

COMPENDIUM OF ACHIEVEMENTS: 10 YEARS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN ITALY AND THE REC

The Italian Trust Fund, 2001-2011

- Sustainable development
- + Capacity building
- + Institution strengthening
- + Environment and health
- + Eco-building solutions
- + Climate change mitigation
- + Renewable energy ...

2001-2011

FONDO FIDUCIARIO
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MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, LAND AND SEA, ITALY

Commitment and effort of the Italian Government

Italy has had an intense and fruitful relationship with Central and Eastern Europe for many, many years, owing both to geographical proximity and clear historical links. Because of these kinships with countries comprising the ex-soviet bloc, the Italian Republic takes particular interest in this region's development, especially concerning issues that arose from the dissolution of the former regime. This closeness has resulted in Italy maintaining a certain expertise in issues concerning practical and legislative changes that have been required, and it is in a position to assist in the process of adapting to greater participation within the wider European community. Italy not only has the knowledge required, but also the duty to transfer assistance and best practices to an area of the world that has only recently speeded up its approximation to the EU.

The personal involvement of the Italian government and the Regional Environment Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) has been long-lasting, but confirmation of this bilateral partnership was finally solidified by the creation of the Italian Trust Fund (ITF) in 2001. The ITF guaranteed financial, administrative and networking assistance from the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea to selected REC projects. This cooperation has consistently gone from strength to strength, and has allowed the Ministry to continue performing its moral duty to its Eastern cousins.

The ITF was established to create partnerships in Europe, to secure a path towards environmental democracy, to provide a neutral platform for facilitating transboundary cooperation, and to empower individual nations to stand up and take control of ever-growing crises.

The unfailing commitment and effort of the Italian Government, with the help of the REC, has enabled the implementation of a series of projects covering a diverse range of expertise, such as Environment and Health, Investment Management, Environmental Training, Waste Management and Water Management. As this document makes clear, there have been a

number of particularly notable examples, including the SEARCH project to monitor air quality in schools throughout the REC beneficiary area, the establishment of a legislative framework in the Carpathian Mountains area, and an ongoing eco-building project that includes the presentation, dissemination and publication of best technologies and practices concerning an overhaul of the building sector. Moreover, as capacity building has been a special priority for educating policy makers and business leaders in environmentalism, the recent creation of the Sustainable Development Academy has grouped together and consolidated seven years of courses, certificate programmes and experiences that have been provided throughout the beneficiary area and beyond. The REC and ITF have consistently sought to target the most pressing needs and most effective means of addressing them.

It has now been ten years since the ITF was established, and in that time it has sought to reach individuals, NGOs, regional authorities and high-level government (through the establishment of environmental decision-making processes and subsequent development of legislation) affecting the beneficiary groups environmentally, socially and economically, while fully exploiting all three pillars of Sustainable Development.

I have been supporting the ITF in my role as Director General of the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS), and am pleased to be able to celebrate the entirety of its ten years of existence. I wish the REC and IMELS, through this tried and tested bilateral tie, many more years of success and continued advancement of the environmental movement.

I extend my warmest regards to the ITF, REC, IMELS, project donors and supporters, project beneficiaries and well-wishers.

Sincerely,

Dr. Corrado Clini

Director General of the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea

Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS)

The Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS) has had an extremely productive relationship with Central and Eastern Europe for many years, owing both to regional proximity and shared values. Given its professional relationship with the REC, both parties created the ITF as a means of solidifying and ensuring the Ministry's contribution to its Eastern neighbours.

The Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea performs tasks that are concerned with protecting the environment according to EU regulations, particularly relating to biodiversity, water and waste management, air pollution, environmental monitoring and standards, environmental impact assessment and long-term strategies for sustainable development. IMELS is committed to the positive effects that capacity building, networks and relationship-building can have on environmental crises, and it is this commitment that directs its activities in the rest of Europe. IMELS fully recognises the exponential benefits that can be obtained through partnership. Its sustained and committed involvement in the region was restated with the establishment in 2003 of the Task Force for Central and Eastern European Countries, which is based in Belgrade and other capitals in the region.

The ITF is tied to the Directorate General for Sustainable Development, Climate and Energy, one of the five sub-departments of IMELS, which mainly focuses on promoting national and international activities, identifying and implementing projects in collaboration with international partners, and co-financing projects with other donors. The nature of this remit makes it a perfect partner for the kind of projects with which the REC concerns itself.



