishment of synergies between their activities in target beneficiary countries. Assistance is also needed at national and regional level in the design and improvement of environmental financing mechanisms and in promoting environmental integration at the level of programming, planning and the use of funds. Further efforts are also needed to assist local and regional authorities to collaborate on the preparation of environmental investment projects and eventually to reach compliance with the EU acquis.
At all levels, it is essential to increase capacity to absorb EU funds and to promote a better understanding of changes in EU cohesion policy. This necessitates not only the completion of strategy and legislative frameworks in relation to environmental protection and in the investment, property and administration domain, but also assistance in the efficient application of these frameworks. Special attention should be given to further building the capacity of the staff of environmental protection funds and analogous organisations. At the regional and local levels, assistance should target capacity building to develop and implement environmental infrastructure projects (including the development of pre-feasibility and feasibility studies). The provision of trainings to develop applications to the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance should be stressed.

Since endorsement by the SEE ministers in 2003, the Priority Environmental Investment Programme (PEIP), one of REReP’s key projects, has served as a regional institutional strengthening and capacity-building tool supporting national strategic environmental investment planning and providing background information to the donor community and international financial institutions.

Local communities and their institutions play a vital role in mobilising, responding to and promoting changes in governance structures and policy processes in relation to sustainable development. Countries in SEE are still generally affected by poverty, but their overall sustainability performance is particularly challenged by weak institutions, shifts in political structures that continue to threaten the viability of initiated reforms, the slow pace of institutional reforms, and the status of decentralisation. Consolidated efforts targeting existing institutions are needed in order further to promote the concepts of sustainable development, decentralisation and efficient governance. Additional, broader efforts targeting whole communities are needed in the sectors of environmental planning, resource management and sustainable investments, leading to poverty reduction and the enhanced sustainability of local communities in SEE.

“Traditional” environmental planning methods, including those related to public participation, provide a foundation of information for stakeholder decision making. However, these methods often prove inadequate for the long-term task of sustainable development planning. Local environmental action plans (LEAPs) go a step further towards incorporating the development agenda of societies, and therefore of local communities, into the planning process. Other methods and tools based on the traditional concepts of environmental planning have also been redefined and adapted in LEAPs. This is true particularly with respect to the creation of snapshots of current development conditions and the assessment of systemic problems and requirements. More than 150 local communities in Central and Eastern Europe have started developing LEAPs with assistance from the REC, with apparent effect. Most of those communities have continued working towards the well-being of their citizens. They have chosen their sustainable development paths and LEAPs have helped them to acknowledge what the community has, what it needs, and what the long-term consequences of the short-term choices identified in environmental planning processes will be. Important additional benefits for partner municipalities were mostly small infrastructural investments totalling around EUR 2 million between 2005 and 2009.

Transport is an important field in the process of harmonisation and integration with EU requirements. The countries of SEE have made enormous efforts to fulfill EU requirements and to follow EU policy recommendations in all sectors. REReP supported this process, promoting the development of sustainable urban transport policies in SEE countries and providing capacity building and the sharing of best practices. In this context, it is extremely important that the countries continue to improve their urban transport systems and to follow EU transport policy guidelines and recommendations. Further financial support for the implementation of sustainable transport policies and measures is still necessary.

The REC has established a close and ongoing cooperation with the UNEP-based Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV). Since 2005, the REC and PCFV have assisted SEE countries to reduce vehicular air pollution through the promotion of lead-free and low-sulphur fuels and cleaner vehicle standards. This has been done through the implementation of actions on a national level in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Efforts were mostly focused on the phasing out of lead, and these efforts have proved successful in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, which will phase out leaded petrol in 2009. Two regional meetings were also organised in 2005 and 2009. Awareness-raising campaigns were carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and one will be carried out in Montenegro in 2009. The REC and PCFV are currently focusing on vehicles themselves by promoting a PCFV/TNT clean fleet management tool. World-recognised experts are invited to the workshops, meetings and trainings to transfer their knowledge and experience. Progress and needs in SEE are regularly presented at the PCFV annual Global Partnership Meeting.

In the coming years, the task of working closely with SEE countries that have not yet phased out leaded petrol,
and that still have no strategy in place to address the problem, remains urgent. Further trainings and national and regional meetings on the legal, technical and economic dimensions of fuel and vehicle issues will be very valuable in this respect in order to enable SEE countries to realise their huge potential for improving urban air quality.

In the overall context of promoting sustainable development, sustainable consumption and production (SCP) is an emerging field of targeted policy making at all levels of governance worldwide. According to the principles of SCP, environmental pressures caused by a particular production-consumption system should be considered holistically, rather than in isolation, taking into consideration all life-cycle stages of a product (extraction, production, consumption and end-of-life) as well as their social and economic aspects. In recent years, SCP has moved up the political agenda of the EU. The main environmental themes in the focus of related action at the EU level are climate change, the rational use of energy, and waste prevention.

In addition to the introduction (or in some cases the strengthening) of fundamental SCP policies in the region, such as market-based instruments (MBIs), voluntary agreements (VAs), green labelling schemes and green public procurement (GPP), it is also important to consider the particular economic and social situation of SEE countries when introducing SCP. While the relatively lower levels of material consumption and waste generation per capita can be considered as advantages, obsolete infrastructure, highly material- and energy-intensive production and housing, as well as the rapid spread of new lifestyles (e.g. the increasing use of cars) raise significant challenges in relation to SCP. Particular attention will also need to be given to tackling the social aspects of SCP: levels of poverty and inequality (resulting in malnutrition or fuel poverty, for example) are relatively high in the region.

REReP recently started tackling these emerging issues through the promotion of green public procurement and the uptake of green products in the SEE region and Turkey, and the evaluation of existing barriers. Through a participatory process involving the most relevant national stakeholders, the main barriers to GPP practice were highlighted in selected countries with proposals for the elaboration of national “road maps” for action.

The most important next steps in this field could be the development of national strategies, including the integration of the SCP concept into national environmental policy, followed by the large-scale introduction and/or strengthening of fundamental SCP policy instruments. To start and manage this process, governments in the region will need continual support from the EU in many areas, including capacity building and the transfer of good practices, but also in terms of direct expert assistance in the preparation of strategies, policy analyses etc.

A list of all projects implemented under REReP through the REC can be found in Annex I of the present publication. A list of all REReP publications is given in Annex V.
Key factors in REReP’s success

After nearly 10 years of implementation, REReP has proved to be a successful mechanism for coordinating environmental assistance in post-war conditions. The main factors enabling this positive development were:

- The strong political support for the programme: it was launched as a joint effort of the European Commission, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, and the SEE countries. The role of the European Commission as co-chair of the REReP Task Force was instrumental in the successful management of the programme.
- The fact that SEE countries were the drivers of the process of defining priority needs and ways to respond to them: needs were regularly reviewed and updated, and for each activity/project the countries identified follow-up steps. The SEE co-chairmanship of the REReP Task Force on a rotating basis improved the efficiency of REReP and was further proof of the strong ownership by the SEE countries.
- The approval of the terms of reference for the secretariat by SEE ministers together with the programme itself: there was one focal point (secretariat) for donors and countries.
- The neutral platform provided by the REC for REReP implementation: the whole intellectual potential of the organisation was made available to SEE countries and flexibility in responding to the demand for services was ensured (see the list of projects implemented via the REC in Annex I). The continuous provision of services was ensured despite delays in financial support to the secretariat. The REC used its international status and position to ensure good coordination and partnership with other players and initiatives in the SEE region and good synergies were developed among activities.
- The involvement of environmental stakeholders: this took the form of open dialogue with all interested local, national and international players, for example participants in the REReP Task Force meetings. Equal treatment was ensured for all stakeholders (essential in post-war regions).
- Needs assessments, peer reviews, strategies and action plans: these contributed to the reaching of agreement on common challenges and how best to address them (for example the Priority Environmental Investment for SEE Programme).
- The willingness of donors to align their assistance to the needs of the countries.
• The promotion of good cooperation between local and national authorities, the building of their capacity, and their contribution to the coordination of environmental strategies and activities.

• Impressive capacity building through a variety of trainings, reviews and assessments, exchange programmes, study tours, professional networks and joint projects.

• The transfer of lessons learned from new EU member states.

At the same time, certain difficulties were encountered in the following areas:

• Not all identified priority areas were covered equally: most donor support went towards institutional strengthening and civil society building. Significant efforts went into promoting cross-border cooperation.

• The coordination of SEE environmental activities was a challenge for the secretariat, especially in recent years. There is a permanently growing number of actors and projects, thus “specialised” coordination by particular areas would be more beneficial, although a good model for this has still to be developed.

• The environment must be given priority in the national agenda and environmental authorities must be given sufficient human and financial resources.

NOTES
1 www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/rerep_bbe.pdf
2 www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/HighlightsofREReP.pdf
5 http://www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/RERepBrochure.pdf
7 As a result of the latest governmental changes in Montenegro in May/June 2009, the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment was established.
8 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro and Serbia.
9 www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/rerep_bbe.pdf
10 www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/HighlightsofREReP.pdf
13 http://www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/RERepBrochure.pdf
15 E.g. SCP is one of the seven key challenges identified in the renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006), and in July 2008 the European Commission launched the EU Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption, Production and Industry.
Priority Area 1
Institution Building
In the course of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), the countries of South Eastern Europe (SEE) have been continuously harmonising their national legislation with the EU environmental acquis and enhancing the implementation of environmental laws and related regulations. Since the inception of REReP, the development of adequate central and local governmental capacities has been of the utmost importance because strong institutions are a necessary foundation for policy reforms, the drafting and enforcement of environmental legislation, and the attracting of environmental investment. Institution building has always been identified as the highest priority area within REReP and has received the most donor support.

The Priority Environmental Investment Programme for SEE (PEIP) continued to assist strategic national environmental planning, the preparation of environmental investment projects and the securing of financial support. PEIP introduced a multi-stakeholder approach to investment planning involving all key players in the process. As one of the key REReP projects, PEIP serves as a regional institutional strengthening and capacity-building tool supporting national strategic environmental investment planning and providing background information to the donor community and international financial institutions. The activities under PEIP were complemented by other environmental infrastructure investment support such as the preparation of a pre-feasibility study for water supply in four municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina; capacity building of local governments and utilities in three cross-border sites in Serbia/Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina/Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina/Montenegro and the preparation of four feasibility studies for water infrastructure investments; the drafting of pre-feasibility studies for two regions in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the establishment of regional Integrated Waste Management Systems and work on the drafting of the National Environmental Investment Strategy of former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The project “Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting” has promoted the efficient and effective development of comprehensive legislative frameworks in compliance with the EU environmental acquis and fostered cooperation in this field throughout the region. The Environmental Law Approximation Network (ELAN), established in 2002, received support for its operation. Work related to multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in the Balkans was aimed at increasing the level of acceptance and implementation. The Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession (ECENA), the successor to the REReP Balkan Environmental Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Network (BERCEN), became a self-standing programme at the end of 2006. The multi-annual work programme (MAP) of ECENA for the period 2007 to 2010 is under implementation, focusing on the implementation of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive, the Seveso II Directive and other directives, as well as other key documents such as the Recommendation for Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspection. The programme has a special cluster on the prevention of environmental crime.

Within this priority area, communities have received help in developing local environmental action plans (LEAPs) as tools for cooperative and transparent planning through the empowerment of citizens. This leads to more efficient use of resources, improved environmental management and more financing for local priority projects. More than a million people in SEE are directly benefitting from these initiatives, such as the communities of Novi Travnik, Jajce, Vares, Kotor Varos and Prnjavor in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Gjilan/Gnjilane, Gjakove/Djakovica, Peje/Pec, Ferizaj/Urosevac and Klin in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244); Probistip, Debar, Zelenikovo, Bosilovo, Vlandovo and Caska in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and Vrnjacka Banja, Trstenik, Cuprija and Velika Plan in Serbia. Aid in planning activities and the direct investment of EUR 1.5 million in priority environmental projects are helping local communities move towards the more strategic management of their environment and resources, and
therefore towards greater compliance with national and 
EU environmental standards. This approach to local de-
velopment is mainly focused on environmental issues, but 
it also provides valuable insights into the social and eco-
nomic aspects of development. Better planning practices 
and environmental management, coupled with invest-
ments in local infrastructure, contribute towards reach-
ing the Millennium Development Goal of reducing 
poverty in communities in SEE.

Professional capacity in SEE in the climate change and 
energy field is still limited, and capacity-building activi-
ties were conducted at both the policy-making and expert 
levels. The impacts of climate change are already visible 
in the vulnerable SEE region. The Belgrade Initiative for 
enhancing regional cooperation in climate change was 
launched in October 2007, followed by the adoption of 
the Southeast Europe Climate Change Framework Ac-
 tion Plan for Adaptation in November 2008. Capacity-
building activities and the integration of climate-change 
considerations into national policies were fostered. Busi-
ness planning for cleaner production and energy effi-
ciency projects took place in Croatia, together with 
support to small and medium-sized enterprises in their 
exploitation of energy-saving opportunities.

REReP promoted the development of sustainable 
urban transport policies in SEE countries and provided 
capacity building and the sharing of best practices. 
Through the ongoing cooperation with the UNEP-based 
Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV), SEE 
countries were assisted to reduce vehicular air pollution 
through the promotion of lead-free and low-sulphur fuels 
and stricter vehicle standards. This has been done through 
the implementation of actions on a national level in 
Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic 
of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Efforts were 
mostly focused on the phasing out of lead, and these ef-
forts have proved successful in the former Yugoslav Re-
public of Macedonia and Montenegro, which will phase 
out leaded petrol in 2009. Awareness-raising campaigns 
were carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, 
and one will be carried out in Montenegro in 2009.

In relation to the implementation and enforcement of 
legislation related to water and waste, significant efforts 
are needed in the region. In spite of difficulties in secur-
 ing funds, REReP contributed to limited capacity build-
ing and investments to support integral water quality 
resources management; pollution reduction and control;
the fulfilment of the requirements of the EU Water 
Framework Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment 
Directive and the Nutrients Directive, as well as active 
participation in international river conventions. In most 
countries a regional approach to integrated waste man-
agement has been adopted and waste management is slowly starting to move in this direction. REReP provided support with limited funds towards the development of national and regional waste management strategies and plans and the establishment of regional waste management centres, for example in two Croatian regions, North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia, as well as in Dalmatian counties. This support also included tailor-made legal and institutional recommendations for certain regions, training for municipalities and utility companies, and public-awareness campaigns.

REReP recently started promoting green public procurement (GPP) and the uptake of green products in the SEE region and Turkey, and the evaluation of existing barriers. Through a participatory process involving the most relevant national stakeholders, the main barriers to GPP practice were highlighted in selected countries with proposals for the elaboration of national “road maps” for action.

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) has been working towards the improvement of regional cooperation for the management of risks from pollution hotspots since 2006. ENVSEC partners are focusing on programmes and projects contributing to reducing environment and security risks from mining in SEE, by providing in-depth risk assessments for decision makers, identifying potential hotspots and recommending priority measures for mitigation and risk management at national and regional levels.

Efforts have been made in all projects to draw from the experience of new and old member states of the EU through the creation of publications showcasing diverse experiences and the exchange of best practices. Dialogue has been fostered through study visits, training sessions, regional workshops and the establishment of regional networks.

**ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS**

**The Priority Environmental Investment Programme**

- **Starting date:** September 2003
- **Finishing date:** December 2005
- **Project budget:** EUR 375,000
- **Beneficiary countries:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)
- **Donor:** European Commission

**FUNDING PERIOD 2007-2009**

- **Starting date:** May 2007
- **Finishing date:** August 2009
- **Project budget:** EUR 400,000

**Project background**

The challenge of financing environmental infrastructure projects in SEE was very significant in 2001, and still is, although in different ways. Key barriers to the development and implementation of environmental infrastructure projects include lack of domestic sources of finance, inefficient project preparation that hinders the flow of financial assistance to the region, unfavourable conditions for borrowing, and the low level of private sector involvement.

Through the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), countries are moving towards harmonising national legislation with the EU environmental acquis and implementing new laws according to prescribed schedules. In the environmental sector, this requires large capital investments in infrastructure, which presents a particular challenge for SEE countries as they lack readily available investment capital and market-based financing mechanisms.

The aim of the Priority Environmental Investment

**Value added from PEIP**

- Assistance in strategic investment planning
- Drafting comprehensive lists of environmental infrastructure priority projects
- Providing an ongoing regional perspective to environmental infrastructure investment planning and detailed situation analyses for each country
- Targeted sectoral trainings: water sector and waste sector
- Targeted manuals tailored to the needs of each beneficiary country
- Providing updated information to the EC, bilateral donors and IFIs about the status of project implementation and the financing gaps
- Interface between the national and local authorities and PUCs on one side, and with the EC and IFIs on the other.
Programme (PEIP), supported by the EC, is to assist national environmental investment planning in SEE through institutional strengthening and capacity building. The objectives of the PEIP are to assist the national governments, municipal authorities and public utility companies (PUCs) in strategic environmental investment planning, the preparation of environmental investment projects, attracting donors and lenders and securing sufficient funds for the environmental infrastructure projects. The work covers the air, water and waste sectors, which are the priority sectors in SEE countries for large environmental investments. The PEIP was initiated in 2001 and it was endorsed by the SEE ministers in 2003.

The PEIP was the first programme in SEE addressing the challenge of environmental investments. In the period 2001 to 2003, the main environmental problems in the beneficiary countries were identified. Regional studies were conducted, which presented the levels of emissions of main pollutants in each country and identified 238 locations with significant environmental pollution problems. The main environmental investment priorities were also identified in the form of a project pipeline or initial environmental projects priority list for each country. During this period, project identification forms (PIFs) were designed and a methodology was developed in order to rank the projects on the national lists according to environmental; health; strategic; geographical; economic and financial; social; legal; and project maturity criteria. During this period, the PEIP structure was developed in a participatory way, so that comments and views from the public, municipalities and NGOs were taken into account during public consultations, and endorsement from relevant ministries was obtained through ongoing consultations. One focal point from each national environment ministry was appointed for ongoing coordination and information exchange during this and the subsequent PEIP period.

PEIP implementation started in 2003 with sectoral capacity-building workshops on the air, water and waste sectors. Six workshops were held in total (two workshops per sector), at which representatives from the national authorities, local administration as well as public utility companies and air-polluting industries had an opportunity to receive training on financing environmental infrastructure projects in their respective sectors, as well as to discuss the problems, possible solutions and constraints in implementing these solutions in relation to the hot-spots identified during the first period. During the first set of sectoral workshops, participants were also instructed in detail on the structure and purpose of PIFs and how to use them. In addition to workshops, one regional meeting was held for the donor community and high officials, including the national PEIP focal points, in order to present the developments on the national prioritisation lists that were updated each six months. During this period, a complex regional study was produced covering the economic, institutional and relevant legislative reforms in the beneficiary countries in order to demonstrate the level of readiness of each country to absorb funds for environmental infrastructure projects, as well as the remaining gaps and barriers, which was important information for the donors and lenders community. The study also presented and analysed the available national and international funds and financing mechanisms relevant for environmental infrastructure project developers.

PEIP assistance in national environmental investment planning

The PEIP assists in national environmental investment planning through:
- clearly identifying and prioritising environmental infrastructure projects;
- developing national lists of priority environmental projects;
- capacity building for national and local authorities;
- providing a link between the countries and financing institutions and donors; and
- enabling the exchange of knowledge between experts from the SEE region and those from other European countries.

In addition to supporting national and local authorities, the programme provides valuable information to the donor community, including:
- background information on environmental and institutional needs and priorities;
- the status of environmental investment planning in the region; and
- a pipeline of priority environmental infrastructure projects in a strategic framework.
Achievements and progress until December 2008

Activities after 2006 were dedicated in greater detail to country-specific problems.

Every six months, the project team, in cooperation with the countries’ national authorities, updated the information on the preparation and implementation of infrastructure investment projects in the region. The results were presented in lists of country-specific priority projects. By presenting the projects most worthy of each country’s limited sources of funding, the lists facilitate strategic environmental investment planning by national environmental authorities. In addition to the priority list, the project team prepared analytical progress reports on infrastructure project preparation and implementation every half year.

Needs-based national workshops focused on water and waste investments. Two two-day national workshops took place in the spring of 2008, one in Serbia and the other in Montenegro. Three one-day workshops took place in the autumn of 2008 in Albania (water), Croatia (water) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (waste). The workshops were mainly targeted at the proponents of high-priority projects from the PEIP list. They were designed to tackle issues related to the preparation of mature and bankable projects and were tailored to the specific situation in each country. Participants comprised representatives from national and local authorities, international institutions, donors and international financial institutions (IFIs), as well as project proponents. During the workshops, progress on financing for PEIP projects was presented and discussed.

The workshops also included presentations and discussions on developments in the legislative and strategic frameworks; capacity building to help authorities develop and implement environmental investment infrastructure projects; discussion on reforming utilities; and examples from new EU member states. The national workshops included further trainings related to project preparation and financing, as well as utility and infrastructure projects. The workshops are vital forums for the exchange of information between project proponents, donors, financial institutions and relevant authorities.

Regional meetings took place every six months and were attended by national authorities of all SEE countries and representatives of the donor and lender community. The main goal was to discuss progress on environmental infrastructure projects and the way forward with regard to securing finance. At each regional meeting, updated country specific project priority lists and analytical reports were presented and discussed.

What comes next?

In early 2009 two national workshops took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo (as defined by UNSCR 1244).

The implementation of the PEIP activities will continue until the end of August 2009. A major report on the progress of environmental infrastructure development will be prepared, highlighting new barriers and good examples from the countries. The report will be similar to report produced in November 2005 “Targeting the Environmental Investment Challenge in South Eastern Europe”. Further outcomes of the project are two manuals on developing and preparing environ-
mental infrastructure projects. The manuals cover the reform of the water and waste utilities. Utilities in the region often suffer as a result of inefficient operations: they will only be able to respond to upcoming challenges and new requirements if they acquire knowledge of how to improve their basic operations.

Environmental infrastructure investments will be of great importance in the SEE region in the years to come, and the need for support for planning and preparation will remain. Although there has been steady progress in the transposition of the environmental acquis into national legislation, and in the development of environmental infrastructure projects, many challenges and barriers persist. In light of EU accession, the development of environmental infrastructure projects as well as approximation to EU standards are of major importance.

For more information visit: www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/PEIP/

ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS

National Environmental Investment Strategy for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Starting date: October 2007
Finishing date: October 2008
Project budget: EUR 197,609
Beneficiary country: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donor: Austrian Development Agency and the Macedonian Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning

Project background

The project was designed to support the Macedonian government in drafting a much-needed national environmental investment strategy (NEIS) for the period 2009 to 2013. The NEIS initiative is an ideal candidate for European Commission funding from the Instrument for
Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). The NEIS was expected to analyse funding needs, develop pipelines of priority projects, and link those priority projects with available funding from different sources — the national budget, bilateral donors and IFIs. The aim of the NEIS was also to propose an optimal and realistic institutional set-up for the implementation of environmental investments. One of the main goals of the strategy was to improve the current process of funding environmental projects.

Achievements of the project

A draft of the strategy was produced in November 2008. Prior to writing the strategy itself, preparatory work was carried out by a team of sector-specific experts, who completed a detailed analysis of legal requirements by sector and of the corresponding investment needs. The sector experts drafted a pipeline of top-down projects that are currently a part of the government investment plans. These were complemented by a list of bottom-up projects formulated by the project proponents.

The NEIS is to be financed via central government funds (34 percent of the total), EU funds (the IPA providing 35 percent), bilateral donors (22 percent) and own contributions (9 percent), predominantly paid for by user charges. The own contributions would come predominantly from soft loans from IFIs but may also include public-private partnership funding and small amounts of funding from local self-governments (LSGs).

With respect to water supply and wastewater, the NEIS has created a list of projects that aim to contribute primarily to the implementation of the following directives: the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) and the Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC). The main challenge will be to establish integrated water management, thus overcoming barriers related to the inherited institutional disparity. The selected projects originate from the initial water project database of 266 water supply and wastewater projects. These were identified from various sources between October 2007 and May 2008. The selection was made following consultations with the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP) and other stakeholders.

A major issue that still needs to be addressed is the requirement to increase water tariffs, although customers’ ability and willingness to pay will limit the level of such increases. There is also a need for greater efficiency among public utilities.

In the field of solid waste, the NEIS contains a list of projects that will help the country meet the requirements of the following directives: the Waste Framework Directive (2006/12/EC), the Waste Landfill Directive (99/31/EC), the Hazardous Waste Directive (91/689/EC, as amended by 94/31/EC) and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (94/62/EC). The total capital costs of implementing these directives are estimated at EUR 360 million.

Between 2009 and 2013, the main challenge will be to establish integrated regional municipal waste management, switching gradually from dumping waste at numerous uncontrolled sites to sanitary engineered landfills.

The regional system of waste management in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is adopted in line with EU practices in order to lower costs through
economies of scale. The National Waste Management Strategy (2008-2020) calls for a regional approach to municipal waste management through regional associations (inter-municipal public enterprises) of municipalities to address the joint ownership of the regional assets and facilities. Eight municipal waste management regions have been defined. All regions start from a similar base in terms of the environmental problems created due to improper disposal practices.

The NEIS also suggests the establishment of a body to implement the strategy, such as an agency for environmental investments. An alternative approach would be to strengthen an existing department at the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. The purpose of this organisational innovation would be to correct the deficiency of the current system and to avoid uncoordinated and overlapping funding and political influence over project selection.

What comes next?

The strategy was finalised in October 2008 and presented to all possible stakeholders. Bilateral donors and IFIs have to be convinced of the benefits of the strategy and make appropriate alignments to their funding strategies for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The strategy was approved by the government in 2009. Support for the setting up and/or strengthening of the implementing body is very much needed.

ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS

Environmental Infrastructure Investment Project Preparation in the Water Sector: Available Sources of Finance for Water Infrastructure Projects in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Starting date: November 2006
Finishing date: March 2007
Project budget: EUR 11,813
Beneficiary country: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donor: Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria

Project background

As an EU candidate country, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia aims to transpose and implement a number of EU directives. Many of these pose serious challenges, in relation not only to the investment costs but also in relation to the skills needed to prepare and implement investments. The water sector is one of the most challenging sectors for the implementation of EU directives, and at the same time it is one of the country’s top priorities. The preparation of water infrastructure investment projects requires experience and knowledge, which is currently limited among the key players at the local level — that is, municipal authorities and utility staff. Many communities have never developed or implemented a water sector project and many public utilities do not operate efficiently.

This project was designed to address knowledge gaps and capacity-building needs among municipal staff responsible for identifying and preparing municipal infrastructure projects in the water sector. The project included a training session and the preparation of a working paper covering various aspects of infrastructure project development. This working paper also covered key challenges faced by the relevant authorities at the local level as well as experiences and lessons from other countries in the region. Although it focused on the Macedonian situation, it contains information that can be of use to local authorities throughout the SEE region that are facing similar obstacles.

The primary target groups were:

- municipalities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that were preparing water sector projects;
- relevant ministries; and
- relevant experts in technical, financial, legal and environmental positions.

Achievements of the project

Assistance aimed at strengthening the capacity of project proponents at local level was provided in the form of training, followed by the preparation of a working paper.

A seminar for the priority agglomerations on preparing and financing wastewater infrastructure projects was conducted.

Municipal representatives from high-priority sites received comprehensive training on the development of water infrastructure investment projects. The following subjects were covered:
• project cycle management of water infrastructure projects;
• investment implications from project idea to feasibility study;
• lessons learnt from successfully implemented investment projects; and
• key factors for developing successful infrastructure investment projects in the water sector.

The seminar took an interactive approach and provided an opportunity for discussions on many practical issues. It was very well received by participants.

The project included the preparation of the working paper “Environmental Infrastructure Investment Project Preparation in the Water Sector” that was later published (see Annex V).

The working paper aimed to support municipalities by providing them with adequate knowledge about the preparation of wastewater infrastructure investment projects. In particular, the document provided information on:
• the strategic and legal framework for water management in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
• the process of project identification and project cycle management;
• the preparation of a water management concept (WMC) and issues related to strategic planning;
• the process of developing feasibility studies and terms of reference for consultants;
• the decisions that need to be made at the municipal level when developing water infrastructure projects;
• economic aspects of project development, including the process of tariff setting and affordability issues;
• technical aspects of wastewater treatment; and
• available funding sources for water infrastructure projects, ways of working with donor institutions and key criteria for acquiring financing.

The working paper, like the seminar, was prepared by the REC team and Austrian experts based on the assessment of the country’s needs and the challenges faced by the project proponents.
What comes next?

Since decentralisation, small and medium-sized municipalities in SEE have borne increased responsibility for environmental protection through the management of municipal water infrastructure. The region has a limited number of wastewater treatment facilities, although investment in the sector remains a constant priority. At the same time, the municipalities face challenges related to their skills in strategic planning, prioritisation and the preparation of investments. Lack of knowledge and experience in the operation of wastewater treatment infrastructure is another hindering factor. There is therefore a tremendous need for capacity-building initiatives that address deficiencies in skills and expertise at the local level. The impact and added value to the communities will increase if such initiatives are accompanied by the preparation of concrete investments and the development of manuals and guidance documents targeting the specific needs of the beneficiaries.

ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS

Pre-feasibility Studies for Strumica-Radovis and Polog Regions

Starting date: October 2007
Finishing date: July 2009
Project budget: EUR 203,268
Beneficiary country: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

Project background

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia adopted a new law on waste management in 2004, which significantly contributed to the ongoing process of approximating national legislation and provided an up-to-date and comprehensive framework for waste management based on EU directives and guidelines. In addition to this law, the broad national policy concerning waste management was formulated within the National Waste Management Plan (2006-2012), the National Solid Waste Management Strategy, and the National Environmental Action Plan II. The Macedonian Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP) is the public authority in charge of planning, overseeing and controlling the management of waste. Local self-government units (LSGs) are responsible for organising and financing waste management activities. Currently, the establishment of regional integrated waste management systems is recognised as a priority task in order to address the inappropriate management of municipal waste. Activities were implemented in two regions: Polog (north west) and Strumica-Radovis (south east).

Similar problems exist in both regions regarding inappropriate municipal waste management. A total of 12 illegal landfills have been identified in the Strumica-Radovis region and three in the Polog region. All of them have been assessed as causing significant risk of environmental pollution. A huge number of village dumps exist due to the lack of organised waste collection in rural areas.

The main project goals were therefore to improve the environmental conditions and to protect the natural resources in the regions by better waste collection and transportation, improved final waste disposal practices, and the remediation of existing municipal landfills and village dumps. The improved municipal waste management system in nine municipalities in the Polog region and 10 municipalities in the Strumica-Radovis region was to be in line with the National Solid Waste Management Strategy, the National Waste Management Plan (2006-2012), and the relevant national and EU waste directives and environmental standards.

The purpose of the pre-feasibility studies carried out for both regions was to:

- assess current practices and problems in relation to solid waste management (SWM) in the two regions;
- identify and evaluate the relevance and feasibility of practical solutions for setting up an integrated solid waste management (ISWM) system in the regions; and
- define an ISWM implementation strategy and business model for the public utilities.

Achievements of the project

Due to the similarities between the regions, a similar methodology was applied. The following tasks were performed in order to assess the feasibility of establishing a regional SWM system:

- Organisation of an initial (kick-off) workshop, focused on mobilising the project implementation team.
- Organisation of two separate workshops for the nominated focal points from the municipalities in both targeted regions, focused on principles of integrated waste management and introduction to feasibility analysis for the needs of projects addressing waste management issues.
The Strumica-Radovis and Polog regions

The Strumica-Radovis region includes 10 municipalities, while the Polog region comprises nine municipalities. The major SWM problems identified in a survey of the current SWM practices in the regions, carried out during the preparations for the pre-feasibility study, include:

- A significant portion of the population, especially in rural settlements, is not covered by the existing service;
- The waste containers and the waste transportation vehicles used are obsolete and too expensive to operate and maintain;
- Current waste disposal practices are at an extremely low level, causing significant threats to human health and the environment; and
- Current waste tariffs and fee collection efficiency are insufficient to cover the costs of SWM.

- Carrying out a survey of current SWM practices and data collection. Four separate questionnaires were prepared and distributed to all municipal and utility stakeholders from the region. The questionnaires referred to: (1) statistical data for the municipalities; (2) relevant data for the public utilities currently responsible for SWM in each municipality and their practices; (3) data regarding the municipal landfills currently in use; and (4) data regarding the identified illegal dumps within the boundaries of each municipality.

- Data analysis and the preparation of an SWM system concept.

- Identification, assessment and selection of a preferred alternative for the establishment and development of the regional SWM system, in particular defining a suitable location for a regional waste disposal site.

- Performance of further technical and financial analysis, and assessment of the project’s net financial benefit/performance and environmental impact.

- Organisation of a national workshop in January 2009, at which two separate pre-feasibility studies were presented to all the stakeholders from both regions. The national workshop was divided into several sessions: EU and national legislation relevant to ISWM, investment needs, regional cooperation, the preparation of waste management plans and financing opportunities.

- Report writing.

- Organisation of a study tour in Latvia for local officials and staff of the MEPP. The study tour comprised a visit to the University of Latvia/Inzenieru; meetings at the Ministry of the Environment/Environmental Protection Department/Waste Unit and Projects and Investment Department; a visit to the waste sorting centre in Riga (“L&T” Ltd.); a visit to the Getlini landfill in Riga; a visit to the North Vidzeme region; a visit to the regional solid waste landfill in Daibě (collection, landfilling and sorting of separately collected waste); and a visit to the Zemgale/Liepaja region.

The following elements of the waste management system were covered in the pre-feasibility studies:

- Improvement of the present waste collection system in both urban and rural areas, with the identification of incremental needs for vehicles/containers and operational routes.

- Improvement of the present transportation system and its upgrading for increased efficiency and reduced costs of transportation from the collection area to the selected disposal site (Rusinovo for Polog and Dobrosinici for the Strumica-Radovis region) were selected as the most appropriate sites in terms of environmental and socioeconomic criteria.

- Improvement of current disposal practices by the closure and remediation of illegal landfills and all the non-compliant sites identified throughout the project, as well as by the improvement of the technical conditions of landfilling and the engineering of regional sanitary landfills in both regions.

Regarding the capacity building of local project beneficiaries, discussions were held with representatives from the regions and the REC project team on several occasions in order to review the study objectives and opportunities. Site visits were made on several occasions to various locations in each municipality in the region to review site conditions. In addition, the regional SWM system alternatives and development prospects were presented to and discussed with representatives of the MEPP.

The analysis carried out within the study refers to an accepted project period up to 2035 (about 25 years).
What comes next?

Hydrogeological and geo-mechanical surveys of the selected locations for regional sanitary landfills have been conducted. The results of the analyses confirm the suitability of the selected sites.

However, the capacity building of local beneficiaries (the mayors of 19 municipalities, and public utilities) should continue in order to prepare for regional waste management in the future. Agreements should be signed and approved by the municipal councils regarding the distribution of ownership over the assets to be financed in the future, potentially through the IPA or IFIs, with the possible involvement of private operator(s). This could be part of the next level of planning documentation, for example a feasibility study and the development of preliminary designs for the sanitary landfills.

ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS

Promoting Financing Mechanisms for Eco-innovation in SEE

Starting date: May 2008
Finishing date: April 2009
Project budget: EUR 70,000
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
Donor: Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of the Netherlands

Project background

Eco-innovation is an excellent opportunity to combine sustainable economic growth with environmental protection, since it involves development in new technologies such as renewable energy sources, bio-fuels, energy efficiency and water treatment. Eco-innovation is also an opportunity to access EU funding in the accession context. Eco-innovation is a brand new subject for SEE countries and therefore its potential needs to be assessed. Incentives and mechanisms for financing eco-innovation (regulatory and institutional framework, voluntary schemes, and access to finance) should be analysed, exploited and improved. Eco-innovation is a broad concept, therefore this project limited its scope to the sectors of renewable energy, energy efficiency and cleaner production. This focused the activities on the most pressing needs, thus using the existing eco-innovation promotion and financing mechanisms in the region more efficiently.

The main goal of the project was to promote financing mechanisms for eco-innovation projects and companies in selected SEE countries. The objectives were to identify conditions for and barriers to the efficient financing of eco-innovation; to propose solutions for overcoming these barriers; and to organise an event for exchanging experiences and ideas in order to further promote eco-innovation financing in the region.

Since 1997, the REC has carried out a number of projects related to environmental financing and eco-innovation, the latest of which culminated in a very successful conference on financing eco-innovation, held in Budapest in April 2007. This project was a pioneering initiative to open debate and provide recommendations on how to promote eco-innovation through financing in the SEE region.

Achievements and progress in the period May 2008 to December 2008

Activities have been shaped around a background study reviewing key policy, planning and legislative documents, as well as the institutional set-up. The study assisted in outlining opportunities and barriers for SEE countries with respect to the promotion of eco-inno-

Primary target groups

- Officials from ministries of environment, finance, economy and regional development, and other relevant sectoral ministries.
- Chambers of commerce and relevant sectors and professions.
- Representatives from environmental technology and eco-innovation companies.
- Representatives from relevant enterprises and their associations.
- Representatives from private, national and multinational investment and development banks.
- Universities and research institutes.
- Environmental NGOs.
Eco-innovations can boost economic growth and create new jobs while improving the state of the environment.

**Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting in SEE**

Starting date: September 2003  
Finishing date: January 2006  
Project budget: EUR 575,000  
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)  
Donor: European Commission

**FUNDING PERIOD 2007-2009**

Starting date: May 2007  
Finishing date: August 31, 2009  
Project budget: EUR 300,000  
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)  
Donor: European Commission

**Project background**

The activities build on the project “Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting in South Eastern Europe”, which was initially implemented under the Phare/Obnova programmes for the period 2001 to 2003 and further extended under the CARDS programme (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation). This was the first regional assistance project to provide a platform for cooperation and to bring together officials from the region with responsibility for environmental law drafting into a single regional network, the Environmental Law Approximation Network (ELAN). Through a system of mutual support, sharing of outputs, provision of international legal expertise and an emphasis on strategy in environmental law drafting, the project assisted the countries to align their legislation to EU norms and standards.

The toolkit for assistance will continue to be relevant to the challenges faced by SEE countries until all the legislation they have adopted is in full conformity with EU requirements.

**Legal capacity building for the beneficiaries**

Through regional workshops and study visits, ministry experts learn from professionals from EU member
states, which contributes significantly to the improvement of their capacity in EU legal approximation.

Through participation in ELAN activities, ministry experts benefit from the regional exchange of good practices and successful approaches in relation to concrete approximation topics. These experts will continue to cooperate and will support one another within ELAN. The regional sharing of experience substantially eases their work back home as they are “armed” with their neighbours’ best solutions, contributing to the further development of a regional strategic approach to EU approximation.

Cooperation between international and national experts on the process of drafting and amending national legislation in the form of direct consultations, reviews of drafts and strategic guidance in the approximation work on concrete EU directives enhances the capacity of national experts in structuring and conducting a successful drafting process. The assistance aims at boosting the ministries’ capacity in legal drafting, increasing their efficiency and enhancing the required expertise to enable them to continue the approximation process without external support.

Achievements and progress in the period January 2005 to December 2008

The current project promotes the efficient and effective development of comprehensive legislative frameworks in compliance with the EU environmental acquis, as well as cooperation on environmental law in the region.

Regional level

At the regional level, capacity-building assistance was provided to the SEE region on EU environmental law approximation.

ELAN was one of the first networks of senior officials to rebuild bridges for collaboration in the SEE region. ELAN proved to be an excellent forum for the exchange of regional expertise and good practices, updates on legal developments and discussions on a strategic approach to regional environmental law approximation.
through targeted topical conferences, workshops and study visits. This is completed by support for the operation of the Environmental Law Approximation Network (ELAN), including the organisation of the sixth, seventh and eighth ELAN meetings.

**Conferences and workshops**

Five regional workshops and conferences were carried out to facilitate cooperation on specific topics between ELAN members, other key line ministry staff involved in the transposition and implementation of EU environmental legislation and experts from EU member states, candidate and potential candidate countries. These events included a workshop on approximation to the EU waste legislation in SEE in June 2005 in Cetinje, Montenegro and a workshop on approximation to EU nature protection legislation in SEE in June 2008, Babe, Serbia.

**Study Visits**

Study visits have been undertaken in existing EU member states with the main objective of sharing acquired knowledge and experience. Visits were organised to the European Chemicals Bureau (Italy), December 2005; on the topic of approximation of nature protection acquis...
The sharing of regional experiences “arms” ministry experts with their neighbours’ best solutions and successful approaches, easing their burden of implementation in their own country.

(Poland), November 2005; on the topic of hazardous waste legislation and management (Ireland), hosted by the Irish Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Governments, November, 2005; and to the National Chemical Bureau of Slovenia, January, 2005.

The study visits were strongly supported and appreciated by both the beneficiary countries and the hosting organisations. They were a learning exercise for both parties and have facilitated the building of informal networks for information exchange.

National/local level

At the national level monitoring was carried out on the transposition and implementation of EU environmental legislation in the potential EU candidate states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo [as defined under UNSCR 1244]) and one candidate country — the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Assessments were done with tables of concordance and implementation questionnaires in relation to up to 64 EC acts per country. Information tools and, more specifically, the updating of the project website, including a matrix of country-based environmental law projects, were created. A newsletter to be distributed every six months was launched.

Local capacity building activities aimed to maximise assistance benefits from support activities at the regional and local level. The beneficiary countries indicated the priority issues to be addressed.

Selected country workshops were organised on the approximation of nature protection acquis in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2005; on the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling (GHS) in Belgrade, Serbia, November 2005; on the approximation of the Environmental Liability Directive, in Zagreb, Croatia, November 21, 2005; and on EU chemicals legislation in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro.

Country/entity-specific, request-driven assistance during the period 2003-2006 included REC contributions of expertise to the drafting of 19 pieces of legislation conforming with the EU environmental acquis. Two examples included the drafting of new chemicals legislation in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Serbia and Montenegro and conformity checks at the country level in the field of IPPC.

What comes next?

A study visit on ambient air legislation/policy was hosted by the Flemish environmental authorities (Belgium) in March 2009. Another study visit on the pre-

Electronic information tools

To facilitate information exchange but also for environmental and efficiency reasons, a number of electronic tools were developed:

- A biannual newsletter on progress in environmental law reforms and transposition projects in the beneficiary countries. The newsletter is produced in consultation with the ELAN members and posted on the website: www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/LawDrafting/docs/newsletter/2008_1.pdf.


- The project website www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/LawDrafting, providing a summary of all activities carried out under the entire project, including all deliverables, publications, brochures and reports.
vention of major accident hazards (Seveso II Directive) was hosted by the Bulgarian Environmental Ministry in May 2009.

The last of eight ELAN meetings took place in June 2009 in Budapest. Discussions focused on activities implemented so far which served as a platform for active regional cooperation on environmental law and for the exchange of expertise and best practices. The participants recommended the continuation of the already good cooperation under RENA.

Progress monitoring will continue to be implemented by the REC with funding from the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA).

The achievements should be followed up by activities to fill remaining gaps; building capacities, particularly at the national level; and the further strengthening of cooperation networks in the SEE region. Future activities should also aim at reinforcing coordination between various ministries and ministry units and between neighbouring countries to ensure a long-term, consistent approach to the reform of legal, policy and institutional frameworks in the field of environmental protection.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Approximation of Croatian Water Management Legislation to the EU Water Acquis

Starting date: June 2006
Finishing date: January 2008
Project budget: EUR 974,800 (REC budget: EUR 184,300)
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Croatian Ministry of Finance, Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU) (via Grontmij — Carl Bro a/s)

Project background

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MoAFWM) and Croatian Waters (CW), the authorities responsible for water management in Croatia, are preparing the strategy known as the Water Management Master Plan. To continue with activities related to the EU accession process, Croatia needs to harmonise its water management practices with EU water requirements and, as a first step towards this goal, the former State Water Directorate (SWD), currently the Water Management Directorate (WMD) within the MoAFWM, conducted a preliminary gap analysis of Croatian water management legislation with respect to some specific EU water directives such as the Water Framework Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment (UWWT) Directive, the Dangerous Substances Directive and the Nitrates Directive. The results showed that existing Croatian water management legislation is well harmonised with EU water legislation, but that it needs further elaboration and improvement.

The MoAFWM needs to continue the process of harmonisation with EU legislation and to start preparing compliance plans. Its main focus in this respect is on the "heavy investments" directives (the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, the Drinking Water Directive, the Dangerous Substances Directive and the Nitrates Directive).

Implementation of the present water management legislative framework is inadequate, due to the insufficient competence of local officials but also, more generally, due to inadequate enforcement mechanisms and an unclear division of roles and responsibilities in the water sector. The involvement of stakeholders, actors, NGOs and the public in the process of the preparation of legislation, strategy development and planning, as well as in the preparation of specific (investment) projects and decision-making processes, is currently at a rather low level. The responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders should be clearly defined and the level of cooperation and coordination improved in order to encourage their participation and to ensure that all the necessary tasks are effectively performed.

In particular, improvements are necessary with regard to horizontal coordination with other relevant sectors such as environment, agriculture and industry, as well as vertical coordination at the local level. Therefore, the overall objective of the project was to support the government in effectively implementing and enforcing the EC water management acquis.

Achievements and progress

From the legal point of view, 16 EU directives in the water sector were analysed. Given that all directives could not have been tackled at this stage with the same level of detail because of the varying status of the fulfilment of the different directives’ requirements, particular focus was placed on the heavy investment directives.

