



PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES IN THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION IN THE SEE COUNTRIES

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GENERAL INFORMATION

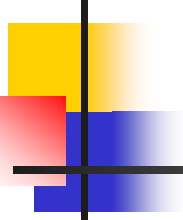
- Highly diverse in terms of its geography, ecosystems, ethnic groups, religions culture and economies, but shares common turbulent history
- The accession to EU was clearly recognized as a key goal of all the countries from the South-Eastern Europe Region
- Country have focused first on post conflict reconstruction and building institutions for democracy and market economy





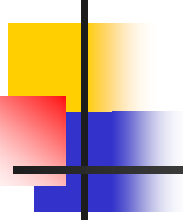
GENERAL INFORMATION

- Many states and socially owned industries collapsed, resulting in reduction of ongoing pollution, but leave behind hot spots of historical pollution
- With donor support the governments embarked on the process of building institutions and development of policy and legal framework in the field of environmental protection



Overview of the environmental situation in the SEE countries

- Drafting and adoption of legislation harmonized with EU acquis
- Development of the Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Fund, Inspectorate
- Most MEAs have been ratified including UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol
- Development and adoption of comprehensive strategies and programs (waste, water and wastewater master plans, tourism, biodiversity)
- There is an evident move towards integration of environmental and sustainable development objectives in the policies of economic sectors (energy, tourism, transport, agriculture)
- All countries are in the process of decentralisation and delegating more powers to municipalities



Overview of the environmental situation in the SEE countries

- The impact of NGOs on the general awareness of the public is rising but is still limited
- Availability of environmental information is improving, leading to increased public participation in environmental policy making
- There are numerous initiatives in capacity building and education for environment and sustainable development, including technical assistance with policy formulation and implementation
- Regional cooperation in environmental sector has been strong especially in environmental enforcement and compliance.



NATURE AND PROTECTED AREAS

- The region is very rich in biodiversity, covering four different European bio-geographical regions: Mediterranean, Alpine, Continental and Pannonian with numerous well preserved ecosystems.
- The turbulent developments of the past decade and a half have brought a number of threats to biodiversity including: urbanisation, land abandonment, overexploitation of resources due to poverty, intensification of agricultural and forestry practices, changes in water regime due to construction of dams and irrigation, pollution and others.
- The institutional set-up for nature conservation has undergone significant changes with ministries of environment, and the Ministry of Culture in the case of Croatia.
- The number and size of protected areas has been increasing, although the share of protected land is still low compared to the needs and EU targets for the Natura 2000 network.
- Management practices and planning have been or are being improved in existing protected areas through a number of donor projects.



BEST EXAMPLES FROM SEE COUNTRIES

- **Transboundary cooperation between Montenegro and Albania (Skadar/Shkodra lake)**
 - Protection of the Albania part of the Lake as IUCN category IV in November 2005 and as Ramsar site in 2006, in Montenegro already existing national park and Ramsar site
 - Several meeting and events involving high level of representatives of both countries were held and joint Declarations were signed promoting the values of the Lake and joint management approaches
 - Memorandum of Understanding and establishment of Joint Lake Forum with 13 members
 - Cooperation among local authorities in two countries



WATER PROTECTION

- **The region is rich in fresh water resources owing to its geography including rivers, lakes as well as sensitive karstic and gravel aquifers. Rivers flow to the Black Sea, Adriatic, and Aegean all of which are enclosed seas vulnerable to eutrophication (especially the Black Sea).**
- **The upstream parts of the rivers are mostly clean, whereas the downstream sections are often polluted by urban and industrial wastewater, improper waste disposal and runoff from agriculture.**
- **These pressures are sometimes combined with risks of pollution from historic hot spots. The shallow karstic and gravel aquifers are also exposed to excessive extraction and pollution from agriculture and untreated sewage in the rural areas.**
- **The policy options for management of water include:**
 - **Various possibilities for institutional structures and cooperation between different institutions;**
 - **River basin management according to the Water Framework Directive**
 - **Privatisation and/or corporatisation of water services including public private partnerships and concessions for water use;**
 - **Cross border cooperation for management of river basins and water bodies.**



BEST EXAMPLES FROM SEE COUNTRIES

- **Sava River Basin Initiative**

- In June 2001 the Stability Pact launched the Sava River Initiative to provide a forum of four Sava countries (BiH, Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia)
- The aim of Commission are:
- Rehabilitation and develop the navigation of the Sava Basin and its main tributaries in the region (Drina and Una)
- Secure sustainable development, utilization, preservation and management of the Sava Basin water and related resources
- Preserve and protect the environment, biodiversity and aquatic condition of the Sava Basin
- Within the Sava Basin, promote the social and economic welfare of riparian States and Communities and well being of all riparian people



ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- **The energy intensity of SEE countries is high and a lot of energy comes from coal. In recent years there has been a high demand for energy in Europe (electricity, oil), and there are significant ongoing investments in generating capacity in the SEE, sometimes aiming at export.**
- **There are many different ways to secure adequate energy supply and enhance the environmental performance of the energy industry:**
 - **Privatisation of the energy industry or securing public funding for investment;**
 - **Produce energy for export and provide transit for energy (power lines, oil and gas pipelines) or mainly serve the domestic markets;**
 - **Enforcing environmental rules or turning a blind eye to secure continued supply;**
 - **Energy reform – unbundling of production and transmission or keeping consolidated national operators.**
- **Significant investment and new legal and institutional frameworks have taken place in improving the efficiency and environmental performance of the energy industry in some countries. All countries are party to the Athens process and the Energy Community Treaty**



PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES

- Capacity building for implementation of legislation
- Continue the development of environmental institutions at the national level
- Increase environmental investment
- Invest in cross sectoral cooperation
- Use EU accession process and EU funds to achieve sustainable development objectives including MDG
- Strengthen the local government
- Develop partnerships with stakeholders



PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES

- Continued and extend regional cooperation
 - Regional cooperation in the framework of Stabilization and Association Process
 - Implementation of UNECE multilateral environmental agreements
 - Implementation of Energy Community Treaty
 - Biodiversity conservation and ecological networks
 - Conservation and sustainable use of Adriatic coast



PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES

- Watershed management such as Sava River Commission
- Environmental management and investments at the local level
- Stronger and more dynamic coordination of donor assistance
- Transfer of experience between the countries in the region and neighboring countries



**Thank you for your
attention!**