The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)

The REC was established in 1990, brought into being by the United States, Hungary and the European Commission, with the aim of creating a non-political, non-partisan, not-for-profit international organisation that would focus on environment and democracy in the post-communist era. The organization has since then gone from strength to strength, with its Charter signed by 30 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, Turkey.

The REC engages in project-based activities targeted to the requests and needs of its beneficiary area, and is able to remain visible through grants, EU tenders and other means. For this reason, and given the non-profit and project-based nature of its work, long-term and consistent donations (like those of the ITF) are always extremely welcome. For the last ten years, the REC and ITF have had a strong and fruitful partnership that has empowered and encouraged the fostering of environmental knowledge and helped to create partnerships instigated and strengthened by the sharing of a common mission.

Our cooperation with Italy

The projects and programmes implemented with the generous support of the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS) and the Italian Trust Fund (ITF) have benefited almost 500 senior governmental officials and representatives of local authorities; thousands of teachers and hundreds of thousands of students; and around 300 civil society representatives. Behind this success lies a clear and consistent strategy of the Italian Government.

Building on the results achieved and the knowledge acquired, we are now developing our services in order to assist new regions. Our cooperation with Italy has been extended to China, where we are working with Italian experts in the context of the Europe-China Clean Energy Centre (EC2), a multi-year project to promote the increased use of clean energy in China and to support the Chinese Government's efforts to shape a more sustainable, environmentally friendly and efficient energy sector. We are also expanding to new areas of work, including sustainable production and consumption and eco-building, capitalising on the lessons learned through the Italian-funded retrofitting of our own conference centre, which aims at zero emissions.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Italian Government for its continued support and to acknowledge the professionalism of everyone involved in IMELS and the ITF.

*Marta Szigeti Bonifert
Executive Director*

Italian Trust Fund (ITF)

The Italian Trust Fund was established in 2001 in order to make the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea's donations to the REC (already sizeable) more established, more visible and more recognised. A plan was initiated to make a significant annual donation, to be supplemented by additional funds on request, with the use of the donations determined in close consultation between the REC and the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea. This means that the funding party makes a significant and important contribution, not only financially, but also in determining how, where and why the money is spent. Rather than being a simple cash gift, the ITF represents a real opportunity for cooperation and exchange of expertise.

ITF funds have certain requirements as to how they should be used: the Memorandum of Understanding that established the fund determined that they should focus on regional plans for environmental improvement, the identification of multilateral projects, feasibility studies and establishing seminars, workshops and conferences, as well as fostering further cooperation between Italy and the REC. This is an exceptionally broad remit, meaning that the ITF can be used depending on need and with a significant chance to adapt to changing circumstances; but it also ensures that the funds have a certain level of direction and guidance, resulting in a useful and sufficiently targeted contribution to the improvement of Europe's environmental situation.

The ITF also has a wide beneficiary area, with courses, partnerships and legislation development agreements being established in the Balkans, Central and Eastern Europe, Turkey, the Black Sea region, the Russian Federation and other countries within the Eastern Europe, and the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) bloc. As it has no specific geographical limitation (the REC itself determines the boundaries), the great work that the ITF does can be spread and replicated over an exceptionally wide area, as shown by its recent involvement in China.

The ITF is dedicated to cooperation in the fields of environment, capacity building and creating frameworks for change, and the many, varied projects that the ITF has been engaged in over the last ten years have enabled it to fulfil its mission with great aplomb. The projects listed in the following pages represent only a modest share of the huge contribution that the ITF has been able to make to the development of the region.

Working together for a better and sustainable future

I am especially fortunate to have been able to follow and participate in the scores of projects that the ITF has supported over the course of my time here. Indeed, since its inception, the ITF has always been a key player in the advancement of environmental protection and improvement, its activities cutting a wide swath across Europe and beyond. Thanks to the ITF's efforts governmental, business and civil stakeholders have been trained in sustainable development, both at basic and in-depth level, leading ultimately to the set-up of the Sustainable Development Academy. In fact, the individual Courses for Sustainable Development have been successfully taking place since 2004, and since then we have gradually built up, through consolidation and partnership, a properly unified Academy focused on Sustainable Development topics, able to transfer best practices from different regions and establish a replicable model for environmental education.