The scope of the project was to ensure a uniform approach and to support the effective transposition and implementation of the EU water management acquis in Croatia. The implementation process included state governmental bodies, institutions, private companies and NGOs. Discussions on the implementation of the EU water management acquis among relevant stakeholders underpinned the project’s implementation process.
Obstacles to the implementation of the water management framework include: inadequate competence of officials, ineffective enforcement mechanisms, unclear division of roles and responsibilities and the low level of involvement of stakeholders.

Major achievements

- A legal, administrative and institutional assessment to determine the framework for the implementation and control of the key water management acquis.
- A detailed assessment of the implementation of the heavy investment directives, especially the UWWT Directive. The aim was to support the MoAFWM and Croatian Waters in establishing the process for preparing the horizontal impact assessment and analysing the impact of adopting the directives at national level, and to train beneficiaries to be able to deal with the process.
- Drafting a plan for compliance with the requirements of the UWWT Directive, including the capacity building of beneficiaries for the preparation of the compliance plan.
- Legal drafting for the transposition of the EU acquis — drafting a new Water Act and Water Management Financing Act, including secondary legislation.
- Drafting the strategy and action plan for the approximation of Croatian water legislation with the EU acquis as a supporting tool to assist in the planning of legal transposition and the implementation of the EU water acquis in Croatian national legislation.

What comes next?

The draft Water Act and the draft Water Management Financing Act are awaiting adoption in the Parliament. The National Water Management Strategy was adopted in July 2008. It is now fully harmonised with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and takes into account public comments and input. The implementation of these documents will increasingly require the involvement of the public and of local and regional authorities in the development and implementation of river basin management plans and other water-related documents. Since the water sector in Croatia has traditionally tended to be self-sufficient and non-transparent towards the public, EU requirements will bring new obligations, thus capacities for conducting multi-stakeholder consultation processes will need to be developed under the scope of the water authorities.

The REC has started to involve Croatian Waters and the current Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management in several projects aimed at building capacity for the provision of environment and water-related information (within the UNDP/GEF Danube Regional Project), and local/regional authorities in water management planning processes. Further capacity-building needs expressed by the sector include training on minimum requirements for performing water inspections.
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Capacity Building on EU Environmental Legislation at Regional/Local Level in Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Starting date: September 2007
Finishing date: July 2009
Project budget: EUR 269,672 (REC budget: EUR 68,042)
Beneficiary countries: Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donors: German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety, and the German Federal Environmental Protection Agency (through BEF Deutschland); Fund for Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency, Croatia

Project background

One of the most crucial but often neglected elements of a functioning political system is regional and local self-governance. Municipal service companies usually provide essential services such as water supply, sewage systems, waste collection and other everyday services. Hence, a well-functioning administration with well-educated staff at the regional and local levels is indispensable to ensure the smooth functioning of a state in its entirety.

The experience of CEE countries that recently joined the EU has shown that great efforts were, and still are, necessary in order to make local and regional units ready to fulfill their often newly acquired obligations and duties, as required by EU legislation. The approximation and accession process had a fundamental impact on the everyday work of the staff in these units, and the change in the current candidate countries, the Republic of Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, will be similarly profound.

Local and regional administrations (LRAs) in Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are not prepared for the upcoming changes resulting from the approximation process. Due to daily workloads in the ministries and the diversification of competences in the environmental sector at the national level, relevant and important information is not always forwarded to the subordinate levels sufficiently rapidly or efficiently. Priority is usually given to national obligations, which often does not favor the submission of necessary information or the provision or organisation of training seminars for LRAs. The ministries of environment in both countries have therefore welcomed the project, and regularly provide resource persons for relevant project activities.

Achievements and progress by December 2008

This project addresses local and regional self-government units in Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with the aim of increasing their knowledge of EU environmental legislation and extending their capacities to successfully implement EU standards in the environmental field. To achieve these goals, extensive use is being made of experience acquired during a similar project, still under way in Latvia and carried out by the Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF) since 2002. Through adaptation to the specific conditions in the target countries, a well-tested and widely recognised set of tools will be reapplied.

The project is jointly implemented by several organisations — BEF Latvia, BEF Germany, the Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Osijek Greens (Croatia) and REC country offices in Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and is supported by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction of the Republic of Croatia, the Macedonian Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, and Deutscher Stadetetag.

Phase 1: Train-the-trainers and promotion

- Background research/preparatory work
  - Target group analysis conducted in 2007: Questionnaire for LRAs on knowledge about environmental matters and EU matters, and on cooperation and communication with national authorities; evaluation of the results of the questionnaire and adjustment of project implementation strategy to findings.
  - Information leaflet about the project in the national language for the municipalities; closer involvement of several municipalities in project implementation, training of staff as future local trainers.
- Two training courses for local partners on facilitation and presentation skills.
- Two train-the-trainers courses on EU structure and environmental policy to enable local partners to lecture at EU info days and thematic seminars.
Phase 2: Addressing local and regional authorities

The results of the target group analysis indicated that LRAs consider the greatest environmental priorities to be the issues of waste management and water management, and that they would like to be informed about these issues and receive further training on them in the context of future EU implementation obligations. The staff of LRAs was addressed in the first project phase during the promotional info days, but mainly during the second phase. Members of staff that (at least predominantly) deal with environmental issues will attend the events: however, small units with a small number of staff do not usually have an environmental department or can barely afford to devote human resources exclusively to environmental issues.

The survey confirmed that most LRAs are not aware of the obligations, the workload and the changes that will result from the accession process. Basic information is therefore provided first (via EU info days), before efforts are made to explain selected EU directives and to give more specific advice on how to handle their implementation at the local and regional levels.

Package 1: General EU environmental policy, decision-making process and role of municipalities

- A series of four or five one-day events per country, in different regions (so-called EU info days), with topics including EU structure, EU environmental policy development, and local/regional authorities as actors at EU and regional level (including good-practice examples). The three EU info days organised so far in Croatia were attended by a total of 90 representatives of interested LRAs and local utility companies, while the Macedonian EU info days attracted around 40 participants from local authorities and utility companies.
- A publication about the structure of the EU and EU environmental policy in general, widely distributed among LRAs in both countries.

Package 2: EU water policy and local implementation

- Two large-scale seminars for a group of selected representatives of Croatian LRAs on different aspects of EU and national water policy and its implementation at local and regional level:
  - Public participation as a challenge in river basin management planning.
  - Local implementation issues and good-practice examples related to water policy (drinking water supply, wastewater treatment, cost recovery for utility services, etc.).

Package 3: EU waste policy and local implementation

- One large-scale seminar for a group of selected representatives of Croatian LRAs, held in October 2008, on different aspects of EU and national waste policy and its implementation at local and regional level:
  - Local waste management issues and good-practice examples.

What comes next?

Package 1: General EU environmental policy, decision-making process and role of municipalities

Two more EU info days in Croatia, and three or four in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were held in early 2009 to provide a general insight into the relevant EU environmental policy, from the perspective of LRAs.

Package 2: EU water policy and local implementation (Croatia); the IPPC Directive and local implementation (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

- Two large-scale seminars for a group of selected Macedonian LRAs, held in autumn 2008, on different aspects of the development of the IPPC system and its implementation at local level.
- Publications: A water management manual for Croatian LRAs; an IPPC manual for Macedonian local authorities.

Package 3: EU waste policy and local implementation

- A second large-scale seminar for a group of selected representatives of Croatian LRAs took place in 2009, on different aspects of EU and national waste policy and its implementation at local and regional level:
- Local waste management issues and good-practice examples (remediation of landfills, separate waste collection, waste streams, cost recovery for utility services, etc.).
- Publication of a waste management manual for LRAs.

The training and information materials developed for EU info days and thematic seminars have big replication potential and can be applied as training modules for a larger target group, eventually covering all local and regional authorities, following the legislative and policy developments in the country.
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Bridging the Gaps II: Enhancing MEA Implementation in the Balkans

Starting date: June 2006
Finishing date: July 2008
Project budget: EUR 22,100 (Phase I + Phase II)
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; and Montenegro in Phase II
Donors: Government of Austria, UNEP/DEWA — Kenya

Project background

The rapid increase in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) addressing a multitude of environmental concerns, and the wide range of decisions taken by governance bodies, has resulted in widespread concern that MEAs are neither complied with nor enforced, or that they are inadequately implemented and that implementation efforts at both national and international levels are insufficiently coordinated.

The project “Bridging the Gaps: Enhancing MEA Implementation in the Balkans” was originally supported and funded by the Government of Austria in the framework of the Regional Partnership Initiative aiding Balkan countries towards possible EU membership. It is aimed at building and improving national capacities for the development and implementation of legislation for the enhanced and more effective national implementation of key global and regional MEAs. It is also aimed at integrating the EU environmental acquis and streamlining reporting and information management systems in the Balkan region.

Achievements of the project

The analytical background paper “Bridging the Gaps: Background Report on Biodiversity and Chemicals/Waste MEAs in South Eastern Europe” was prepared during the first phase of the project. The paper builds on the outcomes of the AIMS project (Support to the Acceptance and Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in South Eastern Europe) and focuses on the existing legal and institutional arrangements for MEA implementation in SEE countries in two main clusters of MEAs — biodiversity and chemicals/waste.

The second phase of the project focuses on the Republic of Montenegro and aims to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders to comply with and enforce MEAs in the areas of biodiversity and chemicals/waste. The main project outputs include an assessment of the current national (and sub-regional) organisational infrastructures of the country with regard to the implementation of relevant MEAs, and an integrated national implementation plan (NIP).

These outputs were presented at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in Belgrade in October 2007 and were discussed during the national training course that took place in Podgorica in June 2008.

Between July 2007 and February 2008, the first draft of the NIP for Montenegro was produced and submitted to the Ministry of Trade and Environment...
(MoTE) for commenting. In late June 2008 a workshop was organised in Podgorica with the main stakeholders from Montenegro. The purpose of this workshop was to discuss in detail the approach and content of the NIP and to update it based on new information and proposed changes. This two-day workshop resulted in a substantive revision, mainly in terms of extending its scope to include some regional environmental agreements and to incorporate new legislative and policy developments. On the basis of the comments received at or following the workshop, a final NIP was produced in September 2008. This NIP also partly covers regional environmental agreements and EC environmental legislation with clear links to the MEAs in the waste/chemical and biodiversity clusters.

What comes next?

Based on the good results of the project, similar integrated NIPs are planned for other SEE countries.

**Project background**

Multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) are vital for transforming international environmental norms into binding rules. The countries of South Eastern Europe have a relatively low rate of MEA acceptance and face implementation obstacles because of reduced resources and the fundamental restructuring of authoritative bodies and enforcement mechanisms. The AIMS project (“Support to the Acceptance and Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in South Eastern Europe”) strove to increase the level of acceptance and implementation of MEAs in the region. The main objective of this project was to promote the applicability of relevant multilateral environmental agreements in South Eastern Europe to assist in the solution of priority environmental problems in SEE countries, both regionally and on a country-by-country basis.

**Achievements of the project**

The project was designed in two phases. The first phase ended in 2004, after which a follow-up phase involved the reactivation of the AIMS network; the sixth AIMS network meeting; and the carrying out of regional activities on practical implementation, in particular with reference to the use of national implementation plans (NIPs) and the UNECE and UNEP guidelines on MEA compliance.

The documents “SEE Commentary on the UNEP and UNECE Guidelines on Compliance with Enforcement of MEAs” (2007) and “Use of National Implementation Plans in South Eastern Europe” (2007) were made available on the Internet, and the AIMS brochure, “Growing Commitments”, was produced in February 2007 to communicate the importance and success of the project.

In addition, AIMS features in the UNEP Manual on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (2006) as an example of coordinated technical and financial assistance on a regional level.

**AIMS project impacts**

- A working regional network as a focal point for international assistance efforts.
- Major reference works assessing MEAs in SEE.
- The setting of MEA priorities by governments.
- Working national/local committees with the participation of domestic experts and stakeholders.
- Funds raised by the Basel Convention secretariat for a new, concrete programme of assistance for SEE.
- Increased assistance efforts in the region from the CITES secretariat following the successful country workshop in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
What comes next?

Following the general conclusions and recommendations formulated under the project, it is expected that additional ratifications/acceptance of MEAs in SEE countries will take place and that the current implementation of MEAs in force will be improved.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Multi-Annual Work Programmes for the Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession (ECENA, formerly known as BERCEN) for the periods 2003-2006 and 2007-2010

Starting date: September 2003
Finishing date: November 2006
Project budget: EUR 675,000
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey
Donor: European Commission

FUNDING PERIOD 2007-2010
Starting date: May 2007
Finishing date: May 2010
Project budget: EUR 1,000,000
Beneficiary countries: Candidate countries and potential candidates in SEE, and Bulgaria and Romania as new EU member states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey
Donor: European Commission

Project background

The candidate countries and potential candidates are in the process of developing legislation in line with the EU integration process requirements. However, difficulties in the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation have been identified as one of the main obstacles, undermining the effectiveness of the legislation.

The importance of reinforcing capacity for the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation has been highlighted by the European Commission in setting obligations for potential future membership.

The Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession — ECENA — was established in March 2005 as a successor to the former Balkan Environmental Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Network (BERCEN), following network enlargement with the addition of Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey.

ECENA is an informal network of environmental authorities from the candidate countries and potential candidates, as well as Bulgaria and Romania as new EU member states. The European Commission is also a member of ECENA.

The main objective of ECENA is to support its member countries in strengthening environmental compliance and enforcement in line with obligations taken up in the EU accession process and — where relevant — obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Process.

ECENA aims to assist the network member countries to improve the implementation of environmental law by cooperation and the exchange of best practices.

The REC was instrumental in the establishment of the former BERCEN, now ECENA, as well as in providing a network secretariat and managing the implementation of the network’s multi-annual work programmes.

Since its establishment in early 2001, the network has provided significant assistance to the countries in improving their capacity to better implement and enforce their environmental legislation. The network’s multi-annual work programmes were supported by the European Commission as well as by the governments of the Netherlands and Norway.

The lessons learned from the network’s activities have been transferred to other regions such as Africa and Asia, where similar networks have been established.

Achievements and progress in the period January 2005 to December 2008

The main activities in the period 2005 to 2008 were aimed at improving the capacity of ECENA member countries to implement EU legislation. This was achieved via a large number of peer reviews, trainings, exchange programmes and study tours focused on topics related to the practical implementation of the major EU directives. In order to enable further capacity building and hands-on experience, the trained inspectors were supported to participate in the projects and activities organised by the EU Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL).

The above activities resulted in:

- A better understanding among the enforcement agencies of ECENA member countries of their obligations in relation to implementation and enforcement, and the steps needed to meet them.
Without enforcement and compliance, environmental legislation is worth no more than the paper on which it is written.

- Improved implementation of environmental legislation through capacity building and training.
- Inspectors and permit writers well trained to perform their tasks in relation to the implementation of environmental legislation, particularly the environmental acquis.
- The establishment of closer links to the IMPEL network and other sister networks that further contributed to better understanding of enforcement issues and capacity-building activities.

The peer reviews were particularly appreciated since they provided screening of the enforcement and compliance system of most of the ECENA member countries and led to practical recommendations for improvement. The main purpose of the peer review is to assist ECENA member countries in their EU accession process by identifying and analysing potential weaknesses in IPPC legislation as well as the implementation of the EC Recommendation Providing for Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) and inspection practice. Half of the experts carrying out the peer reviews were members of ECENA, and half were consultants from external IMPEL countries.

A regional train-the-trainer programme for environmental inspectors and permit writers was delivered in June 2005, in Ireland. A total of 22 inspectors and permit writers from all ECENA member countries were trained. The main topic of the training programme was the implementation of the Large Combustion Plants (LCP) Directive, with an emphasis on the implementation of the LCP Directive in Ireland, best available techniques (BAT) for LCP, permitting in LCP and the presentation of case studies (the BMS Cruiserath incinerator, Eddendery Power Point Ltd. and Moneypoint Coal Fired LCP). Participants attended a two-day classroom training and a two-day on-site training at the BMS Cruiserath incinerator, Eddendery Power Point Ltd. and Moneypoint Coal-Fired LCP.

The ECENA exchange programme was organised in Cluj Napoca, Romania, in October 2005. It enabled participants to further improve their capacity by exchanging knowledge with their colleagues from Romania and other EU member states. The programme was attended by 39 participants from network member countries and IMPEL experts from Denmark, Italy, the United Kingdom and Belgium. The European Commission also attended. The main programme focused on the exchange of best practices in the implementation of the IPPC Directive, a presentation of IMPEL projects, the consideration of health aspects through the IPPC Directive, indicators for effective inspection, indicators for measuring inspectorate performance, prioritisation of inspections, inspection practices in the tanning industry, progress monitoring and benchmarking. On-site inspection visits were made to the Sanex ceramics IPPC installation and the Somes Dij paper mill IPPC installation.

The study tour for environmental inspectors and permit writers, in Denmark, 2006, provided participants with a full understanding of how a national environmental protection system works in one of the most advanced EU countries — Denmark. The focus of the study tour was environmental permitting and inspection in light of the IPPC Directive. However, other major pieces of EU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer reviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The REC accomplished peer reviews of the enforcement and compliance systems of the following ECENA member countries in the period 2005 to 2006:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia, October 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, February 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), March 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia, June 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania, March 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, September 2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
legislation were covered, including the Waste Incineration Directive, the Waste Directive, the Water Framework Directive and the Directive on the Limitation of Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) Directive. Nineteen environmental inspectors from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey visited Copenhagen, the municipality of Gladsaxe and several installations: Vestforbraending Waste Incinerator, LEO Pharma Pharmaceutical Company, Sun Chemicals and a pig farm. In October 2007, inspectors from ECENA countries were given training in Hungary on the development and maintenance of the European Pollutant Emission Register (EPER) and the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR). Experience from Romania and Bulgaria on data collection and verification was shared. Networking with the UNECE working group on PRTR was enabled. The agenda was designed to build the capacities of the participants, providing them with knowledge regarding the setting up and operation of the EPER system, but it also dealt with how to progress from the EPER requirements to E-PRTR, and the implementation of the PRTR Protocol. One day of the two-day training took the form of a field visit to the Hungarian EPER at the Ministry of Environment and Water in Budapest. During the visit, experiences of EPER reporting and various issues regarding the transfer from EPER to E-PRTR were presented. In addition, two train-the-trainer programmes on LCP, Seveso II and E-PRTR in ECENA member countries were delivered in March 2008 in Bristol, the United Kingdom. A total of 49 inspectors and officials were trained. Four on-site trainings were organised in the form of visits to Didcot Power Station, Oxfordshire; to two Seveso II sites (VOPAK Terminal, Barry Silicon-Based Manufacturing Installation in South Wales, and the
The implementation of waste-related EU legislation was recognised as a major priority in the candidate countries and potential candidates. An ECENA train-the-trainer programme on the Waste Landfill Directive and the Waste Incineration Directive was organised in June 2008 in Budapest, Pusztazamor and Balatonfuzfo, Hungary. The goal of this training was to provide greater understanding of waste management in the EU and the implementation of the main principles of the Waste Landfill and Waste Incineration Directives. National waste policies for the realisation of the waste hierarchy and lessons learned through case studies from member states and non-member states were discussed. Presentations were made on the technical characteristics of landfills, EU strategies to reduce biodegradable municipal waste, and best practices. The issues of the cost of waste landfilling and the setting of appropriate landfill tariffs were tackled, and the costs and benefits of compliance were evaluated. Self-monitoring and the monitoring of landfills and incineration were also on the agenda, followed by permitting and reporting obligations on existing plants. Inspectors from Hungary shared valuable experiences regarding the development and implementation of a programme of inspection.

With the assistance of the project team and international and local experts, the network member countries that have adopted relevant national IPPC legislation drafted country reports that form the basis of the Summary Report on the Implementation of the IPPC Directive in Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In order to improve the inspection systems and identify the current gaps, reports were developed on the implementation of Recommendation 2001/333/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on Minimum Criteria for Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The reports were compiled following IMPEL guidance.

The ECENA member countries consider this standardised reporting procedure to be a powerful tool for measuring progress achieved, addressing common problems and needs, and exchanging experiences with IMPEL member countries and the European Commission. To that end, the reports aimed to contribute to further improvement in the implementation of the recommendation and to open up possibilities for the countries to receive important inputs on implementation from the European Commission.

Recognising the need for continuous improvement of performance, grant support has been provided to the REC by the World Bank–Netherlands Partnership Program to support the ECENA programme in order to help consolidate international practices through a global review, to integrate benchmarking discussions in early “mock” peer reviews, and to provide training support to promote and advance the efforts of individual countries.

A workshop on benchmarking was held in March 2007 in Szentendre, Hungary. The training focused on the understanding of benchmarking, its benefits, how and when to use it, and who should be involved in the benchmarking process. In addition to presentations, the programme included interactive training, with the participation of invited officials. Discussions covered the situation in the countries with respect to benchmarking, as well as the permitting system and inspections of installations. Participants prepared a presentation on the situation in their country with respect to benchmarking and progress monitoring.

The problem of environmental crime was addressed during the second ECENA plenary meeting, which resulted in the establishment of cluster 3 — Environmental Crime of the ECENA multi-annual work programme (MAP) for the period 2007-2010. The cluster 3 objective is to improve the capacity of environmental inspectors, prosecutors and police officers to better enforce environmental legislation.

Environmental crime is a serious and growing international problem that not only damages the environment, but also results in significant profits for criminals. The il-
legal disposal of waste into waterways, air and soil can have a significant and long-term impact on the environment. The illegal actions of operators, or of even one individual, can have far-reaching consequences beyond the damage caused by the initial act.

It is the responsibility of law enforcement agencies to ensure that environmental crimes are prevented and that the perpetrators are given sufficient penalties to deter future violations.

These issues have both national and international repercussions. Hazardous waste, especially from more developed nations where it is strictly controlled, can be illegally disposed of in less-developed countries, taking advantage of weak or non-existent environmental controls or ineffective enforcement.

Training programmes for environmental inspectors, judges, prosecutors and police officers are organised in cooperation with INTERPOL, the Dutch Police Academy, the Belgian Judicial Police and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior. The main focus is on criminal penalties in the candidate countries and potential candidates; inspection investigations and the preparation of lawsuits; the trans-border shipment of hazardous waste with an emphasis on the Basel Convention and waste shipment regulations, especially in less-developed countries; the illegal dumping of oil in the sea; the illegal shipment of ozone-depleting substances; the illegal discharge of waste into rivers and lakes; and the reporting of environmental crime to INTERPOL.

The first ECENA train-the-trainer programme on combating environmental crime was organised in December 2008 in Budapest, Visegrad and Esztergom in Hungary. The training was organised for judges, prosecutors, environmental inspectors and police officers as the first training on environmental crime out of the three-training series of the multi-annual work programme (MAP) of ECENA for the period 2007 to 2010. The training was organised in cooperation with INTERPOL, the Dutch Police Academy, the Criminal Intelligence Service of Austria, the Belgium Judicial Police, the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, and the Central European University. Hungarian judges, prosecutors and experts provided valuable input. The Hungarian Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations also provided active support and shared valuable experiences and knowledge with the participants.

The goal of the training was to provide information and create a greater understanding of environmental crime. General aspects of environmental crime were discussed; the issue of environmental pollution crimes was tackled; and a practical exercise was carried out in working groups on the topic of combating illegal waste transportation. The importance of the team approach, of cooperation and coordination among the competent authorities, and the role of intelligence were emphasised. The prosecution and litigation of crime cases and an overview of the new EU directive for the protection of the environment through criminal law were also on the agenda.

An on-site visit to a forensics laboratory and the on-site presentation of a case of the illegal disposal of hazardous waste in Esztergom gave added value to the programme by providing the possibility to examine real cases on the spot.
What comes next?

The implementation and enforcement of EU environmental legislation remains one of the highest priorities for the candidate countries and potential candidates. ECENA (and previously BERCEN) has proved to be a valuable assistance mechanism that enables countries to improve their enforcement capacity through cooperation and the exchange of best practices.

ECENA is currently implementing the network’s multi-annual work programme for the period 2007 to 2010. The work programme comprises three clusters focusing on:

1. Training and the exchange of experience via a number of regional and national trainings, exchange programmes and the development of a training manual for environmental inspectors.
2. The development and maintenance of the E-PRTR.
3. Environmental crimes, via projects implemented with INTERPOL, targeting judges, prosecutors, the police and environmental inspectors and relating to the protection of the environment through the enforcement of criminal law.

ECENA will continue to exchange experience primarily with IMPEL as well as with other sister enforcement networks such as GreenForce, the Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN), the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE), and the Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement in the Maghreb (NECEMA).

Local Environmental Action Planning for Sustainability in South Eastern Europe

Starting date: November 2007
Finishing date: October 2010
Project budget: EUR 2,609,000
Beneficiary countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) and Serbia
Donor: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Achievements and progress until December 2008

The project will provide guidance and assistance to 20 municipalities in developing local environmental action plans (LEAPs). The communities involved are Novi Travnik, Jajce, Vares, Kotor Varos and Prnjavor in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Gjilan/Gnjilane, Gjakove/Djakovica, Peja/Pec, Ferizaj/Urosevac and Klin in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244); Probistip, Debar, Zelenikovo, Bistrica, Vardarovo and Caska in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and Vrnjacka Banja, Trstenik, Cuprija and Velika Plana in Serbia.

Poverty is an overarching problem in local communities in SEE, while their environment is challenged by the status of decentralisation, the absence of infrastructural investments, weak local institutions, frequent shifts in political structures, and the slowness of institutional reforms.

This project aims to respond to the situation by improving environmental planning, providing environmental investments and improving environmental management. The broader goal of this project is to break the “loop” of a degraded environment–failing economy–poverty in SEE by developing LEAPs in partner municipalities.

LEAPs provide a forum for bringing together a diverse group of individuals who work together to agree on common priorities and actions to address environmental problems in their communities. This process involves assessing and ranking environmental problems, setting priorities, developing an action plan to address the main priorities — with broad public involvement — and providing a framework for potential investments. The result is a “living” operational document that can take a local community from a state of ongoing crisis management towards more strategic environmental protection management, even helping communities to move towards compliance with national and EU environmental standards.
The outcomes of this project will fall into one of the following categories:

i) Integrating environmental issues into key development planning processes and providing their linkage with other planning processes in local communities.

ii) Providing direct investments for priority environmental projects, supporting strategic environmental investment planning, and increasing the capacities of local authorities in developing environmental investment projects.

iii) Developing mechanisms and tools for the sustainable use and management of natural resources.

Municipalities were selected in line with agreed criteria. The REC drafted municipality selection criteria and lists of partner municipalities, and signed cooperation agreements with partner municipalities. The eligibility and selection criteria used in the process of selecting partner municipalities were drafted by the REC and discussed with Sida, the relevant national authorities, and, in most cases, national associations of municipalities. These criteria reflect current development realities and are largely coherent across the beneficiary countries. This outcome has a number of broad national impacts, as data and information on municipalities and the status of their environmental and other sectors are consolidated and shared among relevant national players. The REC enhanced this benefit by sharing the results of these efforts at the regional level, presenting them with actions taken in the framework of the LISEE programme (Supporting Local Initiatives in South Eastern Europe). In addition, as in the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the selection of partner municipalities was started by an open call for applications, which enhanced the prominence of the LEAP process and local environmental issues.

Kick-off workshops/promotional meetings were conducted. The main outcomes of these events were the opening of communication channels and the improvement of cross-sectoral cooperation in partner municipalities. Based on the idea that a LEAP will only work if it is accepted and “owned” by the community, the REC maintained close communication with representatives of local authorities in partner municipalities to arrange for the highest possible representation of local administrations at these events, including interested individuals as members of local expert bodies, environmental and civic organisations, public utility companies, environmental professionals, business sector representatives and academics. This resulted in enhanced media attention, providing more direct coverage of municipal issues at the national level in beneficiary countries. These events provided a basis for future inter-municipal cooperation and presented a relatively rare opportunity for partner municipalities to liaise with relevant national authorities and international players in this field.

Stakeholders were identified. The REC drafted a list of potential stakeholders to involve in the LEAP process. Special attention was given to ensuring the equal representation of different groups, taking into account the post-conflict reality of the area in which the project operates. The main impact was increased interest on the part of local decision makers and the general public in the project and in local environmental issues. This heightened interest in the LEAP process provided a good starting point for establishing LEAP working bodies. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, local NGOs that could be involved in the LEAP process were also identified.

Stakeholders were mobilised. Partner municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) and Serbia were asked to nominate operational focal points (municipal LEAP coordinators), based on the criteria of professional experience and a sound knowledge of environmental issues at the local level, to assist the process of LEAP development and to provide efficient cooperation with the municipality. The approach in the former Yugoslav Republic

It is expected that over 1 million people in the partner municipalities will benefit from planning activities and direct investments of EUR 1.5 million in priority environmental projects.
of Macedonia is slightly different: municipal LEAP co-
ordinators will serve as key members of the LEAP con-
sultative bodies.

The partner municipalities nominated consultative bodies comprising members of the municipal adminis-
tration and representatives of expert bodies and the civil and other sectors. These bodies will perform coordina-
tive functions in the process of LEAP drafting and im-
plementation; they will represent a more formal liaison with the local authorities and will provide political sup-
port for decisions made by other LEAP bodies.

Establishing LEAP consultative bodies has the ef-
fect of enhancing the transparency of municipal opera-
tions. Cross-sectoral cooperation between partner municipali-
ties will also be improved, facilitating and en-
hancing future regional coordination and creating the po-
tential for joint priority-setting exercises in later phases of project implementation. These bodies will meet several times a year.

What comes next?

Main results to be achieved by October 2010:

- 450 representatives of local and national authorities and the civil sector receive tailored training, guid-
ance and hands-on experience of developing LEAPs in their communities.
- 500 key experts from local and national authorities, public utilities and other institutions receive targeted training on developing and financing environmental investment projects.
- 20 municipalities implement local projects of approximately EUR 1,500,000 and receive guidance on implementing priority local investment projects.
- 12 national coordination meetings are held.
- Two regional coordination workshops are organised in beneficiary countries, establishing a basis for further cooper-
ation among municipalities in SEE.
- Communication among municipalities in SEE is enhanced, including communication with potential in-
ternational partners.
- Beneficiary municipalities are potentially involved in broader national and international development-
related processes.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Our Community, Our Future: Promoting Sustainable Development of Local Communities in Croatia

Starting date: January 2005
Finishing date: June 2006
Project budget: EUR 21,725
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: DEFRA, UK — Environment for Europe Fund

Project background

In Croatia, the tackling of environmental issues at local government level is still in the initial stages. How-
ever, the environment is one of the crucial issues in EU accession negotiations, in the transposition of EU laws and regulations, and in the implementation of EU legislation. Through documents such as the Declaration on Environmental Protection, Croatia has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable development. However, cur-
rent practice at national, regional and local levels is not characterised by sustainability trends.

Local governments throughout the world have demonstrated their commitment to sustainability in local communities by the development of Local Agenda 21. In
Croatia, only the municipality of Omisalj has developed an LA21 document, which has not yet been adopted by the local authorities. The city of Zagreb has developed an environmental programme, which, while referred to as an LA21, lacks the core values of an LA21 (including public participation). Croatian municipalities and towns are therefore lagging behind in similar EU processes.

Through this project the REC’s country office in Croatia aimed to mobilise human and financial resources in local governments to support the future implementation of LA21 and to ensure the local ownership of solutions to environmental and sustainability problems. The overall aim of the project was to strengthen the capacity of selected local governments in Croatia and to develop sustainable economic growth, solutions to social problems and the proper use of natural resources.

Achievements of the project in the period January 2005 to June 2006

The objectives of the project were:

a) to initiate a dialogue between local authorities and citizens, local civil society organisations and private enterprises through new or stronger formal/informal links.

b) to increase public awareness and improve the dissemination of information on environmental/sustainability problems and viable solutions in local communities through interactive workshops, meetings and educational material (website, brochure).

c) to encourage local authorities to assess whether existing programmes and strategic planning were in line with current sustainability problems in the community and to modify them as necessary (employ environmental officers, begin environmental action planning, allocate funds for the start-up of activities etc.).

Project achievements included:

- At least one municipality (the town of Koprivnica) committed to continue environmental/sustainability planning in line with LEAP or the LA21 process and became acquainted with the basic steps.

- Increased knowledge on the part of local authorities although this would logically be the person to initiate the whole process. There is a lack of understanding that all departments of the local administration should participate in developing a document such as an LA21.

- **Short-term objectives.** Local authorities and their representatives (high-level officials in municipalities, and mayors) generally favour short-term objectives and solutions, which may turn into future problems. These objectives often overlap with their four-year term in office, during which time they try to collect brownie points for their political engagement, sometimes even without strategic plans and programmes.

- **Partnerships and public participation.** Despite numerous challenges, public participation in environmental decision making is widening in scope. The greatest obstacle could be the need to raise awareness among citizens and local authorities. However, many local authorities create and maintain good partnerships with the civil and business sector, which could form the core of the future sustainable development process.

---

**Major highlights and lessons learned**

- **Who is in charge?** Contrary to the essence of the LA21 process, it is often thought that environmental issues (frequently identified with sustainable development) should be tackled at the national level first, largely due to the lack of financial means at the local level and to a lack of awareness of possible solutions.

- **Education.** With rare exceptions, local authorities in Croatia are not sufficiently familiar with the significance of LA21 nor with the benefits for local communities; education is therefore crucial to support sustainable development processes, especially the education of local authority leaders.

- **LA21 — obligatory or voluntary document?** Pursuant to the Environmental Act (Official Gazette 82/94, 128/99), the city of Zagreb and counties and towns in Croatia develop quadrennial environmental programmes and reports. However, the development and implementation of LA21 is not obligatory under Croatian law and is therefore often disregarded.

- **Human resources.** Not all cities and municipalities appoint a person in charge of environmental issues,
and civil society representatives in relation to developing a community vision. (As a result of consultation meetings, seminars and workshops in selected municipalities, at least 200 people in the towns of Hrvatska Kostajnica, Koprivnica and Zagreb increased their knowledge on these issues).

- The town of Koprivnica started to develop strong formal relationships with various stakeholder groups.
- Sources for co-financing the development of LA21 in the community were identified and mobilised, and EUR 15,000 were allocated in Koprivnica in 2005.

The greatest impacts in the town of Koprivnica were:

- The direct participation of a significant number of stakeholders in the LA21 process (100 people in the inception phase, 700 people in the survey, and 30 people in LA21 working groups).
- Successful awareness raising in the wider community (website, articles).
- Visits by working groups to hotspots in Koprivnica (recycling yard, wastewater treatment plant, landfill).
- Koprivnica joined ICLEI (the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives).
- Koprivnica established contacts with the British Embassy and the French Embassy to look for twin towns in the UK and France.
- The town council undertook problem identification, and working groups continued work on LA21.

What comes next?

- By the end of the project: LA21 was in the process of being adopted by the town of Koprivnica.
- Koprivnica had won the European Mobility Week Award, 2008.
- The town was involved as a pilot municipality in larger projects such as “Removing barriers to energy efficiency in Croatia” and “From Estonia to Croatia: Intelligent Energy Saving Measures for Municipal Housing in Central and Eastern European Countries (INTENSE)”, both of which further support the LA21 process.
LOCAL INITIATIVES
Sustainable Island and Coastal Development in Sibenik-Knin: Awareness Raising, Capacity Building and Multi-stakeholder Planning for Sustainable Development and Social Transformation in Croatia

Starting date: June 2007
Finishing date: March 2010
Project budget: EUR 528,732 (REC budget: EUR 38,521)
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Wageningen University and Research Center (MATRA programme)

Project background

The county of Sibenik-Knin, in central Croatia, has a population of 37.8 inhabitants/km², which is almost the lowest in Croatia. This is a consequence of the war between 1991 and 1995 and of depopulation due to economic pressure. War damage is still visible in many villages, and this has been declared an “area of special government concern”. The town of Sibenik has been proclaimed a UNESCO heritage site and is the urban and administrative centre of the county. The county encompasses two large national parks: Kornati, which protects (a part of) the large archipelago off the coast; and Krka, which protects the Krka river in the hinterland.

The project focuses on the county’s coastal and island areas because of:

• the presence of important environmental and natural values that are also significant at national and European level;
• the special importance given to the Adriatic Sea in the Croatian National Environment Strategy, due to heavy pressure from human activities;
• the increasing negative impacts of the development of unregulated tourism on the environment, local culture and natural resources;
• the lack of experience in environmental issues among civil society in the county, especially in the coastal and island areas. So far there have been no international donors or programmes supporting environmental NGOs and sustainable development initiatives;
• the need for regional and local (environmental) authorities, as well as national park protection authorities, to build their capacity in light of the EU approximation process.

The project aims to increase capacity, improve planning, and strengthen cooperation and awareness in favour of sustainable development in the county of Sibenik-Knin. The main objectives are:

• To ensure that the civil sector and regional, local and protection authorities in Sibenik-Knin have an increased capacity, improved knowledge and a clear understanding of sustainable development, and that they work in cooperation to respond to the environmental threat posed by mass tourism.
• To provide environmental education in local schools, to raise public awareness in the county, and to establish a focal point for the sustainable development of the coastal area.
• To create an active, committed and well-positioned sustainable islands network comprising all relevant stakeholders in Sibenik-Knin.

Achievements and progress in the period June 2007 to December 2008

Project activities are grouped into four results-based clusters, as follows:

1. Increased capacity of the local civil society for sustainable development initiatives

• Series of three skills-building workshops for local civil society (December 2007 to April 2008).
• A small grants programme, the Sustainable Development Initiatives (SDI) Fund, to provide support to one-year NGO projects focusing on the sustainable development of the county’s coastal and island areas.
• Five half-day training workshops throughout the county on application procedures and project preparation for the SDI Fund, and the submitting of 10 project applications.
• Five projects under the SDI Fund selected and awarded to a total amount of EUR 34,760, and grant award contracts signed in September 2008.
• The first annual regional sustainable development festival for all NGOs in Sibenik-Knin organised in September 2008 (including the selling of local produce, NGO presentations, cultural events etc.).
2. Island Sustainability Education Centre firmly rooted and successfully implementing ongoing awareness-raising and educational programmes

- The setting up of the Island Sustainability Education Centre with assistance from the municipality of Murter and the Kornati National Park Authority, and the development of a work programme for its first year of operation.

- The drafting of the School Sustainable Islands Educational Package for primary and secondary schools (ages eight to 12), which is intended to reach a minimum of 200 pupils in a series of 10 two-day environmental education sessions (workshops at the Centre and educational tours of the Kornati islands).

- Provision of ongoing information and awareness raising on sustainable island development for visitors to the Centre, including exhibitions; the production and distribution of promotional material; summer activity days for local children; and bi-weekly presentations on sustainable island development activities for tourists and visitors.


- Project kick-off meeting and stakeholder consultations, aimed at developing a vision for achieving sustainable development in the Sibenik-Knin target region.

- A one-week study tour for members of the Sustainable Islands Network to the island of Texel in the Netherlands, including visits to sustainable tourism accommodation and product suppliers, and an introduction to the sustainable tourism chain structure.

4. Sustainable Islands Network set-up and activation

- The Sustainable Islands Network, as an informal multi-sectoral cooperation group, was set up to adopt a common vision for the sustainable development of the coastal and island regions of Sibenik-Knin, to prepare and implement projects for the sustainable development of the region and to lobby for better integration of priority regional development issues into national policies. Four network meetings have been organised.
What comes next?

In the remaining project period the following activities will be carried out:

- A second call for NGO projects under the SDI Fund (total budget EUR 21,240) was opened in 2009, focused on the island of Murter.
- The results of implemented NGO projects and a booklet of success stories will be produced and disseminated towards the end of the project implementation period in 2010.
- Practical sustainable tourism products will be developed for the Kornati National Park, jointly with the National Park Managing Authority, staff members and tourism boards.
- The second annual regional sustainable development festival for all NGOs in Sibenik-Knin was to be organised in Tribunj in September 2009.
- A one-year solid-waste prevention, recycling and waste separation campaign will be developed for the citizens of Murter Island and for visitors (in cooperation with waste collection companies, ensuring the separate collection of waste paper, PET bottles and batteries), as well as awareness-raising activities.
- At least five more Island Sustainability Network meetings will be organised, aimed at developing those projects that the network has identified as priorities:
  - “Regional Sustainable Tourism”, a macro-marketing project, addresses the problems associated with mass summer tourism and focuses on the year-round tourism demand, promoting local heritage and traditional livelihoods (olive growing, sheep farming, bee keeping, traditional sailing, etc.).
  - “Eco-mare” is a regional research centre to be located on the island of Murter (following the Texel model), which would bring together the Kornati National Park authority and the Sustainable Island Educational Centre, and attract international researchers and experts, as well as visitors and tourists.
- A study tour will be organised to visit best-practice examples of sustainable island development in Croatia.
- Two workshops for network members will be prepared and delivered, aimed at building capacity for project preparation and implementation, and at the development of lobbying skills.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Support to Local Environmental Planning for the Liqenas and Proger Communes of Prespa Lake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting date: April 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finishing date: January 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project budget: EUR 20,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary country: Albania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor: UNDP — Albania</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project background

REC Country Office Albania assisted the communes of Liqenas and Proger to develop LEAPs. Assistance covered technical support and guidance for local working groups, mainly focused on the transboundary environmental management of Prespa Lake. Activities included the establishment of working groups, the preparation of the environmental report (an analysis of the environmental status of the sub-region), the organisation of public meetings, the preparation of the environmental strategy (key environmental opportunities and constraints in relation to sustainable development and links to socio-economic and development plans affecting the region), the preparation of the environmental action plan (establishing priority environmental policies, actions and investments) and various activities in the area of public awareness and information.

Environmental planning is considered as the first step in the effective environmental management of transboundary natural resources and in combating inherited environmental damage. Local communities have to deal every day with economic, social and environmental priorities. In most cases, environmental problems are ranked fairly low, thus the level of commitment also remains low. In addition, inadequate knowledge of environmental situations compromises the future of these communities in terms of overexploitation and pollution.

The project aimed to assist two communes in the Korca region, Liqenas and Proger, to establish a basis for the extension of similar assistance to the commune of Bilisht Qender. It identified local needs and attempted to find solutions to ensure the sound use of natural resources while providing local revenue and improving the quality of life of the local population.

The goal of the project was to:

- Increase the capacities and skills of local authorities and targeted communities in relation to the sustainable use and management of the natural resources in their area.
- Establish the basis for future environmental investment.
in the area with the aim of conserving and preserving natural resources; support local development; and improve the standard of living of the population.

- Increase the capacity of local authorities in the use of local financial and human resources.
- Increase the chances of fundraising from central government and other potential donors.
- Create good examples of local environmental planning for the country.

Achievements of the project

Under the project, two local environmental action plans were developed for the communes of Liqenas and Proger. These documents form the basis for further components of the Prespa Park project, implemented by UNDP, and provide for the better management of the natural values of the area. Educational and awareness-raising materials were also produced. Four trainings were organised and activities were carried out with schools in order to educate children on the value of Prespa Park.

Visible results of the project:

- New tools/mechanisms for better cooperation between local authorities and the public.
- Environmental local advisory boards on city councils.
- One LEAP document developed for each community.

What comes next?

The project is continuing with a follow-up phase to implement some of the LEAP priorities, such as outdoor activities with schoolchildren and the development of a brochure on best practices, including examples of environmentally friendly community practices from the area and from other watersheds in the country and internationally.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Support to the Development of the Local Environmental Action Plan for the Municipality of Sokolac

Starting date: January 2008
Finishing date: December 2008
Project budget: EUR 15,083
Beneficiary country: Bosnia and Herzegovina
Donor: Local government (Municipality of Sokolac)

Project background

All municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have faced serious problems in the field of the environment due, in particular, to:

- lack of environmental policies and legislation;
- underdeveloped capacities;
- lack of participation by the public in the decision-making process in relation to environmental issues;
- unclear division of competencies and responsibilities among the various institutions dealing with water, the environment, health, agriculture and similar issues;
- non-existent/inadequate monitoring;
- lack of effective collaboration among the cantons, municipalities and various interest groups;
- inadequate training and lack of expert knowledge, poor management, lack of personnel and finances;
- lack of interest in environmental issues, and a poorly informed public.

Solving environmental problems requires a systemic approach, permanent cooperation and the exchange of information between the various stakeholders (local authorities; businesses; NGOs; health, educational and other institutions; citizens; and the media).

REC Country Office Bosnia and Herzegovina launched this project to support the development of a strategy for solving environmental problems at the local level. The LEAP document for the municipality of Sokolac was intended to assess environmental problems, set priorities and identify required actions in order to improve the state of the environment and public health. The project also aimed to promote public participation in identifying, prioritising and solving environmental problems; to build partnerships between various stakeholders; to improve the transparency and quality of environmental decision making; and to strengthen the capacities of local government in the management of environmental problems. The preparation of the LEAP document was organised according to democratic principles, ensuring full transparency and the active participation of all relevant stakeholders.

Achievements of the project

The engagement of all partners (local government, public enterprises, health and educational institutions, the business sector, NGOs and citizens) in the develop-
ment of a LEAP is one of the preconditions for success. An organisational structure was therefore established, including a working group of experts dealing with environmental issues and an advisory board comprising representatives from the business sector and from educational, health and other institutions in the municipality. A workshop on LEAP development was held, at which participants were introduced to the methodology for LEAP development (LEAP phases and goals, partners in the process of LEAP development, public participation, community vision, the ranking of environmental problems, the selection of priorities, the identification, assessment and selection of solutions, and how to write LEAP documents).

To encourage public involvement in the process of LEAP development, an information leaflet containing basic information about the project was designed and distributed in the municipality. A survey was carried out to assess public opinion regarding environmental problems. The information obtained was used in the preparation of the report on the current state of the environment for certain thematic areas and in creating the list of environmental problems. Based on the comparative risk assessment methodology (proposed in the LEAP methodology), all environmental problems were ranked according to the relative risk posed to human health, ecosystems, and overall quality of life.
What comes next?