The Sustainable Development Academy is indeed an example of how exertion and close cooperation can help create stronger institutions and bonds between what were previously scattered and independent entities, working together for a better and sustainable future in which the next generations will be able to benefit fully from our combined endeavours.

*Sincerely,
Stefania Romano
Head of the Italian Trust Fund*

I Sustainable Development Academy

The ITF has principally funded, since 2004, the development of a series of courses for sustainable development and certificate programmes that targets government officials and local authorities, civil servants and business leaders, with the aim of making them environmentally aware and informed about the day's most pressing issues. The courses also present a perfect opportunity for networking, engaging in practical exercises and obtaining the views of experts and professionals in the field of sustainability.

The courses have been enthusiastically adopted and tailored according to specific priorities in five different regions: the Balkans; the Black Sea region; Central and Eastern Europe; the Russian Federation and other countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA); and Turkey. As of 2011, more than 500 participants have been trained, enabling a new generation of policy makers to initiate and implement national and transboundary policies promoting sustainable development, and thus supporting future cooperation across borders.

Fall 2010 marked a watershed in an unremitting harmonisation process with the official launch of the Sustainable Development Academy, specifically designed to boost the visibility and enhance the efficacy of the overarching educational framework. Although each course retains its specific traits, mostly yoked to the different target countries and participants involved, the Sustainable Development Academy has proved essential in endowing all courses with a clear-cut trademark and a fruitful long-term outlook.

Project timeline

2004-2007	<i>Course for Sustainable Development for Central and Eastern Europe</i>
2007	<i>Kazakhstan Course for Sustainability</i>
2008-2011	<i>Course for Local Sustainability and Action in South-Eastern Europe and the Visegrad Countries</i>
2008-2011	<i>Seminar Series: Partnerships for Sustainable Development, Sustainable Public Policies and Business Practices for Black Sea Countries</i>
2008-2011	<i>Certificate Programme on Corporate Sustainability in Turkey</i>
2010	<i>Course for Sustainability for St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region</i>
2011	<i>Course for Sustainability for Belarus and the Ukraine</i>

Course for Local Sustainability and Action in South-Eastern Europe and the Visegrad Countries

Having been offered annually since 2008, this course endeavours to provide officials from local governments with the necessary tools to effect real environmental change. Open to participants from several countries in South-Eastern Europe and the Visegrad region (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Kosovo (as defined under UNSCR 1244), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Hungary, Poland, Serbia and Slovakia), topics covered range from local development and energy efficiency to urban sustainability. A series of notable experts and lecturers has come to the learning centres in Venice and Szentendre (Hungary) in order to share their wisdom and practical knowledge and contribute to building networking connections between countries and between central and local governments. This format has enabled the sharing of best practices all over the region and has also been enthusiastically adopted by other regions.

2 Other education and capacity-building activities

In addition to the Sustainable Development Academy, the ITF has also been involved in the development of other training courses aimed at specific stakeholders in a wide variety of fields. The training enables the bringing together of concerned actors and experts to facilitate the empowerment of local participants and ground-level professionals. The main focus of environmental training activities has been on how to achieve sustainable development through shared responsibility. Training must therefore provide opportunities for the exchange and spread of knowledge, skills and good practice. Training is a priority for those Eastern European countries needing to reach EU environmental targets at an accelerated pace.

Project timeline

2003-2004	<i>Young Environmental Leaders</i>
2005-2011	<i>Studying Sustainability at School: the “Green Pack” Programme for Turkey</i>
2005-2006	<i>Training for eco-volunteers in protected areas in SEE and Turkey</i>
2006-2008	<i>Summer courses in Budapest</i>
2007-2010	<i>Training teachers in Albania in the “Green Pack” philosophy</i>

Studying Sustainability at School: the “Green Pack” Programme for Turkey and Training teachers in Albania in the “Green Pack” philosophy

Since 2005 the ITF has been devoted to expanding the impact of the REC-developed “Green Pack” multimedia tool. The “Green Pack” comes in various forms and languages, and is aimed at teachers and pupils with the purpose of spreading knowledge of sustainable development to children of various ages. Before 2007, the ITF engaged in spreading a form of the “Green Pack” to 1,600 teachers in Turkey, and finished with a presentation at Brussels to the European Parliament to raise awareness about the project. Since 2007 the “Green Pack” philosophy has spread in Albania to teacher training colleges and 1,700 schools. By informing children about sustainable development at a young age, the ITF has demonstrated its commitment to the next generation as the potential solution to climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE

PEOPLE & THE PLANET

Energy Efficiency

BETTER WORLD

EU Environmental Targets

ECO Building

Environmental Monitoring

LOCAL SUSTAINABILITY

THE "GREEN PACK" PHILOSOPHY



3 Energy and climate

As our climate gradually changes, owing to our overuse of fossil fuels, experts tend to agree that a radical shift in energy production and consumption is needed to avoid our being stuck at a point of no return for our environment. For this reason - or if only for the sake of making our everyday lives more sustainable and less dependent on finite resources - the ITF has funded a series of projects that continue to contribute to the harmonisation of energy and climate.

Disseminating, reporting and implementing new technologies

One of the main ways this can be achieved is by collecting and spreading information on best practices and technologies, along with capacity building, the implementation of international conventions, and the fostering of cooperation across regional and national borders. This ensures not only that beneficiaries are informed on reliable solutions concerning the energy crisis, but also that they have the power to use this information to maximum effect.

Project timeline

2002	<i>Seminar promoting renewable energy technologies</i>
2004-2005	<i>Spreading renewable energy in the Mediterranean through the extension of MEDREP (Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme)</i>
2005	<i>Conference on Climate Change, in Hungary</i>
2008	<i>The REC Zero-Emission Conference Center: A Model of Efficiency</i>
2010-2011	<i>Eco-building programme: dissemination, publication and exhibition of best practices for eco-building at various seminars throughout Europe</i>

The REC Zero-Emission Conference Center: A Model of Efficiency

The process of refurbishing the Conference Center at the Regional Environment Center Head Office in Szentendre, Hungary was finally completed in June 2008. The ITF principally funded the transformation of a previously inefficient building into one of the most technologically innovative and advanced zero-emission buildings in Europe. Over the course of the process, the Conference Center's energy-efficiency systems were

optimised after the installation of state-of-the-art technological and design features, including electrical, plumbing, air-conditioning, lighting and heating systems. This outstanding example of eco-building in practice can be a model for other similar projects and a replicable paradigm of what can be achieved today in the field of energy efficiency.

Encouraging energy efficiency in the face of climate change

Another way to ensure the balance of energy requirements with climate change is to mould the political and social environment so that people, companies and governments do what they can to pursue an energy-efficient existence. The ITF has funded conventions, partnerships and campaigns that further the cause of clean energy usage and respect for the environment.

Project timeline

2004	<i>Creation of a partnership contributing to the promotion of renewable energy sources in Central and Eastern Europe</i>
2003-2005	<i>Disseminating Energy Efficiency in Small and Medium-Sized Business in Croatia</i>
2006-2008	<i>Promoting Climate Change Policies in Turkey</i>
2006-2007	<i>Publication, translation and distribution of the pamphlet "Europe in the World" by Tom Burke and Nick Mabey</i>

Promoting Climate Change Policies in Turkey

Co-funded with the European Commission DG ENV LIFE Third Countries programme, with the support of the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the independent firm Exergia, this project set out to reduce CO₂ emissions in Turkey by developing climate change policies that focused on priority economic sectors, as well as assisting with fulfilling the obligations of the UNFCCC. The project goals were to train administrators in the area of climate change, promote cooperation and increase awareness throughout the nation, as well as to foster access to information while involving NGOs and civil society in the process. This two-year project sped up by leaps and bounds Turkey's adherence to the EU environmental programme.

4 Environment and health

Human health is intimately connected to the environment. It is estimated that approximately 20 percent of premature deaths could be prevented by concerted environmental action. The risks are greater in some Eastern European countries due to poor quality of drinking water, as well as atmospheric and chemical pollution.

The ITF and the REC are committed to relieving some of these problems by supporting and attending conferences, engaging in research and launching practical solutions to try and solve persistent health hazards by addressing environmental issues.