The most important phase in LEAP development is the preparation of an action plan for environmental priorities. This plan, which will be developed during summer 2009, will include activities that need to be realised in order to improve the current situation in certain areas. In September 2009, a draft LEAP document should be prepared and adopted by the municipal council. The draft LEAP will be widely presented to the public. The comments from organisations and citizens will be taken into consideration and the modified version of the LEAP will be submitted to the municipal council for adoption. The final version of the document should be adopted by the end of October 2009. After the adoption of the final version of the LEAP document, it is expected that the municipality will begin implementing the defined priorities.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Course for Local Sustainability and Action

Starting date: November 2007
Finishing date: April 2009
Project budget: EUR 130,000
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland and Serbia
Donor: Italian Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS) through the Italian Trust Fund

Project background

Public interest in environmental issues in South Eastern Europe has been declining and efforts are needed to keep the environment high on the agenda. Relationships between local communities and their governments also need to be improved as work continues to ensure democracy and combat poverty in the region. This project responded to repeated requests from local communities in SEE for assistance in improving environmental planning and enhancing environmental investments by the organisation of a knowledge-sharing event on the subject of local sustainable development.

Poverty and long-term unemployment, income inequality, declining access to public services, growing pollution and other environmental damage, rising consumption levels and the limited use of brownfield investments for new industrial facilities present greater challenges at the beginning of the new millennium than they did at the beginning of the transition in SEE.

Achievements and progress until December 2008

The Course for Local Sustainability and Action was organised at the Venice International University (VIU), an international centre of higher education and research, on the island of San Servolo, Venice, Italy in November 2008. It gathered 35 representatives of local communities, national governments (ministries of local self-governance and ministries of environment), representatives of associations of municipalities and towns, regional authorities, NGOs and members of the business community. The REC implemented this project in partnership with IMELS (through the Italian Trust Fund), Venice International University (VIU) and ICLEI — Local Governments for Sustainability.

Two basic levels of governance benefited from the course and have ownership over its results:

- Local authorities — as local governance is the closest to the people and plays a vital role in educating, mobilising and responding to the public for the promotion of sustainable development.
- National authorities — national associations of local authorities, towns and municipalities, as they provide additional links between local and central governments.

What comes next?

Organising a series of follow-up training events remains the primary task for this area of the REC’s activities. In order to further support the development of the capacities of local and national decision makers, the REC has sought partners to organise further related events:

- A course on sustainable development and action was held in Montenegro in May 2009. This course provided additional knowledge and skills in the area of sustainable development to around 90 mid-level decision mak-
ers. This initiative is funded by the Netherlands Ministry for Development Cooperation.

- An advanced course on topical issues related to sustainable development. This is the sequel to the course held in Montenegro in May 2009. The course will be organised in cooperation with IMELS and the Venice International University. It will provide more in-depth knowledge about economic, social and environmental actions in the domain of sustainable development. It will take place in Szentendre, Hungary with a set of study tours and workshops on the practical implementation of the principles of sustainable development.

- A course on business and sustainable development. This course will gather around 80 representatives of small and medium-sized enterprises, business chambers and other entities in October 2009. It aims to provide the most up-to-date information about the possibilities provided by using the principles of sustainable development in addressing the current global economic crisis. This initiative is funded by the Netherlands Ministry for Development Cooperation.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Economic and Social Development Programme of Cetinje and Herceg Novi

Starting date: January 2008
Finishing date: June 2009
Project budget: EUR 90,642
Beneficiary country: Montenegro (municipalities of Herceg Novi and Cetinje)
Donors: The Government of the Slovak Republic; the Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation; and REC Country Office Slovakia

Project background

The project is oriented towards the development of civil society, the revival of social systems, and regional development. It will support the development and capacity building of the local self-government in the cities of Cetinje and Herceg Novi, and cooperation with civil society.

In the initial phase, the existing situation in the cities of Cetinje and Herceg Novi was critically and comprehensively assessed. The information obtained was used to define, categorise and prioritise the problems and needs to be addressed during one programming period.

An evaluation of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a SWOT analysis) was carried out in cooperation with established working groups in both cities. The SWOT analysis is important in order correctly to identify potential areas of development and important sectors that are insufficiently developed, thereby providing guidance to:

- maintain and develop the city’s strengths and to remove or eliminate its weaknesses;
- use existing opportunities for its further development;
- define measures to eliminate risks for future development.

The main objective, based on the assessment of economic, environmental and social aspects, is to define principles and priorities for economic and social development in the cities of Cetinje and Herceg Novi in order to improve the quality of life of the cities’ inhabitants in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

This includes:

- Supporting the building of local self-government and the development of capacities at all levels of the state administration in the interests of cooperation with civil society.
- Directing development in Cetinje and Herceg Novi in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- Supporting public participation in decision-making processes at local level, promoting interests in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- Improving quality of life in Cetinje and Herceg Novi.
- Increasing awareness and knowledge of sustainable development issues in all target groups.

The elaboration of a strategic development document in Cetinje and Herceg Novi would support the development of local self-governments and strengthen the capacity of different levels of the state administration in the interest of cooperation with the civil society.

Achievements of the project

The project was divided into two phases: analytical and strategic. The analytical phase included:

- The establishment of a three working groups: for environment, technical infrastructure and housing (WGETH), economic development (WGED), and social development (WGSD). The three working
groups comprised representatives of local self-government, local entrepreneurs, experts, NGOs, and representatives of the local state administration and the public).

- The collection of data for a multidisciplinary analysis of the resources of Cetinje and its region (an analysis of the current situation and an assessment of local economic, social and environmental problems by experts and/or the public, and the identification of priorities in territorial development based on sustainability principles).

- The elaboration of a vision for the development of the cities (objectives, priorities, measures, activities, measurable indicators) and the evaluation of the SWOT analysis for both cities.

- The organisation of a public opinion survey for Cetinje and Herceg Novi.

The strategic phase of project included:

- The creation of local action plans based on the principles of sustainable development in cooperation with all stakeholders and partners.

- The definition of priorities for the tasks included in the action plans and the identification of financing for project implementation.
What comes next?

- A public consultation on the Programme of Economic and Social Development, incorporation of relevant comments and finishing final version of Documents.
- Acceptation Documents Programme of Economic and Social Development for Cetinje and Herceg Novi by the municipalities assemblies during July and August 2009.
- The creation of mechanisms to monitor the implementation of action plans, the preparation of progress reports to ensure feedback; the establishment of a system for the correction of objectives and activities; and the provision of information on progress to the public.

Project implementation should contribute to achieving:

- The improvement of the economic and social situation (marginalised groups, gender equality) of the inhabitants of Cetinje and Herceg Novi.
- The development of sustainable tourism.
- The better protection of the environment in Cetinje and Herceg Novi.
- The start of cooperation among self-governments and other stakeholders and the creation of a platform for the exchange of views.
- The creation of conditions for improving the quality of life in the cities.
- The education of self-governments, NGOs and the public in the area of sustainable development.

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Development of a Database for the State of the Environment in Municipalities

Starting date: July 2007
Finishing date: July 2008
Project budget: EUR 17,940
Beneficiary country: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donor: Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Project background

Bearing in mind the need to intensify communication between the municipalities and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP) on environmental management, this project strove to establish a common approach and a transparent and uniform software application for data entry and analysis.

Specific goals were:

- To define the database structure at the level of detail.
- To create an open database allowing for upgrades and adaptations in the future.
- To design a database enabling a comparison between the environmental media and the environmental objectives set in the legislation.
- To enable a simple fast solution into meeting the established environmental goals in the given municipality.
- To devise a systematised and standardised method for the introduction of descriptive indicators for areas in which there is no monitoring or measurements.
- To provide a basis for future linking between all the identified users at national and local level.

Achievements of the project

The set of static and dynamic indicators were defined and agreed with the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. A consultant was appointed to design the software application. A series of meetings with the REC country office project team and the external consultant were held in order to create a complex data set and to determine the data flows and links between respective sectors. The database was designed according to the DPSIR methodology.

The software application comprises two components: the administration and the user parts. The administration part comprises fixed data, such as information on settlements (urban/rural etc.), as well as variable parameters that are to be updated at least once a year. The administrator validates the variable parameters to be filled in by the users/municipalities. The user part contains data collected from various sources, such as the regular monitoring networks and other sources of environmental parameters. The definition of the parameters and structure along the environmental sectors (water, waste, air, nature and soils/land use) according to the adopted methodology was subject to consultation with the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning as well as with a number of pilot municipalities. The demonstration version was also tested before distribution to users — the six
municipalities supported by the Sida project on the development of local environmental action plans.

In August 2008, the six municipalities were trained on the use of the software application. Some imperfections were noticed and corrected in the course of the summer. The project was completed by delivering the database to the MEPP. The application is accessible from the MEPP website: http://www.moepp.gov.mk:8080/REC.

A promotional event, attended by a large number of interested parties (municipalities, consultants and donors), was held in January 2009. As a result, many municipalities applied for access to the database, while a number of donors have shown interest in financing a follow-up to this project.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Additional Services for Support to Water Quality Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Starting date: August 2007
Finishing date: August 2008
Project budget: EUR 399,879 (REC budget EUR 87,250)
Beneficiary country: Bosnia and Herzegovina
Donor: European Commission

Project background

The overall objective of the project was to ensure the protection, improvement and rational use of water resources according to EU standards and requirements using integrated water management principles according to the Water Framework Directive, thus contributing to the reform of the water sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Achievements of the project

Water quality management in Bosnia and Herzegovina (WQM I)

- Drafting of a water protection plan, with an indication of the instruments and measures needed to improve the quality of surface waters in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Development of a decision support system for water quality management.
- Conceptualisation of a water quality monitoring network.
- Identification of the scope and set-up of water quality laboratories.

Additional services for support to water quality management in Bosnia and Herzegovina (WQM II)

- Continuation of the EC-initiated institutional strengthening of the water sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ensured by focusing on the further development of the water management process.
  - Definition of basic elements of the national water resources strategy.
  - Enhancement of knowledge of the relationship between pressures and resulting pollution impacts.
  - Improved coordination among water authorities for defining common monitoring objectives.
  - Clarification of monitoring strategies and methods and the use of results in decisions on programmes of measures.
  - Improved data and information management.
  - Improved implementation of pollution mitigation measures in surface waters.
  - Use of decision support systems and web-based information systems as baseline/input for the development of water policy for Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole.

- Availability of quality environmental investment projects for IFI financing increased through the improved project preparation capacities of authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and improved cooperation with IFIs.
  - Criteria and selection procedures for the determination of priority urban wastewater infrastructure investment projects.
  - Preliminary list of priority investment projects.
  - Increased project preparation capacity at the level of the water sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
  - Support to the establishment of a (transitional) programming and planning unit (PPU).
  - Improved communication channels with IFIs on priority investments.
  - Proposal for 20 urban wastewater infrastructure projects.
  - Proposal for the improved role of government in creating an enabling environment for financing environmental investments.
  - Proposal for the definition of an optimum structure and institutional set-up of the PPU.
WATER MANAGEMENT

Wastewater Treatment with Non-conventional Technologies in Mostar

Starting date: January 2006
Finishing date: June 2007
Project budget: EUR 128,250
Beneficiary country: Bosnia and Herzegovina
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

**Project background**

The project provided help in solving highly visible environmental problems related to wastewater treatment in Mostar through the introduction of non-conventional technologies (NCTs).

When choosing a wastewater treatment system, priority should be given to technologies that:

- have minimum or zero energy consumption;
- are simple to run and maintain;
- are efficient and continue to function when subjected to large changes in the flow and load of the influent to be treated (common circumstances in small towns);
- simplify the handling of sludge generated in the process.

Today, there are only eight wastewater treatment plants in the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, none of which use NCTs.

**Achievements of the project**

The project improved the capacities of local authorities and other key stakeholders through the organisation of training sessions, the creation of guidelines for identification, the development and preparation of projects on non-conventional technologies, and the development of a concrete project proposal for non-conventional technologies in the municipality of Mostar. The main project output was the guidance document “Wastewater treatment with non-conventional technologies”, developed by a group of experts and disseminated to representatives of governmental institutions, the business sector, universities and NGOs. Upon the completion of the guidelines, project documentation for the pilot area (Bosnjaci — a suburban settlement of Mostar) was prepared by a contractor (the Civil Engineering Faculty of the University of Mostar) and delivered to the local authorities in charge of the local infrastructure. All the project results were presented to local stakeholders at the closing workshop held in June 2007.

**What comes next?**

The design and all the documentation required for the construction of an NCT facility for the pilot area, that is, for the suburban settlement of Bosnjaci (Mostar) were prepared by the Civil Engineering Faculty of the University of Mostar. The documentation is available for potential donors interested in such an investment. In addition to the Norwegian Government, other organisations and institutions have shown an interest in continuing the popularisation of NCTs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation from Bosnia and Herzegovina).

WATER MANAGEMENT

Water and Wastewater in Industry: A Training Programme

Starting date: January 2006
Finishing date: June 2007
Project budget: EUR 136,800
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

**Project background**

This project aimed to establish a link between the emerging integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) obligations on industry, with an emphasis on water and wastewater issues, and concrete pollution prevention in the form of cleaner production (CP) and control measures that can be implemented to lead to full compliance with the IPPC Directive. The specific objectives were to:
Major highlights and lessons learned

Non-conventional technologies have a lower environmental impact and reduce contaminant load at lower costs than conventional treatment. They require relatively simple maintenance, which makes it possible to run the plants with non-specialised personnel. NCTs include many processes that are used in conventional treatment (such as sedimentation, filtration, adsorption, chemical settling, ion exchange, biological degradation, etc.) together with natural treatment processes (photosynthesis, photo-oxidation, assimilation by plants, etc.). Unlike conventional technologies, in which the processes are sequential and occur in tanks and reactors at accelerated speeds (thanks to an energy input), NCTs work at a natural speed (with no energy input) and in a single reactor system.

- Up to two site visits per participating company that filled in a pilot IPPC application, in the form of consultations and visits to processing facilities.
- Eight case studies from among the participating companies that filled in a pilot IPPC application.
- Guidelines for BAT in the meat-processing industry and breweries.
- A project website in Croatian and English: www.rec-croatia.hr, containing all the training presentations and BAT guidelines.

Major highlights

- Interactive step-by-step training on the IPPC Directive, combined with site visits and assignments.
- Open dialogue between industries and environmental authorities about mutual challenges in the implementation of the IPPC Directive.
- The implementation of BAT improvements (e.g. installation of water consumption meters) during the course of the project.
- Networking of breweries during the training, which resulted in the transfer of expertise on the IPPC Directive within the Croatian Breweries Association.

What comes next?

After the completion of the project, relevant Croatian authorities, led by the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction, started preparations for the implementation of the IPPC Directive through the CARDS project “Support for the Further Approximation of Croatian Legislation with the Environmental Acquis”, in which REC Country Office
Croatia participates as a member of the working group for the IPPC Directive.

Based on project results, in relation to the future implementation of the IPPC Directive in Croatia it is recommended to:

- involve industries in parts of the training and in the filling in of both IPPC applications and permits;
- involve both permitting and inspection authorities in trainings;
- prioritise information and guidance to industries.

**WATER MANAGEMENT**

**Sava River Inland Waterway Transport Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting date:</th>
<th>June 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finishing date:</td>
<td>October 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project budget:</td>
<td>EUR 12,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary countries:</td>
<td>Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor:</td>
<td>Booz Allen Hamilton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project background**

Despite its natural advantages, transportation on the Sava River, which links Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia with ports on the Adriatic, is not currently at full capacity. Nevertheless, river transportation is increasingly perceived as an ecological and sustainable way to contribute to the region’s economic growth. The goal of this project was to produce a written report, based on the work of four national legal experts, reviewing the laws, rules and other regulations affecting the transportation of goods and passengers on the Sava River.

**Achievements of the project**

An institutional, policy and legal framework study and a project document for the rehabilitation and development of transport on the Sava River were developed based on reports produced by four national legal experts. The study included:

- an identification of the government organisations responsible for commercial river transport in the region,
a description of their role within the national governments, and a general portrayal of staff structure;
• a comparative assessment of EU laws and regulations governing inland waterway transport and those of the beneficiary countries; and
• an assessment of the commercial institutions and regulatory bodies responsible for various aspects of river transport operations, such as port and fleet operators.

The goal of the study was to propose measures to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of transport on the Sava River; and to offer guidelines for financial investments regarding Sava River transportation.

Based on this study, the US Agency for International Development published the final report “Sava River Inland Waterway Transport Demand and Institutional, Policy and Legal Framework Study”, with the close involvement of the secretariat of the Sava River Basin Commission.

What comes next?

Recommendations, input and guidance resulting from the study are expected to enable the Sava River Basin Commission to:

• define the short-, mid- and long-term policy on the development of water traffic on the Sava River;
• set priorities concerning investments, operations and maintenance; and
• facilitate access to international financial institutions regarding the reconstruction, maintenance and development of waterway infrastructure.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

Preparation of the SEE/CCFAP — Climate Change Framework Action Plan for the SEE Region

Starting date: January 2008
Finishing date: December 2008
Project budget: EUR 100,800
Beneficiary countries: SEE countries
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

Project background

The objective of this project was to prepare a detailed regional climate change action plan for South East Eu-
rope (SEE/CCFAP), accompanied by a capacity-building workshop and consultative meetings. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) includes commitments for all signatory parties and additional commitments for Annex I countries (industrialised countries and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe with economies in transition) and Annex II countries (only industrialised countries). Five countries of the SEE region belong among the non-Annex I parties (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia) and one country belongs among the Annex I parties (Croatia). All countries in the SEE region have certain commitments under the UNFCCC. The non-Annex I countries have the possibility to receive support from mechanisms established under the UNFCCC in order to meet their commitments.

The Republic of Serbia launched the so-called Belgrade Initiative to enhance SEE sub-regional cooperation in the field of climate change, encompassing research and systematic observations, education, training, public awareness and capacity building (systemic, institutional and human). The initiative found the support of the ministers at the Belgrade 2007 “Environment for Europe” conference.

One of the activities envisaged in the Belgrade Initiative was the drafting of an SEE sub-regional climate change framework action plan (SEE/CCFAP), as elaborated in the background paper "The Belgrade Initiative: Enhancing SEE Cooperation in the Field of Climate Change", which was presented at the Belgrade 2007 ministerial conference.

The project targeted stakeholders in South Eastern Europe and involved the main central governmental in-
stitutions dealing with climate change (i.e. ministries dealing with environmental protection, hydro-meteorological services, environment agencies and other institutions dealing with monitoring and reporting), academia, industry etc. in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Achievements of the project

A kick-off meeting was organised with the aim of introducing the project in April 2008 at the premises of the Hydrometeorological Service of the Republic of Serbia. The meeting gathered representatives of the environment ministries and national hydrometeorological services of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia, and representatives from scientific institutions.

The first working group meeting was held in Tirana in June of 2008. The working group comprised the UNFCCC focal points and national experts with different areas of expertise to be entrusted with the project implementation, along with nine additional experts. All relevant suggestions and comments from the working group were incorporated into the first draft of the SEE/CCFAP. National experts agreed on a revised title of the action plan, namely: South East Europe Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation (SEE/CCFAP-A).

In close cooperation with the national focal points and experts in the countries involved, the SEE/CCFAP-A was drafted under the coordination of the Hydrometerological Service of the Republic of Serbia and the REC.

The first Ministerial Thematic Conference "Combating Climate Change in South East Europe" was held on October 14, 2008 in Sarajevo, organised by the Regional Cooperation Council and the REC. The SEE/CCFAP-A was adopted by ministers responsible for environment.

The ministers also encouraged the establishment of a climate change working group under the future Regional Environmental Network for Accession (RENA). The ministers asked the donor countries and the European Community to consider urgent support for the implementation of the SEE/CCFAP-A.

Achievements of the SEE/CCFAP-A project

- The South East Europe Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation (SEE/CCFAP-A) was developed.
- The implementation of Article 5 and Article 6 of the UNFCCC in Serbia and in the SEE region was supported.
- SEE regional and sub-regional cooperation on climate change issues was strengthened within the framework of international agreements.
- Further activities towards the development and implementation of the programmes proposed by the SEE/CCFAP-A were initiated.
- More possibilities were created for improving partnerships at the national, sub-regional, bilateral and multilateral levels.
- Political support to the SEE countries for the implementation of the Nairobi Work Plan was strengthened through the SEE/CCFAP-A by developing, in accordance with their common interest, programmes and projects with the final aim of supporting the implementation of Article 5 and Article 6, and the Nairobi Work Plan of the UNFCCC.
- Relevant donors in the region were informed of the SEE/CCFAP-A and of the potential for cooperation.

What comes next?

The priority is to generate funds for the implementation of the project ideas identified in the SEE/CCFAP-A. Other activities include the enhancement of the environmental cooperation among the SEE countries; the dissemination of the SEE/CCFAP-A; and the promotion of new partnerships in the SEE region in the field of climate change.
Climate Change — Adaptation Capacity Building

Starting date: October 2007
Finishing date: December 2007
Project budget: EUR 15,000
Beneficiary countries: SEE countries
Donor: Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea, Italy

Project background

South Eastern Europe is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It is therefore vital to carry out vulnerability assessments and implement adaptation measures. As part of this process, the REC organised the workshop “Adaptation to the consequences of climate change: Progress achieved and capacity building needed” in November 2007 in Budapest, Hungary. Participants included officials from environmental and non-environmental governmental bodies, representatives of international organisations and experts.

The objective of the workshop was to assist the invited parties in their efforts to build capacities for the adaptation process, with a focus on legislative, economic and institutional issues. Capacity-building needs in the area of adaptation, and ways to meet these needs, were identified and discussed in the regional context.

Achievements of the project

The observations and conclusions of the workshop can be summarised as follows:

- In terms of adaptation to the effects of climate change, the CEE and SEE regions lag far behind the rest of the world, for a variety of reasons.
- The observation system in these regions, while requiring updating and investment in equipment, is solid and allows the carrying out of regular and scientifically robust observations of the main indicators (i.e. temperature and precipitation). The (hydro-)meteorological institutions are staffed by reputable experts.
- The expected values of the main climate indicators have been modelled, although the expected impacts vary in different sectors. Models and software are mainly imported: countries are not developing their own models.
- Contacts between scientists and decision makers are weak.
- There is much room for improvement in terms of legislation for adaptation.
- The institutional framework for adaptation is almost non-existent.
- There is no clear vision of how to integrate adaptation issues in other national strategies, plans etc.
- Adaptation projects are more re-active than pro-active.

What comes next?

The Belgrade Climate Change Initiative was approved in October 2007 at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”. The focus is on research and systematic observation, education, training, public awareness and capacity building. The Belgrade Initiative is intended to enhance regional cooperation in SEE in the field of climate change. The South East Europe Climate Change Framework Action Plan for Adaptation (SEE/CCFAP-A) was adopted in November 2008.

Capacity Building in the Field of Climate Change in the Republic of Serbia

Starting date: November 2007
Finishing date: May 2009
Project budget: EUR 97,539
Beneficiary country: Serbia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

Project background

The Republic of Serbia signed and ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2001 and joined the Kyoto Protocol in 2007. As a signatory to the convention, Serbia has various obligations including the submission of a national communication on climate change. In order to execute these obligations Serbia needs human, organisational, institutional and scientific resources.

Within this project, the capacity-building needs of representatives of central and local governments, businesses, NGOs, media and experts were addressed in order to support the preparation and submission of the first national communication to the UNFCCC secretariat.
Achievement and progress until December 2008

The project covered four main activities:

• Training for representatives of ministries other than the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, focusing on general knowledge of climate change, the state of the international negotiation process under the UNFCCC, and options for the post-2012 climate regime.

• Contribution to the elaboration of CDM strategy in the Republic of Serbia.

• Seminar for experts preparing national communications on climate change focused on the most important problems related to GHG inventory preparation, mitigation and adaptation.

• Training for media staff and journalists on various aspects of climate change and its impact in Serbia.

What comes next?

The training for journalists took place in early 2009. The aim of the training was to provide journalists with basic theoretical and practical information on climate change in order to increase their capacity to write on the topic and make an impact on the public. The programme included presentations, a field trip, discussions and a practical writing exercise. Journalists were acquainted with scientific aspects of climate change and advanced environmental reporting techniques, equipping them with the know-how to produce and publish articles and prepare TV/radio reports on specific climate change issues in Serbia. At the end of the training, participants wrote draft articles and/or news reports for publication in order to heighten interest in and the awareness of the issue in Serbia. The participants were selected in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning.

A training for governmental officials that are not staff of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning took place in April 2009 in Belgrade in order to improve their knowledge of the needs and obligations of Serbia in regard to climate change and to strengthen inter-ministerial cooperation. The training covered the scientific background of climate change, observed signs of climate change, the need for adaptation, international obligations under the UNFCCC, and the EU Energy and Climate Package.

A workshop for experts participating in the preparation of the initial national communication took place in Belgrade the last week of April 2009. The programme covered all chapters of the national communication to be prepared by non-Annex I countries. International experts were invited to share their experiences, including experts from Annex I (Hungary) and non-Annex I countries (Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) who took part in drafting their countries’ national communication.

Further capacity building in the field of climate change is still needed in Serbia and the REC will continue to seek support for relevant activities at regional and national level. Regional cooperation in SEE needs to be strengthened in particular in the field of adaptation-related activities. The already adopted SEE/CCFAP-A provides an excellent framework for further activities. Concrete project proposals now need to be elaborated and submitted to donors for financial support.

On the national level, the preparation of the initial national communication is among the most pressing activities.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

Legal and Institutional Support for a Designated National Authority for the Clean Development Mechanism in Albania

Starting date: November 2007
Finishing date: June 2008
Project budget: EUR 4,000
Beneficiary country: Albania
Donor: UNDP Albania

Project background

Albania is a non-Annex I party to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol and is eligible to host greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation projects under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the protocol. It has moderate potential for the cost-effective reduction of GHG emissions as a result of the country’s outdated and inefficient energy sector; abundant but relatively unexploited sources of renewable energy (solar and hydro); and the presence of several GHG-rich industries. The country’s proximity to the EU, electricity interconnectedness with the European grids, and prospects for EU integration could create market ad-
Advantages if Albania were to increase its capacity to deliver CDM projects. To date, however, there has been only limited engagement in CDM activities in Albania. There are no registered CDM projects and only one that has reached the validation stage.

The responsibilities of the designated national authority (DNA) fall on the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration (MoEFWA). The ministry was nominated by the government and the nomination was communicated to the UNFCCC secretariat in 2005. However, the nomination was not supported by any by-laws or regulatory provisions allowing the DNA to conduct CDM project review and approval functions in compliance with the national legal and regulatory environment.

This project provided assistance to the Albanian DNA to address this legal and regulatory gap and to build the capacity of the DNA’s staff to implement its function in an effective and timely manner.

Achievements of the project
- Analyses of the current national legal framework (and legislation in process) for environmental protection, energy and forestry from the perspective of the Clean Development Mechanism.
- Analyses of the roles and responsibilities of various institutions in the field of environmental protection, energy and forestry, with particular focus on the Kyoto Protocol.
- Analyses of procedures for amending legislation.
- Identification of current legislation that might apply to certified emissions reductions.
- Assessment of the legislative and regulatory frameworks for the implementation of projects in the areas of energy, forestry, waste, agriculture etc., and recommendations for the further development of the legislative and regulatory framework.

What comes next?
The work on CDM and climate change issues and the provision of expertise and resources at national and regional level is ongoing with an emphasis on capacity development.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

Climate Change and Balkan Biodiversity Conference

Starting date: December 2007
Finishing date: July 2008
Project budget: EUR 26,875
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey
Donor: The Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development (AECID) through the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ECNC)

Project background
There is growing scientific evidence of the effects of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems in SEE. Through the Azahar programme of AECID, the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ECNC) and the REC implemented a project targeting Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey — countries eligible for AECID support.

The general objective of the project was to increase knowledge and awareness of the impacts of the climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems in five priority countries, and to build their capacity to identify and implement realistic solutions.

Achievements of the project
A project leaflet, available in English and four local languages (Albanian, Bosnian, Serbian and Turkish), was disseminated to key stakeholders in the selected SEE countries.

In June 2008, the conference "Changing climate, changing biodiversity in South East Europe" took place in Belgrade, Serbia. The conference attracted 60 participants from various SEE countries as well as experts from West European countries and various international organisations.

The conference confirmed predictions that SEE will be severely affected by climate change. The effects of the climate change on the region’s rich biodiversity and on the goods and services that ecosystems provide are already becoming visible and may increase rapidly, combining with existing threats posed by agricultural intensification and development pressure.

A background document was developed containing easily accessible scientific information about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem services, focusing on the five target countries.
The key project recommendations for tackling the impacts of climate change on biodiversity in SEE are described below.

1. A strong and concrete action plan on climate and biodiversity for SEE should be developed, defining actions and measures to:
   - enforce legislation;
   - reduce sources of harm not linked to climate;
   - conserve biodiversity;
   - protect habitats;
   - establish ecological networks;
   - strengthen local governments so that they can assume environmental responsibilities; and
   - continue and extend regional cooperation.

2. Relevant national and international governmental organisations should integrate biodiversity and climate change considerations in their policies, strategies and actions, and ensure that available funds work in favour and not against biodiversity conservation.

3. Awareness raising and educational activities on climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem services are of vital importance in order to reach the public, politicians, policy makers and the economic sector. These actions need to increase in number and be implemented at regional, national and sub-national levels, while adopting a multi-stakeholder approach.

4. At European, regional and national levels, actions should be undertaken to fill basic gaps in information and knowledge about the impacts of climate change on biodiversity in the SEE region, including focused and extended multidisciplinary research, policy analyses, modelling and scenario building, and adequate biodiversity monitoring at regional, national and sub-national levels. These actions should address both terrestrial and marine environments. However, no action should be delayed because of gaps in information and data.

5. Practical capacity building in terms of knowledge and human and financial resources should be increased in order to address climate change in SEE as a top priority and to provide a basis for further action.

6. Adequate mitigation and adaptation measures and guidelines for addressing the negative impacts of climate change on biodiversity should be developed and implemented, including adaptive management strategies for sites of particular natural value. Wider climate change mitigation measures should not damage biodiversity.

7. Concrete and far-reaching measures should be implemented in order to strengthen ecological and landscape resilience in the SEE region, including the concrete establishment and management of protected areas and ecological networks, and of SEE- and Europe-wide climate corridors.

What comes next?

The development of a strong and concrete action plan on climate and biodiversity for South East Europe is proposed. This action plan should be built on ongoing initiatives, including the Belgrade Climate Change Initiative adopted at the 2007 Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, as well as initiatives of the EU, the UN and the Council of Europe.

Conclusions of the Climate Change and Balkan Biodiversity Conference

The countries of SEE are particularly vulnerable to climate change, and the region’s biodiversity and ecosystems are likely to suffer the greatest impacts of climate change. In particular:

- southern SEE regions and parts of the Mediterranean basin, due to the combined effect of temperature increases and reduced precipitation in areas already coping with water scarcity;
- mountainous areas, where temperatures increase rapidly leading to the widespread melting of snow and ice and subsequent changes to river flows;
- SEE coastal zones, due to the rise in sea level combined with increased risks of storms;
- densely populated floodplains, due to increased risks of storms, intense rainfall and flash floods leading to widespread damage to built-up areas and infrastructure.

98
CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

Financial Engineering for Cleaner Production and Energy Efficiency Projects in Croatia

Starting date: January 2004
Finishing date: June 2007
Project budget: EUR 522,097 (REC budget: EUR 113,720)
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway (through Energy Saving International [ENSI], Norway)

Project background

The demand for economic development through increased energy efficiency, the utilisation of renewable energy and environmental improvements is widely acknowledged in Croatia.

National and international financial institutions are showing an increasing interest in environmental and energy efficiency projects, leading to more funds gradually being available for investments. However, the financial institutions complain about the lack of bankable projects. Local know-how and experience in terms of the development of appropriate business plans often fails to match the demands of financial institutions.

To address this problem, Energy Saving International (ENSI), in cooperation with REC Country Office Croatia, organised the programme “Business Planning for Cleaner Production and Energy Efficiency Projects in Croatia”, co-financed by the Norwegian Government. The goal of the programme was to train the sponsors and developers of environmental projects in business planning and presentation skills, enabling them to develop successful business plans (investment studies) for their projects and to approach financing institutions, primarily banks, more effectively.

Achievements of the project

The first interactive programme implemented by ENSI and the REC took place during 2004/2005. It comprised three classroom sessions and an assignment period of five to six weeks between each session, during which participants developed a step-by-step business plan for their own projects. Following successful completion of the programme, two additional trainings were organised in 2005/2006 and 2006/2007.

Twenty representatives from 10 different organisations and associated consulting companies were selected to participate in the programme.

Among the project achievements:

- More than 100 Croatian project developers and energy experts were trained in business planning.
- Business plans for 31 projects in the private and public sectors were developed.
- The developed projects represented a total investment of over EUR 44 million.
- The projects were bankable and were presented to representatives from the Croatian authorities, banks and other financial institutions and the media at a final dissemination seminar.
- Local banks and investors expressed their interest in several of the developed projects.
- All projects had significant benefits, both environmental (savings in raw materials, fuel or water, as well as less waste and fewer emissions to the environment) and economic (the most profitable projects may pay back the invested financing sources within as little as two or three years).

What comes next?

Due to the high interest generated in Croatia, especially during the last programme aimed at public sector projects (local government and public utilities), new trainings have been planned.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

Energy Efficiency in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Croatia

Starting date: January 2004
Finishing date: June 2005
Project budget: EUR 59,230
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: (former) Ministry for the Environment and Territory, Italy

Project background

One of the main problems encountered by countries in transition is the inefficient use of energy. In addition to inadequate and often obsolete technologies and energy management, as well as other consequences of inadequate energy policy, there are further serious obstacles such as disorganisation, a lack of up-to-date
knowledge and the absence of information interchange. In Croatia, the effects of the recent war are an additional burden. Although post-war energy consumption per capita is one of the lowest in Europe, Croatia faces rapidly increasing energy demands. It is difficult for suppliers to keep pace and pollution increases with growing energy production.

An alternative to the construction of new power plants is needed in order to find a balance between increasing financial pressure and growing environmental awareness. The simplest and most acceptable solution is an organised and significant increase in energy efficiency and the rational use of energy.

Achievements of the project

The project was designed to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in their exploitation of energy-saving opportunities. A grant from the (then) Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory supported a partnership between the REC’s country office in Croatia and the International Solar Energy Society (ISES), Italy. A number of local organisations (the Hrvoje Pozar energy institute and the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing of the University of Zagreb) contributed to successful implementation of this project.

The specific objectives of this project were:

- to build the capacity of SMEs for the planning and implementation of various energy efficiency measures and technologies through interactive training activities;
- to present the technical, economic and financial feasibility of energy efficiency measures through identified case studies in SMEs;
Project emphases

Throughout the project, emphasis was placed on:

- The human factor — training on each energy efficiency measure required the involvement of competent personnel acquainted with the characteristics of each industrial facility.
- The need for collaboration with competent experts from various institutions as well as local consultants from research and consulting organisations.
- The involvement of banks and other financial institutions such as HEPESCO (an energy service company) and the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund (EPEEF).

- to disseminate information and project experience throughout the country, as well as among the potential sources of financing for project follow-up.

The project was realised in the form of interactive training, comprising research, including a survey of SMEs to identify current energy-use patterns, best practices and perceptions; an intensive series of workshops, site visits and energy audits for representatives of SMEs; and assistance to SMEs in finding further support for energy efficiency measures.

The project involved 20 representatives from eight of the most energy-intensive SMEs in Croatia. Participants received training on theory and, by means of energy audits, case studies were developed for several energy efficiency measures in the companies.

The project showed that the eight companies had solid potential for the implementation of energy efficiency measures. The costs of the most profitable measures could be recovered in one or two years, and the total energy costs in individual companies could be reduced by 10 to 30 percent. Commonly proposed measures were improvements in heating and lighting systems, peak load management, fuel replacement (fuel oil by leftover wood in the wood-processing industry), and the optimisation of compressed air systems. The introduction of water management systems could also lead to big savings. Non-investment measures, such as the education of employees and the sound management of energy and water were neglected by the SMEs, although they can lead to significant long-term benefits.

In the less energy intensive companies located in the Adriatic region, the possibility of using renewable energy resources such as solar energy for the production of hot water was identified.

After the completion of the project, some of the participating companies were granted financial resources from the Environmental and Energy Efficiency Fund for the implementation of identified energy efficiency measures.

What comes next?

The implementation of energy efficiency measures leads to multiple benefits: savings in fuel and water, as well as fewer hazardous emissions. By increasing energy efficiency, companies reduce energy costs and emission fees and thus directly influence company competitiveness and market success.

The project was one of the early forerunners of programmes such as UNDP’s “Removing barriers to energy efficiency in Croatia”. It is planned to implement further programmes to raise awareness of energy efficiency among SMEs and to assist in matching SMEs to financial institutions.

By increasing energy efficiency, companies reduce energy costs and emission fees and thus directly influence company competitiveness and market success.
**CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY**

**Fair and Clean Energy for Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244): Assistance in the Preparation of Forum 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting date: November 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finishing date: April 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project budget: EUR 13,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary country: Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor: Soros Foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project background**

Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) faces restrictions to its energy supply. Although big investments were made by the international donor community and the government, the situation remains problematic and power cuts are a regular occurrence. The Ministry of Energy and Mining is involved in preparations to open a new mine in the Sibovc area, and in the construction of the new power plant Kosovo C, with a capacity of 2,100 MW. These activities are based on Kosovo’s energy strategy, adopted by the Parliament of Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), which clearly does not take into consideration the objectives of the Kosovo environment strategy, adopted by the government in 2004. Forum 2015 is a policy institute funded by the Kosovo Open Society Foundation. The REC was involved in organising research and preparing the report to be discussed at the Forum 2015 annual meeting.

**Achievements of the project**

The overall objective was to inform the public about the sustainable use of natural resources, the principles of energy efficiency and renewable energy, and the economic, social and environmental impact of such undertakings on the sustainable development of the country.

Among the project outputs were five assessment reports on selected topics, including:

- **Land use:**
  - the quality of the land to be used for the new mining operations; and
  - the amount of water required for the power plants.

- **Policy and legislation:**
  - the procedures followed;

- **Emission levels:**
  - the actual level of emissions to the air from existing power plants;
  - emissions to the soil and water;
  - pollution trends; and
  - emission limit values and comparison with the requirements of EU directives.

- **Geographical area impacted by new mines and new power generation plants:**
  - displacement of population and facilities; and
  - mapping of impacts.

- **Health:**
  - incidence of respiratory diseases connected with pollution from existing power generation plants among inhabitants of the area around the facilities of the Kosovo Power Corporation (KEK), including KEK employees in the Kosovo A and B power plants, and projections for the future based on pollution levels.

The other major output was a draft policy paper for the Forum 2015 discussion concerning the construction of a new power plant in Kosovo — a summary of the findings of the assessment reports and recommendations for the Forum 2015 discussion.

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**

**Support to the Public Regional Communal Service Company and Four Bosnian Municipalities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting date: January 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finishing date: May 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project budget: EUR 350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary country: Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project background

As a country in transition, Bosnia and Herzegovina has faced serious problems in connection with its water sector, due to inadequately developed capacities and infrastructure as well as to numerous socio-economic and institutional difficulties.

The river Vrbas is one of the most strategic water resources in the municipalities of Bugojno, Jajce, Donji Vakuf and Gornji Vakuf/Uskoplje in terms of water supply, agriculture, tourism and other types of water utilisation. As there is no wastewater treatment plant in these municipalities, wastewater is directly discharged into the river Vrbas.

The purpose of the project was to support the institutional strengthening of the regional public communal service company, and to support the capacity building of the municipal staff and experts from the municipalities' water utility companies in order to prepare the pre-feasibility study for wastewater infrastructure. The pre-feasibility study covered not only the development of wastewater infrastructure but also the need for future institutional and capacity building and the sustainable functioning of the regional public communal service company established by four municipal water utilities. The regional public communal service company and municipal water utility companies are facing organisational, institutional and financial difficulties. The project therefore aimed to strengthen their institutional capacity through a number of workshops and the organisation of training sessions on various topics.
The project also served as an opportunity to foster co-operation with municipalities located downstream on the river Vrbas.

Achievements of the project

The project was organised in three phases:
1) Assessment of the situation in the field of water management.
2) Conceptual solution for wastewater management design.
3) Preparation of a pre-feasibility study of wastewater infrastructure projects in four municipalities.

Phase 1 – Assessment of the situation in the field of water management
The assessment of the existing situation in the field of water and wastewater management was based on a review of the existing municipal planning documentation; financial and other relevant documentation of the respective utility companies; field visits; and meetings with relevant stakeholders from the communal service companies and municipalities.

The result of the assessment phase was the report “Assessment of performance in the water and wastewater sector in the municipalities of Bugojno, Jajce, Donji and Gornji Vakuf/Uskoplje”. The report provided a better understanding of the following issues:
• current level of performance in the sector and of the sustainability of the sector;
• status of the existing infrastructure, level of maintenance, reconstruction needs;
• economic and financial performance of the water and wastewater sector and municipalities;
• operational efficiency of the communal service companies;
• existing plans for wastewater sector development.

Phase 2 – Conceptual solution for wastewater management design
Within this phase, the most appropriate technical solutions for the development of wastewater collection systems and wastewater treatment plants were identified and selected.

The final deliverable of phase 2 was the report “Conceptual solution for the development of the wastewater collection, disposal and treatment system in the municipalities of Bugojno, Jajce, Donji Vakuf and Gornji Vakuf/Uskoplje”. The report described the technical, institutional and economic concept of water and wastewater systems in these municipalities.

Data collected during phases 1 and 2 served as the basis for defining the baseline situation and potential conceptual solutions. Existing technical designs for the sewerage systems in Jajce, Gornji Vakuf and Bugojno municipalities showed many deficiencies, the greatest of which was the lack of options and conceptual analysis. For the purposes of preparing the pre-feasibility study, quantitative research was carried out in the four municipalities with the aim of collecting information on willingness to pay, affordability and other aspects related to current and planned water and wastewater services.

Phase 3 – Preparation of a pre-feasibility study of wastewater infrastructure projects in four municipalities
The pre-feasibility study covered not only the development of infrastructure but also comprised a needs assessment for the institutional framework, capacity building and organisational set-up of the regional public communal service company and municipalities. It provided sufficient information to justify the acceptance, modification or rejection of the planned environmental investment, in line with the international standards for the feasibility assessment of environmental investment projects. The study analysed the legal, technical, organisational (environmental, social/stakeholder, institutional), financial and economic aspects of the proposed project as well as project alternatives.

What comes next?

The sustainability of the regional public communal service company has improved, although this is not a long-term improvement. Additional support to the regional public communal service company will be needed, ideally focused on human resources, institutional strengthening and technical development.

In the water sector, a regional approach can yield many benefits for the utilities and for end-users of water services, stemming mostly from the possibility to achieve economies of scale and the optimisation of infrastructure. However, regionalisation in the water sector is at an initial stage in the SEE region and there is a need for capacity-building activities and for the transferring of best practices and approaches from EU member states.
Support to the Regional Waste Management Centres in North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia

Starting date: January 2007
Finishing date: June 2008
Project budget: EUR 350,000
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

Project background

The waste management sector has been singled out by the European Commission as an area in which approximation to EU requirements and practices requires special attention on the part of the Government of Croatia. The Croatian waste management strategy (WMS) proposes the establishment of regional waste management centres (RWMCs), which will be responsible for the development and financing of waste management facilities for larger groups of municipalities in a county, or even on a wider regional level. There are difficulties in establishing RWMCs due to lack of:

- legal forms for establishing the necessary inter-municipal cooperation for the future management of RWMCs;
- agreement on the location of RWMCs (identifying and permitting sites for RWMCs);
- human resources and expertise on how to establish and operate future RWMCs;
- good feasibility studies to support decisions; and
- access to financing.

The main project goal was to contribute to better waste management in two Croatian regions, North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia, by supporting the establishment of regional waste management centres and thus to improve the quality of life of citizens in both regions.

The project objectives were:

- the institutional strengthening of the two regional public institutions responsible for establishing and managing regional waste management centres;
- the raising of public awareness of regional waste management centres;
- the promotion of a regional approach to waste management in Croatia.

Achievements of the project

Through workshops, consultative meetings and direct technical assistance to regional public institutions, the project achieved the following:

Technical activities

- Assessment of the functioning of the public institutions and future centres from a legal and institutional point of view.
- A social survey in order to assess the general public’s familiarity with the concepts of RWMCs, public satisfaction with the quality of current waste management services, the need for improvements, and the affordability and acceptability of increased waste charges.
- The identification and assessment of specific investment needs (energy recovery of waste in North West Croatia and the mechanical-biological treatment of waste in Eastern Slavonia).
- Recommendations for the efficient functioning of public institutions and future centres from a legal and institutional point of view.

Capacity-building activities

- Public awareness raising on the benefits of integral waste management, through informational material (articles in newspapers, leaflets, newspaper supplements) and radio shows.
- Study tour to Poland, where 20 representatives of the regions (towns, counties, communal companies, public institutions) and national authorities learned about the waste management system, including waste management centres.
- Workshops for representatives of towns, counties and communal companies on the topics of national/county/municipal waste management plans, project financing, waste management costs and fees, systems of separate waste collection, the transportation and recycling of waste, and public awareness raising.
- A final conference on experiences in the establishment of RWMCs, aimed at representatives of the regions included in the project, as well as other counties that have an obligation to build centres, and national authorities and institutions involved in waste management systems.
Highlights

• Joint consultations for towns, counties and communal companies in the project regions.

• Awareness raising among local stakeholders on the necessary institutional changes — the planning of such a complex waste management system requires organisational capacities that do not yet exist in the public institutions.

• Six meetings, two two-day workshops, and a one-week study tour, which attracted 50 representatives from each region.

• Public awareness campaign on roles and responsibilities in relation to regional waste management:
  • survey of 600 citizens from both regions;
  • media and NGO opinion polls and the development of a public communication strategy;
  • distribution of 250,000 leaflets and 70,000 newspaper supplements;
  • 80 interested stakeholders from throughout Croatia, including media representatives, involved in the final conference.

What comes next?

• The successful completion of long-term agreements by local and regional authorities in North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia to join regional waste management systems by the end of the project period guarantees project sustainability.

• NGOs will be included in wider discussion forums for planning the regional waste management centres.

• Experience gained from the project is transferable to other counties and regions in Croatia.

Waste Management in Dalmatian Counties in Croatia

Starting date: December 2005
Finishing date: May 2007
Project budget: EUR 769,800 (REC budget: EUR 154,090)
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: European Commission (through Carl Bro a/s)

Project background

In line with the Croatian Waste Act and the national waste management strategy, regional and local authorities have initiated the drafting of waste management plans and remediation plans as well as developing inter-municipal cooperation with the aim of creating regional waste management centres (RWMCs), sanitising existing landfills and dumpsites, and generally improving waste collection and management.

The management of municipal waste in Croatia is undergoing a radical transformation — from the current situation with decentralised disposal of waste at local substandard landfills, to centralised management of waste at waste management centres (WMCs) serving whole, and in some cases several, counties. The Croatian Government adopted the WMC concept in its 2005 national waste management strategy. Other government initiatives that are contributing significantly to the development of the waste management sector are:

• The Fund for Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency, which is injecting substantial funds into the closure and restoration of landfills by providing grants of 50 percent to more than 160 landfills in Croatia.
The introduction of producer responsibility and deposit refund schemes for packaging waste and special waste types from 2006, which is boosting this area of the recycling sector.

The continuing development of waste management legislation. One example is an ordinance of May 2006, which determines compensation to communities hosting landfills.

Various processes with regard to waste management planning and implementation are under way in the counties: this project was firmly based in ongoing activities and provided technical assistance for the meeting of legal objectives, taking into account the EU accession process. It also drew lessons from processes initiated under the earlier UNDP-financed MEMCI project, which assisted the other two Dalmatian counties (Zadar and Sibenik-Knin) in their planning for the development of RWMCs.

The project aimed to contribute to future inter-municipal and interregional cooperation in waste management, so as to optimise the number of landfills and to promote treatment options that encourage cleaner production and energy recovery.

Achievements of the project

The project focused on two Croatian counties, Split-Dalmatia and Dubrovnik-Neretva, and provided technical assistance to local and regional authorities in developing and implementing waste management activities. In particular, it provided assistance to:

- strengthen the regional waste management organisations established or to be established in the two counties;
- elaborate and implement waste management plans for the project area;
- design landfills and transfer stations and find the best solution for remedial action for existing landfills;
- help municipalities organise a cost-recovery system, and improve the affordability and financing of projects;
- enable local authorities to access funds from the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession (ISPA), the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), and international financial institutions (IFIs) by identifying investment priorities and building their capacity for project preparation and application;
- organise awareness-raising activities related to municipal waste management.

Project results

- Proposals/recommendations for inter-municipal organisation were developed in consultation with the municipalities of the two counties. Draft statutes for future waste management organisations were developed, describing tasks; means of financing; the division of responsibilities, competencies and obligations between daily management and shareholders; workshop organisation; and specifications for office space and equipment.
- A series of workshops was implemented for counties and municipalities, and hands-on training was provided, in particular for the improvement of management and financing aspects.
- Project documentation was developed for both future regional waste management centres: a feasibility study, including economic and financial analysis, for setting up regional waste management centres, project design and technical specifications for the facilities.
- Application forms for both future RWMCs were completed in line with requirements for ISPA/IPA/IFI or national funding sources.
- A training course for utility workers and public awareness campaigns were developed and implemented, including the development of communication strategies for the future operation of the RWMCs.

What comes next?

The main challenges in the further implementation of the regional waste management concept are the organisation of inter-municipal cooperation; securing funding for RWMC investment and maintenance costs; ensuring willingness to pay increased prices for waste management services; and continuing work on public information and the acceptance of RWMCs.

Based on the results of this project, the REC has assisted two other Croatian regions to build capacity for the future operation of RWMCs in North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia by providing legal and institutional recommendations, training for municipalities and utility companies, and public awareness campaigns. In view of the amount of work still to be done, in these and other regions of Croatia, the REC is prepared to provide the necessary assistance.
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND CLEAN FUEL
Cooperation with the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles

Starting date: September 2004
Finishing date: January 2009, ongoing
Project budget: EUR 235,000
Beneficiary countries: CEE and Turkey
Donors: UNEP; the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of the Netherlands; the Italian Trust Fund

Project background
Cooperation between the REC and the UNEP-based Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) began in 2005. The PCFV assists developing countries to reduce vehicular air pollution through the promotion of lead-free, low-sulphur fuels and cleaner vehicle standards and technologies. The SEE region is of particular interest for the PCFV as there are still several countries in which leaded petrol is sold: Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is even more striking, bearing in mind that only 14 countries in the world (including these four SEE countries) still sell leaded petrol. The region has a long way to go to improve diesel fuels as well.

Achievements of the project
A joint conference was organised in October 2005, and representatives of relevant ministries in the CEE countries elaborated joint conclusions:

Lead phase-out
- Remove lead from gasoline as soon as feasible.
- Introduce national regulations banning leaded gasoline, including official deadline.
- Improve monitoring/control of fuel quality.
- Hold information campaigns for better understanding of lead phase-out (possible monitoring of lead levels in blood).
- Launch vehicle renewal programme.
- Improve vehicle import regulations (to include age limits and catalytic converters).
- Improve interaction at all levels of governance.

Reducing sulphur
- Raise awareness of the benefits of cleaner fuels (among the public, NGOs and decision makers).
- Highlight the importance of fuel taxes to the economy (check with government inspectors and policy).
- Remain independent from producers and ISO accredited labs (country specific).
- Designate fuel from poor-quality refineries for non-transport uses (industrial boilers, marine use, domestic heating) — temporary measure.
- Make available mobile testing labs for testing fuel quality (at least for sulphur and colour marking).
- Modernise the equipment used in state-owned laboratories.
- Train personnel in fuel quality control.
- Introduce higher taxes for dirty fuels compared to cleaner fuels.
- Implement a sliding scale for penalties (starting with lower).

Cleaner vehicles
- Raise public awareness.
- Train policy makers.
- Improve access to information.
- Introduce fiscal incentives.
- Launch a discussion on how to harmonise the second-hand car market — standardisation.
- Introduce differentiated environmental taxes.
- Cooperate with other stakeholders and the private sector.
- Retrofit older vehicles.

These joint conclusions have become the basis of the future common work between the PCFV and the REC. Since 2005, the REC and the PCFV have worked in partnership to tackle these issues through small interventions at national level. Most of the projects focus on the Western Balkans, where the situation in terms of fuel quality is at its worst.
Country initiatives

*Bosnia and Herzegovina*

A main goal of the project was to promote the phase-out of leaded petrol in Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with the use of low-sulphur fuels. The main activity within the project was the roundtable “Possibilities for reducing the use of leaded petrol in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, held on November 6, 2006. The roundtable was followed by an awareness-raising campaign warning citizens of the negative consequences of using leaded petrol, with special emphasis on health risks. The campaign was conducted through radio clip broadcasts and the distribution of leaflets at petrol stations.

Unfortunately, Bosnia and Herzegovina has still not phased out leaded petrol. The refinery in Bosanski Brod has been privatised and the fuel quality specifications were not changed. However, leaded petrol accounts for less than 10 percent of total petrol consumption in the country.

*Serbia*

Serbia is the biggest producer of leaded petrol in SEE. In early 2009 its two refineries, Pancevo and Novi Sad, were privatised by the Russian company Lukoil. The efforts of the REC head office and REC Serbia in 2007 and 2008 were targeted at obtaining the commitment of decision makers to phase out lead by the end of 2008. Support was received at the highest political level from the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Health. However, the main decision maker — the Ministry of Mining and Energy — remains to be convinced to work towards the phasing out of lead.

A programme of modernisation has been adopted as a part of the privatisation contract. Nevertheless, it is likely that leaded petrol will continue to be sold in Serbia until 2011.

The high consumption of leaded petrol has negative impacts on health. The REC planned to carry out blood tests among children in Belgrade in order to prove that high levels of lead are present in the blood of the most vulnerable population group. However, because of permit issues the testing was not allowed by the Institute of Public Health.

*The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is phasing out lead from July 1, 2009. The phase-out was delayed for several years because of the unclear division of re-
sponsibilities among various institutions and a loss of political momentum. The REC/PCFV project was successful in establishing stakeholder communication through a working group in order to speed up lead phase-out and solve the problem of 800 tonnes of stocks of blended leaded petrol.

Montenegro
A REC/PCFV project is being implemented in Montenegro. A national working group on fuel quality and vehicle emissions has been established through the project. A national plan for transition to cleaner fuels and vehicles is being drafted and a national awareness-raising campaign for transition to cleaner fuels from 2009 will be carried out. Montenegro is phasing out lead starting from July 2009.

Regionwide initiatives

Environment for Europe
Within the project funded by the Italian Trust Fund at the REC, a category I paper was drafted for the Sixth UNECE Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, which took place in Belgrade in October 2007. The following recommendations were made:

- High-level commitment is needed to phase out leaded petrol by the end of 2008, in line with the PCFV global deadline, in SEE and EECCA countries where it is still produced and/or imported or where legislation exists but is not implemented.

- Phasing out lead in petrol can be accomplished quickly and effectively, as already demonstrated throughout the world. It is an essential step for better air quality in SEE and EECCA countries, enabling the use of vehicle emission control technology (i.e. catalytic converters) for significant reductions in pollutants.

- Concurrently, catalytic converter technology should be promoted by the adoption of national standards requiring its use in all newly produced and imported vehicles.

- In order to reduce vehicular emissions of fine particulates and to allow for the use of advanced emission controls, it is essential to lower sulphur levels in fuels — especially diesel fuels. Countries should move towards reducing sulphur in vehicle fuels to 50 ppm or below, in line with clean vehicle technologies, with roadmaps and timelines developed regionally and nationally.

- The role of all sectors involved in decision making with respect to cleaner fuels and vehicles should be strengthened: this includes the governmental, civil society and private sectors. Public-private dialogue should be intensified to promote commitment to cleaner fuels and vehicles and to ensure adequate implementation and participation.

The declaration adopted by all UNECE countries included the following text: “We reiterate our commitment to eliminate lead from petroleum and to take steps to significantly reduce the amount of sulphur in motor fuels, with roadmaps and appropriate timelines, in order to improve human health and the environment, including through participation in and support for the UNEP Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles.”

Clean fleet management trainings
UNEP/TNT developed a clean fleet management toolkit targeted at fleet operators and aiming at stimulating measures for fuel reduction. In 2008, the REC was commissioned to conduct trainings for Hungarian fleet operators as well as train-the-trainer workshops for representatives of REC country offices.

The work continues with two additional trainings in Slovenia and Poland.

What comes next?
All interventions at regional and national level will be in line with the conclusions drawn in October 2005. Work on the clean fleet management toolkit is continuing with trainings in individual countries. Besides Slovenia and Poland, interest has been expressed by Romania, Albania, Estonia and the Czech Republic.

Starting in July 2009, the REC/PCFV are launching a new regional project in SEE. At a regional meeting in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in January 2009, it was recognised that regional cooperation in the field of clean fuels and vehicles will be of significant added value. Through a series of national meetings and via national working groups, the REC and the PCFV are aiming towards the final phase-out of lead in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. The project will also enhance the adoption and implementation of national standards for lead-free, low-sulphur fuels and the improvement of vehicle standards commensurate with European directives. Time- lines and milestones will be developed by participating national authorities.
**SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND CLEAN FUEL**

**Sustainable Urban Transport Policies in SEE**

- **Starting date:** December 2006
- **Finishing date:** November 2007
- **Project budget:** EUR 45,000
- **Beneficiary countries:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey
- **Donor:** The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands (VROM)

**Project background**

The overall objective of this project was to assist public transport stakeholders in SEE towards a better understanding of sustainable transport policies and strategies in EU countries.

During a meeting on the promotion of urban transport and environmental policy integration in SEE, which was organised by the REC in November 2004 in Zagreb, Croatia, it became clear that the countries of SEE were facing a number of problems related to the transport sector. All these countries have to take into consideration the EU drive towards achieving coherence in sectoral policy making, which means that environmental concerns must be taken into consideration during policy making in other sectors.

It was emphasised that the identification and dissemination of best practices in sustainable public transport is very important, and innovative solutions that are not financially demanding are particularly important. These findings are especially relevant for SEE countries, where awareness of the mechanisms and benefits of sustainable public transport is far lower.

The REC carried out an analysis of transport problems in SEE and presented examples of good practice with respect to the integration of environmental concerns in the transport sector, with special focus on examples from the new EU member states.

After identifying the most relevant public stakeholders among municipalities, public transport operators and transport ministries in SEE, public transport needs and problems were assessed on the basis of three pilot countries — Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia. Personal interviews with 26 public transport stakeholders were carried out in Tirana, Skopje and Belgrade to provide a background for further discussion at the regional meeting in June 2007 in Budapest.

Based on the interviews, on reports and data provided by the interviewees and desktop research, a background paper was prepared for the regional meeting. The background paper was updated after the meeting to reflect all the comments from participants. It presented the current condition of public transport systems in all three cities and suggested certain actions, which were discussed during the meeting. From the needs assessments it became clear that all cities are facing the problem of increasing numbers of cars and difficulties in public transport financing.

During the meeting, the findings of two other REC projects on clean fuels and vehicles supported by VROM and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/UNEP were presented, as well as other European projects promoting sustainable transport solutions (SPUTNIC, ELTIS, PILOT) and other relevant European documents.

Based on the assessment, a number of public transport case studies were selected from the Czech Republic, Germany and Poland, with a focus on cities in transition (Olomouc and Ostrava in the Czech Republic; and Poznan and Gdynia in Poland). The public transport system in Freiburg, Germany, is included as an example of very good practice.

The goal was to present lessons learnt in the development of public transport using the example of cities with a comparable economic context. Four of the cities are in countries that previously had a centrally planned economy and historically had a high proportion of public transport. At the same time, lessons learnt from their recent experience of transition and adaptation to changing economic and social circumstances can be of interest to other SEE cities that are now beginning to develop efficient and sustainable public transport systems. The study of Freiburg provides an example of a model city from the point of view of public transport and mobility management.

**Achievements and progress**

The major outcome of this project was the publication *Sustainable Transport Policies in South Eastern Europe:*
Needs, Priorities and Lessons Learnt from EU Countries, which summarises problems and needs related to public transport in SEE and presents improvements in public transport in five cities in EU member states. The selected cities illustrate different approaches to public transport and important lessons can be learnt from them. The publication has been distributed among all relevant stakeholders and is available on-line. The printing costs were supported by a contribution of the Czech Ministry of Environment.

What comes next?

In general, all public transport stakeholders agreed that car-based lifestyles are dominant in countries in transition. Due to the significant increase in the number of cars, congestion problems and air pollution plague almost all SEE cities. Public transport is not given priority, municipal/government funding is not available to cover the costs of services provided to users with social privileges (discounted tickets), and there is a lack of funds for service improvements. On the other hand, stricter enforcement of environmental regulations is needed. Participants concluded that further cooperation is required to foster sustainable public transport policies and solutions in the region. Experience exchange with cities that are more advanced in applying sustainable transport policies and measures would also be valuable, with special focus on medium-sized and small cities from the new EU member states. Further financial support for the implementation of sustainable transport policies and measures is still necessary.

The REC successfully applied for financing from the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of the Netherlands for a follow-up project to continue work on this topic in the region.

Project information, the electronic version of the publication and other important documents related to sustainable transport can be found on the REC's website at: www.rec.org/rec/Programs/environmental_policy/sustainable_transport_policies/default.html
## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND CLEAN FUEL
### Further Support to Sustainable Urban Transport Policies in SEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting date: November 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finishing date: October 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project budget: EUR 40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor: The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands (VROM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Project background

The primary objective of this project was to provide further support to the implementation of sustainable urban transport policies in SEE cities. It was a continuation of the project "Sustainable Urban Transport Policies in SEE", which was also financed by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment of the Netherlands. The project addressed public transport stakeholders in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. The main activity under this project was the organisation of a site visit combined with a workshop in a city in one of the new EU member states.

The idea for this project emerged at a regional meeting during the previous project, at which it was concluded that experience exchange with cities more advanced in applying sustainable transport policies and measures is needed, with special focus on medium-sized and small cities in the new EU member states. Further financial support for the implementation of sustainable transport policies and measures is still necessary. A study tour and one-day workshop was organised in two Polish cities (Gdansk and Gdynia) in northern Poland.

### Achievements of the project

The main activity under this project was a two-day study tour and workshop in May 2008 in the cities of Gdansk and Gdynia in northern Poland. The visit comprised a number of presentations on the cities' public transport systems. There were also presentations on municipal sustainable public transport plans, followed by discussion based on the example of such a plan in Tallinn.

Most of the selected participants were stakeholders involved in the previous transport project funded by VROM, in order to ensure the continuity of the work.

Both cities are excellent examples of improvement in public transport systems. Both shared their experiences of participation in European projects and initiatives.

### What comes next?

Significant transport-related problems remain in the SEE region, especially due to the common perception of cars as symbols of freedom and good status in SEE coun-
tries. The REC is currently looking for further funding to continue its support to transport-related activities in the region.

On-line project information is available at: www.rec.org/REC/Programs/environmental_policy/sustainable_transport_policies/default.htm

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT/STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**Introduction to European EIA and SEA Legislation in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting date:</th>
<th>June, 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finishing date:</td>
<td>December 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project budget:</td>
<td>EUR 10,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary country:</td>
<td>Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor:</td>
<td>Soros Foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project background**

Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) is currently undergoing a privatisation process, during which it is planned to put many of the old non-operational factories or facilities back into operation. It is well known that industrial developments have previously taken little or no account of environmental issues. It is therefore extremely important that new undertakings take into consideration the environmental impacts of the activities.

With the Law on Environmental Protection (Regulation 2003/9), each investment project with a potential environmental impact must undergo the EIA procedure and the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning must issue an environmental consent before the project starts. The Administrative Instruction on EIA from 2004 is replaced entirely with the Law on EIA adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo in 2009 (2009/03-L-024). The Law on EIA, or more specifically the EIA procedure described therein, comprises many stages and steps of cooperation and consultation.

This project aimed to make the procedure as transparent as possible by familiarising the municipal authorities with their responsibilities and informing the public of their rights. An appropriate, transparent and correct EIA procedure is the best preventive measure for environmental protection and ultimately for public health and well-being.

The main goal of the project was to familiarise stakeholders in the EIA/SEA process with EU requirements, including other relevant international agreements, ultimately contributing towards transparent and democratic decision-making processes in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) while respecting the principles of sustainable development.

**Achievements of the project**

- Representatives from the Kosovo Assembly and from central and local governmental institutions gained knowledge of sustainable development principles in general, and of EIA/SEA in particular.
- Members of environmental NGOs were informed about the role of public participation in the EIA/SEA process.
- A handbook on EIA was produced with information on the national legislation, EIA practice in national, regional and EU contexts and the Aarhus Convention.
- Members of the parliamentary committee for the environment gained knowledge of EIA prior to the adoption of the new Law on EIA and SEA.
- An information campaign for the general public introduced the EIA process and its overall benefits (two televised debates and one issue of a trilingual bulletin).

**What comes next?**

Further support for the implementation and enforcement of EIA and SEA in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) is needed.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT/STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**EIA/SEA Alumni Follow-Up Workshop for South East Europe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting date:</th>
<th>July 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finishing date:</td>
<td>November 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project budget:</td>
<td>EUR 52,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary countries:</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor:</td>
<td>Sida (through Ramboll Natura, Sweden)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project background**

A six-day EIA/SEA alumni follow-up workshop for SEE was organised in Rijeka, Croatia, for selected par-
participants in the EIA and SEA Advanced International Training Programme and the Regional Training Programme for SEE, which were held in Sweden between 2002 and 2006. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Strengthen existing networking among participants and establish new networks according to participants’ needs and interests.
- Strengthen knowledge related to EIA/SEA among participants and within the institutions they represent, based on network competence and experience.
- Increase the exchange of experience relating to managing change projects and institutional change processes in general.
- Expose participants to frontline knowledge and developments in the area of EIA and SEA.
- Improve and further develop future EIA/SEA training programmes, as well as the managing change concept.

Achievements of the project

The selection of specific subject areas for lectures was based on the participants’ areas of interest and communication with participants prior to the workshop.

International and regional experts presented the following topics at the workshop:

- SEA and planning processes
- Scoping and alternatives in EIA/SEA
- Public consultations in EIA/SEA
- EIA report evaluation and quality assurance
- Decision making in EIA/SEA
- Monitoring
- SEA/EIA of oil/gas projects
- Sustainability appraisal

Small group discussions provided opportunity for an exchange of experience in relation to EIA in various sectors (energy, road construction, mining, urban development, waste management, forest management, site reclamation and rehabilitation etc.). The workshop included field visits to sites in the north Adriatic and Istria, selected for their relevance to the interests and fields of work of the participants:

1. “Energo” Energy Supply Company, Rijeka
2. The “Rijeka-Zagreb Motorway” road management company: technical facility, Delnice
3. The INA oil refinery, Rijeka, and sightseeing on the island of Krk

Participants presented case studies from current or planned projects from the region and elsewhere in Europe, with a focus on energy/gas/oil infrastructure projects as the most interesting in terms of EIA. Lectures provided opportunities for discussion on the status of SEA in Europe and the state of the art in general. The need for regional and wider networking was confirmed as a source of frontline knowledge and developments, while the lack of regional activities and projects was pointed out.

The cost of membership of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) for one year was covered for all participants. This enabled several workshop participants to visit the IAIA annual conference in Perth, Australia, in May 2008.

What comes next?

The opportunity for networking and establishing contacts with participants in previous trainings was evaluated as highly successful. After the workshop, the REC assisted with the follow-up activities built into the alumni workshop concept. Key outputs of the networking discussion were:

- the setting up of a core group for the establishment of an SEE regional SEA/EIA network;
- agreement on a list of tasks to be performed by the net;
- work under the coordination of the core group;
- discussion on linkages with the IAIA; and
- the establishment of an Internet discussion forum and Internet page for information dissemination, networking and cooperation.

It was proposed and agreed that the REC would provide an independent contact point to act as coordinator. Ramboll has also supported the establishment of a website for the exchange of experience and networking among workshop participants.

To learn more about SEEIA — a network of impact assessment stakeholders in South East Europe, visit the website: http://seeia.org/about-us.
**Promotion of, and Evaluation of Barriers to, Green Public Procurement (GPP) and the Uptake of Green(er) Products in South Eastern Europe (SEE) and Turkey**

**Starting date:** January 2008  
**Finishing date:** May 2009  
**Project budget:** EUR 70,000  
**Beneficiary countries:** All SEE countries and Turkey, with a particular focus on Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro  
**Donor:** The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands (VROM)

**Project background**

Governments are expected to demonstrate leadership in furthering sustainability, not only through setting policies but also by setting an example in the public sector by pursuing (more) sustainable consumption patterns. Governments are the most influential purchasers in a national economy, typically spending 15 to 30 percent of GDP on a wide range of goods and services. By adopting environmental and social criteria in their purchasing practices, governments themselves can be one of the main drivers of the development of markets for green(er)/more sustainable products and services.

Green public procurement (GPP), according to which public authorities seek to procure goods, services and work with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle, is an effective tool in the hands of governments to set an example and to demonstrate commitment towards sustainability. The setting up and operation of green labelling schemes (e.g. national eco-labelling or organic food labelling schemes) are effective complementary measures to GPP: beyond providing guidance on the environmental performance characteristics of products to private consumers, they also offer a wide range of choices for green procurement.

The introduction of GPP and the setting up and operation of green labelling schemes, however, are either in a very initial phase or practically non-existent in the countries of SEE and Turkey. The overall objective of the project was therefore to promote the introduction of GPP practices and to enhance the development of markets for green(er)/more sustainable consumer goods in the region. The more detailed goals included:

- assessing the legal and institutional context of public procurement and identifying relevant legal provisions, initiatives and activities already in place in the countries of the region;
- working out national “roadmaps of action” towards GPP in three selected countries;
- building the capacity of stakeholders in the region and potentially establishing a regional forum (an SEE governmental network for green public procurement and eco-labelling) for the exchange of information, sharing of best practices etc.

**Achievements and progress in the period January 2008 to December 2008**

In the first stage of the project, information was collected in all SEE countries and Turkey about:

- The legal and institutional context, e.g. national public procurement laws, references to environmental criteria and related institutions and stakeholders.
- Related initiatives and actions already in place, particularly if the country has an eco-labelling and/or organic food labelling scheme; if there are legal provisions for the energy labelling of appliances; and what other private labelling schemes (e.g. the “Blue Flag” for beaches or the “Forest Stewardship Label” for timber) are in place.

For all the SEE countries and Turkey, the above information was summarised in country factsheets. Based on the first stage of the project, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro were selected for further activities (details are given below).

In the second stage of the project a market survey was conducted on the availability of green(er) products that could potentially be the subject of green public procurement. Interviews were conducted with key national stakeholders on the main barriers to setting environmental criteria in public tenders and to actually practising GPP.

In winter 2008, national stakeholder workshops were held in Croatia and Montenegro to discuss country-specific barriers to GPP and to identify opportunities as well as potential action towards the introduction of GPP in the national context. These national events, with the participation of key stakeholders from the governmental, business and civil sectors, were a good opportunity for participants to learn more about the EU policy framework on GPP as well as the status of GPP.
and related good practices in EU member states. During the workshops, participants worked out potential next steps and measures that they considered necessary for the introduction of GPP by national governments.

The recommendations and conclusions of the workshop/roundtables, considered as potential “roadmaps of action” towards the introduction of GPP, were sent to the relevant ministries and other governmental institutions in the countries for their consideration for implementation.

What comes next?

Between January and April 2009, a national stakeholder workshop and roundtable were held in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, similar to the events held in Croatia and Montenegro at the end of 2008.

Finally, the results of project activities, including the assessment of the relevant legal and institutional context in all SEE countries, as well as the recommendations and conclusions of the three national events, were presented to invited delegates from all SEE countries at a workshop and seminar held in April 2009 in the town of Prcanj, Montenegro.

Apart from the distribution of project results, the overall objectives of this workshop/seminar included capacity building of relevant SEE delegates and the enhancement of networking on the subject of GPP, with a view to potentially establishing an SEE governmental network for green public procurement and eco-labelling at a later stage, based on the needs of the beneficiary countries.

Potential follow-up activities include, primarily, the adoption by national governments of the recommendations of the workshop-seminars held in the three focus countries and the development of national action plans for the introduction of GPP in all SEE countries. Based on the results of the final project event, bilateral cooperation has started with several of the beneficiary countries towards potential follow-up projects, including twinning projects on the topics of GPP and eco-labelling, the capacity building of relevant stakeholders and the development of criteria for GPP in the national context.

The country factsheets are available on the project website: www.rec.org/REC/Programs/environmental_policy/main_gpp/default.html

OTHER TOPICS

Reducing Environment and Security Risks from Mining in South Eastern Europe (SEE): Improving Regional Cooperation for Risk Management from Pollution Hotspots/ENVSEC Initiative in SEE

Starting date: 2006
Finishing date: 2009
Project budget: USD 650,550
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia
Donors: The Netherlands, Austria, Canada
Lead agency: UNEP

Project background

The countries of South Eastern Europe share not only a wealth of mineral resources and a long history of mineral extraction activities, but also the same negative effects from substandard mining operations. These have resulted in — and continue to cause — significant adverse environmental, health and safety impacts and related liabilities.

In May 2005, UNEP organised the sub-regional conference “Reducing Environment and Security Risks from Mining in SEE and the Tisza River Basin (TRB)” in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Water Management of Romania. The aim was to draw up an action programme to reduce environmental and security risks from mining in the region, including assessments and pilot projects at high-risk sites, and to endorse guidelines for sustainable mining and mine closure.

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) publication Mining for Closure: Policies, practices and guidelines for sustainable mining and the closure of mines was produced following the successful Cluj conference. It presents principles and guidelines for mining policy development, capacity building and institutional development that can yield a sustainable mix of social, economic and environmental benefits in the SEE region. It was created in recognition of the fundamental divide between the interests of mining companies, which typically wish to develop mines, achieve a good return, then leave when production finishes; and the interests of the communities...
that desire wealth and income opportunities that will last over time.

Within this field, UNEP and its ENVSEC partners are focusing on programmes and projects that contribute to the management of transboundary risks by providing in-depth risk assessments for decision makers; identifying potential hotspots; and recommending priority measures for mitigation and risk management at national and regional levels. Moreover, in the later phases, ENVSEC partners will monitor the implementation of chosen options, carry out capacity-building activities and perform final evaluations.

**Achievements and progress**

One of the main activities was to update the 2004 ENVSEC desk assessment of the region’s mining hotspots with additional local information obtained during a series of field missions to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro and Serbia between February 2006 and April 2007. Information was verified on site, completed with the help of local experts, and supplemented with up-to-date images of the sites. This targeted assessment of transboundary environment and health risks resulted in a list of around 15 sites at which immediate follow-up action should be carried out. To date, three of the sites have been taken up by the UNDP regional hotspots programme and are subject to transboundary risk and hazard reduction.

In March 2007, UNEP organised a technical workshop on innovative techniques and technologies for contaminated mine waters assessment, management and remediation in Bor, Serbia, in order to draw attention to the issue of contaminated mine water — and the waterways that receive and carry them — as the prime source of transboundary environmental problems. These contaminated mine waters originate in mines, mine dumps and mining areas and are characterised by low pH, elevated concentrations of heavy metals and increased salinity loads. Such pollution can cause substantial damage in freshwater ecosystems and in public water sources due to their bio-chemical and eco-toxicological effects.

The aim of the workshop was to stimulate the broad and effective uptake of such techniques throughout South
East European jurisdictions in order to support risk mitigation and the general improvement of living conditions in the region. In addition, specific objectives were to substantially increase knowledge, on the part of important decision makers and practitioners, regarding:

- Best-practice or innovative and robust mine water treatment techniques and technologies, with a focus on passive and semi-passive techniques.
- Technical needs and requirements for cost-effective site assessment techniques — particularly focused on the assessment of mine waters and effluents.
- The current status of European legislation in relation to mine waters and effluents.
- The design of procedures and examples that can be utilised as a basis for experience sharing among practitioners in their home countries.

The international experts taking part in the workshop presented their work and experiences and were involved in exercises based on real problem sites located in South Eastern Europe. The workshop attracted representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia, from the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) and from non-governmental organisations, and other international experts and participants.

In March 2007, ENVSEC conducted field missions to northern Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina to identify hotspots in coordination with the technical workshop. These missions, as well as the technical workshop, were supported by mining experts from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), as part of the Canadian International Development Agency’s support to ENVSEC.

What comes next?

In northern Albania, the expert mission identified three priority sites — Fushe-Arrez, Reps and Rreshen — that require emergency risk and hazard reduction due to strong signs of instability and evidence of chronic water pollution. In order to address the issues encountered at these sites, and as a follow-up to previous findings, UNEP conducted a technical mission in July 2008 that collected new data. It identified required risk reduction measures and developed adequate technical designs, including cost indications, for each site. The results were presented to the international donor community at the ENVSEC national coordination meeting in Tirana in September 2008.

OTHER TOPICS

The Establishing of Environmental Management Centres (EMCs) in Balkan Countries — Phase 1

Starting date: December 2007
Finishing date: June 2008
Project budget: EUR 20,170
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
Donor: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through Emisoft AS, Norway

Project background

Due to the introduction of new environmental legislation in SEE, in relation to the process of harmonisation with EU regulations, simple eco-reporting will no longer be sufficient. There is a clear need to improve the environmental situation in industrial hotspots prior to joining the EU, and it is necessary to coordinate reporting routines with those of EU member states. This is very important, particularly in regions where industrial pollution is still high and poses a risk to human health.

The general objective of the project was to carry out a desk study and needs assessment for the establishment of an environmental management centre (EMC) in a selected country in SEE. The EMC would provide environmental services to companies, authorities and others, particularly in relation to national and international legislation reporting and to cleaner production issues.

This project represents a unique example of cooperation between the REC and the business sector, through Emisoft AS from Norway, which has developed the powerful and proven environmental management and information system TEAMS.

Achievements of the project

Four main activities were implemented:

- Pre-selection of the SEE country that is to host the EMC.
- Training of REC experts in TEAMS at Emisoft.
- Country visits and seminars/presentations related to EMC in SEE.
- Selection of the SEE country that is to host the EMC.

All eligible countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,
Montenegro and Serbia) were assessed in a desk study and further examined during field visits. Three countries were identified that meet all the requirements for hosting and making efficient use of an environmental management centre — Serbia, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

In all countries, the visited state institutions confirmed that the possible establishment of an EMC is in accordance with the government’s national priorities in the environmental sector:

- Serbia: The Hydro-meteorological Service of Serbia, the Serbian Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), and the Electric Power Industry of Serbia (EPIS)
- Croatia: the Croatian Environment Agency and the Croatian Cleaner Production Centre (CCPC)
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: the State Environmental Inspectorate

The team found that all three pre-selected countries met the requirements for hosting and would make efficient use of an environmental management centre. All three countries submitted letters of commitment indicating that they were prepared to commit themselves to, and cooperate with, the EMC if selected.

A schematic set-up of the EMC, showing TEAMS, EMC staff, client partners (companies) and others was developed.

Discussions took place with all visited stakeholders on how the EMC will assist its client partners to produce reliable environmental accounting reports in fulfilment of their present and future obligations. A particular benefit to client partners could be support for the reduction of their emission loads and advice on how to realise this potential.

Organisational linkage, as designed by the Serbian Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), is used as an example of how EMC should work in close contact with national and local authorities in order to ensure the best possible way to establish a regional reporting system.

The EMC will also work in close cooperation with its client partners, ensuring a firm basis for its work, both in the commercial world and in relation to the authorities.

Consideration was given to phase 2 of the project — the development of a full project proposal for the establishment of an EMC in a selected SEE country. The most feasible option was an application by the joint venture (JV) REC–Emisoft. It was envisaged that a project implementation unit (PIU) would be established by the JV REC–Emisoft in a selected country.

**What comes next?**

A full project proposal for the implementation of phase 2 of the project “The establishing of an environmental management centre (EMC) in one selected Balkan country” was developed and then submitted for funding.

It is expected that the EMC will provide an information infrastructure for its client partners in a relationship of cooperation. This means that the EMC will provide its client partners with information technology and expertise, assisting them to produce reliable data on their manufacturing processes and to generate viable options for modifying their processes with a view to enhancing resource efficiency and reducing emissions.

**OTHER TOPICS**

**Country Survey on Environmental Integration Tools in Croatia**

**Starting date:** March 2008  
**Finishing date:** May 2008  
**Project budget:** EUR 7,700  
**Beneficiary country:** Croatia  
**Donor:** International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), through Integra Consulting Services

**Project background**

There are a wide variety of tools, tactics and methods, but little independent guidance as to which are appropriate and under what circumstances. Too many tools are being pushed by external interests and little is known about whether other, more culturally relevant, approaches have been successfully employed.

The need has therefore been identified to produce a guidance document on effective approaches to integrating environmental considerations into all aspects of development decision making (e.g. physical, economic and social planning). This is known as environmental mainstreaming. In order to produce a guidance document that is relevant to a wide range of potential and actual users, input is being sought from a variety of countries, sectors and user types, by means of a survey as the basis for inputs, discussion and the identification of relevant case studies. Current participating regions/countries are the Caribbean, Chile, Ghana, India, Kenya, the Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, and selected countries in Central and Southern Europe (the Czech Republic and Croatia).

The guidance is intended to overview of a small se-
A guide to tools, tactics and methods provides an effective approach for the environmental mainstreaming of international experiences of environmental decision making in a variety of different contexts.

A D E C A D E ’ S D I F F E R E N C E

INSTITUTION BUILDING

Achievements of the project

Croatian experience was analysed in terms of the effectiveness of tools for integrating environmental issues into sectoral policies, from the point of view of various end-users, in order to identify requirements for and obstacles to the better use/implemention of tools. The most effective and least effective tools have been mapped, and recommendations identified for tools to be included in the user guide.

The survey was conducted through a combination of questionnaires, structured personal interviews, and group meetings involving all relevant stakeholder groups. The main message from the survey can be defined as follows: The problem is not a lack of tools; it is rather their ineffective application.

Survey findings

The use made of most of the tools mentioned depends on whether they are prescribed by law, since this is usually the only reason why decision makers use them. The survey confirms the fact that environmental mainstreaming actually seems quite well regulated, but that administrative and financial capacity is lacking for its enforcement, both in the business sector and in governmental institutions. Some respondents from international institutions also pointed out that, since the environment is a cross-cutting issue (and is often, erroneously, identified with sustainable development), it should be incorporated into all sectoral institutions and should not exist as a separate administrative authority. This might help to raise overall awareness of its importance and to foster mainstreaming into relevant strategies and policy documents and, ultimately, their practical implementation.

Several sectors still seem to be unaware of the need to integrate environmental issues into their decision making — primarily healthcare, water management, tourism, energy, transport, metallurgy and the oil industry. The agricultural sector is still quite unprepared for cooperation with the environmental sector, but improvements are visible (under the influence of the EU approximation process) in terms of the launching of the organic products certification scheme and the start of the development of the best agricultural practice code with a view to anticipating measures for reducing agricultural impacts on soil and groundwater quality. Many respondents questioned whether physical planning is able really to reflect strategic development goals — spatial planning is influenced by local/national political or private interests; and many physical plans are designed in a general way and leave room for varying interpretations, usually in favour of large development/construction projects that are ambitious in terms of existing local infrastructure capacities (especially tourism and municipal housing projects) or that do not take into consideration the need for balanced spatial elements. Some respondents also mentioned the problem of a sensationalist approach to the environment on the part of the media.

Due to the fact that Croatia is still an economy in transition, with a gap of over 10 years in terms of infra-
structure investments and human resource development (mainly due to the recent war), the environment is still low on the list of priorities and is considered more as a non-necessary cost than as a business and sustainable development opportunity. Thus the overall feeling is that there is still much work to be done in order to integrate environmental aspects in sectoral policies. However, under the positive influence of international environmental trends and the EU approximation process, the need has been recognised and there is a positive trend towards capacity building in the public administration.

The Croatian example shows that regulation and strong legislation do not automatically mean successful environmental mainstreaming. This confirms findings from the Czech Republic, which (as an EU member state) can be considered to have more detailed and complex environmental legislation and regulation than Croatia. Here, legally mandatory tools such as land-use planning, EIA, SEA etc., even if more frequently used, are not commonly rated as efficient — that is, they represent an administrative and financial burden for industries and planners; and they do not sufficiently ensure the quality of the environment. In fact, environment and/or sustainability issues can be found in almost all strategic documents at all levels, but there is typically a lack of measures for the implementation of the proposed objectives and targets.

Even if the majority of respondents understand and support the idea of environmental mainstreaming, there is still no clear way to ensure it. Political will and support were mentioned as key preconditions for the successful integration of environmental issues in planning and decision making. Numerous cases show that even the perfect application of standard procedures (EIA, SEA, IPPC etc.) cannot guarantee the implementation of a plan or project in line with the results and recommendations provided by these procedures if there is no support from decision makers. It is therefore possible to conclude that the efficiency of environmental mainstreaming is related to the general socio-economic status, and the general perception of the importance of the environment. Most respondents propose that the planned guidance tool includes not a ranking of tools, but rather a description of case studies in specific contexts.

What comes next?

The survey findings will be communicated to key national actors by publication on the web. A national discussion may be initiated on possibilities to improve the level of integration of environmental issues in sectoral policies and practice.

OTHER TOPICS

STAR — Preparation of a Social Assessment Study in the Field of Agriculture and Rural Development

Starting date: January 2007
Finishing date: April 2007
Project budget: EUR 29,570
Beneficiary country: Serbia
Donor: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Serbia

Project background

The agricultural sector in Serbia is not prepared to cope with competition in the EU. Cumulative problems also make competition with neighbouring states difficult. Organic production is seen as having the greatest potential, mainly because of the available grassland resources in mountainous regions. The Serbian Government is trying to strengthen the environmental management and restructuring of the agricultural sector with the aim of becoming more responsive to EU requirements for enhanced exports.

In order to improve the competitiveness of Serbian agriculture and incomes on family farms, one of the primary tasks is the establishment of efficient mechanisms that will tap the potential of rural areas. Serbia urgently needs to develop a functional agricultural advisory service that can provide family farms and agro-processors with information on, for example, production and value-adding technologies; access to credit and markets; government and EU policies, regulations and standards; environmental, food-quality and safety requirements etc.

Achievements of the project

The REC assisted the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management in Serbia to conduct a two-part social assessment study, comprising:

1. An assessment of the existing system for the transfer of knowledge, information, business connections and local partnerships, and the availability of rural services in the field of agriculture and rural development.
NOTES

16 The term “public infrastructure” is used here to mean infrastructure that provides a public service (such as solid waste collection), regardless of its actual ownership. Electricity generation infrastructure is not considered “public infrastructure” for this purpose.

17 Currently the Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management, www.mrrsvg.hr/

18 The DPSIR methodology defines the systematic approach identifying drivers, pressure, state (of the environment), impact and response (of the stakeholders and society as a whole). Drivers are the main polluters, but at the same time can be resources (mineral, water, biodiversity etc.); pressures are emissions; the state is the ambient quality of environmental media; impact is the adverse effects on the media and human health; while the response are laws and their enforcement, technical assistance, capacity building, campaigns and investments (various instruments and modalities to protect the environment).

Priority Area 2

Civil Society Support
A strong and well-functioning civil society is a fundamental requirement for democracy. Civil society advances democracy and pluralism under the rule of law; promotes and enforces transparency in government and the economy; supplies alternative institutions to serve public needs; and improves decision making by ensuring the more efficient representation of public and private interests.

Support to civil society has been a priority of REReP from the very beginning. Civil society is vital in ensuring that investments made during reconstruction reflect broad public interests, and that democratically based institutional capacities are truly embedded. Support to environmental civil society has been seen to contribute to democratic development, national and international stability and security and the solution of environmental problems in the Balkan region. Naturally, the challenge has been to determine the most effective and efficient means to support this priority. The projects developed within the context of REReP demonstrate the breadth of action needed to support this sector. Financial support to NGOs has concentrated on helping them to prepare projects supporting environmentally responsible and sustainable development. While some granting projects have financially supported NGOs in specific countries, including Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, support to national and regional electronic networks has included strategic planning exercises, targeted training and infrastructure provision.

A wide variety of support projects have been carried out under REReP. More notable civil society programmes cover topics such as support to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention and the improvement of public participation practices in SEE, and access to information and public participation in environmental decision making (e.g. in the Danube River basin). The largest such project is the EUR 3.7 million SECTOR project (Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations), which includes a number of support tools (training, granting, organisational development) and which is based on an extensive civil society assessment carried out in 2006 and 2007. Several new tools to support environmental NGOs have been created by this project, including a manual and programme on organisational assessment and development. This will be finalised in seven SEE countries by the end of 2009. In Albania, considerable resources are being supplied, through the REC, for a trust fund to support locally initiated environmental projects. The trust fund has now entered its second phase with an additional EUR 1 million focusing on capacity development activities and
the improvement and rehabilitation of environmental conditions through a granting programme.

Education projects are particularly strong and the extension of the Green Pack to four countries of the region has begun. These highly praised teaching aids will be delivered to schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) in 2009 and 2010. The Green Pack Junior was launched in Belgrade in October 2007, and the Green Pack programme continued in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In addition, a number of projects support education and awareness raising within REReP.

Several projects have addressed important public participation issues: these include a project in Albania on rights and responsibilities in environmental matters; improving public participation practices in SEE, and a programme on access to information and public participation in Danubian countries.

Support is targeted towards CSOs focusing on urban and sustainable development issues and acting as important community development drivers. The support programme is delivered through three components:

1) organisational viability;
2) project support; and
3) networking assistance and training.

Achievements and progress

The project began in April 2006 with an initial steering committee meeting in Belgrade. The inception phase included the further development, scoping and preparation of the three main support components before the full project launch in October 2006, and involved a comprehensive survey of environmental CSOs in the target region.

The assessment survey was based on a questionnaire completed by groups in the region, a series of stakeholder interviews, and the gathering of background data. The results of this phase have allowed further tailoring of the programme components and provide an up-to-date picture of the status of environmental civil society in the region. The REC has produced a new NGO directory for the region (in English and national languages, including an online version) and highlighted the results of the research at the "Environment for Europe" ministerial conference in Belgrade in October 2007 and at the European Commission’s Civil Society Development Facility conference in Brussels in April 2008.

The first component on organisational viability is well advanced in all participating countries. The pilot country Croatia has finished the organisational assessments (10 CSOs undertook the process) as well as the grants to implement components which were identified through the assessment process (five CSOs implemented the grant).