Project timeline

2004	<i>Education programme to raise awareness on environment and health</i>
2004	<i>Encouraging the participation of NGOs in the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest</i>
2005-2009	<i>Development of SMAQ (satellite-assisted management to inspect air quality) to give decision makers an indispensable geographic information system that will help them address environmental concerns, including pollution levels</i>
2006-2010	<i>SEARCH (School Environment and Respiratory Health of Children): Monitoring air quality in six European countries</i>
2006	<i>Organising the 22nd Meeting of the European Environment and Health Committee, on the issue of safe water (held in Szentendre, Hungary)</i>
2010-2013	<i>SEARCH II (School Environment and Respiratory Health of Children II): Enhancing air quality in European schools and assessing the situation and needs of non-EU countries</i>

SEARCH (School Environment and Respiratory Health of Children): Monitoring air quality in six European countries

The SEARCH project covered the period between 2006 and 2010 and consisted of two main implementation components: the first phase focused on environmental and health assessment, while the second emphasised capacity-building and awareness-raising activities, which were tailored according to a school's particular research needs.

Falling under the wider framework of the European Environment and Health Policy and Action Plan, the project kindled active involvement in European processes and the development of efficient instruments and tools for multi-stakeholder cooperation. Specifically, "Priority Goal 3" of the Children's Health and Environment Action Plan - which covers the prevention and reduction of respiratory diseases of children from outdoor and indoor air pollution - was implemented at regional level by carrying out comparative research in six European countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Hungary, Italy, Serbia and Slovakia).

Project outcomes, along with mature policy recommendations, were presented at the 5th Environment and Health Ministerial Conference, hosted in Parma, Italy in 2010. The project's acknowledged usefulness, as well as the final conclusions from the conference, encouraged the setup and commencement of the SEARCH II project in autumn 2010. SEARCH II will not only continue to monitor and conduct in-depth tests in schools of the aforementioned six countries, but will extend the scope of activities and geographical focus by surveying four additional countries: Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

5 Investment management

Environmental investments are aimed at bridging the gap between development policies and environment policies: environmental targets within industrial policies make products more competitive and are the start of truly sustainable development. While it is not an easy target for established industrialised countries to reach, it is even harder for countries that have recently joined the European Union and for those currently marching towards full EU accession. In these countries, factories were often established with lower environmental standards than those demanded in the EU, lacking the proper mechanisms necessary for the implementation and enforcement of specific environmental laws, thus making them vulnerable to environmental dumping. In order to integrate environmental policies with development policies, while at the same time making optimal use of European Community grants, the REC and ITF have initiated many projects in Central and Eastern Europe in order to increase project capacity and investments.

Project timeline

- 2003-2005: *Developing the capacity of regional and local authorities, public service companies and other organisations to identify and prepare quality environmental investment projects in Poland and Slovenia*
- 2004 & 2009 *High-level workshops dedicated specifically to integration of the environment into the economy of an enlarged Europe*
- 2004-2005: *Educating representatives of ministries of economy, finance, environment and agriculture from eight countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Poland, Romania, Serbia & Montenegro, Slovenia, Romania and Turkey) about European grants*

High-level workshops dedicated specifically to the integration of environment into the economy of an enlarged Europe

At two separate events - one in 2004 and the other in 2009 - the REC deployed ITF resources to create a series of workshops focused on streamlining the environment with the European economy. With the help of important European officials, the workshops centred on integration of environmental concerns, environmental aspects of Structural and Cohesion Funds and the development of national SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) systems.

The first event, hosted by the REC in Szentendre on May 13-14, 2004, was highly significant due to the then-recent welcoming of several Central and Eastern European countries as European Union members. The workshop provided a unique opportunity for discussion between environmental authorities and regional development authorities concerning mechanics of the Structural Funds programming process and prospects for sustainable development. The workshop also helped participants to identify areas for future cooperation among new member states regarding treatment of environmental issues within the context of Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. It was concluded at this event that it is crucial to redirect funds to the environment, and to see this not as a problem but as a key element of potential solutions to Europe's most pressing environmental challenges, with climate change being of paramount concern.

6 International processes

Environmental cooperation on an international scale has been pursued through a variety of projects that have aimed to take advantage of international processes that the REC and ITF have at their disposal. Cooperation is the cornerstone for achieving progress in the advancement of sustainable development, and the ITF has sought during its ten-year existence to spread this kind of cooperation on a global scale.

Conventions and Partnerships

One of the most important ways to encourage international cooperation is to be involved in processes such as international conventions and partnerships that will lead to better understanding, researching, reporting and publishing of important environmental issues. ITF has taken its place on the world stage by actively supporting, encouraging and participating in many of these processes.

Project timeline

2001-2003	<i>Survey of environmental democracy and implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Central and Eastern Europe</i>
2002-2003	<i>Framework on environmental law in Bosnia & Herzegovina</i>
2003	<i>Support for the Implementation of the Carpathian Convention</i>
2003	<i>Working for Strategic Environmental Assessment in Estonia and Hungary</i>
2003	<i>Creation of a network of eight environmental NGOs, following a training programme in Italy</i>
2006-2007	<i>Creation of the Adriatic Sea Partnership</i>

Support for the Implementation of the Carpathian Convention

In 2003 the Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians was signed in Kiev. This is a legislative tool safeguarding a chain of mountains that spreads over parts of seven countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. This ITF-funded project set out to support the implementation of this important international convention by conducting a diagnostic audit of policies and institutional and legislative setup existent in the Carpathian countries, and subsequently comparing the results

with principles promoted and commitments undertaken under the Carpathian Convention so that the huge environmental benefits promised by the agreement could be assured in practice.

Conferences

By participating in conferences on key environmental issues, the ITF has greatly contributed to enhancing awareness-raising and dissemination efforts, thereby ensuring its own visibility as well as that of IMELS and the REC. The importance of this lies in the fact that the REC and ITF have been able to get their messages across at the right levels and to the right people, whilst keeping abreast of cutting-edge developments and innovations.

Project timeline

2003-2004	<i>Supporting the implementation of the environmental strategy of the 2003 Kiev Ministerial Conference and drawing a draft programme for the 2004 “Kiev+1” Conference</i>
2004	<i>REC meeting in Rimini to facilitate greater cooperation between Italy and CEE</i>
2007	<i>Session on sustainable development in CEE, during the Fifth European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns, in Seville</i>
2007	<i>Contribution to the Sixth “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference in Belgrade</i>

Contribution to the Sixth “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

The Sixth “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference took place in Belgrade in October 2007. As a key environmental player in the region, the REC, with help from the ITF, was able to make a valuable contribution to the event by offering visibility to countries from Central and Eastern Europe, while preparing and submitting papers in order to present the situation in CEE to attending delegates. In addition, the REC organised side events, including an ITF-funded side event on clean fuels.

7 Waste and water management

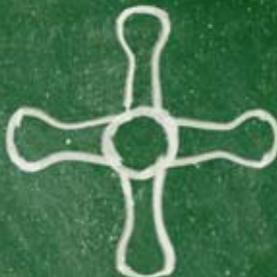
The ITF has taken great efforts to help assuage two of the major environmental problems afflicting its beneficiary areas. Providing motivation to clean and maintain lakes, rivers, water basins and drinking supplies poses a great challenge, especially in cross-border areas where agreements between countries and regions are required before action can be taken. Also, within an increasingly commercial and consumer-oriented culture, the issue of the collection and treatment of waste presents an even steeper challenge. Projects undertaken by the ITF in its ten-year existence have aimed to reflect upon and ease the impacts of these problems.

Project timeline

2002	<i>Training for technicians in Baltic countries to implement correct waste management</i>
2002	<i>Training waste-management technicians in Bulgaria</i>
2002-2003	<i>Wastewater management programme for Bulgaria, Romania and countries of the former Yugoslavia</i>
2005-2008	<i>REC participation in the European Topic Centre on Resource and Waste Management</i>
2006-2009	<i>Workshop on transboundary management of water in SEE countries, held in Belgrade</i>

REC participation in the European Topic Centre on Resource and Waste Management

The European Topic Centre on Resource and Waste Management, created in 1997, is one of five topic areas of the European Environment Agency that enables the development of reliable and comparable data, the creation of a European network specialising in energy and waste management and the preparation of sector studies and environmental analyses. Between 2005 and 2008, the ITF facilitated the participation of the REC in this Topic Centre, significantly increasing its visibility and enabling its involvement in a number of European surveys.





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