The other six countries involved — following the lessons learnt in the pilot country — have also tailored the organisational assessment tool (OAT)/organisational development plan (ODP) to their national conditions and have launched the programme in their countries. During 2008, further groups underwent organisational self-assessment, including 48 CSOs in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) with the support of facilitators trained by the REC. Of these, 45 CSOs designed a long-term ODP and 30 were awarded viability grants, which are being carried out during 2009. Together with five awarded via-

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS/NGO SUPPORT

SECTOR: Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in South Eastern Europe

Starting date: April 2006
Finishing date: April 2010
Project budget: EUR 3,699,947
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
Donor: The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Project background

This four-year comprehensive project supports the environmental civil society organisations (CSOs) of South Eastern Europe. The programme was developed by the REC and Sida over a one-year period with the primary goal of promoting the development of a vibrant and democratic environmental civil society within SEE countries in order positively to influence society towards sustainable development and to improve living conditions in urban areas.

Support is targeted towards CSOs focusing on urban and sustainable development issues and acting as important community development drivers. The support programme is delivered through three components:

1) organisational viability;
2) project support; and
3) networking assistance and training.

Achievements and progress

The project began in April 2006 with an initial steering committee meeting in Belgrade. The inception phase included the further development, scoping and preparation of the three main support components before the full project launch in October 2006, and involved a comprehensive survey of environmental CSOs in the target region.

The assessment survey was based on a questionnaire completed by groups in the region, a series of stakeholder interviews, and the gathering of background data. The results of this phase have allowed further tailoring of the programme components and provide an up-to-date picture of the status of environmental civil society in the region. The REC has produced a new NGO directory for the region (in English and national languages, including an online version) and highlighted the results of the research at the "Environment for Europe" ministerial conference in Belgrade in October 2007 and at the European Commission’s Civil Society Development Facility conference in Brussels in April 2008.

The first component on organisational viability is well advanced in all participating countries. The pilot country Croatia has finished the organisational assessments (10 CSOs undertook the process) as well as the grants to implement components which were identified through the assessment process (five CSOs implemented the grant).

The other six countries involved — following the lessons learnt in the pilot country — have also tailored the organisational assessment tool (OAT)/organisational development plan (ODP) to their national conditions and have launched the programme in their countries. During 2008, further groups underwent organisational self-assessment, including 48 CSOs in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) with the support of facilitators trained by the REC. Of these, 45 CSOs designed a long-term ODP and 30 were awarded viability grants, which are being carried out during 2009. Together with five awarded via-

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS/NGO SUPPORT

SECTOR: Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in South Eastern Europe

Starting date: April 2006
Finishing date: April 2010
Project budget: EUR 3,699,947
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
Donor: The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Project background

This four-year comprehensive project supports the environmental civil society organisations (CSOs) of South Eastern Europe. The programme was developed by the REC and Sida over a one-year period with the primary goal of promoting the development of a vibrant and democratic environmental civil society within SEE countries in order positively to influence society towards sustainable development and to improve living conditions in urban areas.
viability grants in Croatia in 2007. 35 viability grants will be implemented in the region by the end of the project, including six CSOs from Bosnia and Herzegovina, five in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, five in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), four in Montenegro and five in Albania.

The Organisational Viability Toolkit, which was developed to assist the assessment process during 2007 and 2008 in English, was used in Croatia and in the other countries, with the crucial parts translated into national languages. The toolkit was finalised in the spring of 2009 based on comments from facilitators and trainers. The final version will also include case studies presenting lessons learned and the experiences of CSOs involved in the organisational viability process, making the toolkit as practical and user-friendly as possible. The toolkit will be made available electronically in English in 2009 and will be translated into Serbo-Croatian and Albanian, making it more widely available.

National and regional grants

The first round of national and regional grants was decided on in April 2007. There were 38 national projects supported with EUR 353,060 in the first round of SECTOR national grants in six beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro and Serbia. Fifty percent of the awarded projects at the national level in the first round are managing typical civil society activities such as demonstration, awareness-raising and educational projects aimed at greening South Eastern European cities. Another 30 percent of the selected projects address waste-related problems by promoting recycling, composting and other waste prevention measures in urban areas. The remaining projects address energy consumption and sustainable transport as the main urban themes. A few civil society groups are working on promoting participatory policies in order to be part of the urban planning in their countries.

Under the first round of SECTOR grants, five regional projects were supported with funding of EUR 169,051. These regional projects were closed by the middle of 2009. There were 17 beneficiary CSOs, dealing with demonstration, awareness-raising and educational projects for the greening of Western Balkan cities, educating the younger generation on energy efficiency measures, and taking practical action for the sustainable use of natural resources.

Within the second round of SECTOR, four national grant schemes were announced in September 2007 and four SEE countries were awarded grants: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. By May 2008, the REC had awarded 30 national projects addressing urban environmental priorities, with Sida support of EUR 275,304. Projects are under implementation. Forty-six percent of the CSO projects at the national level address land-use and urban planning issues through enabling practical community actions such as greening parts of the city, cleaning dumpsites, rehabilitating landfills and turning them into playgrounds. Apart from practical rehabilitation and cleaning activities, all projects emphasise improving community involvement in urban planning, fostering stakeholder dialogue, and ensuring multi-ethnic representation and participation in decision making. Twenty-seven percent advocate proper waste management and finding ways to collaborate with the responsible authorities. The remaining CSO initiatives focus on energy, transport and water issues through promoting behavioural changes — encouraging energy saving, reducing consumption and promoting recycling.

In parallel to the national grants scheme, the REC is managing the second round of regional grants to CSO beneficiaries from SEE countries (Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia, in addition to those within the national grants scheme). Five regional projects involving 13 beneficiary CSOs are running from September 2008 to February 2010, promoting regional cooperation; increasing the capacities and capabilities of CSOs in the Western Balkans; and enabling them to become key players in the urban development of their region, to contribute to better policies and their implementation, to improve public participation in urban sustainable development, and, ultimately, to contribute to improving quality of life in urban areas.

The third and final round of national grants was launched in August 2008. A total of 44 national projects were supported with EUR 275,304 in six beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro and Serbia.

Forty-three percent of the CSO projects awarded at national level in the third round of SECTOR national grants address waste management as one of the urban development-related national priorities identified by most of the countries. Through awareness-raising activities and education projects, CSOs are aiming to change citizens’ behaviour and attitudes. In addition to classic awareness-raising initiatives to promote recycling and reuse, the projects feature some more innovative approaches, such as appealing to shop owners to promote the use of eco bags; raising the awareness of householders about reducing
Thirty percent of the projects implement typical awareness-raising activities aimed at greening the cities and promoting community involvement in urban development and local decision making. A range of CSO activities are planned that are aimed towards practical urban improvements. These activities range from the removal of illegal dumps close to waterways to the establishment of “green zones”, practical on-site education etc.

Networking Social Capital

The networking and training component was developed in 2007. During 2008, the workshop series course material was written and edited, trainers were identified and the course agenda was finalised for all seven courses beginning in early February 2008 and finishing in November 2008. A total of 188 students participated in the Master Class training series. All country-relevant packages were developed in English and in local languages and posted on the web at www.rec.org/sector/assistance/masterclass.html.

Under “Networking Social Capital”, two regional CSO networks were selected for organisational development support and were each awarded seed funding of EUR 20,000 to begin the realisation of their development plans between November 2008 and February 2010.

Master Class objectives were to:

- build capacity by responding as directly as possible to the needs outlined in the CSO assessment;
- foster CSO collaboration/networking/experience exchange; and
- generate a shortlist of the obstacles and challenges and formulate recommendations across the five modules.

The Master Class series also reached out to non-environmental sectors.

Student evaluations of the course (overall extremely positive) were collected, analysed and published as part of the annexes to each country’s Master Class materials. The Master Class resource materials also represent an up-to-date survey on Aarhus Convention implementation in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia on access to information (watchdogging); public participation; and access to justice (legal recourse).

What comes next?

The project represents a significant effort to offer support to CSOs in the region. SECTOR delivers tangible opportunities for environmental groups to develop, to build their skills and to implement their projects. By the end of the project the REC will not only have supported a wide range of groups, but will have developed several new and innovative support mechanisms that can be utilised in the future (organisational viability methodology and new training curricula). A regional conference in Sarajevo in the last quarter of 2009 will bring together many of SECTOR’s beneficiaries to identify opportunities to further strengthen civil society in the region.

Project information can be found on line at: http://www.rec.org/sector/default.html

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS/NGO SUPPORT

Trust Fund for Locally Initiated Environmental Projects in Albania

Starting date: October 2003
Finishing date: June 2007
Project budget: EUR 1,000,000
Beneficiary country: Albania
Donor: The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tirana

Project background

Every characteristic of an underdeveloped environmental civil society can be found in Albania, due to its new experience with democracy and insufficient donor and state support. Decentralisation has increased the role of local authorities in environmental management, while a lack of capacity and insufficient funding have limited NGO intervention in local environmental improvement. To respond to this situation, in 2003 REC Country Office Albania joined forces with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tirana to support local environmental initiatives by establishing a grant-giving mechanism through a trust fund of EUR 1 million. The REC network, and REC Country Office Albania specifically, have worked in the field of grant giving and NGO support since 1994. Valuable experience has been gained through many projects and partnerships at national and regional levels.
Achievements of the project

Coaching and capacity building for target groups

Detailed guidelines were prepared for NGOs and other stakeholders for the two stages of the application process for the grant-giving mechanism of the trust fund: project idea and full proposal. Both documents — the “Call for Concept Papers” and the “Guidelines for Preparing Project Proposals in the Framework of Local Environmental Initiated Projects” — contain detailed information on the application procedure, proposal writing, and the evaluation process.

REC Country Office Albania put together detailed information on NGO capacities with respect to environmental investments and the building of partnerships at local level.

Based on the cumulative information process, the REC designed two main stages:

- Assessment of the implementation of environmental investment projects.
- A tailored training programme to increase/upgrade proposal development and planning related to environmental investment and awareness raising at the local level.

In order to increase the capacities of the whole environmental NGO spectrum at national and local level and to promote partnerships, REC Country Office Albania targeted both successful and non-successful applicants to the trust fund granting scheme. The project staff based their decision on feedback collected via the questionnaires distributed to all applicants to the granting programme of the trust fund.

A training programme was designed covering four main themes over five full training days. The main topics were: the preparation of good project proposals (log-frame approach); cooperation and partnership with other stakeholders; and public participation and the role of NGOs in improving environmental conditions in local communities.

Three training workshops were delivered during the period March to May 2007, with the participation of 39 young NGO members/activists.

Winners’ meetings

Meetings for project leaders and NGO representatives provided training for the selected NGOs in relation to the implementation of the granting and reporting procedures. The NGO representatives were provided with guidelines and forms for reporting on activities and grant finances.

Direct assistance during the application process

There are three deadlines per year for concept papers, followed by deadlines for full project proposals. During the application process, REC staff assisted applicants by clarifying topics, priorities and application procedures and deadlines. Applications were screened by REC staff, who sent applicants requests for additional documents and clarifications, stating the deadline for submitting such papers. Completed applications were evaluated by the Trust Fund Evaluation Board according to REC procedures and predefined criteria.

Cooperation with partners

During the implementation of the granting scheme, the REC cooperated with other donor organisations by sharing information and ideas, co-funding and monitoring the implementation of awarded grants. The main partners were GEF/Small Grants Programme, the Dutch Development Organisation (SNV), the Peace Corps, GTZ, UNDP and the World Bank.

Grant support scheme

The REC received a total of 275 concept papers during the period of the trust fund programme. Of these, 199 passed the screening procedure and were registered and submitted to the Trust Fund Advisory Board for evaluation. Seventy-six concept papers were not accepted due to missing documents or the non-eligibility of the NGOs, or the fact that the topics were not included in the trust fund framework, etc.

All NGOs were officially notified of the decision made regarding their proposal and of the reasons for rejection. The evaluation process comprised two phases, at the end of which 74 grants were awarded amounting to EUR 797,178. Seventy-two of these grants have been implemented.

All the grants rely on close cooperation between NGOs and local government structures to deal with environmental priority problems at the local and community level. The awarded grants focus mainly on:

- the promotion of sustainable practices;
- forest rehabilitation and anti-erosion measures;
- the management of natural resources;
- the management of urban waste;
- sewage water systems;
- green areas; and
- the rehabilitation of urban infrastructure.
More concretely, the grants contributed to:
- improving and rehabilitating 60 ha of forests;
- constructing 560 m³ of anti-erosion walls;
- installing 2,134 m of sewage pipes;
- rehabilitating 98 sewerage service points;
- creating 28,805 m² of green spaces;
- planting 42,725 trees and saplings;
- planting 10,770 ornamental bushes;
- installing 142 park benches;
- paving 8,200 m² of roads and paths;
- installing 1,532 m of pipes;
- building three decorative fountains;
- installing four waste bins in public spaces;
- providing 115 urban waste containers;
- constructing three solid urban waste disposal sites; and
- collecting and removing 2,215 m³ of urban waste.

What comes next?

Based on the experience acquired with the trust fund, reports have been prepared on the status and needs of the NGO sector and the local authorities in Albania. A second phase of trust fund operation was agreed in order to provide the necessary support and assistance (see the next project record).

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS/NGO SUPPORT

Trust Fund 2 for Locally Initiated Environmental Projects in Albania

Starting date: January 2008
Finishing date: December 2010
Project budget: EUR 1,000,000
Beneficiary country: Albania
Donor: The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tirana

Project background

Following the experience acquired and the needs identified through the previous trust fund project between 2003 and 2007, REC Country Office Albania and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tirana continue to support local environmental initiatives.

Achievements and progress

The programme began in January 2008 and focuses on the following elements:
- physical environmental conditions;
- cooperation among stakeholders; and
- public participation and environmental awareness raising.

Programme components

Capacity-building activities

During this implementation period, twelve training workshops were organised and delivered in Tirana and in rural areas. The topics covered included “Media communication as a tool for civil society” and “Environmental impact assessment and the role of civil society”. Approximately 245 participants (among them NGO members, representatives of local government institutions and representatives of other relevant institutions) benefited from the 12 training workshops.

Improvement and rehabilitation of environmental conditions through grants

During this implementation period, the REC awarded a total of ALL 57,523,552 (approximately EUR 468,242), distributed in 27 grants, from among 136 project proposals. The main project topics are urban waste, urban infrastructure and planning, sewerage systems, the management of natural resources, energy efficiency, EIA and environmental monitoring.

Further details can be found at: albania.rec.org/Projects/Grant/TF2/TF2.html/TF2_zhvillimi_kapaciteteve.html

What comes next?

The granting scheme will continue: new deadlines will be announced for concept papers and project proposals. The guidelines and application and evaluation procedures will be improved according to the lessons learned during the implementation process in the first phase. Projects will be monitored in the implementation phase as a continuous process, aimed at ensuring the achievement of grant objectives and at supporting effective cooperation among NGOs, local government structures and the community. Success stories will be identified and best experiences shared with other partners, donors and NGOs through an exchange of information and the publication of project information.
CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS/NGO SUPPORT

Technical Assistance in Grant Scheme Management — Croatia

Starting date: March 2007
Finishing date: March 2009
Project budget: EUR 30,275
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Croatian Ministry of Finance, Central Finance and Contracting Unit (through Business & Strategies in Europe)

Project background

In February 2006, the Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU) of the Croatian Ministry of Finance was accredited as the implementing agency for the CARDS, Phare and ISPA programmes, thus assuming responsibility for the management of EU-funded projects under the decentralised implementation system. Following accreditation, the tendering and contracting duties for CARDS projects taken over by the CFCU included three grant schemes related to the civil society sector:

• Grant scheme CARDS 2004 “Social service delivery by the non-profit sector” (EUR 2,000,000). The expected number of grant contracts under this scheme ranges from eight to 20, with a duration of 18 to 24 months.

• Grant scheme CARDS 2004 “Support to civil society organisations active in the field of environment protection and sustainable development” (EUR 600,000). This grant scheme involves four to eight contracts with a duration spanning from 12 to 18 months.

• Grant scheme CARDS 2003/2004 “Good governance and the rule of law” (six already contracted projects).

In total, 18 to 34 projects were expected to be selected, with a duration of between 12 and 24 months.

The contracting authority and the project implementation unit (the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs) required the support of technical experts to ensure sound financial management and the quality implementation of these grant schemes, and in particular to:

• provide guidance to grant beneficiaries on project management in line with EU standards;

• provide independent assessors to assist the evaluation committee in the selection process, and to assist the contracting authority and the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs in the pre-contracting phase as well as in monitoring the implementation of selected projects.

Achievements and progress in the period March 2007 to December 2008

The REC provided the team leader and an assessor in the team of nine experts supporting the CFCU and the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs. Their assistance involved pre-grant work, activities during grant implementation and the monitoring of grant contracts.

Pre-grant activities

• Assessment of concept notes and proposals according to the requirements of the Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EC External Actions (PRAG), submitting their recommendations for project funding to the evaluation committee.

• Assistance to the CFCU in the budget clearing of the successful grant applications before contracting.

Activities during the grant

• Full-day workshop for all successful applicants, held in July 2007, to explain basic project management principles, reporting requirements, secondary procurement etc.

• Second workshop for grantees, held in March 2008 (middle of implementation period), in order for experts and grantees to analyse achievements and difficulties arising during grant implementation. Grant experts briefed and trained grantees as required to ensure they are able to fulfil grant reporting obligations.

Monitoring of grant contracts

• Assist in collecting necessary information (technical and financial) from the beneficiaries in relation to the implementation of the project in order for grantees to fulfil reporting requirements efficiently.

• Field visits to selected contracted projects within the framework of the three grant schemes, coordinated with the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs, which visits all projects once during their implementation.

What comes next?

A report will be prepared on lessons learned, including the strengths and weaknesses of each grant scheme and recommendations to be used for future grant management and programming.
Project background

In 2000, the REC started to develop a programme to support environmental education and education for sustainable development. With support from Toyota’s Environmental Activities Support Programme, the Green Pack, an innovative multimedia educational package for schoolchildren, was developed. Specific national Green Packs have been implemented in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Green Pack assists teachers of children aged between 11 and 15 in their teaching about sustainable development. The goal is to promote environmental protection by raising awareness of the environment and of sustainable development issues among pupils and teachers. The Green Pack emphasises the formation of new values among students and the setting of a new model of behaviour at school, at home and in society.

The Green Pack is a multimedia environmental education curriculum kit comprising 22 topics related to environmental protection and sustainable development. It includes:

- a teacher’s handbook with lesson plans and factsheets for students;
- a collection of animation clips and educational films;
- an interactive CD-ROM with extensive information on various environmental topics; and
- a dilemma game presenting 22 environmental cases for discussion and the building of values.

Users of the pack can complement the lesson plans with video presentations, a dilemma game and additional information from the CD-ROM and its links to similar websites.

Achievements and progress until December 2008

The project began in December 2007: in the first half-year the feasibility study was finalised and preparations started for the development phase. During the feasibility phase, the REC obtained commitment from the national authorities and institutions dealing with education and the environment in all four countries/territories for the development of nationally specific Green Packs.

In addition, an education assessment was carried out to identify specific adaptation requirements in order to comply with educational standards and to respond to national sustainable development and environmental issues and debates.

In the four countries/territories, national Green Pack teams have been established, made up of a variety of knowledgeable and professional environmental and educational experts from different institutions. These teams have completed the adaptation of the international Green Pack prototype to a nationally specific version, including the development of new educational material.

What comes next?

Green Packs for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) are to be finalised, approved and taken up in the national education systems, produced and disseminated. Launch events will be organised in each country to introduce the Green Pack, with the participation of national institutions, NGOs, educators, the media and other stakeholders. In the last phase of the project, schoolteachers will be invited to attend a training on the use of the Green Pack.
The following results are foreseen:

- Development and production of 4,300 nationally specific Green Packs in local languages. This includes the production of:
  - 1,700 Green Packs for Bosnia and Herzegovina with Green Packs in Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian.
  - 500 Green Packs for Montenegro in Montenegrin.
  - At least 1,100 Green Packs for Serbia.
  - 1,000 Green Packs for Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) in Albanian and Serbian.

- National launch events for the Green Pack in each of the countries, in order to introduce the Green Pack to the public.

- Training of 3,500 teachers from all schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244).

- Fundraising for the production of 2,600 extra Green Packs for Serbia and to train 3,600 teachers in Serbia.

*Information about the Green Pack is available on-line at: www.rec.org/REC/Programs/Greenpack*

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

**Green Pack Junior, Promoted at the Belgrade “Environment for Europe” Conference**

- Starting date: March 2005
- Finishing date: December 2007
- Project budget: EUR 84,500
- Beneficiary countries: SEE, Central and Eastern Europe
- Donor: Toyota Motor Europe

**Project background**

Green Pack Junior was launched during the ministerial conference “Environment for Europe” in Belgrade in October 2007. Green Pack Junior targets children between seven and 10 years of age. It presents 10 topics covering the environment, society and economic development. These topics demonstrate how we depend on and affect the environment in which we live. There are lesson plans for each topic, with supporting materials for teachers. The lessons are interactive and include games, discussions, outdoor activities, tests and fairy tales.
Achievements of the project

Around 130 people attended the launch of the Green Pack Junior to learn about the new teachers’ resource.

Green Pack Junior provides educators with original and accessible materials for teaching about sustainable development issues in an engaging and motivating way. The materials are divided into 10 topics that look at the interaction between environment, society and economic development. These topics were chosen to demonstrate how humanity is tied to, and how it is affecting, the environment in which we live; and, importantly, what that might mean to society. The topics covered are: connections, atmosphere, water, soil, energy, biodiversity, resources, human population, consumption and waste, and social development and the environment. Each topic comprises a structured lesson plan and the supporting materials required to plan and deliver a class on the subject. The lessons rely on an interactive way of learning by using discussions, brainstorming, role playing and outdoor activities. As such, each lesson plan provides the teacher with background information on the topic, teaching objectives, the methodology, used what materials are needed, a suggested timing and possible teaching location. At the end of each lesson plan, teachers will find supporting factsheets, such as colouring pages, simple tests and even fairy tales.

The Green Pack Junior presents key issues facing the world today — why the world is the way it is — but it also allows pupils to think critically about these problems and encourages them to become involved citizens.

What comes next?

The original, English-language prototype, focusing on globally relevant lessons, is now being promoted for adaptation and implementation in specific countries. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is the first country to have prepared a concrete action plan aimed at the upgrading and adaptation of the Green Pack Junior to the country’s specific environment and development challenges.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Raising Environmental Consciousness through the Environmental Education and Information Programme — the Green Pack in Albania

| Starting date: November 1, 2003 |
| Finishing date: March 31, 2007 |
| Project budget: EUR 300,000 |
| Beneficiary country: Albania |
| Donor: The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tirana |

Project background

This project developed a set of multimedia curricular materials based on the positive results achieved during the implementation of the REC Green Pack in several countries in Central and Eastern Europe. This version addresses the diversity of environmental challenges currently facing Albania.

The Albanian Green Pack for schoolteachers and other educators comprises a number of interlinking components, including a printed teachers’ handbook and a CD-ROM containing environmental films and computer-based materials. Most of the materials are ex-
clusively in Albanian, with the exception of the CD-ROM, which is bilingual (Albanian and English).

During two years of work on the Albanian Green Pack, the REC team used the methodology that has been successfully employed in recent Green Pack projects in other countries. A number of elements were added to the Green Pack methodology to reflect Albania’s particular situation, including:

- work with Albanian educational professionals to ensure teaching standards and relevance to national curricula;
- consultation with Albanian environmentalists to provide sound and accurate environmental information;
- use of the best achievements worldwide to make the educational materials interactive and attractive.

Achievements of the project

Through the implementation of this project, more than 2,000 Green Packs prepared by the REC are in the hands of teachers and pupils. The Green Pack is envisioned as an extra-curricular subject for Albanian seventh graders, beginning in early 2007. It is expected to reach approximately 1,865 schools and 67,000 pupils per year.

The information is presented in the form of text (a 210-page teachers’ handbook, 800 pages on the CD, and 22 postcards in the dilemma game), pictures and illustrations (300 in the handbook, 540 on the CD), 265 photographs (on the CD), maps (42 on the CD), more than 56 interactive tables and illustrations, and more than 38 video clips (on the CD and DVD). More than 67 links to useful local and international websites are also provided on the CD-ROM, which also contains 22 lesson plans that are the same as those in the handbook. These can be downloaded as pdf files for use in classroom activities.

Following the dissemination of the Green Packs, 14 training courses in 13 regions were organised for more than 462 teachers all around the country. During the second semester of the academic year 2006/2007, more than 1,200 teachers were trained in using the Green Pack.

The REC has built strong partnerships at national, regional and local level with the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of the Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, the Institute of Curricula, the Centre for Teacher Training, the regional education directorates and offices of education, and regional environmental agencies.

The Green Pack enhances critical thinking, problem solving, and effective decision-making skills, and teaches individuals to weigh the various sides of an environmental issue in order to make informed and responsible decisions. Environmental education through the Green Pack is a process in which individuals gain awareness of their environment and acquire the knowledge, skills, values and experiences, as well as the determination, to act, individually and collectively, to solve existing and future environmental problems.

The Green Pack contributes to country efforts towards European integration through the EU Sustainable Development/Lisbon Strategy as well as the Education Council’s efforts to promote education to reverse unsustainable trends. The Green Pack counts as a step forward in the UN’s Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005-2014, and supports the goals of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.
What comes next?

REC Country Office Albania is continuing the work via the project “Beyond Piloting the Green Pack Albania in the Basic Education System” to train teachers and integrate the pack into the Albanian system as a whole (see the next project record).

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Beyond Piloting the Green Pack Albania in the Basic Education System

Starting date: July 2007
Finishing date: March 2010
Project budget: EUR 170,000
Beneficiary country: Albania
Donor: Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, Italy

Project background

This project focuses on the provision of sustainable development courses and curricula to support the transfer of skills and knowledge to school systems in Albania. The REC is actively engaged in the field of education for the environment and for sustainable development, especially focusing on environmental education in the basic education system and promoting public awareness. Education is a crucial tool to support environmental and sustainable development policies, aiming at promoting public consciousness of environmental matters and environmentally responsible behaviour.

The environmental education programme comprises:

- The development of environmental education curricula and their introduction as a subject in teacher training institutes.
- The establishment of training courses for teachers assigned to teach environmental education.

The expected results are:

- Support to the reform of university curricula by introducing the specific subject of education for sustainable development.
- Reorientation of education towards sustainable development and increasing public awareness, through the implementation of environmental education at university level.
- Increased capacity of university staff to develop and deliver comprehensive state-wide environmental education programmes.
- Incorporation of environmental education topics/curricula into university curricula.
- Establishment of multi-stakeholder cooperation and
partnership on environmental education issues in Albania.

- Establishment of and support to a national expert network on environmental education.
- Promotion of research and assessment of the effectiveness of environmental education in improving environmental quality and student achievement.
- Improvement in the quality of, access to and coordination of environmental education information, resources and programmes.
- Promotion of the integration of environmental education into other school subjects in the national curriculum.

**Achievements and progress in the period July 2007 to December 2008**

Three pilot universities were identified (October to December 2007) for the organisation of project activities: Tirana University; Luigj Gurakuqi University, Shkoder; and Aleksander Xhuvani University, Elbasan. Focal points were established in each of the universities.

**Development of the environmental education curricula workshop**

- A project team was established to focus and adjust the action plan within the appropriate timeframe.
- An expert group was established to assess the level of environmental education in the university system.
- Close collaboration was established with university professors from the three Albanian universities and the regional education directorate in Albania.
- An environmental education teaching programme was developed on how to use the new academic training.

**Training workshop on environmental education**

- An Italian expert presented concrete examples of environmental education for particular age groups.

**National meeting with regional education directorate representatives**

- A network of high-school teachers, teaching assistants and university professors was established.
- In 2007 and 2008, training activities were carried out in 21 cities in Albania.
Outdoor environmental education activities were planned in eight pilot schools in Albania.

What comes next?

In the short to medium term (one to three years), the REC will support the extension of the programme at the university level by introducing the subject of environmental education in the curricula of teacher training institutes.

The Centre for Teacher Training recently included environmental education as a training course, referring to REC Country Office Albania as an information resource for the provision of support and materials.

- Thirty training courses throughout Albania for teachers on the use of the Green Pack to be delivered (October 2008 to March 2010).
- Twelve lecture sessions in selected universities.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Green Pack: Education for Sustainable Development for Schools in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Starting date: December 2005
Finishing date: June 2007
Project budget: EUR 321,000 + EUR 39,800
Beneficiary country: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donor: Austrian Development Agency and contributions of beneficiaries

Project background

The project was designed to contribute to the improvement of the environmental situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia by raising environmental awareness in society through the education of schoolchildren (between the ages of 10 and 14), teachers and parents.

As a result of the project, the Green Pack was made available free of charge to schools for approximately 25,000 pupils annually and training was given to more than 330 teachers.

The proposed environmental education programme in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia focuses on:

- educational activities — to raise young people’s environmental awareness and to cultivate environmental protection skills, values and habits;
- social/environmental understanding — to place the actions of pupils/citizens in the general context of sustainable development.

The project addressed a typical problem of the teachers, that is, the lack of books and teaching material on the theme of environmental protection and sustainable development. The Macedonian Green Pack was the first to be produced bilingually, in Macedonian and Albanian. The CD-ROM is in Macedonian, Albanian and English.

Achievements of the project

A feasibility study on the current level of environmental education and awareness in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was prepared. Local and national support was secured and the Green Pack was recognised as a unique teaching tool enabling teachers to introduce to pupils the concept of sustainable development. Advisors from the Bureau for the Development of Education carried out a comprehensive review (feasibility study) and a programme was developed for the integration of the Green Pack into the curriculum of Macedonian primary schools. The primary target group were pupils between 10 and 15 years of age, and the secondary target group were their families.

The Green Pack was adapted to the specific situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and was written in both Macedonian and Albanian. A number of experts, teachers, educators and NGO representatives from both nationalities participated in this process.

A train-the-trainers workshop was organised in order to train at least one teacher per school in the country. The target groups were potential trainers from among the teachers, educators and advisors from the Bureau for the Development of Education in NGOs who had participated in the preparation and adaptation of the Green Pack for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and who were familiar with its content. In late August 2008, the trainers trained 350 biology and geography teachers from all the primary schools in the country.

The implementation of the Green Pack officially started at the beginning of the 2008/2009 academic year. The Green Pack was recommended by the Bureau for the Development of Education as a teaching tool for the new facultative subject “Environment”, as well as for all classes in the natural sciences such as biology, geography, physics, chemistry, as well as civil society.

The Macedonian Green Pack is unique due to its
bilingual content and multinational approach. Added value in this project is the adaptation of some components to visually impaired children. This is a unique approach towards the social integration of citizens with special needs, which is related to the implementation of the overall concept of sustainable development.

What comes next?

Monitoring and evaluation is planned for the final semester of the 2008/2009 academic year, the first academic year of the official start of implementation of the Green Pack. After the monitoring is carried out by both beneficiary ministries, it is planned to produce the Green Pack in the Turkish and Serbian languages.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Improving Public Participation Practices: Next Step in Implementing the Aarhus Convention in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro

Starting date: December 2004
Finishing date: December 2006
Project budget: EUR 515,135
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands

Project background

The project was designed to enhance the implementation and awareness of the Aarhus Convention in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the then Serbia and Montenegro, and Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244). It focused on supporting the practical implementation of the Aarhus Convention through capacity building of government officials and NGOs; through sharing of experiences; and by ensuring civil society involvement in environmental decision making. The project supported efforts towards the ratification of/accession to the convention in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro, and assisted in preparations for the ratification of the UNECE Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs).

The project focused on achieving tangible results in terms of practical implementation at national and local levels, with supplementary support at the regional level. Activity plans for countries and entities were developed based on country consultations and were discussed in regional workshops and national consultations. Activities were designed to strengthen governmental and NGO capacities through three regional workshops and numerous national and local capacity-building workshops targeted at officials at national and local level, as well as NGOs. Workshop training materials were created on topics such as public access to information, public participation in decision making on environmental impact assessment (EIA), integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC), strategic environmental impact assessment (SEA), access to justice, and PRTRs. Information about the convention was prepared in user-friendly format in local languages in the form of brochures, website content and manuals, to aid NGOs engaged in pilot projects as they promoted the Aarhus Convention to public and local officials.

Project activities built on the results of an earlier project “Support to Developing Strategies for the Implementation of the Aarhus Convention in South and Eastern Europe” (REReP 2.2), implemented between 2001 and 2003, which developed specific mechanisms, national-level structures and networks of experts and NGOs interested in the issues covered by the convention. Strategies and action plans for the implementation of the Aarhus Convention were developed based on needs assessments and were used to guide project activities.

Achievements of the project

The project significantly contributed to the improved practical implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the targeted countries. It also supported the ratification/accession process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the ratification/accession documents were submitted to the Parliament during the project period. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, an assessment and a draft explanatory memorandum were prepared for the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations within the project period, officially initiating the acceptance of the convention. Accession happened in the autumn of 2008. In Montenegro, the results of the project are also being used in the accession process that is planned...
Taking into account the special situation in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), there has been an examination of how the principles of the Aarhus Convention should be integrated in the legislation and followed in practice, and recommendations have been made to this effect.

More concrete results include:

- The preparation of legislative, institutional and practical recommendations regarding the implementation of the convention or the improvement of the current situation in terms of access to justice in Albania and Montenegro, and regarding the establishment of PRTRs and the implementation of the PRTR Protocol in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, and the implementation of Aarhus Convention principles in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244).
- The development of manuals for officials in all countries at national and/or local levels in order to develop and improve the capacities of officials and to provide methodologies for the implementation of measures.
- The strengthening of the capacities of approximately 1,000 experts from government agencies, municipalities, the judiciary, NGOs and other stakeholders through trainings at national and municipal level regarding the practical implementation of the convention and in order to improve their everyday practices, especially at local level. The trainings focused mainly on the first and second pillars of the convention.
- The successful implementation of 12 pilot projects — two in each county — at the municipal level leading to more transparent decision-making practice and making a positive impact in those communities. During these pilot projects, methodologies for public participation were tested/applied in concrete decision-making situations.
- The implementation of pilot projects in four selected countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia), examining and supporting the establishment and future development of pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs) in line with the PRTR Protocol, so leading to a better understanding of the existing gaps and needs and to a common discussion of future tasks. The findings of the assessment were discussed at multi-stakeholder roundtables and recommendations for further steps were proposed.
- The participation by 10 officials from three countries (Albania, Montenegro and Serbia) in a study tour to the Czech Republic to learn from practical experience of establishing and operating an integrated pollution register in line with EU requirements and the UNECE PRTR Protocol, and to share and exchange experiences.
- The maintaining and strengthening of a network of national and local authorities and NGOs cooperating on the practical implementation of Aarhus Convention issues through three regional capacity-building workshops and regular communication and contacts. The regional workshops, held in Ohrid in May 2004, in Budva in June 2005 and in Brcko in November 2006, supported project implementation and included interactive practical training on public participation in local-level decision making on permitting, planning, law making and access to justice. The workshops and networking have led to common approaches to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention among the target countries.
- The wide dissemination of project results, which have been shared in English and local languages at national and local levels, as well as internationally through the websites of the REC head office and country offices and through the distribution of hard-copy publications.

What comes next?

At the closing regional workshop in Brcko, in November 2006, the project results were evaluated, experiences and lessons learned were summarised, and potential follow-up activities were discussed. Since the end of the project, donors have been approached for funding for a new project for the further identification of unresolved needs, gaps and barriers. Project results and further needs were used as input in the preparation of the category 2 document on the implementation of MEAs in SEE, which was presented at the Belgrade “Environment for Europe” conference, as well as in the official sessions and side events of the second and third Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention held in Almaty in 2004 and in Riga in 2008.

Further capacity building for officials from all SEE countries was carried out in 2007 and 2008, based on the results of the Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession (ECENA) in relation to PRTRs and to the European Pollutant Emission Register (EPER) and E-PRTR systems. A proposal has been developed for funding within the capacity-building initiative of the UNECE PRTR working group and submitted to donors. Both these fundraising efforts for the contin-
uation of the work on the Aarhus Convention and PRTR Protocol are still under way.

Serbia acceded to the Aarhus Convention in spring 2009.

On-line project information: www.rec.org/REC/Programs/PublicParticipation/improving_practices/default.html

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Access to Information and Public Participation in Environmental Decision Making (Danube Regional Project, 3.4)

Starting date: September 2004
Finishing date: June 2007
Project budget: EUR 1,499,548
Beneficiary countries: Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia
Donor: UNDP/GEF, Danube Regional Project (DRP)

Project background

Implemented in partnership by the REC, Resources of the Future and New York University School of Law, this project sought to strengthen public access to information and participation at different levels concerning water-related issues in the Danube River basin. It also aimed to promote the GEF priority of community involvement, to enhance good governance and to reinforce the capacities of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) to implement access to information and elements of public participation in the EU Water Framework Directive. At the national level, it helped to build the capacities of responsible government authorities from five Danubian countries — Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Romania and the then Serbia and Montenegro — to provide water-related environmental information to the public and to facilitate public participation as required by the Aarhus Convention, the EU Water Framework Directive, and other relevant directives and national laws. It also reinforced the capacities of NGOs by inviting them to project activities and involving the community in solving water pollution-related issues at selected local hotspots in the Danube River basin. Based on a needs assessment, country partners discussed and identified priorities and pro-
posed country activities to remove key barriers and improve public access to water-related information and public participation. A package of practical participation tools was developed and disseminated throughout the Danube River basin to assist authorities and various stakeholders in their efforts towards public information and participation.

**Achievements of the project**

During the 28-month project, a wide range of activities were successfully completed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Serbia. The projects resulted in the creation of various tools to improve access to information and public participation when applying the EU WFD, including manuals for government officials, brochures for NGOs, and legislative and other recommendations.

Among its outcomes, the project:

- contributed to the development of by-laws and procedures to implement relevant provisions of the new national water law in Bosnia and Herzegovina and helped to develop a water database that will clarify what water-related information exists and which authorities hold it;
- assessed, and made recommendations for improving, the rules and regulations on the confidentiality of environmental and water-related information in Bulgaria; provided training and capacity building for authorities on how best to implement existing procedures; and shared good practices for the improved handling of information and information requests;
- improved the active dissemination of information on environment and water through the development of a web page of the Danube River Basin Directorate in Bulgaria;
- assessed and made recommendations on how to improve the functioning of the river basin committees (RBCs) in Romania, and carried out capacity building and training on communication, information dissemination and stakeholder participation;
- produced manuals for authorities in Croatia, Romania and the then Serbia and Montenegro to improve the varying abilities and skills of authorities in terms of how they manage and handle access to information and public participation;
- developed brochures for the wider public and NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Romania and the then Serbia and Montenegro on how to access information and how the public can be part of the decision-making process, including useful tips and examples, and provided a brochure for NGOs and the general public on on-line water-related information sources, including information on access to information rights in Bulgaria;
- delivered a training programme on public access to water-related information; created materials to build the capacity of public officials and relevant stakeholders in Croatia; and organised capacity-building workshops for officials (to enhance the likelihood that authorities will use the guidance materials in their daily work) and for NGOs on practical aspects of public access to information, with a joint session with officials in Serbia and Montenegro;
- successfully implemented five pilot projects to demonstrate best practices in public access to water-related information and increasing public participation at the local level in hotspots in Bor, Lovech, Osijek, Tirgu Mures and Tuzla;
- prepared the two reports “Public Access to the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) Information” and “Options for Further Developing Public Participation Including Observership and Stakeholder Participation at ICPDR”, which were submitted to the DRP and ICPDR for further use and consideration. The reports were discussed by the strategic expert group of the ICPDR and were used when preparing new documents regarding the rules of observership to the ICPDR;
- increased the capacity and skill of officials and NGOs through two study tours to the US and to the Netherlands to gain practical experience in participatory water management and the implementation of the WFD. In total, 20 official experts attended the tours from the water and environmental authorities in charge of the WFD along with 10 NGOs active in Danube issues from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and the then Serbia and Montenegro;
- organised three regional and numerous national capacity-building workshops for officials and NGOs from the Danube countries to assist the country partners in carrying out the planned activities and to address major barriers defined in the country activity plans, as well as to provide opportunities for participants from the project countries to share their experience and learn from other EU countries;
• shared experiences in a basin-wide dissemination workshop in October 2006 at the REC in Szentendre, where best-practice models and practical experience from the multi-year project were presented and lessons learned of value to countries throughout the basin were exchanged with representatives of authorities, NGOs, the DRP and ICPDR and members of the ICPDR public participation expert group.

What comes next?

The booklet “Flowing Freely” summarises the challenges identified and the approaches developed to address them during the 28-month project. In addition to sharing lessons learned and recommendations in this publication, project results, best-practice models and practical experiences were widely disseminated in the Danube region and throughout Europe using electronic tools, publications and meetings.

Project results have been used in ICPDR working groups and expert groups, including the public participation expert group and the Tisza and Sava basin groups, as well as at the national level in all Danube countries during the implementation of the WFD. The network of experts created during the project has been maintained through electronic and other means of communication, and plans have been discussed to develop further cooperative projects/initiatives to continue the project outcomes.

Research on good practices leads to proposed improvements

Assisted by knowledge of how public involvement works in water management in the US and countries of the EU, Romanian NGOs identified and recommended constructive options for selecting representatives of citizens and NGOs for membership in river basin committees. They also came up with ideas for increasing public input in the committees’ decision making.

One report that helped them to do this is available at www.rec.org/REC/Programs/PublicParticipation/DanubeRiver-Basin/project_products/rom_selected_practices_rbc.pdf.

Stakeholders set aside differences and focus on solutions

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, citizens, NGOs and industrial firms in Lukavac, Tuzla canton, met to consider the impacts of pollution on their shared interests and to look for joint solutions. Previous efforts had been unproductive and confrontational. A local NGO, Eko-Zeleni Lukavac, brought together relevant authorities and stakeholders. Because of the collaborative approach, a local company decided to participate and offered its factory as a meeting site, setting a new, civil tone for discussions.

A “water forum” hosts discussions

Local communication on water quality in Osijek, Croatia, now has an Internet-based platform: the Water Forum. The forum is a virtual space for governmental authorities, NGOs, citizens and other stakeholders to discuss water issues, including the planned construction of a wastewater treatment plant. Coordinated by an NGO, Green Osijek, this low-cost approach allows information exchanges through the Internet. Participants may hold actual meetings as appropriate. More information is available at www.zeleni-osijek.hr.

Bulgarians test the system

Efforts by the NGO Ecomission 21st Century to engage Bulgarian citizens and NGOs in submitting information requests to local, regional and national authorities not only improved the skills of local communities in getting information, but also tested what kind of water management information was being withheld as confidential.

The results helped the NGO to propose improvements in national legislation and practice. More information is available at www.bluelink.net/water/public/.

Government ministers endorse manuals

In Serbia, the “Manual for Authorities on Access to Information on Environmental and Water Issues”, produced under the project, was recommended for use by the director of the Water Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, and was distributed through the directorate’s website. The manual and endorsement are at www.minpolj.sr.gov.yu/images/materiali/Prirucnikzapredstavnikejavnevlasti.pdf.

In Romania, the “Manual for Authorities on Environmental and Water-Related Access to Information and Public Participation in Decision Making with a Focus on the EU WFD” was published with the logo of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and disseminated to water and environmental authorities by the state secretary of the ministry, with a recommendation that it be used.

River basin authorities coordinate websites

Authorities in Bulgaria conducted a needs assessment with representatives of the Danube River Basin Directorate and other organisations, and developed a common approach for their websites.
The goal was to make the sites more functional and offer comparable information in similar formats. The revised websites now explain procedures for requesting information, provide hyperlinks to other websites with environmental data, and offer environmental information. They also include a form for requesting information as well as frequently asked questions (FAQs). A manual was prepared for web page managers. See two of these websites at www.dunavbd.org/index.php?x=46 (Danube River Basin Directorate) and www.lovech.bg/Read.php?id=537 (Lovech County).

Bulgaria considers a “public interest test” approach

In the Lovech-Troyan area, the NGO Ecomission 21st Century built on a previous effort to identify gaps in legislation and practice and conducted several rounds of test requests for information. Analysis of the results helped form the basis for recommended procedures for handling business confidentiality.

Recommendations include implementing a public interest test and supplementing the current rulebook of the Ministry of Environment and Water.

A meta-system orients citizens

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a consultant helped government authorities and NGOs develop a meta-information system for locating water-related information within the multiple levels of a particularly fragmented government structure. The system helps citizens find out where the information they need is located. For each of the 324 institutions, it identifies a contact person, gives a website address and hyperlink, describes the institution, and indicates what information is held there.

The system is available at www.rec.org/REC/Programs/PublicParticipation/DanubeRiverBasin/project_products/default.html.

An NGO and local authorities create a database

Working with local authorities and companies, the NGO Association of Young Researchers in Bor, Serbia, established a standardised database for water resources and made it accessible to government authorities, water users and the public. The database will be transferred to the municipality’s environment protection department, and the NGO has trained municipal employees in operating and maintaining it.

Project information on-line: www.rec.org/REC/Programs/PublicParticipation/DanubeRiverBasin/project_products/default.html

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Promotion and Effective Application of the Rights and Responsibilities of the Albanian Population in Environmental Matters

Starting date: April 2006
Finishing date: March 2008
Project budget: EUR 180,000
Beneficiary country: Albania
Donor: Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID)

Project background

This project aimed to support Albanian stakeholders at central and local levels in implementing the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) in dealing with environmental problems, and in ensuring a participatory approach.

The implementation of the three pillars of the Aarhus Convention emphasises both fundamental human rights and the responsibility of the state and its citizens to protect the environment for future generations.

The implementation of the Aarhus Convention was supported by strengthening the judicial institutions responsible for tackling environmental crime through the training of future judges and prosecutors. The local community was involved in environmental planning and administration through awareness raising and public participation in decision making.

- An awareness-raising campaign was organised to provide information about threats to the environment and to underline the importance of environmental protection and the responsibility of all citizens.
- A pilot programme was launched for public participation in decision making at the local level. A plan of action and a budget plan were elaborated by a selected municipality. In order to increase the participation and responsibility of local authorities, activities had to be at least 10 percent co-financed by the community.
- Three training courses were held for future judges and prosecutors at the Albanian Judicial School. The
training included a presentation of the Aarhus Convention and its protocols, as well as practical case studies for each of the pillars of the convention. The training programme involved local and Spanish experts and was organised by the Albanian Judicial School together with the REC.

Achievements of the project

Component 1. Support given to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Albania

The project has resulted in a better understanding of the obligations of Albania under the Aarhus Convention and methodologies for its implementation through a pilot activity involving the general public, local institutions and the judicial system.

- An Aarhus Convention implementation strategy is in place and the Ministry of the Environment, Forestry and Water Administration has drafted a decision of the Council of Ministers in support of this multilateral agreement.
- Civil society has increased pressure on the government to take into consideration the principles of the Aarhus Convention, especially in legal drafting and new investments. On one issue, the NGOs addressed the Compliance Committee of the convention in Geneva (October 2007).
- Although there is no specific monitoring of environmental cases, numerous cases do come to court, especially in the area of non-enforcement.

Component 2. Public awareness raised and public participation promoted through an awareness-raising campaign

- 11 public seminars organised in a 10-day tour;
- 100 volunteers and approximately 800 participants in cities;
- 3,000 pamphlets and 3,000 badges distributed;
- 25 to 30 waste bins provided in each of 11 local public awareness actions;
- 21 teacher-training courses around Albania on environmental education (approximately 562 teachers trained);
- 5,000 copies of a booklet published;
- five issues of the magazine Mjedisi Sot distributed;
- 217 daily e-info versions of Mjedisi Sot distributed.

Component 3. Pilot plan for action for environmental protection in an Albanian municipality developed and implemented

One urban municipality (Koplik) was involved, and in addition a rural community (the commune of Bushat) has been included in the process. Seven working groups of local experts have been established, and numerous working group meetings have been held, including two big public hearings.

Finally, an environmental plan has been drafted and adopted by the commune council. Seven project ideas have been submitted by the local authority for further financial support and 300 copies of a publication on LEAP methodology have been published.

What comes next?

Considering the level of participatory processes at all levels of governance in Albania, the need was identified by national authorities (the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration) and the donor (AECID) to implement several pilot actions for each pillar of the Aarhus Convention.

While the type of activities varied, the main message of the project was the importance of public participation and the guaranteeing of this right by the country's judicial system.

This integrated approach to Aarhus application was supported by the beneficiaries as a concrete model of multi-stakeholder involvement. It also established a foundation for further work on each of the project components in the future.

Based on the priorities identified in the LEAPs, three investment projects (EUR 100,000) for the municipality of Koplik and one investment project (EUR 20,000) for the commune of Bushat are being implemented to improve the waste collection systems in both localities and to improve infrastructure (wastewater, greening, cleaning etc.). The municipality and commune gave more than 15 percent financial contribution to the projects, as well as in-kind contributions from the local service sectors.
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Support to Small-Scale Initiatives of Non-profit Organisations Focused on Environmental and Natural Resource Protection in the Neretva Delta

Starting date: January 2006
Finishing date: July 2006
Project budget: EUR 25,725
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Defra, UK – Environment for Europe Fund

Project background

This granting project is based on lessons learned from the cross-border project “Transboundary Management of Shared Natural Resources”, which the REC has been implementing since 2000 in the Neretva Delta region shared with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main problem in the area is wetland degradation, due to a lack of adequate protection measures and management planning. The REC has so far assisted local civil society and government institutions to define common management approaches to biodiversity conservation, resources management, waterway/agricultural land pollution, and possibilities for, and challenges to, sustainable development. It has also implemented a series of capacity-building and networking activities for NGOs, protected area authorities, educational institutions and local governments, with topics and methodology customised to stakeholders’ needs and the specific conditions of the area.

Many of the REC’s activities in the area were implemented through small grants to non-profit organisations in 2002 and 2004. As a result, NGOs were activated and
recognised as powerful motivators in the region. However, the funds disbursed so far were insufficient to cover all the sustainable development efforts of the local organisations, thus the granting programme was altered to support the efforts of the longstanding REC project in the Neretva Delta area "Transboundary cooperation through the management of shared natural resources". Since most Neretva Delta NGOs have experience in environmental education, public awareness and promotion campaigns, and since collaboration between NGOs and schools is very productive, these areas were classified as grant priorities.

Achievements of the project

The project aimed to further support the protection of natural resources in the Neretva Delta (Croatia) through small-scale financial support to local initiatives that are contributing to increasing local and regional awareness of the natural values of the area and promoting the sustainable use of resources. Small grants (of between GBP 2,500 and 3,000 per project) were awarded through standard REC granting procedures to six projects by Croatian non-profit organisations, focusing on biodiversity protection, sustainable development and the wise use of natural resources. The six projects were:

- "Ethnographic Collection of the Neretva Delta Area"
- "The Metkovic Virtual Ornithological Collection"
- "Creating Original Souvenirs of the Neretva Delta"
- "Informing the public about the value of the Bacina Lakes and protection measures implemented and planned for the area"
- "Butterflies — A disappearing beauty"
- "Promotional campaign for the development and protection of natural heritage in the Neretva Valley"

Project outputs, such as brochures on the ethnographic heritage of the Neretva Delta; butterfly inventory reports; videos, posters and promotional leaflets about specific sites and animal biodiversity in the region; and an online ornithological collection, are used to promote the values of the Neretva Delta among the public.

What comes next?

Since this DEFRA-funded project originated from several years of REC presence in the Neretva Delta region, and from an existing long-term cross-border REC project, all deliverables from granted projects were disseminated in the Neretva region and among other interested stakeholders by the joint efforts of the REC and the implementing organisations.

Demand for promotional materials on the Neretva Delta is high, primarily among schools and among local, regional and national authorities in charge of the environment and nature protection, but also among tourists and the various international organisations present or interested in the area, with which the REC has already developed regular contacts and cooperation. However, local production of such materials is generally poor. Since publications/posters on the Neretva Delta attract the greatest interest among stakeholders, the REC supports reprinting and helps local authors to disseminate their publications to as wide an audience as financially possible.

The majority of small grants awarded within this project are to ongoing activities of these organisations, therefore most of them continued after this project’s support ended — for example work on the promotion of the Bacina Lakes, the promotion of biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use in the Neretva Delta, creative environmental workshops for schoolchildren, inventories of flora and fauna in the region etc. Local non-profit organisations, primarily NGOs and school associations, are the most active environmental players in the Neretva region, although they have limited capacities. Whenever possible, the REC will aim to offer other, similar, small grants programmes in order to further support the development of such organisations and the continuation of their activities.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

SEA — Capacity Building in Albania and Montenegro

Starting date: October 2006
Finishing date: January 2007
Project budget: EUR 15,350
Beneficiary countries: Albania and Montenegro
Donor: The Netherlands Commission for Environmental Impact Assessment (NCEIA)

Project background

Both countries have been working towards developing their own strategic environmental assessment (SEA) systems. The Montenegrin government has prepared an SEA law, which came into force in 2008. There are references to SEA in Albanian legislation, and Albania is working towards more coherent SEA regulation. The legal requirements for SEA improve the level of environmental integration in decision making. Montenegro is a
signatory to the UNECE SEA (Kiev) Protocol, and the protocol has been ratified by Albania.

These important developments had to be followed by capacity-building activities for relevant stakeholders in both countries, enabling experts and authorities to carry out SEA on different plans and programmes.

Achievements of the project

REC Country Office Albania organised a workshop for participants from both Albania and Montenegro. It was involved in the preparation of the workshop programme and materials, along with experts from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration, the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Impact Assessment (NCEIA), experts in territorial planning from the UK, and the World Bank’s Project for Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

The two-day workshop organised in Tirana in November 2006 attracted 40 participants from Albania and Montenegro, both of which countries are in the process of introducing SEA into their planning practice. The workshop programme covered the basics of SEA (definition of SEA and how it is carried out) and several SEA case studies, and provided participants with opportunities to discuss the implications of SEA. Through a working-group exercise, participants developed a list of identified priorities for future SEA activities in both countries.

What comes next?

REC Country Office Albania remains focused on work related to EIA/SEA and will follow up with specific and general capacity development activities for relevant stakeholders, at national, regional and transboundary level.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Participation in Environmental Decision Making: Promoting Aarhus Principles in Croatia

Starting date: September 2004
Finishing date: August 2005
Project budget: EUR 31,780
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: EC Delegation in Croatia

Project background

The main problems addressed by the project included:

- low levels of efficiency and transparency and the quality of the government environmental decision-making process;
- low capacity of NGOs for participation in environmental decision-making processes; and
- lack of information, knowledge and understanding of the principles of the UNECE Aarhus Convention and their practical implementation.

Activities were therefore focused on building the capacity of selected key stakeholder groups in environmental decision making and in the practical implementation of Aarhus Convention principles.

The project aimed to help central and local governmental officials, NGO representatives, business and media representatives and other relevant stakeholders to work on capacity building and to improve the efficiency and transparency of the environmental decision-making process.

It aimed to accomplish this through better access to information and a more strategic and integrated institutional and practical approach, in the light of the concrete implementation of the principles of the Aarhus Convention and through the dissemination of good practices from CEE and West European countries in Croatia.

The target group comprised 80 to 100 central and local governmental officials, environmental NGOs and business and media representatives. They were all provided with an opportunity to attend interactive workshops and to use a specifically developed methodology that gave them an equal opportunity to exchange opinions, concrete experiences and know-how. In addition, in the long term the project aimed to accelerate the implementation of good EU practices.

Achievements of the project

Project activities included the development of a training manual; the organisation of six trainings throughout the whole territory of Croatia, including one train-the-trainers programme; the publication of three issues of the REC “Bulletin”, emphasising the Aarhus Convention and public participation as its main topics; and the publication of a public participation training manual and of a directory of Croatian environmental stakeholders and funders.
Project ideas developed by training participants that were implemented

Success stories include:

- The NGO “Osijek Greens – Free Movement” began to conduct similar project activities but upgraded to more specific groups, such as environmental journalists through the fully operational environmental press centre ALERT.

- Environmental NGOs united in response to problems related to the river Drava and organised the Drava League to lobby for the declaration of the Drava Biosphere Reserve.

- The local initiative “Transboundary Programme for the Protection of the Danube River” was launched by Croatia and Serbia as a result of a process initiated at one of the training workshops.

- A local initiative was undertaken to raise public awareness of hotspots recognised by the ICPDR in eastern Slavonia, using a methodology developed and discussed at trainings for stakeholders.
Concrete results:

- 103 stakeholders (mainly NGOs, local authority representatives and journalists) trained in understanding and passing on knowledge related to public participation in environmental decision making and public access to environmental information, especially information related to the use of water resources;
- 76 action plans developed within the framework of trainings, with the aim of implementation in local communities according to specific local needs and interests;
- three issues of the REC “Bulletin” widely distributed among environmental stakeholders in Croatia, specifically focused on public participation in environmental decision making and public access to environmental information;
- functional interconnections developed among different regional projects focusing on public participation and access to environmental information (stakeholders networked, public awareness raised, initiatives developed within state institutions to start establishing more functional systems for providing information and cooperation with the public, taking into account public concerns, as required by relevant EU directives);
- 15 persons trained as trainers and enabled to become knowledge and skills disseminators, as well as developers of local initiatives related to the issues of public participation and access to environmental information.

What comes next?

Following the end of the project period, positive developments in national legislation (the EU approximation process, enactment of the Access to Information Law etc.) enabled the REC to continuously provide thematic educational programmes related to public participation and access to environmental information.

These programmes also served to help various national and regional authorities responsible for the management of environmental information (e.g. the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction; the Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management; the city of Zagreb, Sibenik-Knin county and Varazdin county).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Awareness Raising for the Development of Tourism in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Starting date: September 2007
Finishing date: March 2008
Project budget: EUR 10,226
Beneficiary country: Bosnia and Herzegovina
Donor: Ministry of the Environment, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Project background

The project goal was to raise awareness of natural values in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina among children aged between seven and 11. The main project activities were:

- determining the most important sites in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina where natural values and environmentally friendly activities can be promoted;
- designing, printing and disseminating a brochure;
- promoting the natural values and the brochure through a public event.

Achievements of the project

The project identified the most important and most interesting sites that can be used for educational tours for schoolchildren. A brochure was developed, describing the experiences of schoolchildren that had already visited the sites. A public event was organised to promote the brochure, and nature study tours in general. Representatives of schools, resource ministries, NGOs and the media participated in the event, which was organised in cooperation with one of the recommended sites, the Hutovo blato nature park.

What comes next?

The brochure was disseminated to elementary schools in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of encouraging schools to organise nature study tours. Since the Federal Ministry of Environment (the donor) traditionally organises eco-camps each year, there are possibilities for synergies with the project.
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Partnership for the Environment in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)

Starting date: January 2007
Finishing date: June 2008
Project budget: EUR 50,772
Beneficiary country: Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)
Donor: European Agency for Reconstruction

Project background

Environmental protection is not currently one of the main priorities among a population faced with huge economic and social problems. This, coupled with low public awareness and little involvement on the part of governmental institutions, makes the work of environmental CSOs even more frustrating and difficult.

In short, concrete problems addressed by this project were:

- lack of formal structures for cooperation between government and environmental CSOs;
- lack of trust towards governmental institutions;
- low level of public participation in decision-making process;
- unsatisfactory information provided to the general public by the government;
- low level of public awareness; and
- unsatisfactory accountability and transparency.

The overall objective of this project was to support the building of democratic and transparent institutions through strengthening and mobilising environmental CSOs, improving cooperation with the government and promoting social dialogue. The aim was to contribute towards better environmental solutions and better environmental decisions based on sustainable development and reached through wide consultation and agreement.

The proposed project comprised three complementary components. The first, establishing the foundation for formal and official cooperation between the Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP) and environmental CSOs; the second, capacity building for government officials, environmental CSOs and industry; and the third focusing on informing CSOs and the general public about project activities and the possibilities offered by this project to voice their environmental concerns.

Achievements of the project

- A signed memorandum of understanding for cooperation between MESP and CSOs; and the strengthened position and involvement of environmental CSOs in the process of policy development and the setting of environmental standards.
- Development of the electronic Environmental Forum, a tool for regular and effective communication between the government and environmental CSOs in relation to environmental problems and priorities. Comments can be posted on the forum on actual environmental issues in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244).
- Partnership between MESP and environmental CSOs to work towards protecting and improving the environment in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) based on the principles of sustainable development.

What comes next?

Both the MESP and CSOs initiated steps for the implementation of the memorandum of understanding.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Sustainable Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) — Raising Environmental Awareness through a Critical, Vital and Multi-ethnic Environmental Movement

Starting date: June 2007
Finishing date: November 2009
Project budget: EUR 95,419
Beneficiary country: Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244)
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, through the MATRA Programme for social transformation

Project background

The project aims to use the window of opportunity provided by institutional reforms in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) and related international attention to address a number of issues in a coherent, integrated manner. It is hoped to achieve this through methodical learning-by-doing training, enhancing cooperation between NGOs and governmental institu-
tions, and raising public awareness through active monitoring and the promotion of environmental issues in the Kosovan media. The project opens the doors to international cooperation for Kosovan environmental NGOs, which is of crucial importance for the healthy development of an environmental movement. The project will focus on the entire ethnic make-up of the country in order to ensure full participation and cooperation among all inhabitants.

The project goal is to provide environmental NGOs in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) with adequate and relevant training to create a vital, critical and cooperative environmental movement, capable of contributing to socio-economic reconstruction and to the designing of environmentally sound development plans. This necessitates raising public awareness as well as promoting cooperation amongst NGOs, and between NGOs and governmental institutions involved in environmental policy development and environmental protection.

In relation to this, the project aims to contribute to:

- increasing the capacity and knowledge of environmental NGOs to effectively influence and lobby the country and international authorities and to raise public awareness on environmental issues;
- increasing environmental awareness among the general public, including wider coverage of environmental issues by the Kosovan media;
- increasing cooperation among environmental NGOs in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) and with partner organisations in neighbouring countries.

Translated into activities, this project focused strongly on capacity building through various training activities.

Achievements and progress until December 2008

The capacity building of environmental NGOs in Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244) is being addressed through workshops and trainings, focusing on internal communication, effective meetings, consensus decision making, campaigning, lobbying, external communication and stakeholder management.

Four NGO workshops have taken place and two more workshops will follow, as well as two international study tours. During the workshops, opportunities were created to support the establishment of contacts between participating NGOs for the purposes of sharing information, experiences and ideas. Contacts and cooperation with environmental authorities were promoted through the organisation of two roundtables.

Two workshops were organised for journalists and editors. Participants worked on cases related to environmental threats and opportunities in the country. After the journalism workshops, there was an increase in environmental stories covered in the media. Better coverage of environmental issues provides citizens and organisations with information and is expected to contribute to an increase in their awareness with regard to the environment. One of the journalists was awarded a prize at an international radio festival in Bosnia and Herzegovina for a piece on an environmental topic that he treated as part of the workshop.

A one-week study visit for beneficiary NGOs was organised in Croatia, with the aim of gaining experiences from Croatian NGOs in relation to environmental concerns.

What comes next?

The capacity of environmental NGOs and journalists will be further developed during the capacity-building programme for NGOs and through the workshops and study trip for journalists and editors. An intensive training session was held aimed at improving the facilitation skills of coaches, and they will continue to share their knowledge. Thus far the coaches have supported their NGO(s) with the drafting of assignments. This has resulted in strengthened contacts among NGO members and has enhanced the skills of the coaches, providing a sustainable basis for further cooperation among environmental NGOs and for the further facilitation of environmental meetings.

Small grants will be awarded to beneficiary NGOs to implement small projects (awareness-raising campaigns) using the lessons learned during the capacity-building process.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Seminar for Environmental Journalists and Representatives of NGOs in Serbia

Starting date: November 2007
Finishing date: December 2007
Project budget: EUR 24,128
Beneficiary country: Serbia
Donor: Ministry of Environmental Protection, Republic of Serbia
The media is often the main source of information for the general public. If the media is not aware of the local environmental situation and global environmental trends, it is incapable of reporting on them, thus incapable of transferring the knowledge to citizens.

Project background

Under this project, the REC organised a seminar for journalists and representatives of NGOs from Serbia on reporting in the area of environment protection. The aim of the project was:

- to introduce journalists and representatives of NGOs to the relevant issues in the area of environmental protection;
- to present the current state and on-going activities in the area of environmental protection in Serbia and neighbouring countries;
- to present global environmental concepts and trends;
- to specify, in detail, the competencies of different responsible authorities in the area of environmental protection in Serbia;
- to enable networking among environmental reporters in the country and abroad.

Achievements of the project

The REC organised a three-day seminar for 27 journalists. Representatives of ministries responsible for environmental protection from Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and Serbia presented the current state and ongoing activities in the area of environmental protection in countries in the region, global environmental concepts and trends, and the competencies of different responsible authorities in the area of environmental protection.

The workshop provided an opportunity for networking among environmental reporters in the specific countries and abroad.

What comes next?

After positive feedback from the participants and relevant ministries in the region, the Ministry of Environmental Protection20 of the Republic of Serbia expressed willingness to support future activities to provide environmental journalists and NGOs with knowledge in the environmental field and an opportunity for networking in the future.

NOTES

20 From July 2008, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Urban Planning, Republic of Serbia
Priority Area 3
Support to Environmental Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation
The countries of SEE today share the common goal of EU integration, which promotes interstate dialogue, regional cooperation and good relations. The countries have recognised the importance of cross-border cooperation, especially in the protection of their common environment. Regional cooperation is also a specific requirement under the Stabilisation and Association Agreements and is a cornerstone of the EU policy framework that offers countries of the region the possibility of future EU membership.

Regional cooperation and cross-border dialogue are at the heart of REReP and enormous progress has been made in this area since the initiation of the programme. The effective sustainable management of shared natural resources requires cross-border cooperation and the development of long-term planning. The project “Transboundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources” builds on the very first project implemented in SEE under REReP. Activities focused on three types of geographical area (delta, mountain range, lake) and the six countries neighbouring these areas. The Neretva Delta, shared by Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia; Skadar/Shkodra Lake between Albania and Montenegro; and the Stara Planina mountain range that runs along a stretch of border between Bulgaria and Serbia. Cross-border exchanges between local organisations and regional-level technical networks were developed in order to enhance the shared management of natural resources.

Environmental cooperation has been particularly successful in the protection of other shared natural sites, such as the cross-border management of the rivers Sava, Drina, Bojana/Buna, Timok and Danube, as well as the joint natural resources of lakes Ohrid and Prespa.

A range of cross-border forums, agreements and initiatives can be found within the increasing number of cross-border projects that are being carried out in the region, using a variety of instruments, models and approaches for joint work. The Euroregion Stara Planina has been recognised by the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), and forums for the Neretva Delta and Skadar/Shkodra Lake have been successfully established. The institutional strengthening of the established forums and capacity-building activities are being implemented via conferences, workshops, training events, eco-camps and study visits supporting regional dialogue. Cross-border cooperation has also been strengthened at different locations throughout the region with multi-stakeholder environmental investment planning and the preparation of local environmental action plans.

Cross-border local environmental action plans were developed and adopted in the municipalities of Bratunac, Ljubovija, Rudo and Priboj, belonging to the section of the Drina River basin that stretches between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Local stakeholders received tailored training, guidance and hands-on experience in developing local environmental plans, as well as guidance to implement priority environmental investment projects, and several priority actions were implemented in partner municipalities with EUR 300,000 of investments.

The project “Cross-border Cooperation through Environmental Planning and Investment” assisted stakeholders from three cross-border areas — Zvornik, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mali Zvornik, Serbia; Debar, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Peškopia, Albania; and Bileca, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Niksic, Montenegro — in addressing common environmental problems through the preparation of investments. Through a series of trainings and workshops, local governments and utility experts across the borders were supported to establish a cooperative approach and to develop the skills needed to identify and prepare environmental investment projects for financing. Four international-standard feasibility studies were prepared and the investments were made up of three components focused on water resources protection, more specifically water supply efficiency improvement; the reduction of pollution caused by the discharge of wastewater; and the institutional strengthening of the public utilities.

Through the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), a new multi-year project was launched in 2007 seeking to facilitate a process of dialogue and coop-
eration between Serbia and Bulgaria on the transboundary Timok River.

This exchange and open dialogue remains vital for the further strengthening of regional cooperation and the protection of shared natural resources in SEE countries.

Transboundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources

Starting date: March 2004
Finishing date: February 2009
Project budget: EUR 1,270,000 (third phase), EUR 440,148 (fourth phase)
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia
Donor: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Project background

The project was launched in 2000 and was one of the first field interventions within REReP. The project targeted three pilot sites defined by large transboundary ecosystems — a delta, a mountain and a lake — the rich biodiversity and unique landscapes of which are internationally recognised. These sites also have considerable socioeconomic importance and support the livelihoods of a number of local communities, which partially live by directly utilising natural resources through agriculture, fishing, tourism, hunting or other uses.

The three cross-border sites targeted by the project are:

- **Neretva Delta**: located in the lower Neretva valley, including the river basin from Pocitelj to the mouth of the river, and shared by Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **Skadar/Shkodra Lake**: a large lake in the Zeta-Skadar valley, between Montenegro and Albania.
- **West Stara Planina**: the westernmost section of the Balkan Mountains (Stara Planina), which stretch from north east Serbia to north west Bulgaria.

The project aimed to enhance cooperation among

### Key project outcomes during the first six years of work

**Democratisation process**
- Local democracy has been strengthened through the introduction of participatory processes.
- The countries involved have made progress towards stability and European integration.

**Transboundary cooperation**
- Operational cross-border cooperation mechanisms have been established.
- Lines of communication have been restored between institutions and between countries.
- Transboundary cooperation is being supported by official cross-border agreements and the commitment of national and local governments.

**Ecosystems**
- The conservation of shared natural ecosystems is promoted as a result of their designation as protected areas.

- The management of shared natural resources is better ensured through improved multi-stakeholder dialogue and the increased capacities of resource management bodies.

**Local communities**
- Directions for strategic development have been identified and assessed.
- Concrete cross-border products, which also bring new development alternatives, have benefited local communities.

**Knowledge sharing**
- Local stakeholders benefit from new knowledge, experience and lessons from other similar areas.

*From: Trans-Boundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources, REC, 2007*
SEE countries through the management of shared natural resources. More accurately, it aimed to promote:

- local organisations;
- cross-border exchanges and cooperation between local organisations for the sake of the sound management and protection of key transboundary areas in South Eastern Europe that are important from the point of view of nature conservation and that have great potential for transboundary social interaction;
- technical networks at a regional level as well as the integration of these networks in relevant processes at national and international level.

The publication “Trans-Boundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources:

Lessons learned

The following lessons have emerged from the first six years of promoting transboundary cooperation in the three cross-border sites:

- **Shared natural resources are a good basis for transboundary cooperation**: Shared natural entities, when deeply embedded in the local culture, serve as a link between communities divided by country borders. The opportunities they present can transcend national differences and party politics, making them ideal subjects for transboundary exchanges, which — especially when led by an independent facilitator — play a significant bridging role in politically, ethnically and economically difficult cross-border situations.

- **Cross-border cooperation provides various local benefits**: Transboundary cooperation raises the profile of border areas, attracts the attention of national authorities, donors and investors, and opens the door to involvement in Europe-wide processes of territorial cooperation. However, local capacities are often limited, therefore extensive capacity building is vital for realising such potential.

- **The sustainability of cross-border activities requires multi-level integration**: Building functional transboundary cooperation mechanisms requires strong local ownership and a bottom-up approach. Once such mechanisms are built, their sustainability requires institutionalised structures recognised at local, national and international level, and a legal framework allowing the implementation of transboundary activities.

- **Cooperation between people from neighbouring states promotes decentralisation and good governance**: Transboundary projects contribute to decentralisation by creating new mandates for local authorities to facilitate transboundary processes, underlining the importance of local developments and giving the authorities new opportunities to learn. Such initiatives provide a basis for adopting good governance and fostering institutional collaboration at different levels.

- **Cross-boundary projects entail flexibility and a process-oriented approach**: To ensure a joint approach to the development of transboundary regions, the widest possible range of relevant players needs to be mobilised. However, transboundary projects have to operate in a highly dynamic environment: political situations and development agendas often change, and state institutions operate with rapid personnel turnover. This requires a flexible and process-oriented approach.

- **Building and maintaining trust between project partners from neighbouring countries requires special attention**: The trust of players and their confidence in the fairness of dealings within the project is especially important when ethnically and politically divided communities work together. This demands special attention to transparency and openness.

- **The complexity of transboundary activities requires a constant search for synergies**: Transboundary projects dealing with the management of natural resources are becoming extremely complex because of the growing demand for an integrative approach to issues, countries, policies and organisations. As a result, synergies (on the project, local, regional, national and international level) are as important as the activities themselves. This demands special care and a project team that is able to operate efficiently at local, national and international levels.

From: Trans-Boundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources, REC, 2007
Experience and lessons from six years of work in three pilot areas — Neretva Delta, Skadar/Shkodra Lake and West Stara Planina was produced in May 2007, summarising experiences and lessons learned from the first six years of work in the three pilot areas. Excerpts from the publication are provided below.

Achievements and progress

Project implementation was divided into four phases. While the first two phases of the project were preparatory — focusing mainly on the establishment of relationships, the initiation of dialogue, the creation of communication networks and the identification of common priorities — the third phase focused on the implementation of three largely site-specific agendas defined by the goals and objectives. The fourth phase focused on the long-term sustainability of local processes initiated by the project, such as:

- the further development of transboundary forums as the main mechanisms for transboundary stakeholder cooperation;
- the transfer of the mandate of the REC site offices to relevant local players.

Neretva Delta

In 2007, the REC organised and facilitated meetings and workshops to define an optimal forum structure to serve as a transboundary consultative body for the management of the Neretva River Delta region. After comparing five different scenarios for feasible forms of organisation, it was decided to set up two identical/twin forums registered in the countries — one in Croatia and another in Bosnia and Herzegovina — that would work together according to a precisely defined agreement on mutual cooperation, covering:

- the coordination of activities of NGOs, local and regional authorities, state institutions, activists and other legal subjects in relation to the Neretva Delta area;
- the maintenance of cross-border cooperation in order to resolve cross-border issues;
- joint implementation of activities that contribute to efficient water and waste management;
- the planning, design and implementation of projects in the Neretva Delta area relating to sustainable development, nature conservation and environmental protection, safeguarding landscape features, flora and fauna and unique natural values;
- the organisation of public lectures, workshops and seminars on the sustainable development of the Neretva Delta;
- upgrading cooperation with similar organisations or higher-level institutions in the countries and more widely, with the aim of advancing the role of the forums.

Approach and methodology

- Relying on an international cooperation framework to ensure national ownership.
- Treating the project as an open-ended process — building each step on the one before.
- Fostering local participation by engaging as many relevant stakeholders as possible from the very beginning.
- Identifying priorities locally — working with proposals made by local stakeholders based on information they have collected.
- Establishing permanent transboundary bodies to engage stakeholders in the joint planning of activities and maintaining cross-border dialogue.
- Rallying communities around a joint vision.
- Empowering local actors to become leaders of transboundary processes.
- Allowing stakeholders to take action and learn from their own results by providing direct support to pilot local initiatives.
- Promoting a positive regional image through transboundary promotional activities and by bringing communities together.
- Ensuring transparency through a systematic approach to communication.

From: Trans-Boundary Cooperation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources, REC, 2007
The Neretva Delta Forum in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Neretva Delta Forum in Metkovic, Croatia, have been legally established and officially registered. A mutual agreement has been signed on the close cooperation between the two NDFs.

What comes next?

- Technical assistance in the development of operational structures, a joint work plan and a financing strategy for both Neretva Delta Forums.
- Increasing the internal cohesion of the new forums and empowering their members with the skills necessary for improved participation. As an end-result, a well-trained and committed core team of Neretva Forum members will be established and a first work plan for the forums will be prepared through a participatory process.
- Support to the implementation of initial priority activities according to the joint Neretva Delta Forum work plan.

Skadar/Shkodra Lake

Seven years after the beginning of the project, the transboundary region of Skadar/Shkodra Lake was included on the list of priorities for both countries and had gained recognition at the international level. As a result of the efforts, strong commitment and participation of local stakeholders, a protected area was established on the Albanian side of the lake and the site was internationally recognised under the Ramsar Convention. The establishment of the Skadar/Shkodra Lake Forums in Albania and Montenegro is one of the most important achievements of the Skadar/Shkodra Lake component of the project. However, the challenge still remains to make and maintain further improvements in the long term.

Recent achievements include:

- The Declaration on the Skadar/Shkodra Lake, which was signed by members of the Skadar/Shkodra Lake Forums at their meeting on March 17, 2006 in Vranjina, Montenegro. In the declaration, forum members officially expressed their commitment to improving the protection of Skadar/Shkodra Lake and invited all relevant institutions and organisations from both countries to join them in achieving this goal.
- A Statement of Cooperation, which was signed by the mayors of the municipalities of Shkodra, Albania and Cetinje, Montenegro on April 27, 2006. The conservation and sustainable use of Skadar/Shkodra Lake and the protection of the environment in general were recognised as the main areas for joint work and cooperation between the two municipalities. The agreement identifies several other areas of possible collaboration, such as culture, sports, trade etc.
- Internal preparations through a study tour, focusing on gathering and analysing information about similar examples in other countries (i.e. other cross-border lakes or similar cross-border structures) such as Lake Ohrid (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia...
and Albania), Lake Peipsi (Estonia and Russia), Lake Constance (Switzerland, Germany and Austria), the Great Lakes (USA and Canada) etc. The result was the first draft of the document “Review of the Possibilities for Setting up a New Transboundary Institution for Skadar/Shkodra Lake.”

What comes next?

The operational start-up of the Skadar/Shkodra Lake Forums in Albania and Montenegro is envisaged through the establishment of a secretariat, the capacity building of staff, the development of a work programme, and promotional activities. For example, it is expected that the Montenegrin Skadar Lake Forum will function as an independent sustainable body and will be able efficiently to engage in the management and protection of Skadar/Shkodra Lake.

Activities proposed for the project and beyond include:

- Operational start-up of the Skadar/Shkodra Forums, including implementation of the work programme — for example, a study visit to a similar body, targeted trainings, pilot initiatives and working meetings concentrating on particular environmental issues and the further designing of the work programme.
- Promotion and communication efforts, such as the development of a simple promotion and communication plan (to create a new image); the designing, publication and distribution of promotional materials; and the organisation of a promotional event, the “Lake Day” (in June)/Ramsar Day (in February).

West Stara Planina

The Euroregion Stara Planina was established in June 2006 between the Serbian Association for the Development of the Stara Planina Region, and the Bulgarian Regional Association for Tourism Development – Northwest Balkans (in line with the requirements of the Council of Europe) as a cross-border body with a mandate to facilitate cross-border cooperation. In 2007 and 2008, the Euroregion Stara Planina was integrated into European structures through its acceptance as a full member of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), a partnership of more than 160 border regions across Europe. It has also benefited from lobbying at the European level and from the creation of policies for border regions. Partnerships were established with the Euroregion between Slovenia and Austria and with the AEBR management and members.

Following the decision of the management board of the Euroregion Stara Planina of May 18, 2007 to apply for membership of the AEBR, the application procedure was launched. The AEBR welcomed the establishment of the Euroregion Stara Planina and its willingness to apply for membership, and provided all the necessary documentation for the application procedure. The membership of Euroregion Stara Planina was finally accepted on June 29, 2007.

At the general assembly held in Knjazevac on December 21, 2007, a five-year development strategy was adopted in order to ensure institutional strengthening. It comprises three key objectives:

- Support to the development of the Stara Planina region according to five priorities (tourism, agriculture, infrastructure, environment, and culture and sports).
• Institutional strengthening and the development of the Euroregion Stara Planina (development of a logo and Internet site, which will be used in the future for regional branding).

• Expanding the image and influence of the organisation.

The publication Directions for developing sustainable agriculture in Serbian municipalities of West Stara Planina can be found on the REC’s website at www.rec.org/REC/Publications/agriculture_stara_planina.pdf, and the Strategy for the Development of the Euroregion Stara Planina can be found at www.rec.bg.

What comes next?

The Euroregion Stara Planina has sufficient mechanisms and a network of trained staff for the implementation of the agreed documents/activities. This is in line with its recognition within the EU and corresponds to the EC criteria for transboundary entities. The Euroregion Stara Planina is able to act as a partner in relevant EU financing mechanisms/instruments. The two associations from either side of the border are playing a key role within the Euroregion through their work with all stakeholders involved in rural development. They act as the main partner in the process of regional planning and development, as well as in marketing and branding the area.

Project activities in 2008 were directed towards maintaining the Euroregion’s website, organising a promotional event to present the project’s achievements, and implementing the pilot programmes and projects contained in the strategic plan for 2008 to 2012 (e.g. to design and establish a Stara Planina transboundary biosphere reserve).

It is expected that the Euroregion Stara Planina will become a key player in the sustainable development of the region, capable of acting as a partner to authorities of protected areas, national governments and other players.

In line with the priorities identified by the project and local stakeholders, additional funding will be requested to support the implementation of larger-scale local initiatives in the fields of tourism, agriculture, water management, environmental education and environmental investments. Additionally, the development of harmonised management approaches for newly established protected areas will be supported, while the project’s experiences will be transferred to other potential cross-border sites.

Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity Management in South Eastern Europe (UNEP)/ENVSEC Initiative

Starting date: 2005
Finishing date: 2009
Project budget: USD 432,633
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia
Lead agency: UNEP
Donors: Austria, Canada

Project background

The project focuses on countries and territories of SEE, some of which have been directly or indirectly involved in the ethnic conflicts that escalated in the past 10 and more years in the region. These war-torn nations, where ethnic tensions still exist, have also been subject to economic crises as a result of their isolation from the global economy and the impacts of the transition from socialist economic policies to free market economies. Simultaneously, there is the recognition that biodiversity loss poses an additional security risk and that technical cooperation in the field of natural resources management would contribute to the stability and prosperity of the region.

In this region, where borders cut across ecosystems and areas of natural value, achieving ecological coherence and the protection and sustainable management of natural resources, and preventing or mitigating environmental threats cannot be the task of one country alone. However, the necessary regional cooperation has been seriously hampered in the past by political and ethnic tensions.

Transboundary protected areas provide for an ecological continuum beyond virtual boundaries and corridors for numerous species migrating across state borders. One of the aims of the project is therefore to encourage and facilitate regional cooperation on nature protection issues, with a particular emphasis on supporting transboundary cooperation, establishing new protected areas in border regions and developing a network of protected mountainous areas in SEE, which could also serve as a tool to mitigate current tensions and re-establish friendly relations between nations and ethnic groups formerly involved in conflicts.

The project’s main objectives are:
• to carry out an assessment of the state of transboundary mountain ecosystems, the main threats and current management practices;
• to support ongoing initiatives in transboundary cooperation on biodiversity and the management of protected areas, and to facilitate collaborative and consultative processes (e.g. peace parks); and
• to support the establishment of networks of protected areas and build capacity on selected topics at the sub-regional level.

The target groups are ministries and politicians, scientists and research institutes, protected area managers and local authorities.

Achievements and progress in the period January 2005 to December 2008

Initially, a rapid regional assessment of the general state of the environment, as well as of managerial problems experienced by the administrative bodies responsible for the protected areas, was carried out based on country-specific reports. The regional report “Enhancing Transboundary Biodiversity Management in South Eastern Europe” provides an overview of the biological diversity (flora and fauna), protected area system, legal and policy framework, existing and planned institutional structures for nature protection, threats to biological diversity, examples of transboundary cooperation as well as socio-economic factors, and recommendations for actions to be taken in particular countries of the region and in the region as a whole.

In the course of the project, and in consultation with representatives of the countries participating in the ENVSEC-SEE workshop held in June 2006 in Podgorica (Montenegro), eight priority potential transboundary protected areas have been identified in the project region:  
• Sharr/Sara Mountains – Mount Korabi (Albania, Kosovo [under UNSCR 1244], the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
• Bjeshket e Nemuna – Prokletije Mountains (Albania, Kosovo [under UNSCR 1244], Montenegro)
• Orjen – Snjeznica (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro)
• Vlahina – Malesevska – Belasica (Bulgaria, Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
• Sutjeska – Durmitor – Tara (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro)
• West Stara Planina (Bulgaria, Serbia)
• Tara Mountains – Drina (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia)
• Osogovsky Planine – Ossogovo (Bulgaria, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

As a second step, innovative methodological guidance for designing transboundary protected areas was developed, which would allow the assessment of:
• the feasibility of establishing particular potential new transboundary protected areas identified in the course of the ENVSEC-SEE project; and
• the kind of external support that would be required for the success of each particular local initiative.

The methodology for establishing transboundary protected areas, originally developed under the ENVSEC-SEE project, may be applied worldwide.

In the current phase of the project, UNEP Vienna, in cooperation with experts from SEE countries, is preparing transboundary feasibility studies (gap and opportunity analyses) for the establishment of three planned transboundary protected areas:  
• Bjeshket e Nemuna – Prokletije Mountains
• Sharr/Sara Mountains – Mount Korabi
• An area including Durmitor National Park, the planned Bioc-Maglic-Volujak Regional Park, the Tara River region (in Montenegro), and Sutjeska National Park (in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The programme of work on protected areas under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recommends to “strengthen existing and establish new transboundary protected areas (TBPA) to enhance the conservation of biological diversity, implement the ecosystem approach, and improve international cooperation”, and in particular to “enter into dialogue to establish, where appropriate, new TBPA with adjacent parties and countries, bearing in mind the ecosystem approach and the importance of ecological networks”.

At a high-level event on the Dinaric Arc, held during the ninth Conference of the Parties (COP9) to the CBD (Bonn, Germany, May 29, 2008), representatives of the governments of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia, as parties to the CBD, signed a joint statement recognising that “a joint and coordinated effort is needed in efficient delivery of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas obligations. Transboundary cooperation between the Dinaric Arc countries in the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas, with the aim to create a well-
managed and ecologically representative protected area network, is the key to safeguarding the Dinaric Arc ecoregion’s exceptional natural and cultural values” and the “importance of regional cooperation to achieve transboundary sustainable management of the South Eastern European region, including the Adriatic Sea, Dinaric Alps and Sava River Basin.”

At the same time, the governments declared their national priorities in delivering on the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas in the Dinaric Arc, which are compatible with the focus of the project on enhancing transboundary biodiversity management in SEE. For example, Albania will work towards the establishment of a TBPA in the Prokletije Mountains; Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republika Srpska) will examine possibilities for transboundary cooperation between the Sutjeska National Park and the Durmitor National Park (Montenegro); and Montenegro will examine possibilities for the establishment of a TBPA including Durmitor National Park and Sutjeska National Park (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and will support the establishment of the Prokletije National Park.

The trilateral Bjeshket e Nemuna/Prokletije Mountains protected area could jointly cover over 100,000 hectares, thus constituting one of largest protected areas in this part of Europe. Additionally, the government of Serbia planned to designate the north western slopes of the neighbouring Mokra Gora mountain range as a protected landscape area.

The proposed transboundary protected area in Sara Planina/Sharr Mountains and the neighbouring Korab Massif, to be designated in cooperation between Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), may cover a total of over 200,000 hectares in all three countries and therefore become one of the largest European protected areas, similar in size to large national parks in Norway or Finland.

What comes next?

The transboundary feasibility studies for the first three proposed transboundary protected areas would indicate what kind of external support would be indispensable for the success of each particular local initiative, as well as which of the proposed new transboundary protected areas could become a potential success story, inspiring and motivating stakeholders.

Based on the above assessments, capacity-building programmes would have to be designed for each proposed protected area, and support projects prepared and funded.

Eco-bridge between Montenegro and Albania

Starting date: September 2007
Finishing date: June 2008
Project budget: EUR 15,000
Beneficiary countries: Albania and Montenegro
Donor: Embassy of the United States of America, Podgorica, Democracy Commission Small Grants Program

Project background

The project has enhanced cross-border cooperation between Montenegro and Albania over environmental protection issues. The purpose of the project was to build networks between secondary-school pupils and teachers from the two countries in order to raise their awareness of environmental protection, with a special emphasis on protected areas, that is, national parks and strict nature reserves (IUCN categories I and II).

The project was planned as an exchange programme between secondary-school pupils from Montenegro and Albania. The aim of the six-day eco-camp, organised in Montenegro, was to raise awareness of the valuable natural resources shared by the two countries (Skadar/Shkodra Lake and Bojana/Buna River), as well as to provide an opportunity to discuss possible joint actions to help improve the management of protected areas.

Achievements of the project

The eco-camp comprised field visits and educative and creative workshops. Fifteen pupils from secondary schools in Cetinje, Montenegro, and Shkodra, Albania, were selected to participate. Three teachers per school also attended the eco-camp, as well as a number of experts involved in environmental protection in the countries.

During the workshop “Learn so you can protect”, participants presented their own countries, with a special emphasis on environmental issues, for example protected areas, cross-border protected sites, the legal framework, institutions active in environmental protection etc. The presentation of other information about their countries helped to bring participants together and to overcome the barriers, including cultural barriers, between them.

Participants at the workshop “Curriculum and environment” explored the following questions: How are environmental topics incorporated within existing curricula in Montenegro and Albania? How are environmental topics treated within and outside school? How can EU experiences be compared to the experiences of SEE countries? How can things be improved? During the work-
shop. REC Country Office Albania presented the Green Pack, the REC-developed multimedia educational kit that was first implemented in Albanian schools. Pupils worked on developing partnerships at high-school level, providing the direction for future cooperation and exploring the possibilities for the inclusion of environmental topics in existing curricula in Montenegro.

The workshop “Overview of environmental institutions” involved visits by participants to institutions dealing with environmental protection in each of the countries (exploring how they function, whether they involve citizens in their activities, whether they cooperate with educational institutions etc.): republic institutes for nature protection, national parks or other protected areas, and natural history museums were visited in Montenegro; and in Albania participants met representatives of the regional environmental agency, the University of Shkodra, the Water Directorate, the Fishery Inspectorate and the Directorate for Food and Agriculture. Apart from governmental organisations, participants had a chance to meet environmental NGOs to find out about their cooperation with schools, volunteer programmes etc.

During the field visits, participants spent time in protected areas in each country (e.g. the Skadar Lake National Park, the Lovcen National Park and Bojana/Buna River. Following the visits, the art workshop “About nature in nature” gave participants an opportunity to present their personal impressions of these sites in an artistic way using materials collected during the visits. An exhibition of the work produced was organised at the end of the workshop.

Participants were taken to the Skadar Lake visitors’ centre in Vranjina, where they learned more about protected areas in Montenegro. They were accompanied by experts and biologists from the national park and the national park guards and were able to discuss the challenges that national park staff face in their everyday work. Special emphasis was given to cross-border issues (e.g. fishing).

An expert ornithologist took participants to the Ulcinj Salt Pan (a proposed Ramsar site); the Bojana/Buna River, which is protected on the Albanian side; Paratuk Island, an important bird colony; and the Albanian part of Skadar/Shkodra Lake. Participants also visited the Velipoja Reserve (a protected area on the Albanian side) and met representatives of various institutions involved in nature protection.

This first-hand experience, combined with workshops, improved participants’ knowledge of protected areas and helped them to think critically about environmental protection issues.

Cross-Border Cooperation through Environmental Investment and Planning

Starting date: December 2004
Finishing date: December 2007
Project budget: EUR 668,135
Beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Project background

The three-year project was designed to address specific gaps in knowledge and experience and shortcomings in cooperation among communities in the SEE region in relation to the preparation of environmental investments. It was implemented in three cross-border sites in SEE:

- Zvornik (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Mali Zvornik (Serbia)
- Debar (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and Peshkopia (Albania)
- Bileca (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Niksic (Montenegro)

The objective of the project was to assist in solving cross-border environmental problems in the SEE region through training, technical assistance and facilitated cooperation across national borders and stakeholder groups.

The project aimed to alleviate two of the most pressing and complex problems hindering environmental improvements in the SEE region:

- the lack of capacity among local environmental actors to identify, develop and prepare environmental investment projects for financing; and
- the lack of trust and initiative that thwarts cooperation across borders.

The project targeted local governments, utility experts and local consultants, who all have different roles in the investment preparation process but whose cooperation is essential in the design of high-quality and feasible investments.

The project developed and tested an innovative model for environmental planning and investment in a cross-border and multi-stakeholder context. It responded directly to the need to strengthen capacities for investment preparation and to improve dialogue and cooperation across borders. Activities were driven by the demands and needs
of the local communities and targeted one of the most common problems concerning environmental investments from the SEE region — the lack of projects with proven feasibility based upon the willingness of all affected stakeholders to support the project technically, politically and financially. As a regional effort, the project fostered the exchange of experiences among participants, the building of networks and contacts across borders, and the provision of impetus to future initiatives in cross-border areas.

Achievements of the project

The project combined capacity-building activities and investment preparation. Implementation was organised according to four major phases/tasks, related to the typical investment project cycle:

- project inception;
- project identification;
- project preparation;
- communication with financing sources and results dissemination.

The REC identified three priority cross-border environmental problems in the SEE region. At each site, the REC engaged a team of staff and experts to work with stakeholders in order to:

- define the scope and cause of the problem;
- develop and agree upon conceptual technical solutions;
- provide basic and in-depth training in all aspects of environmental investment preparation and financing;
- prepare feasibility studies for selected solutions;
- define and communicate the final investment projects to potential sources of financing and/or national authorities.

Through facilitated training and a series of workshops, local authority decision makers and relevant experts across borders developed the skills needed to identify and prepare environmental investment projects for financing. Importantly, the project was designed for implementation in areas where borders isolated populations. The workshops provided the first opportunity for cross-border communities to overcome lack of trust, establish a cooperative approach, and address common environmental problems through the preparation of investments.
Four feasibility studies were prepared by teams of local experts, trained and supervised by the REC. The investments comprised three components focusing on the protection of water resources — the improvement of water supply efficiency, the reduction of pollution caused by the discharge of wastewater, and institutional strengthening. The capacity of local authorities to identify, develop and prepare environmental investment projects was significantly improved as a result of the workshops and the training provided by the REC. Project beneficiaries were trained on the financing aspects of investments and viable financing options were identified for two of the investments. The Debar investment project was included in the national development plan of the country and is likely to receive funds under the EU Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession (ISPA). The Bileca wastewater treatment plant will receive financing under the regional World Bank/GEF project.

What comes next?

The shortage of well-developed viable environmental projects is a bottleneck in the development of environmental infrastructure in many towns and villages in cross-border areas of SEE, even when financing is available. Strengthening capacity in the area of project preparation

---

**Key outcomes**

- A group of approximately 40 key stakeholders and 12 local consultants from selected sites received training on: (1) project cycle management; (2) project identification and design using the logical framework approach; (3) investment project preparation (feasibility assessment); (4) project communication, and other concepts and topics related to the design of environmental infrastructure projects based on international standards.
- Groups of approximately 60 to 70 community stakeholders were given an opportunity to work together to solve common environmental problems.
- Four bankable feasibility studies were prepared according to international standards.
- Four project summary documents and short-term investment plans were prepared.
- Options for the financing of the environmental investments were pre-identified.
- A model for a participatory approach to environmental investment planning at local level was tested in three locations, providing valuable experience that can be replicated in the region.

**Benefits of the project for Zvornik municipality**

- Municipal staff and public utility experts who participated in the training are transferring the experience gained and lessons learned from this project to other areas of planning.
- The municipality used the knowledge acquired to prepare applications for five additional infrastructure projects submitted under competitive procedures. Among the proposed projects was the construction of a collector from Divic to Zvornik, and all the data and parameters presented were taken from the feasibility report.
- The experience gained during the project was used when an application to the Republika Srpska Development Fund was prepared for the construction of a sanitary landfill.
- The municipality benefited from the feasibility study prepared for the implementation of activities for a water supply system.
- The municipality will incorporate the investment components analysed in the feasibility study into the capital investment plan as priorities in the upcoming period.

From the presentation by Ms. Rosa Maksimovic of Zvornik municipality delivered at the SEE regional project financing workshop, Budva, Montenegro, 2007
therefore remains a priority for the region. Future technical assistance projects must take into consideration the concrete gaps facing key players as well as the constraints arising from the historical, political and development context of the region. These key players include municipal authorities, utilities and local consultants as the main target groups of future initiatives focusing on investment preparation at the local level.

The applied project methodology can be replicated in other transitional, development or post-conflict areas. The boosting of capacity for investment preparation should be accompanied by hands-on assistance and the preparation of investments through stakeholder involvement and dialogue. Special attention should be paid to the reform of utilities and the training of utility staff so that improvement measures are properly introduced. The achievement of capacity-building objectives will be facilitated if accompanied by tailor-made manuals, tools and guidelines for local players.

Cross-Border LEAPs: Environmental Planning for Peace and Stability

Starting date: December 2005
Finishing date: August 2008
Project budget: EUR 750,000
Beneficiary countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia
Donor: Ministry for Development Cooperation, the Netherlands

Project background

Most communities in the region face considerable difficulties due to lack of management, planning and communication skills in relation to newly acquired responsibilities. The situation is at its most critical in border areas, where ethnic and religious differences and centralised bureaucracies are obstacles to regional communication, cooperation and trust building. At the same time, several decades of serious neglect, combined with the recent armed conflict, have resulted in highly visible environmental pollution and serious ecosystem damage throughout the region.

Environmental problems have immediate impacts on quality of life. Their visibility makes them an effective means of galvanising authorities, institutions and citizens to take on new, more open and cooperative mechanisms for planning and running their communities. Local environmental action plans (LEAPs) have proved to be effective tools in assisting communities to undertake participatory environmental planning, and provide a solid basis for further coordinated action.

This project introduced the LEAP methodology to four communities in a cross-border region of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and guided these communities to prepare LEAPs in a coordinated manner, based on the REC’s 13 years of experience working with LEAPs throughout CEE.

The area selected for project implementation was the section of the Drina River basin that stretches across Serbia and the two entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina — the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

This area belongs to one of the most underdeveloped regions in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, where the rise in GDP per capita has been far smaller than in other, richer northern regions of the former Yugoslavia (Slovenia and Croatia). The development of communities in this region was essentially based around the location of new large-scale industries in the region regardless of local traditions, available labour, supplier businesses, raw materials and resources, and other important geographically specific factors.

Local environmental action plans

LEAPs provide a forum bringing together a diverse group of individuals who work together to agree on common priorities and actions to address environmental problems in their communities. The process involves assessing and ranking environmental problems, setting priorities and developing an action plan to address the main priorities — with broad public involvement. The result is a “living” operational document that can take a local community from a state of ongoing crisis management towards more strategic environmental protection management, even helping communities to move towards compliance with national and EU environmental standards.
The four communities were:

- **Bratunac**, a municipality in north eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina that spreads over 293 square kilometres, along the left bank of the Drina bordering with Serbia. It comprises 50 settlements and has a population of 19,522.

- **Rudo**, a municipality located in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina on the border with Serbia. It covers 344 square kilometres, comprises 62 settlements and has a population of approximately 11,000. Rudo is located in a mountainous area, on the lower reaches of the river Lim.

- **Ljubovija**, a town in western Serbia that covers an area of 356 square kilometres and is situated on the right bank of the Drina opposite the municipality of Bratunac in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has a population of approximately 18,000 with a relatively low population density of 52 persons per square kilometre.

- **Priboj**, located in the valley of the river Lim at an altitude of 385 metres. It covers 550 square kilometres and has a population of around 35,000 inhabitants.

**Achievements of the project**

The project has brought about much-needed change in community planning and environmental management in the four partner municipalities. It supported ideas and actions that assisted decision makers from two different countries to agree and implement identified priority actions.

- Four LEAPs were developed and adopted in the selected municipalities.
- Over 100 local decision makers, representatives of municipal administration bodies and other stakeholders received tailored training, guidance and hands-on experience in developing LEAPs in their communities.
- The partner municipalities and the REC invested over EUR 300,000 in priority environmental projects.

**Main priority actions implemented in the partner municipalities**

**Ljubovija**
- Communal waste management (installation of machine-operable solid waste containers).
- Urban planning and management (revitalisation of the central town park).

**Bratunac**
- Urban planning and management (revitalisation of the central town park and city beach).

**Rudo**
- Communal waste management (installation of large solid waste containers at selected sites).
- Planning and management of urban green areas (assessment of a project for the revitalisation of the central town park).
- Water treatment and supply (designing a project for installing a water supply and management system in the Sjeverin watershed area).

**Priboj**
- Communal waste management (installation of machine-operable solid waste containers).
- Urban planning and management and installation of remote-controlled system for water use in the “Vodostan” unit of the Bistrica hydro-power station.
The partner municipalities received guidance in implementing priority environmental investment projects in their communities through a transparent tendering process according to international standards.

Over 50 key experts from local authorities, public utilities and other institutions received targeted training on developing and financing environmental investment projects.

Four coordination workshops for key members of the partner communities were organised and facilitated by the REC team at key points in the LEAP process. These workshops gave each community the chance to present its work to the others, to share lessons and tips, and to present specific issues for coordination or follow-up.

The main outcome of the coordination workshops was the adoption of cross-border priority areas for further intervention.

### Cross-border priority areas for further intervention

#### Municipalities of Bratunac and Ljubovija

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified issue of cross-border relevance</th>
<th>Relevant actions to be taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Communal waste                            | • Initiatives on public awareness in all municipalities of the Drina River basin  
                                         | • Coordination activities in riverbank settlement  
                                         | • Clean-up activities |
| Water supply                               | • Sharing of experiences  
                                         | • Protection (information sharing) |
| Maintenance of green areas                 | • Maintenance of green areas in municipalities, including parking areas and streets |

#### Municipalities of Rudo and Priboj

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified issue of cross-border relevance</th>
<th>Relevant actions to be taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Communal waste                            | • Waste transportation from rural cross-border municipalities  
                                         | • Joint action to clean up illegal landfills  
                                         | • Maintenance of waste management roundtables  
                                         | • Environmental awareness campaigns |
| Water supply                               | • Expansion of water supply system for cross-border areas  
                                         | • Formation of a common expert team for water quality monitoring  
                                         | • Common development of projects |
| Maintenance of green areas                 | • Reclamation and maintenance of Lim and Lim tributary riverbanks  
                                         | • Maintenance of green areas along the regional road Priboj–Rudo  
                                         | • Common efforts in the maintenance of the Uvac leisure zone |
This resulted in a list of common problems and a list of jointly identified actions to address them. It became clear that the joint identification of areas of cooperation opens up the opportunity for the realisation of the process. In addition, representatives of the municipalities managed to overcome their individual differences to work together towards a joint cause. The list of identified cross-border issues will form the basis for the selection of cross-border actions in later phases of project implementation. It will also be used as one of the main background documents for a third cooperative workshop.

What comes next?

The project closed at the end of August 2008. The main lessons learned can be summarised as follows:

- Developing sound environmental plans in local communities in SEE demands strong commitment on the part of beneficiary municipalities and actors. Such commitment should be formalised in a cooperation agreement or similar document approved by the local administration.
- Weak capacities of local stakeholders should be strengthened through training and other forms of capacity building. This is crucial for developing successful environmental plans with local ownership.
- National associations of local authorities and other bodies with a similar portfolio play an important role in assisting communities in the region to work on local sustainability. These bodies serve as clearinghouses for relevant development-related information for local communities.
- Investments provided in the assistance programmes to local communities are of crucial importance. Providing financial support to pilot municipal environmental projects has been shown positively to affect the uptake of the planning methodology, and to enhance the commitment of local authorities and the readiness of local citizens to support such initiatives. The financing of pilot projects also gives clear proof that engaged planning methodology brings direct and concrete results and leverages local funds (in the form of in-kind and other contributions).
- Mainstreaming gender and equal participation/representation issues into the process proved to be an effective tool to enhance the participation of women and minorities (ethnic and other) in local initiatives. This resulted in heightened public support for the process and an increased sense of local ownership.
- Regional cooperation in the form of conferences proved to be an efficient means of sharing experiences among beneficiary municipalities and of disseminating project results.

Bilateral Arrangements for the Transboundary Management of Water Resources: The Timok River

Starting date: November 2007
Finishing date: December 2010
Project budget: USD 780,000
Beneficiary countries: Bulgaria and Serbia
Donors: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)

Project background

The REC, in cooperation with the UNECE and the Water Convention Secretariat, and through the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), launched a multi-year project seeking to facilitate a process of dialogue and cooperation between Serbia and Bulgaria on the Timok River. For many years, the Timok River basin has been subject to serious degradation and deforestation as a result of uncontrolled mining activities, which represents a serious threat to the livelihoods of people on both sides of the border and a source of pollution to the river Danube. Although an agreement was signed in 1958 between the governments of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria concerning water management issues, this cooperation was discontinued in 1982.

Achievements and progress in the period 2007 to December 2008

Wide consultations involving the REC and central authorities from Serbia and Bulgaria in order to initiate dialogue took place at the end of 2007 and beginning of 2008.

An environmental and risk assessment of the Timok River basin was carried out by local experts from Serbia and Bulgaria and was finalised after the first project meeting held on the Serbian side of the Timok River basin in June 2008. During this first meeting, which gathered stakeholders from national authorities and municipalities, water experts, NGOs and local users from both sides of the border, the possible establishment of a Timok forum to develop dialogue and identify priority areas of work
was discussed, as well as options for the joint management of the river. Serbia and Bulgaria confirmed their willingness to cooperate on the transboundary waters, with the aim of developing a bilateral agreement, and a working group was established to support the development of a bilateral agreement.

In addition, a project web page was created to serve as a platform for information about activities under the project. All documents related to the project meeting, as well as the environmental and risk assessment, have been made available online.

What comes next?

There was clear support for an open-ended forum comprising representatives from all concerned ministries (environment, water, agriculture, forestry, energy etc.), local authorities and inhabitants, academia, NGOs and business. The next meeting under the project took place in Vidin, Bulgaria in February 2009 and on this occasion the Timok River Forum was formally launched and discussions on future steps continued. In particular, the adoption of a joint statement by the participants of the forum showing commitment towards transboundary cooperation is hoped to serve as an incentive for the national governments of both counties and the donor community to further support the process.

More information can be found at the project web page at http://timok.rec.org.

Setting up Instruments for Sustainable Cleaning of Solid Waste in the Drina River Basin

Starting date: October 2004
Finishing date: November 2006
Project budget: EUR 209,930
Beneficiary countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

FUNDING PERIOD 2007-2009
Starting date: March 2007
Finishing date: September 2008
Project budget: EUR 220,910
Beneficiary countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

Project background

This project follows up on activities initiated under three other grants awarded to the REC by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: “Cross-Border Municipal Environmental Cooperation: the Drina River Basin”, awarded in December 2002; “Support for a solution to the problem of solid waste in Lake Perucac”, awarded in October 2003; and “Support to Cross-Border Cooperation in the Drina River Basin”, awarded in 2005.

The earlier projects aimed to identify and solicit external financing for a solution to the problem of solid waste flowing from the river Drina into Lake Perucac. The project aimed to provide a grant to support local communities for implementation of the jointly proposed solution (the provision of a water cleaner vessel and waste compactor), initiate long-term prevention of further waste accumulation and facilitate cross-border cooperation. All projects were facilitated and managed by the REC.

Similarly to other local communities across SEE, stakeholders from the Drina River basin needed further support to achieve transparency and efficiency in decision making, to increase public participation and to build civil society. In this respect, the project aimed to:

- complement, enhance and improve the currently applied technical solution to clean Lake Perucac;
- further support and strengthen the process of environmental cross-border cooperation in the Drina River basin.

The continuous activities aimed at improving environmental conditions in the cross-border region along the Drina River and its tributaries significantly changed the perspectives of local communities on the Lim and Drina rivers. In line with the local activities, national governments and relevant ministries joined in the initiatives to clean the river and its banks through intensified environmental cooperation.

Achievements of the project

The Drina River Committee (DRC) was established in April 2006 under task 1 of the project “Support to Cross-Border Cooperation in the Drina River Basin”. Representatives of 18 municipalities in the basin signed the declaration on founding the DRC in Bajina Basta.

All the signatories agreed on the initial responsibilities of the new cross-border body, which include:

- Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the technical solution to remove the waste (i.e. the operation of the water cleaner, the transfer of waste to the Bajina Basta landfill and its final disposal).
• Participation in designing the framework for grants that will support further clean-up actions and other environmental activities proposed by NGOs and associations in the Drina River basin.

• Participation in the selection of areas for further cooperation within planned thematic working groups and assistance to the REC in establishing them; advice on the scope of planned capacity-building activities and the proposal of priority areas for future environmental action planning.

• Discussion of the scope of future cooperation between the municipalities of Bajina Basta and Srebrenica regarding environmental protection.

• Discussion of other areas of common concern related to sustainable development in the Drina River basin that could be the subject of regional cross-border cooperation in the longer term.

Capacity building and preparing for action planning.
Following the establishment of the Drina River Committee, the REC carried out five trainings tailor-made to the specific needs of members. The trainings were aimed at preventing further pollution of the Drina River basin and at increasing the capacity of local stakeholders to continue and strengthen environmental cross-border cooperation in the longer term.

The first training, held in Zvornik municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was on project proposal writing, project management and financial reporting. It was attended by 30 NGO representatives from the Drina River basin as well as representatives from interested municipalities. The second training was held in Zlatibor, Serbia, and was aimed at introducing environmental protection and management at local level. The third training was held in Bjelasnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in July 2006 and covered the topic of waste management and recycling. Two additional trainings targeted the introduction of organic farming opportunities (October 2006, Kopaonik, Serbia), and the transfer of local environmental action planning methodology (November 2006). All the trainings were attended by representatives of more than half the municipalities in the region and each attracted between 25 and 30 participants.

Grants for the NGO community. The local NGO community was offered the opportunity to apply for grants with the goal of maintaining the multi-stakeholder character of activities in the Drina River basin and maintaining the interest of all parties involved in the process.

In the course of the two previous projects, local authorities (the municipality of Bajina Basta and the Tara National Park) already received funds for the purchase of cleaning equipment. However, the local NGO community did not receive any support for its initiatives. The proposed grant was therefore an attempt to preserve a balance between different groups of stakeholders.

The specific purpose of the task was to:

a) support and enhance the implementation of the technical solution to remove waste from Lake Perucac;

b) initiate the long-term prevention of further waste accumulation; and

c) facilitate cross-border cooperation.

The following technical assistance was provided by the project:

• reconstruction of the water cleaning vessel, increasing its capacities to 10 cubic meters of storage in one cleaning tour;

• installation of barriers in the Drina River for waste collection;

• distribution of waste bins to public utilities; involvement of local communities in various cleaning campaigns.

The water cleaning vessel was initially designed for surface plastic, glass and paper waste and had a capacity of two cubic meters per container. As a result of the continuous cleaning campaigns, the structure of the waste changed, becoming predominantly wood. The costs for the maintenance and operation of the water cleaning vessel were very high due to its limited capacity for this type of waste.

The owner of the water cleaning vessel, Tara National Park, which is responsible for operating and maintaining the boat, developed technical documentation for the reconstruction of the vessel. For each stage of the reconstruction, the REC and Tara National Park obtained three offers from interested companies. Due to limited resources and to the type of work, only local entrepreneurs showed an interest in taking part in the process.

Tara National Park monitored the implementation of the activities and kept the REC informed of progress. Following completion of the reconstruction, Tara National Park formally checked the quality and functionality of the new vessel and confirmed that the changes carried out were fully in compliance with the proposed plan for reconstruction.

The installation of barriers for waste collection in Lake Perucac was an additional measure aimed at increasing the efficiency of the campaigns to clean up sur-
face waste. The barriers were designed to trap floating waste and prevent the further pollution of the Drina River. In line with the overall plan for the removal, transportation and final disposal of the waste, developed by Tara National Park and the municipality of Bajina Basta, several seasonal mini-barriers were developed. These form a trap for waste based on wind direction and current. Most of the barriers were set in the Drina River gorge within the territory of the Tara National Park, which is also responsible for maintaining the barriers.

The procurement of waste bins to assist local communities along the Drina River in implementing cleaning campaigns was initially designed as an awareness-raising activity in order to try to attract the broader participation of the local population. It was also meant as an incentive for local authorities and public utilities to provide logistical support for cleaning campaigns organised by civil society organisations, schools, Tara National Park and other institutions in the region.

A total of 300 waste bins, with a capacity of 240 litres, were distributed to all 14 municipalities in the Drina River basin, and also to the Tara National Park. This activity was initiated by the municipality of Zvornik, which put together a project proposal for cleaning the Drina riverbanks on the territory of the municipality, based on the example of the "Rusken" project, implemented in Oslo, which was discussed during the second Drina River Committee meeting in Tara in 2006. All the other municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia subsequently joined the initiative to organise the cleaning of the Drina riverbanks.

Waste bins were supplied to municipal public utilities and to the Tara National Park, and each municipality signed a commitment to use the waste bins for maintain-
ing the riverbanks. The REC received formal letters of gratitude from the municipalities along the Drina River. This project targeted stakeholders in the Drina River basin and involved the main relevant central government institutions dealing with environment and water management issues (i.e. ministries dealing with environmental protection and water management in Serbia, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, local authorities, hydropower plants, the administration of the Tara National Park, local NGOs and associations, public and private enterprises, schools etc.) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.

The following activities were implemented to support environmental awareness raising:

• Audio and video clips were prepared featuring the “Clean River Anthem” based on the slogan “Protect our Drina”.

• Painting and poetry competitions were organised for primary-school pupils in all the municipalities in the Drina River basin. Symbolic prizes were awarded for the 25 best written submissions and an exhibition of the best work was organised during the Drina River Committee (DRC) meeting in Kolasin, Montenegro.

• An educational booklet “Our Drina” was published as a result of cross-border cooperation. Preparations were coordinated by the DRC administration office and the DRC Public Awareness working group approved the content of the booklet. The team of authors included representatives of all three countries. “Our Drina” contains information on the social and environmental aspects of the Drina River basin. Printed copies of the booklet were distributed to primary schools in the area through the DRC administration office.

• During the project implementation period, the DRC administration office, in cooperation with the DRC working groups (public awareness and waste management), the REC and local stakeholders produced nine bulletins for the dissemination of project-related information. Local media also disseminated information on main events and project milestones in relation to cross-border cooperation, the clearing of waste and the political process implemented by the national governments and the Drina River Committee.

• As far as possible the project supported significant public events, being visible at local and national level through printed materials (posters, leaflets, T-shirts) all bearing the slogan “Protect our Drina”.

What comes next?

This project continued support to the ongoing process of environmental cross-border cooperation between communities in the Drina River basin in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. Further facilitation of cross-border cooperation and assistance in cleaning the banks of the Drina is needed, building on the results of activities implemented since 2002.

NOTES

21 www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/Biodiversity/docs/transbound.pdf
22 For more information, see the section Civil Society Support and www.rec.org/REC/Programs/Greenpack
Priority Area 4
Reducing Environmental Health Threats and Loss of Biodiversity
The countries of SEE need to work together in order to reach a better understanding of the true economic value of ecosystem services and to offer economic tools that take proper account of this value. This is central to both economic and environmental management. Furthermore, urgent remedial action is essential because species loss and ecosystem degradation are inextricably linked to human well-being. Relevant national and international governmental organisations are working on the integration of biodiversity considerations in SEE policies, strategies and actions, aiming to ensure that available funds work in favour of rather than against biodiversity conservation.

Biodiversity loss is still taking place and many challenges are arising, including the rapid development of the tourism sector and increased consumption patterns. Today, projects promoting biodiversity protection and coastal conservation in the Kornati archipelago in Croatia and the protection of priority wetlands for bird migrations in the Dinaric Arc Ecoregion are being implemented using an inter-sectoral approach, involving stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds including tourism entrepreneurs, members of civil society and national authorities. This open dialogue is vital in the field of biodiversity, which cuts across many sectors from tourism to agriculture and transportation. In addition, the initiation of dialogue and the exchange of experiences across geographical regions and national borders provide an excellent opportunity to stem the loss of biodiversity.

Impact of Municipal Wastewater on the River Vrbas

Starting date: January 2006
Finishing date: June 2007
Project budget: EUR 135,500
Beneficiary country: Bosnia and Herzegovina
Donor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

Project background

Bosnia and Herzegovina is rich in water resources. The surface water in Bosnia and Herzegovina is, in general, of poor quality and bacteriologically unsafe due to extensive pollution from numerous sources. The main threats to the quality of water are the discharge of municipal or industrial wastewater directly into rivers or along riverbanks, and run-off from agricultural areas where pesticides and fertilisers are used. The quality of groundwater is generally considered to be good: the data show a few examples of groundwater contamination. The lack of reliable data on the quality of surface water and groundwater resources is, however, striking, and groundwater contamination may be more widespread than anticipated.

About half the population has access to public water-supply systems, mainly in urban areas. The rest use private wells, small village water-supply systems or local systems, which are not under national control. Water supply is mainly based on the use of groundwater (89 percent), while 10.2 percent comes from rivers and 0.8 percent from natural lakes and artificial reservoirs. The extracted water is of varying quality: some is drinkable without any treatment, but in other cases the quality is unacceptable. In many cases water treatment is insuffi-
cient: old and leaking pipelines also pollute water before it reaches consumers. The maintenance of water pipelines has been neglected for years. Some are 50 to 60 years old, and when serious leaks occur the pipes are often beyond repair. Damage to the infrastructure during the war, combined with insufficient maintenance and an inadequate regulatory framework, have led to difficulties in the water sector. The result is that water resources are exposed to pollution, the quality of drinking water is deteriorating steadily, and the flood control infrastructure throughout the country is damaged.

Achievements of the project

The main goal of the project was to define the impact of urban wastewater from the three urban areas located along the river Vrbas and to suggest ways in which communities might decrease negative impacts in the future. The project collected data on wastewater in the river through the systematic analysis of existing data and the sampling of water. This contributed to a comprehensive overview of the situation, taking into account data related to urban planning, demographic status, the economy within the micro-region, overall development plans etc. An updated and upgraded database was the starting point for the preparation of an activity plan, which aimed to suggest the next steps towards reducing negative impacts. The activity plan was offered to local stakeholders for their further elaboration and use. Special attention was given to possibilities for infrastructure investment and the publication “Impact of Municipal Wastewaters on the River Vrbas” was produced.

In summary, the project:

- Identified the main sources, quantity and quality of wastewater from three urban areas.
- Assessed the quality of water and wastewater in the river Vrbas in three pilot areas.
- Drafted a possible model for the development of sewerage systems.
- Proposed possible locations and a technological procedure for a wastewater treatment installation.
- Proposed guidelines for the development of future action plans, submitted to local authorities.
- Disseminated information and project results in order to raise public awareness of the impacts of municipal wastewater on the river Vrbas.
- Strengthened public involvement in the process of solving environmental problems.
- Assessed the applicability of the Water Framework Directive in the Vrbas River basin.

What comes next?

A possible solution for the development of sewerage system infrastructure and a wastewater treatment installation, along with guidelines for the development of an action plan, were delivered to local authorities of the municipalities of Bugojno, Jajce and Banja Luka, and the project results will form the basis for future investments in water quality improvement. The local authorities can
make use of these documents to ensure their own financial means or other financial resources to improve the sewer-age system infrastructure network and to develop waste-water treatment facilities.

The project was implemented in parallel with the current EC project “Water Quality Management at River Basin Level in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, which supports the water sector institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina in reaching good water status (as defined in the Water Framework Directive) through the introduction of water quality management principles according to EC practice. Good synergy between the two projects was ensured. The results of this project were taken into consideration by the EC-funded project.

Project background

With the aim of reinforcing the protection of water resources in Serbia, this EU-aided technical assistance project comprised a survey of the existing situation and institutional strengthening. It was prompted by the recognition that soil pollution has an impact on the quality of water and water resources. The overall objective was to ensure the protection of water resources, water quality and public health. Specific project objectives were to provide improved conditions for the remediation of historically polluted sites that pose a significant threat of pollution to the aquatic environment.

As a first step, an inventory of existing and abandoned hotspots and contaminated sites was prepared, in the form of a register of point and non-point sources of environmental contamination. This made possible an estimation of the pollution loads originating from these sources, and of the extent to which these loads might potentially enter critical aquifers and surface water systems.

The project focused on the existing site contamination of soil and groundwater, in particular in cases where there is a significant risk of the contamination spreading to nearby sensitive surface waters. Threats to the quality of water resources originating from municipal or industrial discharges or nutrient emissions from agriculture did not fall within the scope of this project.

In the context of this project, hotspots are defined as sites where historical or current activities — industry,
mining or waste disposal — have resulted in the contamination of the land. The project did not extend to entire industrial zones of several kilometres along riverbanks. However, individual hotspots within such industrial zones did fall within the scope of the project.

Achievements of the project

In the first, pre-assessment, phase an inventory of some 100 hotspots was established, comprising the highest-ranking sites in terms of potential to cause negative environmental impacts to water resources within the territory of Serbia. A methodology for identifying and ranking contaminated sites according to environmental risk was developed and applied.

According to the pre-assessment methodology, the following 10 sites in Serbia were selected for further investigation:
1. Baric — toluene spill from the Prva Iskra chemical industry plant
2. Baric — chemical contamination from the Prva Iskra chemical industry plant
3. Gornji Milonovac — copper tailings from the Rudnik mine
4. Novi Sad — oil refinery
5. Subotica — Azotara fertiliser factory
6. Sabac — zinc tailings from the Zorka–Obojena Metalurgija chemical complex
7. Prahovo — IPH fertiliser factory
8. Vinca — Belgrade municipal landfill
9. Kostolac — fly ash depot
10. Vreoci — Kolubara Prerada coal processing plant

The second phase comprised on-site investigations, and the focus was shifted to the 10 sites posing the greatest risk. On the basis of the pre-assessment report, field investigations were carried out and multi-criteria analysis (MCA) was used to rank the 10 sites.

As a result of the ranking, it was proposed that further investigation be carried out at the following three sites:
1. Baric — Prva Iskra chemical industry plant
2. Vinca — Belgrade municipal landfill
3. Sabac — zinc tailings from the Zorka–Obojena Metalurgija chemical complex

In the third phase of the project, a full baseline report was further elaborated for each selected site. Additional inputs were collected on the basis of interviews, archive research and field inspections (historic), and sources of pollution, waste material and discharges were identified. The baseline reports contain information necessary for a more detailed risk assessment.
The baseline report concerning the Prva Iskra chemical industry plant in Baric showed that the inhabitants of Baric, Obrenovac and Belgrade have been, are still, and/or will be affected by contamination from a spill of toluene that resulted from the 1999 NATO bombing. There is a significant threat to the environment that must be addressed. The site is difficult to investigate due to the presence of explosive materials, although operations at the site are currently at a low level. From the data collected, it appears that the area drains towards the Sava River.

Data concerning the Vinca landfill revealed that the area is well suited for landfilling, but that leachate must be dealt with. The river Danube provides a high degree of dilution, especially during periods of high water.

The site of the Zorka–Obojena Metalurgija chemical complex in Sabac was shown to drain towards the Sava River. The drainage of polluted groundwater and the previously uncontrolled discharge of industrial wastewater has high potential impacts on the quality of groundwater and surface waters (Sava River) as well as on human and ecological receptors.

In phase four of the project, a comprehensive environmental audit/feasibility study for each of the three selected sites was undertaken, including:
- the identification and characterisation, on an individual basis, of the major sources of environmental impact at each of the three sites;
- a quantified assessment of the impact, for example through modelling;
- an assessment of impacts on and/or risk to public health;
- an assessment of the socio-economic implications of the impact, for example through effects on neighbouring communities;
- consultation with statutory stakeholders and the public and reporting the results of this process.

The information contained in the audits indicated:
- those sites for which sufficient information (technological, environmental, financial) was available to allow immediate investment in an action plan;
- those sites that required further study and investigation before investment could be specified and undertaken, for example the preparation of detailed investigative monitoring, including cost estimates.

Feasibility study reports were prepared for each of the three sites detailing the results of the environmental audits and the remediation options for further consideration. During the preparation of the reports, results were used from site visits, field investigations and interviews with stakeholders.

Presentations were given at each of the three sites, for
stakeholders and for the general public. The valuable comments and suggestions made during these presentations were incorporated in the reports and taken forward into phase five of the project. In this phase, detailed action plans for the remediation of each site were compiled, taking into account technical (reliability of the planned remedial measures), economic (cost/benefit), environmental and social (use of local human resources to implement the remedial measures) concerns.

The plans are practical and realistic and include a ranking of cost-effective actions and investment priorities, in the form of a priority investment plan with detailed budgets.

**What comes next?**

A number of meetings were held to discuss the results of the project and to reach common understanding of the follow-up steps. The Directorate for Water in Serbia has expressed its interest in obtaining the analytical results of the field investigations and reports and in organising preparatory meetings to learn more about the project results and the remediation measures proposed for their site. In addition, officials have stated their readiness to endorse this project as a first step to cleaning up the area, that is, to improving the current state of the environment.

**Preparation of Project Documentation for the Construction of Sewerage Systems and Wastewater Treatment Plants**

**Starting date:** April 2006  
**Finishing date:** December 2007  
**Project budget:** EUR 141,287  
**Beneficiary countries:** The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia  
**Donor:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

**Project background**

The municipality of Saraj is one of the municipalities that make up the city of Skopje. It is a small to medium-sized rural municipality in the west of the city, covering approximately 124 square kilometres. It has a population density of 146 inhabitants per square kilometre and comprises 24 settlements with a total of 35,408 inhabitants.

The area is abundant in natural resources. The municipality of Saraj has potential for the development of tourism, based on the stunning Treska river canyon and the river’s suitability for kayaking. With the rivers Treska and Vardar, and the Rasce spring that supplies the city of Skopje with water, the municipality is one of the richest in the country in terms of high-quality water resources. In the long term, the beneficiaries of the project activities will be the local population in the seven villages of the municipality of Saraj, totalling around 10,000 people.

The local government unit of the municipality of Saraj is a direct beneficiary of the project. It was directly included in the project implementation by signing a cooperation agreement with the REC’s Macedonian country office, appointing high-level representatives and professional staff from the local government unit. Representatives of public services in the urban, waste and water sectors were also appointed to provide communication and technical support to all project partners. A local committee established to enable the participation of the main interest groups included municipal officials, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MEPP), public enterprises from Skopje, and representatives of neighbouring communities.

The MEPP, as a national authority assigned responsibility for overseeing approximation with EU environmental directives (in particular the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive), took part in all the planned activities. The MEPP representative took an active part in providing background information for the process of developing the feasibility study.

In order to reduce concentrations of pollutants to permitted levels (meeting environmental standards concerning the quality of potable water and wastewater discharges into recipient water bodies), the project aimed to establish improved water management. The overall project objective was to upgrade the municipal wastewater infrastructure and to contribute towards upgrading the communal services provided to local communities. In addition, the project aimed to contribute towards reducing the degradation of river water quality resulting from discharges of untreated waste in the rivers Treska and Vardar, as part of the efforts to meet the compliance requirements of Council Directive 91/271/EEC.

The specific project objectives were:

- To develop a long-term strategy and implementation plan for the wastewater (collection and treatment) system in the municipality of Saraj.
- To select the most suitable technical option for wastewater collection and treatment in the municipality of Saraj.
- To address the financing, investment and operation of the planned infrastructure in line with the polluter pays principle.
• To define the most feasible institutional model for water supply and wastewater treatment management.

Achievements of the project

The feasibility study was developed in the period February to November 2007. It comprised four main types of analysis:

• Technical analysis with a proposed short- and long-term strategy for the development of wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure.
• Development of the institutional framework and recommendations for the improvement of the operational efficiency of the future operator.
• Assessment of the financial performance of the “Saraj” public enterprise, including a project financial analysis and draft investment plan.
• Environmental impact assessment.

After finalising the feasibility study, the design of the wastewater collection and treatment plant was developed in the period August to December 2007. Field investigations were carried out in combination with desk analyses. A number of technical, institutional and financial alternatives were considered. These alternatives were subject to approval by project stakeholders. A number of meetings were held in order to reflect the needs of particular landowners in the designs. Also, various land-use conflicts were resolved in communication with project stakeholders.

What comes next?

The main project objectives were achieved and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning provided financial support to start the first phase of the construction work. This is a very good indicator of success. The construction of the sewerage system and wastewater treatment plant in the village of Grce started in spring 2009.

However, some problems will remain after the project, related to the weak capacities of the public enterprise “Saraj” to operate the newly built infrastructure. The public enterprise does not possess the technical and human resources necessary to operate either the existing, or the new, sanitation infrastructure that is planned or currently under construction. Due to the lack of any sound charging policy in the municipality of Saraj, operation costs cannot be recovered for either the existing or the planned sewerage system. An institutional model for cooperation between the communal enterprises should be designed and agreed with the project beneficiary. The municipality of Saraj must assign an operator to the existing and planned wastewater infrastructure. The grad-
ual transfer of responsibilities for wastewater services to the municipality of Saraj should be followed by agreements between the councils of the city of Skopje and the municipality of Saraj.

A number of follow-up measures are therefore recommended:

• Facilitation of relations between the city of Skopje, the municipality of Saraj, and the public enterprises “Vodovod i kanalizacija” and “Saraj”.
• Observations of the implementation of the proposed short-term investment plan (STIP) and institutional measures, starting with the selection of a possible communal operator.
• Support for the municipality to provide finance and donors, at least for the STIP.
• The implementation of the long-term investment plan (LTIP) will depend on available resources for financing infrastructure projects in the country, but the municipality will also need support for the LTIP.
• Depending on the availability of funds, the feasibility study should be adjusted according to the specific requirements of potential donors. In addition, if the
delay between the development of the feasibility study and the construction of the infrastructure is too long (e.g. three years), a complete revision of the study might be needed. It is therefore strongly recommended to assist the municipality in negotiations with respective funding sources in order to secure funds for the implementation of the project in the near future.

Such a project may be initiated with a bilateral donor, or may be funded through technical assistance once the financing for the infrastructure is made available, possibly through the IPA or IFI.

Healthcare Waste Training System in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Starting date: March 2007
Finishing date: March 2008
Project budget: EUR 51,706
Beneficiary country: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donor: Defra, UK – Environment for Europe Fund

Project background

Inadequate handling of healthcare waste may have serious consequences in terms of both public health and the environment. The aim of the project was to develop the capacity of the healthcare sector for the effective fulfilment of obligations that are delegated through the new manual for the handling of healthcare waste, prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and the Ministry of Health, and to see in practice the results of implementing the new manual through a pilot project in one hospital. It was planned to monitor the results and data from the waste management system over the six months following the training and to summarise the lessons learnt.

Achievements of the project

A training programme and materials for the new manual for handling healthcare waste of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and the Ministry of Health were prepared and delivered.

Three trainings were organised for medical staff from the larger state hospitals, employees directly responsible for healthcare waste management, and participants from the regional branches of the Republic Institute for Health Protection. In total, more than 130 participants from 90 hospitals were invited, not including participants from the state inspectorate. The number of participants exceeded all expectations, and the training was very well received. It was perceived as greatly needed, and many of the recommendations were for follow-up with wider trainings. The majority of the participants were head nurses, with the idea that, following the training, the head nurses should then transfer the knowledge acquired to the staff under their responsibility, taking into account the high risk of contamination arising from the extremely high number of accidents, especially concerning junior staff in hospitals. The training curriculum included both theoretical and practical components.

A gap analysis was prepared in the framework of the project. Including a review of the legal background and existing situation in the healthcare sector, the report comprises a detailed analysis of the current situation in terms

Main results of the project

- Training for healthcare sector representatives in the effective implementation of the new manual.
- Increased capacities of healthcare sector representatives in specific areas of health and environmental protection.
- Improved knowledge among healthcare sector representatives of new healthcare waste management trends and techniques.
- Increased awareness on the part of healthcare institutions of the hazards of medical waste.
- Increased synergy between the beneficiaries — the Ministry of the Environment and Physical Planning, the Ministry of Health, the Republic Institute for Health Protection and communal enterprises for waste management — allowing them to work together, to gather data on waste streams, to compare results and information and to determine the most appropriate method of waste treatment.
of healthcare waste management, an overview of the reporting obligations of healthcare institutions, weaknesses and gaps, and recommendations for improvement.

**What comes next?**

The project was evaluated as excellent by beneficiaries and participants in the trainings. All participants stressed that the trainings were very helpful and greatly needed, especially in the absence of guidelines on compliance with the regulations in force. Medical staff were trained in how to handle medical waste, to minimise the risk of self-injury and to satisfy the related regulations. Hospital employees learned how to comply with waste regulations, and participants from the regional branches of the Republic Institute for Health Protection learned how to recognise so-called hotspots in hospitals and how to minimise the risk of infection. Following the trainings it was the task of head nurses to transfer the knowledge to the staff for whom they are responsible. This depends to a great extent on the skills of the trainees, thus there were recommendations to organise further trainings covering medical staff not targeted within this project.

Future needs for training in this sector are very high because each healthcare institution will need to appoint a waste manager who has passed a state exam and obtained a licence for the position.

**Protection of Priority Wetlands for Bird Migrations in the Dinaric Arc Ecoregion — “Sharing Waters”**

- **Starting date:** February 2007
- **Finishing date:** January 2010
- **Project budget:** EUR 41,300
- **Beneficiary country:** Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Donor:** World Wide Fund for Nature Mediterranean Programme Office (WWF MedPO)

**Project background**

REC Country Office Bosnia and Herzegovina and the World Wide Fund for Nature Mediterranean Programme Office (WWF MedPO) signed a contract for the implementation of this project in the Neretva River basin at the beginning of 2007. The aim of the project is to achieve greater success in preserving priority wetlands in the Dinaric Arc region by addressing site preservation in connection with river basin management. The project goal is to achieve a stable quantity of water in the marshes of the lower Neretva valley by building the capacity of civil society to minimise the impact of existing and future infrastructure systems in the Neretva basin. Alternative options to future and existing hydropower dams will be proposed to decision makers. A further goal is to obtain the support of local communities, research institutions and other relevant stakeholders in opposition to the unsustainable development of water infrastructure in the upper Neretva River basin. The capacity of local NGOs will be built for running communication and advocacy campaigns in the basin.

**Achievements and progress in the period February 2007 to December 2008**

The project aims to:

- set up solutions that ensure the quality and quantity of water provided to the lower catchment area of the Neretva and Trebišnjica river basins, meeting the needs of water users;
- ensure that the functions of the Hutovo blato nature reserve are maintained, in particular water table recharge and purification, as well as salinisation prevention.

These objectives will be reached as a result of active collaboration with decision makers at national and local levels, dam developers and local users.

The project approach is integrated river basin management, which relies on the following four main pillars:

1. To strengthen civil society organisations so that their interests and opinions are taken into account in decision-making processes in terms of water management.
2. To develop studies and research that evaluate the current water situation in relation to dam operations and water releases, and that provide alternatives and/or solutions to dam operations that result in harmful impacts.
3. To partner with key sectors involved in water management to find feasible and acceptable solutions for dam operations and the mitigation of their impacts.
4. To raise awareness among local populations and decision-making authorities of the results of studies/research and to promote the principles of integrated river basin management as the only long-term water resources solution.
What comes next?

All the necessary preparations for the start of the work on identifying the measures and actions that will secure water quantity and quality — that is, environmental flows that will safeguard biodiversity in the Hutovo blato nature park — have been finalised. Terms of reference have been developed for reports on ornithology, ichthyology, flora, hydrology and hydrogeology. Experts have been identified and contracts signed for the delivery of reports in the relevant scientific fields. An information technology expert was added to the team in order to support the reports with GIS maps. All key partners have been involved from the very beginning in the project. The project partners played a big role in collecting data on hydrology and biodiversity in Hutovo blato. The framework of the study development was agreed among the project team. The most appropriate framework that can be applied in the case of Hutovo blato is the framework developed by the conservation organisation The Nature Conservancy for the project “Developing and Implementing Ecosystem Flow Recommendations for the Savannah River”, which is presented in box XX.

With regard to this scheme, the development of the study is currently at step 2 and preparing for step 3 — Flow Recommendation Workshop. Draft reports have been completed by the experts.

Besides the development of the study, the project aims to create and strengthen civil society organisations to act and promote nature protection in the Neretva and Trebisnjica basins. A civil society organisation was created in the form of a network of local environmental NGOs, under the name “Protect the river – Protect life”. The net-

Indicator species

Key species and habitats (conservation targets) have been selected to represent Neretva and Trebisnjica ecosystems. They will be used as indicators in relation to the protection and conservation status of the basin as a whole.

- Marbled trout (Salmo marmoratus), indicative of the fast-flowing waters of the catchments and of good connectivity in the river.
- Soft-mouthed trout (Salmothymus obtusirostris oxyrhynchus), indicative of a healthy and natural water fluctuation regime.
- The Hutovo blato nature park, which is the hydrological heart of the basin.
work of 16 local NGOs agreed on the objectives of their mutual work, the scope of the work and their operational structure in the form of statutes. The idea of Projecte Rius, which began in 1997 in Catalonia, was shared and embraced by the member NGOs at the group meeting. The main objective of the project is to draw people closer to rivers and to raise their awareness about the protection of rivers by monitoring local rivers and collecting data on hydro-morphology, analysing the chemical parameters of waters, and carrying out a biological survey of a certain stretch of river. It has become a big initiative in Spain, involving over 4,000 volunteers. The adaptation of Projecte Rius methodologies to local conditions and the first field research will be carried out by the environmental group with additional financial support from the donor. Recently implemented activities include the launching of a promotional campaign devoted to World Water Day on March 22, 2009; organising Hutovo blato "nature park days" in May 2009; and organising the Neretva Cleaning Day in June 2009.

Preparation of a Study on the Natural Values of the Ezerani Nature Reserve on Lake Prespa

Starting date: April 2008
Finishing date: December 2008
Project budget: EUR 9,010
Beneficiary country: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Donor: UNDP

Project background

The main goal of the socio-economic assessment and research is to identify the existing interaction between the local population and the Ezerani Nature Reserve in terms of highlighting the income-generating activities that may be in conflict with the protection regimes to be established based on the study.

The following (combinations of) economic activities were taken into account:

Type I: hunting, forestry and fishing
Type II: farming, forestry and tourism
Type III: tourism and fishing
Type IV: non-traditional activities (handcrafts, eco-tourism etc.)
Type V: transportation
Type VI: industry

Analyses were carried out on current land-use patterns and practices. Statistical information was collected and analysed concerning the demographic and socio-economic situation in 10 villages within and around the boundaries of the protected area. Questionnaires were developed for households and municipal authorities and community leaders.

The desk survey comprised the collection of the following data:

- demographic statistical data (data on population and a forecast of future population growth, migrations, gender issues, education, employment and labour contingencies);
- living standards, housing and urbanisation (public services — education, public health, sport and recreation, water supply, wastewater and solid waste management);
- structure of economic activities;
- average disposable household incomes.
These were compared with data collected on the spot throughout the survey. It was carried out in summer 2008 in 10 villages encompassing 63 households, which represents over 15 percent of the population.

From the survey results, it was concluded that it is too early for the local population to take over a significant role in the protection of the Ezerani Nature Reserve (ENR). Without carefully designed compensation measures (including various incentives/penalty schemes), there is no chance of changing the behaviour that is jeopardising the present and future protection regimes in the area. Preliminary measures have been designed; however, they need to be discussed with various stakeholders in the future.

The responsiveness of the population to changes made towards implementing the envisaged protection regimes was assessed, along with problems faced by the local population, which were mapped out as a base for defining suitable compensation measures.

Finally, awareness of the importance of the protected area and the willingness of citizens to participate in this project were estimated. The level of both awareness and willingness to become involved in the activities that are being initiated and promoted at central level (for example the establishment of a protected area, which is the task of the Ministry of Environment) was rather low. However, it became clear that if members of the local population are sufficiently involved in the definition of
ENR borders and protection regimes, if the compensation measures and penalties are consistently applied, and if the local and national authorities are sufficiently involved through the provision of either human or financial resources to guide the ENR protection process, feedback from citizens will improve.

A workshop with the main stakeholders was held in April 2009. The main objective was to disseminate the results of the study, and the socio-economic analyses in particular, with the aim of obtaining feedback from the local population.

What comes next?

A technical task team (TTT) was appointed for the collection, assessment and evaluation of national information in support of the transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) and the development of a strategic action programme (SAP) in the Prespa Lake basin. More specifically, in November 2008 the REC’s Macedonian country office, in cooperation with the Albanian country office, was appointed by the UNDP/GEF trilateral project to carry out data collection and assessment in order to develop transboundary diagnostic analyses of the major stresses on the ecosystem in the three countries sharing Lake Prespa. National workshops took place in 2009 with the aim of consulting with national stakeholders on the most important impacts on the ecosystem of the Prespa basin as well as their causes and sources. National reports have to be submitted in 2009.

In the next stages, a number of stakeholder meetings will be carried out in order to disseminate the results of the transboundary diagnostic analyses and to develop the environmental quality objectives as well as the strategic action programme along with cost outlines of the proposed measures.
Increased Biodiversity Protection and Coastal Conservation in Kornati Archipelago, Croatia

Starting date: January 2007
Finishing date: May 2008
Project budget: EUR 131,056 (REC budget: EUR 12,010)
Beneficiary country: Croatia
Donor: Wageningen University and Research Centre (BBI-MATRA Programme)

Project background

The Kornati National Park comprises 89 islands, islets and reefs with a total surface area of 223.8 square kilometres. The other area of the Kornati archipelago, the so-called Upper Kornati (the Zut and Sit island groups), is categorised as a protected landscape and is under the jurisdiction of the County Protected Areas Authority. The Kornati archipelago has a rich biodiversity and is especially important as a habitat for breeding and migrating birds as well as for endangered marine wildlife. Several species fall under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive, thus Croatia will have to designate special protected areas for them. It is likely that the Kornati archipelago will become a Natura 2000 site during and after Croatia's EU accession. As a result, biodiversity and habitat protection in the archipelago should be accorded the priority they deserve.

Unfortunately, biodiversity in the Kornati archipelago is increasingly under pressure from tourism, including yachting, organised boat tours and “Robinson Crusoe” tourism. The number of visitors has significantly increased since the war in the early 1990s and exceeds pre-war figures. The economic structure of the region is built on tourism, agriculture and fishing. At the same time, the level of protection in the Kornati archipelago does not match the increased biodiversity needs and standards, especially in the light of Croatia's hopes for EU accession. Environmental civil society has not developed sufficiently quickly and is not in a position to take action against economic exploitation of the archipelago.

Besides the economic pressure for rapid developments in tourism, an important reason for the unsustainable growth of the tourism sector in the national park is the lack of an appropriate, well-coordinated, multi-stakeholder policy-making and policy implementation system. Responsibility for the Kornati archipelago is shared between two authorities, both of which face limited capacity and limited political power to enforce a code of conduct developed for the archipelago. In 2003, a spatial plan was drawn up for the archipelago but enforcement has proved rather complicated, especially because most of the land surface in the national park and protected landscape is privately owned. It is therefore crucial to come to a common understanding and agreement with the owners and tourism entrepreneurs in the archipelago about the need for biodiversity and habitat protection. The project tackled the following problems:

- The limited capacity and skills of the Kornati archipelago protection authorities in terms of initiating and leading multi-stakeholder policy making.
- A lack of understanding of the consequences of EU approximation among the protection authorities, but also among local authorities and landowners in the archipelago.
- A young civil society that needs capacity building and coaching in their aim to protect the Kornati archipelago through the positive perspective of sustainable tourism.
- A lack of awareness and understanding among tourism entrepreneurs, local authorities, protection authorities and even NGOs of the long-term benefits of well-planned sustainable tourism for the Kornati archipelago.

Achievements of the project

The project contributed to halting the loss of biodiversity in Croatia's coastal and island zones that are heavily threatened by the development of (mass) tourism. The main beneficiaries of the project were the protection authorities, including staff of the national park authorities, and nature and environmental protection staff at the local and regional administrations adjacent to the Kornati archipelago. Also included were the local environmental and nature protection NGOs and institutes, the private sector, the general public and visitors to the archipelago.

1. The capacity and position of local protection authorities and of biodiversity protection NGOs was strengthened through a series of multi-stakeholder capacity-building workshops, featuring nature conservation topics relevant to the area — the preservation of marine mammals; nature protection legislation and its implementation in Kornati; and fundraising for nature protection.
2. The protection authorities took the lead in proposing changes to economic development policies in order to facilitate better biodiversity protection and coastal...
conservation. This was carried out through a series of stakeholder interviews, followed by a roundtable discussion and the drafting of a strategic action plan for biodiversity protection, which was adopted by all relevant local and regional stakeholders and presented to relevant national authorities.

3. Awareness-raising activities focused on the need for the active preservation of biodiversity in the Kornati archipelago and included promotional material that was widely distributed among the public and visitors to the newly opened Island Sustainability Centre in Murter. Media attention was generated through campaigns to clean up the seabed at all anchoring locations in the Kornati archipelago, in which a group of 35 volunteer divers (students, citizens, NGOs) took part at the end of the 2007 tourism season. In addition to clearing the seabed, the divers monitored and verified the prevalence of *Posidonia oceanica* and *Caulerpa taxifolia*. The seagrass *Posidonia oceanica* is given special protection under European directives, while *Caulerpa taxifolia* is a highly invasive species that can rapidly destabilise marine flora once established.

**What comes next?**

- After the clean-up activities organised under the project, the national park authority continues annual clean-up campaigns in cooperation with local divers’ organisations and NGOs.
- Lobbying is in progress for the implementation of the strategic action plan for Kornati biodiversity on local and regional level.
- Opportunities will be explored for regular cooperation between protected area authorities and NGOs. With additional education and training, interested NGOs involved in nature protection could be used for more effective research (mapping, inventorying and monitoring) in protected areas.
REReP Task Force and Secretariat
The REReP Task Force comprised representatives of the ministries of environment of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro, Serbia and Romania, with observers from donor countries, international organisations, institutions and NGOs. After joining the EU, Bulgaria and Romania changed their status within REReP. The Task Force for the implementation of REReP, which was established upon the endorsement of the programme, has made essential contributions to the success of REReP by providing regular country reports on the progress achieved, discussing existing problems and potential solutions; and offering continuous guidance for the ongoing activities.

As decided at the ministerial meeting in Skopje in 2000, at which REReP was launched, the REC was appointed to serve as secretariat of the programme’s Task Force. The responsibilities of the REReP Secretariat included facilitating donor communication between all REReP stakeholders — especially through the preparation and organisation of Task Force meetings — and the dissemination of information concerning REReP implementation. Dissemination was carried out by the Secretariat directly via electronic means such as mailing lists, a web page, the electronic REReP Record newsletter; regular secretariat reports; three REReP Highlights publications; leaflets; as well as Green Horizon, the quarterly magazine of the REC. Using these tools, the secretariat assisted in coordinating donor support and in assessing REReP priorities.

The programme aimed to help SEE countries draw closer to EU membership, in particular by providing myriad means of assistance to SEE countries in meeting their obligations under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA). Task Force meetings served as indispensable reference points in the overall process.

The Task Force was REReP’s decision-making body. The Secretariat coordinated the implementation of decisions between Task Force meetings, assisting countries in the preparation of new projects and in fundraising. It also acted as an implementing agency for specific projects in the region. While monitoring the progress of REReP implementation, the Secretariat was in continuous contact with Task Force members, donors and implementing agencies. The REReP Task Force operated in a spirit of partnership, with coherent and complementary efforts from each stakeholder, while making the best use of resources.

A total amount of EUR 1,442,367 was provided for the functioning of the REReP Secretariat during the lifetime of REReP (2000 to 2009) — more specifically EUR 946,000 from the European Commission; EUR 220,362 from Norway; EUR 136,000 from the Netherlands; EUR 90,000 from Italy; and EUR 50,000 from Germany.

From the launch of REReP, the Secretariat organised:

- 12 regional Task Force meetings, including one extraordinary meeting, and coordinated the implementation of the meetings’ decisions;
- one SEE ministerial meeting in Skopje in October 2003;
- two meetings to promote SEE cross-border cooperation — in Belgrade in May 2004, and in Milocer in March 2005; and
- two events on common priority topics agreed by the countries — a regional meeting on climate change and energy in Brussels in May 2008; and a regional meeting towards Natura 2000 in SEE in Sarajevo in May 2009.

The REReP Secretariat also monitored project implementation in the region and presented brief summaries of ongoing projects in the form of a secretariat report delivered at each REReP Task Force meeting. The countries of SEE became the effective owners of REReP priority programmes after the shift in responsibility for reporting on progress achieved from the implementing agencies to the countries represented at Task Force meetings. This resulted in a broader acknowledgement of REReP’s results and added to the responsibilities of those countries towards the national and international environmental community.
Information about bilateral and multilateral assistance in the region was provided by the Secretariat in order to avoid the duplication of efforts, as well as to ensure synergy in terms of project results. REReP has proved to be a successful mechanism for coordinating donor assistance to the priority projects of regional assistance and for encouraging regional cooperation on environmental issues.

In one of the independent external reviews of REReP carried out for the European Commission (performed in 2004 by Carl Bro Global Environmental Consortium), it was concluded that the REReP coordinating mechanism enabled some donors to begin financing projects in the region much earlier than would otherwise have been possible, and led to increased attention being paid by international financing institutions to environmental investment projects in SEE. While evaluating the REC’s role as REReP Secretariat, the same external review concluded that it is “considered appropriate and necessary, and the strong coordination that (the REC) has provided is appreciated throughout the region.” The report adds that “the strong local base provided by the REC country offices has been especially valuable.”

Conclusions of the REReP Regional Meeting on Climate Change and Energy in SEE

The following was agreed during a brainstorming session at a meeting held in May 2008 in Brussels:

**SEE general needs in climate and energy**
- Better coordination with existing platforms and initiatives over cross-cutting issues
- Institutional strengthening, growing differentiation within SEE, common challenges in terms of data collection and reporting, development and implementation of relevant strategies and measures
- Renewable energy
- Energy efficiency
- Transport sector — cross-border cooperation
- Assessment of the possibility of establishing and implementing regional ETS

**EE energy and climate change priorities on national and regional level**
- Strengthen dialogue between the EC and candidate and potential candidate key policy makers in SEE as to the post-Kyoto climate change regime
- Address the problem of lack of data on the impacts of climate change in SEE (e.g. vulnerability assessment including economic impacts). Guidelines for preparing adaptation strategies (regional SEE action plan with priority adaptation measures)
- Exchange SEE experiences and best practices on GHG inventories. Further capacity building on accounting/monitoring/reporting, ensuring sustainability of GHG inventory preparation
- Develop regional climate change framework action plan for SEE with priority adaptation measures27
- Exchange regional climate change–related experiences and promote networking
- Decide on institutional, legislative and technical measures as well as capacity building for the establishment of ETS in SEE countries28
- Introduce “learning by doing” pilot projects for ETS
- Prepare manual on climate change process and international negotiations for SEE decision makers
- Assess the economic impact of mitigation measures
- Enhance national capacities in SEE for early warning and response systems in SEE
- Raise awareness of various stakeholder groups and encourage their active involvement.
Conclusions of the REReP Regional Meeting “Towards Natura 2000 in SEE”

The following was agreed during a brainstorming session at a meeting held in Sarajevo in May 2009:

Major challenges and common priorities in the SEE region

Country representatives acknowledged related discussions initiated at the regional workshop “Approximation with EU Nature Protection Legislation in South Eastern Europe” regarding the legal aspects of the designation and management of sites within the Natura 2000 and EMERALD networks in candidate and potential candidate countries. A regional workshop was held in June 2008 in Babe, Serbia, as part of REReP Task II “Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting in South Eastern Europe”.

Country representatives confirmed their commitment to work towards the implementation of the national priorities listed in May 2008 in the Joint Statement of the Big Win Initiative for biodiversity conservation in SEE; and to support the Dinaric Arc Initiative (DAI) with its broad framework of cooperation.

Major challenges in the SEE region

Country representatives further highlighted the following major challenges and common priorities in the region, while respecting the different progress paths among the countries:

- Lack of bylaws and weak implementation of existing laws on protected areas.
- Certain segments of the legislative framework on nature conservation not completely in line with EU directives in some cases.
- Absence of national strategies and lack of clear priorities in many SEE countries.
- Inter-sectoral cooperation and communication still to be improved (e.g. infrastructure, water, climate change).
- Insufficient level of project documentation, monitoring and data.
- Need for management of protected areas.
- Institutional capacity still weak:
  - insufficient capacities in human resources;
  - limited financial assets.
- Lack of public awareness and lack of communication with the general public to provide appropriate information on the future of Natura 2000.
- Need for improvement of effective cooperation between institutions and NGOs.
- Need to expand regional cooperation and exchange of experience with EU countries and EC.
- Need to programme future funding framework.

Common priorities in the SEE region

- Create an effective policy with clear priorities in terms of biodiversity protection.
- Continue work on legal drafting and/or implementation of laws and bylaws on nature conservation coherent with EU directives and regulations.
- Adopt national strategies and action plans on biodiversity with clarification of competencies and further improvement of cooperation and information exchange.
- Translate SEENET into national ecological networks.
- Establish/improve monitoring system of species and habitat types for preparation for Natura 2000 sites.
- Carry out further detailed research and development of databases.
- Develop/finalise selection of Natura 2000 sites.
- Develop a guide for the application of Emerald/Natura 2000 and prepare management plans for protected areas.
- Build capacity of structures included in Natura 2000 processes.
- Make further efforts to communicate to wide range of stakeholder groups and prepare educational materials (posters, CDs, leaflets, brochures).
- Continue with regional cooperation and exchange of information.
- Build on past/ongoing cross-border programmes/projects (e.g. SDC Balkan transboundary projects; further support to forums established within the project/transboundary sites).
- Jointly prepare proposals for IPA multi-beneficiary programme.
Conclusions of the RReP Regional Meeting “Towards Natura 2000 in SEE”
(continued)

Potential country-specific cross-border future priorities
Considering the major challenges and common priorities in the SEE region described above, country representatives specifically highlighted the following potential cross-border future priorities:
- Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244):
  - Transboundary Alps Park
  - Bjeshket e Nemuna — Prokletije
  - Mali Sharr — Korabi
- Albania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:
  - National Park Jablanica
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia:
  - Protection of Neretva delta
  - Una regional park, preventive protection
  - Neretva and Trebisnjica management project
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia:
  - Establishment of a transboundary protected area (biosphere reserve) encompassing NP Tara
  - Sutjeska NP enlargement through Tara Canyon
- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria:
  - Osogovo project
- Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244):
  - Sustaining rural communities and their traditional landscapes through environmental governance in transboundary protected areas of the Dinaric Arc.

NOTES FROM REREP TASK FORCE AND SECRETARIAT CHAPTER
23 Members of the RReP Task Force and meeting documents from all Task Force meetings can be found at http://www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/RerepTaskForce.html
24 The Secretariat homepage can be found at: <www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/Default.html>.
25 Green Horizon Online, http://www.greenhorizon-online.com
26 Does not apply to Croatia: Croatia is currently establishing national Natura 2000.
27 Croatia, as an Annex I party to the UNFCCC, has more demanding tasks. Taking into consideration the level of practice achieved in relation to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol, Croatia will not be in a position to take part in the initiative on the Virtual Climate Change Center.
28 Not applicable to Croatia.
29 http://www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/LawDrafting/Activities-topic-workshops.html
31 The Dinaric Arc Ecoregion Project: http://www.cbddinaricarc.com/content/view/28/41/
32 Dinaric Arc Initiative partners: WWF, UNESCO-BRESCE, IUCN, UNDP, UNEP, Council of Europe, FAO, Euronatur, SNV, ECNC, REC
33 Specific country presentations were delivered at the meeting and are available at: http://www.rec.org/REC/Programs/REREP/regional_meetings/regional_meetings_natura_2000/index.html
Annex I

List of Projects Implemented in the SEE Region with REC Assistance

The following tables of projects also include activities presented at the Task Force meetings and in all REReP highlights publications. In those cases where the REC contributed to bigger projects, the table indicates only the amount relevant for the REC services and products delivered. Projects are registered in the REC’s internal project management system. The cut-off date is December 2008.

**Institution Building**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional services for support to water quality management in Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>September 2007–August 2008</td>
<td>87,250</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation to the impacts of climate change in the South of Europe: capacity-building needs</td>
<td>Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>60,746</td>
<td>Government of Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximation of Croatian water management legislation with the EU water acquis</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>June 2006–January 2008</td>
<td>184,100</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance, Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in environmental law drafting in SEE – REReP 1.3</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>477,000</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in environmental law drafting in SEE – second phase</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>2003–2005</td>
<td>575,000</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance in the development and implementation of the SEE Priority Environmental Investment Programme</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>2001–2003 first phase; 2004–2005 second phase</td>
<td>625,000</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BERCEEN exchange programme, 1.7.2</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridging the gaps II: Enhancing MEA implementation in the Balkans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building for regional waste management in Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building of environmental impact assessment, 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building of environmental legislation at regional/local level in Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building in the field of climate change in the Republic of Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building of strategic environmental assessment, 1.4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity strengthening of the local communities in the Prespa Lake region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change — Adaptation capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Change and Balkan Biodiversity conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compiling a water polluters cadastre in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance and Enforcement “MEAs implementation in SEE”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation with the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country survey on environmental integration tools in Croatia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEE and Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006–2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May–December 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001–2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2007–January 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2007–September 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001–2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2002–March 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2007–December 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2007–July 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2009–December 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February–October 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2004–ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2008–May 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59,089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Austria, UNEP Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvian Environmental Protection Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USEPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Cooperation Agency for Development, Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Institute for Environment and Development (IEED)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course for Local Sustainability and Action</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia</td>
<td>November 2007–April 2009</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course for Sustainability — Alumni conference</td>
<td>Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey</td>
<td>May 2006–April 2007</td>
<td>53,475</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course for Sustainability: Strategies, Methodologies, Policies and Actions for Central and Eastern Europe — Course IV</td>
<td>Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey</td>
<td>October 2006–March 2008</td>
<td>490,000</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of a database of the state of environment in municipalities</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>July 2007–July 2008</td>
<td>17,940</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of LEAPs in Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>April 2004–April 2007</td>
<td>706,000</td>
<td>Sida 630,960, Macedonian Local Government 75,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of national information systems, 1.8</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>670,000</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing guidelines for common environmental communication tools on EU accession (in SEE countries)</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>January 2003–September 2003</td>
<td>26,510</td>
<td>GTZ, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic and social development programme in Cetinje and Herceg Novi</td>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>January 2008–June 2009</td>
<td>90,642</td>
<td>Government of the Slovak Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIA/SEA alumni follow-up workshop in SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>July 2007–November 2007</td>
<td>52,076</td>
<td>Sida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIA and SEA capacity-building activities in SEE — Upgrade of SEA manual for SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>June 2007–October 2007</td>
<td>6,362</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands; Ministry of Environment, Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy efficiency in small and medium-sized enterprises in Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>January 2004–June 2005</td>
<td>59,230</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment and Territory, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental action plans for Balkan countries</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro</td>
<td>2004–2006</td>
<td>2,761,170</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental infrastructure investment project preparation in the water sector in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>November 2006–March 2007</td>
<td>11,813</td>
<td>Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental financing trends in SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>March 2007–December 2007</td>
<td>41,000</td>
<td>Federal Environmental Agency, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial engineering for cleaner production and energy efficiency projects in Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>January 2004–June 2007</td>
<td>113,720</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up support for AIMS network (Network of MEAs senior officials and legal experts for South Eastern Europe)</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia</td>
<td>2005–February 2007</td>
<td>44,975</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functioning of the REReP Task Force Secretariat</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2000–2003</td>
<td>547,000</td>
<td>Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, EU Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal logging in SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>January 2009–June 2011</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving fuel quality in Montenegro — Phase I</td>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>September 2008–October 2009</td>
<td>22,060</td>
<td>UNEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving industrial and hazardous waste management in the West Balkans</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>November 2005–July 2006</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution strengthening of the Federal Ministry of Physical Planning and Environment of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry of Urbanism, Civil Engineering and Ecology of Republika Srpska</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>July 2002–January 2005</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment and Territory, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to European EIA and SEA legislation in Kosovo</td>
<td>Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
<td>June 2007–December 2007</td>
<td>10,494</td>
<td>Soros Foundation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key elements for the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina's environmental policy in the process of approximation to EU — phases I and II</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>2002–2004</td>
<td>45,555</td>
<td>GTZ, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo Environmental Action Plan</td>
<td>Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
<td>2004–2006</td>
<td>300,991</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal and institutional support for the DNA for CDM in Albania</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>November 2007–June 2008</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education for sustainable development in the Western Balkans</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia</td>
<td>April 2009–April 2013</td>
<td>3,807,000</td>
<td>Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local environmental action planning for sustainability in SEE</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia</td>
<td>November 2007–October 2010</td>
<td>2,609,000</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local waste management plan for the municipality of Budva, Montenegro</td>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>November–December 2008</td>
<td>14,825</td>
<td>Municipality of Budva, Montenegro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal environmental investments in the SEE region</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>February–October 2007</td>
<td>40,148</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Environmental Investment Strategy for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>October 2007–October 2008</td>
<td>197,609</td>
<td>Austrian Development Agency (ADA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National project elements for REReP 1.1 in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia</td>
<td>Serbia and Montenegro</td>
<td>May 2002–May 2003</td>
<td>49,900</td>
<td>GTZ, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAWAMS — Drafting the National Water Monitoring Strategy</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>49,200</td>
<td>Japan Special Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking of environmental and financial specialists in SEE/developing and enhancing the effectiveness of economic instruments, 1.5.1</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>645,000</td>
<td>EU 245,000; Germany 400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our community, our future: Promoting sustainable development of local communities in Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>January 2005–June 2006</td>
<td>21,725</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot technical assistance for the institutional and operational development of the environmental fund in Croatia, priority project 1.5.2</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-feasibility studies for Strumica-Radovis and Polog regions on regional waste treatment solutions</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>October 2007–October 2008</td>
<td>203,268</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of the SEE/CCFAP—Climate Change Framework Action Plan for SEE</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>September 2007–September 2008</td>
<td>100,800</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of a social assessment study in the field of agriculture and rural development</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>January 2007–April 2007</td>
<td>29,570</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of a study of the biological monitoring of the river and lakes/reservoirs in Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>September 2008–June 2009</td>
<td>23,900</td>
<td>VVMZ, Slovakia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of, and evaluation of barriers to, GPP and the uptake of greener(er) products in Western Balkan countries and Turkey</td>
<td>SEE countries and Turkey</td>
<td>January 2008–December 2008</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting financing mechanisms for eco-innovation in SEE</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>May 2008–April 2009</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of the integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies in SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2003–2005</td>
<td>62,744</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional strategy for hazardous waste management, 1.1</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>119,000</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REMUS: Regional municipal waste management project</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>54,000</td>
<td>Japan Special Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP 5.3 Development of project preparation capacity for environmental investments</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>262,000</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sava River Inland Waterway Transport Study</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia</td>
<td>June 2007–October 2007</td>
<td>12,700</td>
<td>Booz Allen Hamilton, US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA, EIA and IPPC capacity building for governmental officials in Montenegro</td>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>February–December 2009</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE regional seminar in project preparation</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>January–September 2004</td>
<td>46,030</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting up an operational unit under the Environmental Steering Committee</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>October 2002–September 2004</td>
<td>698,215</td>
<td>EU Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening capacities for regional sustainable development planning in Montenegro — Manual and roundtable for local stakeholders</td>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>November 2006–April 2007</td>
<td>8,550</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the capacity of national environmental protection agencies and their inspectorates, 1.7</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>477,580</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the capacity of national environmental protection agencies and their inspectorates, 1.7.1</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>343,000</td>
<td>EU (Phare)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening environmental implementation and enforcement in SEE countries within SAP: BERacen/ECENA</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Turkey</td>
<td>September 2003–2010</td>
<td>1,675,000</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study on strengthening environmental institutions</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2005–2007</td>
<td>245,208</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for acceptance and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>June 2001–April 2004</td>
<td>471,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to CEE for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol</td>
<td>CEE countries</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>35,540</td>
<td>Japan Special Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to the developing of implementation strategies of the Aarhus Convention in SEE, 2.2</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>226,000</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention</td>
<td>Carpathian countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine)</td>
<td>2004–2006</td>
<td>119,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment and Territory, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention — Phase 2</td>
<td>Carpathian countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine)</td>
<td>2006–2008</td>
<td>271,450</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment and Territory, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to the implementation of RERenP for SEE 2007–2009 (Priority Environmental Investment Programme; Environmental Law Drafting and RERenP Secretariat)</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>2007–2009</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support to local environmental planning for Liqenas and Proger communes of Prespa Lake</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>April 2007–January 2008</td>
<td>20,992</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to local environmental planning for Liqenas and Proger communes of Prespa Lake - Follow-up</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>June 2008–June 2009</td>
<td>12,880</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to the public regional communal service company and four Bosnian municipalities</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>January 2007–May 2008</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to regional waste management centres in North West Croatia and Eastern Slavonia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>January 2007–June 2008</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to the REReP Secretariat operation — Second phase</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>September 2003–November 2006</td>
<td>375,000</td>
<td>EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable development: national and local action</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>October 2008–March 2010</td>
<td>506,350</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable island and coastal development in Sibenik-Knin, Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>June 2007–November 2009</td>
<td>38,521</td>
<td>MATRA Programme (Wageningen University and Research Center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable urban transport policies in SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>December 2006–November 2008</td>
<td>85,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAMAP — Municipal solid waste management plan</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>60,960</td>
<td>Japan Special Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The establishing of environmental management centres (EMCs) in Balkan countries — Phase 1</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>December 2007–June 2008</td>
<td>20,170</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for effective environmental decentralisation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>March–November 2006</td>
<td>14,472</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training in environmental and energy law for SEE officials</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>July 2008–April 2009</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>EBRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TransMarkets SEE — Towards the creation of markets for high-efficiency household appliances in the West Balkan countries</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>December 2008–December 2009</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Institution Building (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waste management in Dalmatian counties in Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>December 2005–May 2007</td>
<td>154,090 EUR</td>
<td>EU through CARDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wastewater treatment with non-conventional technologies in Mostar</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>January 2006–June 2007</td>
<td>128,250 EUR</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water resources management capacity building on integrated water resources management in Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>2008–2009</td>
<td>24,000 EUR</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL (Institution Building)** 27,153,960 EUR

### Support to Civil Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to information and public participation in environmental decision making, Danube regional project 3.4</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia</td>
<td>2004–2006</td>
<td>1,499,548 EUR</td>
<td>UNDP/GEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balkan bytes: Environmental NGO electronic networking in SEE, 2.3.1</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2004–2005 (third phase of 2.3)</td>
<td>591,100 EUR</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment and Territory, Italy (591,100 third phase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balkan NGO Information Service</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2000–2003</td>
<td>215,000 EUR</td>
<td>US EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond piloting the Green Pack Albania in the basic education system</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>July 2007–March 2010</td>
<td>170,000 EUR</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting networks</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>September 2004–September 2005</td>
<td>50,000 EUR</td>
<td>Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danube regional and national grants (first round)</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2002–2005</td>
<td>402,678 EUR</td>
<td>UN (UNOPS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danube regional grants (second round)</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2005–2007</td>
<td>295,488 EUR</td>
<td>UN (UNOPS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Geographic Focus</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Budget EUR</td>
<td>Donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danube national grants (second round)</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2005–2007</td>
<td>529,035</td>
<td>UN (UNOPS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of regional environmental press center for SEE, 2.1</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>226,000</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct assistance for SEE NGOs, 2.5.2</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2000–2003</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>US EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eco-educational campaign for region Bihać</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>January–December 2007</td>
<td>61,488</td>
<td>The Regional Landfill of Una-Sana Canton, Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment legal advocacy/ advisory centres</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic</td>
<td>June 2001–April 2004</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further support for NGO projects in the run-up to the Kiev ministeral conference 2003</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2002–2003</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Pack: Awareness of sustainable development for Macedonian schools</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>December 2006–June 2007</td>
<td>360,800</td>
<td>Austrian Development Agency (321,000) (the Macedonian Government contributed 39,800)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Pack Junior</td>
<td>CEE countries</td>
<td>March 2005–December 2007</td>
<td>84,500</td>
<td>Toyota Motor Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Pack in the Western Balkans</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>December 2007–November 2009</td>
<td>1,149,450</td>
<td>Ministry of Development Cooperation, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines on public participation in EIA/SEA procedures in Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>November 2008–April 2009</td>
<td>9,654</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving public participation practices: Next step in implementing the Aarhus Convention in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro</td>
<td>December 2004–December 2006</td>
<td>515,135</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Support to Civil Society (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion and effective application of the rights and responsibilities of the Albanian population in environmental matters</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>December 2006–June 2007</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public awareness campaign for the development of new air-quality legislation</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>May 2002–June 2003</td>
<td>490,710</td>
<td>GTZ, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public awareness campaign on heavy metal pollution in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
<td>Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
<td>September 2008–December 2009</td>
<td>31,836</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public awareness raising for the development of tourism in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>September 2007–March 2008</td>
<td>10,226</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public participation in environmental decision making: Raising environmental conciousness through environmental education and information programme — The Green Pack</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>September 2004–August 2005</td>
<td>31,780</td>
<td>EC delegation in Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising environmental conciousness through environmental education and information programme — The Green Pack</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>November 2003–March 2007</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>The Royal Netherlands Embassy, Tirana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycling training for the Roma population</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>April–September 2008</td>
<td>26,984</td>
<td>IFC, World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional initiatives for sustainable development in the Western Balkans</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>July 2003–January 2006</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP 2.2.1 Building capacities for the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in SEE</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2000–2003</td>
<td>158,000</td>
<td>US EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP 2.3 — Promoting networking and cooperation of environmental NGOs: Establishment of electronic computer networks on a national and regional level</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>The Netherlands (650,000), Norway (100,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP 2.5 — Development and strengthening of NGOs</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2000–2003</td>
<td>650,000</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP 2.5.1 — Development and strengthening of NGOs: Co-operative grants</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2003</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Support to Civil Society

(continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SECTOR: Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in South Eastern Europe</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>April 2006–April 2010</td>
<td>3,699,947</td>
<td>The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar for environmental journalists and representatives of NGOs in Serbia</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>November 2007–December 2007</td>
<td>24,128</td>
<td>Ministry of Environmental Protection, Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to environmental non-governmental organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>January 2004–2005</td>
<td>199,885</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to implement the waste management campaign and strategy of Shkodra municipality</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>June 2008–March 2009</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>Intercooperation (Swiss NGO in Albania)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to small-scale initiatives of non-profit organisations focused on environmental and nature protection in the Neretva Delta</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>January–July 2006</td>
<td>25,725</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) – raising environmental awareness through a critical, vital and multi-ethnic environmental movement</td>
<td>Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)</td>
<td>June 2007–December 2009</td>
<td>95,419</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands, MATRA programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance to grant scheme management in Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>March 2007–March 2009</td>
<td>30,275</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance, Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bulletin: The quarterly magazine of the REC, 2.9</td>
<td>SEE</td>
<td>2000–2003</td>
<td>213,000</td>
<td>US EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust fund for locally initiated environmental projects</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>November 2003–April 2006</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>Netherlands Embassy, Tirana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust fund II for locally initiated environmental projects</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>January 2008–December 2010</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>Netherlands Embassy, Tirana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop for environmental journalists</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>November–December 2007</td>
<td>24,128</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment, Serbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (Support to Civil Society)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17,203,037</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Support to Environmental Regional Cooperation Mechanisms and Cross-Border Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral arrangements for the transboundary management of water resources:</td>
<td>Bulgaria and Serbia</td>
<td>November 2007–December 2010</td>
<td>520,000</td>
<td>CIDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Timok River</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border lakes protection and management network</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>December 2003–July 2005</td>
<td>21,750</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border cooperation through environmental investment and planning</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,</td>
<td>December 2004–December 2007</td>
<td>668,135</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia, Montenegro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border LEAPs: Environmental planning for peace and stability</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia</td>
<td>December 2003–September 2008</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border municipal environmental cooperation: the Drina River basin</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia</td>
<td>2002–2004</td>
<td>58,770</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eco-bridge between Montenegro and Albania</td>
<td>Albania, Montenegro</td>
<td>September 2007–June 2008</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>US Embassy, Podgorica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eco-tourism in the Prespa Lake region</td>
<td>Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>September 2003–March 2004</td>
<td>27,470</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating bilateral cross-border cooperation among SEE countries, 4.2.1</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2005</td>
<td>162,290</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating bilateral cross-border cooperation — Montenegro meeting, 4.2.1</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>58,000</td>
<td>Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of cross-border cooperation, networking and exchanges in South East</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro</td>
<td>First phase: July 2000–January 2002;</td>
<td>3,220,000</td>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: first three components - cross-border and regional components</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising awareness about biodiversity and sustainable community development in</td>
<td>Bulgaria, Serbia</td>
<td>June–December 2006</td>
<td>27,300</td>
<td>IUCN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Stara Planina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REReP 4.3.23.1, Plants along the borders</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>2001–2004</td>
<td>100,840</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Support to Environmental Regional Cooperation Mechanisms and Cross-Border Projects (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the institutional ground for continued trans-boundary cooperation in the Neretva Delta, Skadar/Shkodra Lake and West Stara Planina</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>January 2007–January 2009</td>
<td>440,148</td>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Fourth phase: No regional component</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sava River Commission — Technical, legal, stakeholder and secretariat support</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>2003–2005</td>
<td>300,500</td>
<td>US Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting up instruments for the sustainable clearing of solid waste in the Drina River basin</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>February 2007–August 2008</td>
<td>220,910</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening environmental cross-border cooperation in the Drina River basin</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>2004–2006</td>
<td>210,000</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to local communities around Skadar lake on implementing LEAPs and promoting eco-tourism</td>
<td>Albania, Montenegro</td>
<td>July 2007–July 2009</td>
<td>161,694</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Adriatic Sea Partnership: Commitments on the management of the Adriatic</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, Slovenia</td>
<td>February 2006–February 2007</td>
<td>109,723</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment and Territory, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timok River Forum</td>
<td>Bulgaria, Serbia</td>
<td>October 2008–March 2009</td>
<td>80,126</td>
<td>UNECE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for young environmental leaders and young experts programme</td>
<td>All REReP countries are included in the programme. The whole programme covers 15 CEE countries plus Cyprus, Malta and Turkey</td>
<td>2002–2006</td>
<td>543,450</td>
<td>Ministry for Environment and Territory, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANS PARK—“The Golden Gates of the Danube”: Transboundary management of two national parks in the Iron Gate area</td>
<td>Romania, Serbia and Montenegro</td>
<td>2001–2002</td>
<td>51,000</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (Environmental Regional Cooperation Mechanisms and Cross-Border Projects)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7,816,728</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Reducing Environmental Health Threats and Biodiversity Loss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balkan Biodiversity Conservation Forum</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro</td>
<td>September 2002–June 2004</td>
<td>107,970</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity and ecosystem services for local sustainable development in the Western Balkans</td>
<td>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia</td>
<td>February 2009–December 2011</td>
<td>761,850</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Karst Ecosystem Conservation Project workshop</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>November 2006–December 2006</td>
<td>8,356</td>
<td>Ministry of Culture, Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing transboundary cooperation in the Prespa region</td>
<td>Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>February 2005–June 2006</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare waste training system in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>March 2007–March 2008</td>
<td>51,706</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of municipal wastewater on the river Vrbas</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>December 2005–July 2007</td>
<td>135,500</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased biodiversity protection and coastal conservation in Kornati archipelago, Croatia</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>January 2007–May 2008</td>
<td>12,010</td>
<td>Wageningen University and Research Center, BBI MATRA Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Ohrid conservation project</td>
<td>Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>1999–2004</td>
<td>244,000</td>
<td>GEF, World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network development of local actors from the Sava River basin on water resource management</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia</td>
<td>September 2004–December 2005</td>
<td>173,617</td>
<td>Canada, Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Gerdec: Support for environmental remediation and community rehabilitation after the ammunition depot explosion</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>2008–2009</td>
<td>179,685</td>
<td>Spanish Agency for International Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of action plans for the remediation of three heavily polluted areas (hotspots)</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>January 2007–October 2007</td>
<td>122,914</td>
<td>European Agency for Reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of project documentation for the construction of sewerage systems and wastewater treatment</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>January 2006–March 2007</td>
<td>140,518</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of a study on the natural values of the Ezerani Nature Reserve and Lake Prespa</td>
<td>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>April 2008–December 2008</td>
<td>9,010</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Reducing Environmental Health Threats and Biodiversity Loss (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Geographic Focus</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Budget EUR</th>
<th>Donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection of priority wetlands for bird migrations in the Dinaric Arc ecoregion</td>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>February 2007–January 2010</td>
<td>41,300</td>
<td>WWF Mediterranean Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion and Development of the Governance Principles for FDI in Hazardous Activities</td>
<td>SEE countries</td>
<td>August 2007–December 2010</td>
<td>44,237</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical task team (TTT) for the collection, assessment and evaluation of national information in support of the transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) and development of a strategic action programme (SAP) in the Prespa Lake basin</td>
<td>Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
<td>November 2008</td>
<td>76,982</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL (Reducing Environmental Health Threats and Biodiversity Loss) | **2,259,655** |

| GRAND TOTAL (SEE projects with REC assistance) | **54,433,380** |
Annex II

Donor Contribution by Priority Area

Contribution by priority area

- Support to Civil Society: 32%
- Institution Building: 49%
- Support to Environmental Regional Cooperation Mechanisms and Cross-Border Projects: 15%
- Reducing Environmental Health Threats and Biodiversity Loss: 4%

Projects with REC assistance
Includes activities presented at Task Force meetings and in all REReP highlights publications.
Annex III

Contribution to REReP Process by Donor

**Contribution by donor (in EUR)**

Projects with REC assistance
Includes activities presented at Task Force meetings and in all REReP highlights publications. Where the REC contributed to bigger projects, the pie chart shows only the amount relevant for the REC services and products delivered.
Annex IV
Donor Contribution to Priority Projects by Year

Contribution by year (in EUR)

Projects with REC assistance
Includes activities presented at Task Force meetings and in all REReP Highlights publications. Where the REC contributed to bigger projects, the graph shows only the amount relevant for the REC services and products delivered.
Developing a Priority Environmental Investment Programme for South Eastern Europe
Annex V

RReP Publications and Reports

RReP implementation

- **RReP: Building a Better Environment for the Future**

- **Highlights of RReP**

- **Model for a Successful Assistance Mechanism**
  September 2003, RReP leaflet, hard copy and PDF, available on-line

- **Environmental Reconstruction and EU Approximation in South Eastern Europe — RReP Highlights 2003-2005**

- **Environmental Snapshot of South Eastern Europe — RReP Country Profiles**
  March 2006, ISBN: 963 9638 05 6

- **Foundation for Integration**
  September 2007, RReP leaflet, hard copy and PDF file

Institution building

- **Developing a Priority Environmental Investment Programme for South Eastern Europe**

- **Targeting the Environmental Investment Challenge in South Eastern Europe**

- **Environmental Financing Trends in South Eastern Europe**
  October 2007

- **Establishing an Environmental Fund: Practical Aspects for Decision Makers and Fund Managers**
  June 2006, available only on-line

- **Environmental Infrastructure Investment Project Preparation in the Water Sector, Available Sources of Finance for Water Infrastructure Projects in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**
  2006, Working paper

- **Municipal Environmental Investments in Water and Waste Infrastructure in South Eastern Europe**

- **Strategies for Reform: A Manual for Water Utilities in South Eastern Europe**

- **Assessing Environmental Law Drafting Needs in South Eastern Europe**

- **Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting in South Eastern Europe**
  December 2003, on-line version only

- **Progress in Environmental Law Drafting in South Eastern Europe**

- **Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting in South Eastern Europe — Promising Harvest: The fruits of environmental law reform in South Eastern Europe**
  July 2006, on-line version only

- **Assistance in Environmental Law Drafting — A Formula for Success: Development of chemicals laws in Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**
  September 2005

- **Environmental Enforcement and Compliance in SEE**
  Compiled report on legal structures and resources currently available to environmental protection agencies and inspectorates in SEE
Civil Society Support

DEVELOPING SKILLS OF REGIONAL NGOS

- Public Education to Raise Environmental Awareness
  (Also available in regional languages)

- Evaluation and Monitoring
  (Also available in SEE regional languages)

- Local Environmental Action Programmes
  (Also available in regional languages)

- Presentation and Communication
  (Also available in regional languages)

- Project Management
  (Also available in regional languages)

- Proposal Writing
  (Also available in regional languages)

- The Right to Know
OTHER NGO-SUPPORT PUBLICATIONS

- Following Through: Progress on the Implementation of the Aarhus Convention in South Eastern Europe
  May 2003, on-line version only

- Networks at Work: Status and Needs Assessment of Electronic Networking and Cooperation among Environmental NGOs in South Eastern Europe

- Sustainability in Action: NGO Initiatives for Sustainable Development in the Western Balkans
  January 2006, ISBN: 963 9638 04 8

- Striving for Sustainability, A Regional Assessment of the Environmental Civil Society Organisations in the Western Balkans
  October 2007, SECTOR brochure

- NGO Directory of South Eastern Europe
  May 2007, ISBN: 963 9638 10 2, versions in national languages of SEE are also available

Support to Environmental Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation

- Trans-boundary Co-operation through the Management of Shared Natural Resources

Reducing Environmental Health Threats and Biodiversity Loss

- Regional Approach to the Management of Hazardous Waste in SEE Countries
  August 2003, DOC file, available on-line

- Directions for Developing Sustainable Agriculture in Serbian Municipalities of West Stara Planina

- Implementing Volunteers in Parks Programmes: Guidelines for managers and stakeholders of protected areas in South Eastern Europe
THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (REC) is an international organisation with a mission to assist in solving environmental problems. The REC fulfils this mission by promoting cooperation among governments, non-governmental organisations, businesses and other environmental stakeholders, and by supporting the free exchange of information and public participation in environmental decision making.

The REC was established in 1990 by the United States, the European Commission and Hungary. Today, the REC is legally based on a charter signed by the governments of 29 countries and the European Commission. The REC has its head office in Szentendre, Hungary, and country offices and field offices in 17 beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.

The REC actively participates in key global, regional and local processes and contributes to environmental and sustainability solutions within and beyond its country office network, transferring transitional knowledge and experience to countries and regions.

Recent donors are the European Commission and the governments of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as other intergovernmental and private institutions.

The Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP)

A Decade’s Difference

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union.