

Environment and Security initiative

BELARUS • MOLDOVA • UKRAINE



ENVSEC E. EUROPE NEWS & OUTLOOK

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Dear colleagues,

the ENVSEC secretariat brings to your attention the 3d edition of an information bulletin for Eastern Europe, covering events between November 2007 and April 2008 as well as future plans. As usual, additional and more detailed information about ENVSEC is available on-line at www.envsec.org.

We will always seriously consider your feedback, which you can address to entry points to Eastern European activities within ENVSEC partner agencies, and ENVSEC regional desk for Eastern Europe. Contact information is included at the end of the bulletin.

We thank you for your dedication, and very much look forward to a continued cooperation.

Milestone 2008: launch of ENVSEC assessment in Ukraine

On 26-27 February 2008 the Russian-language version of ENVSEC assessment report and work programme for Eastern Europe were presented in a joint launch with UNECE's 2nd Environmental Performance Review of Ukraine. This was the third of the country launches of ENVSEC assessment, following earlier events in Chisinau (June 2007) and Minsk (September 2007). In Kyiv and Donetsk more than 100 participants, including Government officials, representatives of ENVSEC partner agencies, donor and international organisations, media, business and NGOs, attended the presentations. Discussions on specific topics covered strategic planning and international environmental cooperation, air pollution, water management, waste and land resources. The events attracted broad media attention and coverage.

ENVSEC meetings: water – waste – hazards... cooperation

On 27 November 2007 in Simferopol, UNDP introduced to Crimea's sectoral ministries, national and local NGOs, research organisations, professional agencies, and municipality associations the concept of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as a tool to assist planning an environmental dimension of Crimea's Development Strategy. Major environmental issues were identified through a SWOT analysis and will form the basis for further work on the district level.

A seminar 'Cross-border Assessment and Transboundary Cooperation for Management of the Drisviaty / Druksiai Lake Basin' was facilitated by UNEP and REC on 7 December 2007 in Minsk, Belarus. The purpose of the seminar with participants from Belarus, Lithuania and Latvia was to outline stakeholders and their interests, make an assessment of available data on the state of the environment of the lake basin, and draft a working plan for project implementation in 2008. The main issues discussed were the effects of the Ignalina nuclear power plant on the biodiversity of the lake, and an assessment of environmental impact of the new nuclear power plant to be built in the area. Social concerns associated with the construction of the new plant and storage of radioactive waste, and the importance of public participation were highlighted too.

On 13-14 December 2007, a workshop on strengthening safety measures at hazardous facilities was held at Vadul-lui-Voda, Moldova under the auspices of ENVSEC and the UNECE convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents. The purpose of the workshop was to promote cooperation and application of common standards between Moldova and its neighbouring countries, Romania and Ukraine by discussing legislation and methods to ensure adequate safety at hazardous activities.

Meetings on information exchange in the framework of Dniester basin cooperation were organised by UNEP in Kyiv (29-30 February 2008) and Chernivtsi (15 April 2008). Moldova's and Ukraine's national and local authorities in the water, environment, monitoring, and health sectors, NGOs and researchers discussed the contents and details of a common Dniester geographic information system, including mechanisms and conditions of exchanging data within the countries and internationally. A pilot version of the system will become operational by the end of the year.

On 18 March 2008, the OSCE organised in Kyiv an assessment workshop on the illegal cross-border traffic of hazardous waste. Participants included Ukraine's Ministry of Environment Protection and its environmental inspectorates, the Ministry of Health, State Customs and Border services. The secretariat and resource centre of the Basel Convention were also represented. The participants deemed the currently existing gaps in border control very obvious; the proposed programme of training intends to help narrow some of them down throughout 2008.

Contribution to external events

ENVSEC contributed to OSCE seminar in Odesa on 14-15 April 2008 devoted to economic and environmental confidence-building measures in the Transnistrian region of Moldova. Needs for enhanced cooperation were highlighted in the domains of Dniester river basin management; the prevention of river bank erosion and natural disasters; the protection of fish stocks and terrestrial biodiversity (i.a. in the Lower Dniester area); the re-packaging, centralization and removal of dangerous pesticides from Transnistria; improving the regulatory framework for environmental activities through the selective and gradual application of international legal standards (by, for example, drawing on the experience of new members of the EU); and enhancing environmental research and analytical capacities in the region. Follow-up to the meeting will be further discussed in Chisinau and Tiraspol throughout the year.

On 25 April 2008 UNEP took part in the annual meeting of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Chernobyl (video-conference between New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris, Copenhagen, Moscow, Kyiv and Minsk), presenting a newly funded ENVSEC project on the study of contamination by Plutonium, Americium and other radionuclides in the Belarus sector of the Chernobyl exclusion zone. Facilitated by NATO Science for

Peace and Security programme, the project will considerably enhance awareness about the current state of pollution in the area, as well as about risks associated with the relocation and transfer of radionuclide through natural phenomena such as floods and forest fires.

Recent developments in projects

A series of *Dniester* basin cooperation meetings will take place this and the following years. With the support of OSCE and UNECE the meetings will further the implementation of a jointly agreed basin-wide Action Programme. In addition to work towards a shared information management system already described above, and to promoting the adoption of a new basin agreement, specific activities are planned on fisheries / biodiversity conservation and sanitary monitoring depending on available funding. Meanwhile a NATO project to support real-time monitoring on the Dniester and Prut rivers is coming to a conclusion. On 28 March - 5 April 2008 the PHOENIX company visited Moldova in order to repair the four stations of automated monitoring and put them into operation. The Tudora station is already functional, the rest will be attended soon. Once the stations are fully operational, monitoring data will be disseminated i.a. through a website of Moldova's Hydrometeorological Service.

A recently added Belarus – Ukrainian project in the upper *Pripyat* basin will facilitate the development, harmonisation and bilateral implementation of water allocation procedures for the Beloozerskaya water-feed system of the Dnieper-Buh Canal. Analytical and field work will start in the near future, a bilateral workshop will be held in Pinsk in late 2008. Another project on the Pripyat for potential inclusion in ENVSEC work programme is being developed with the help of NATO. It will support automated monitoring of flood and modelling of water flow for early cross-border warning about extreme events.

Jointly with the *Danube* commission (ICPDR), ENVSEC will facilitate a feasibility study for joint environmental monitoring, assessment and exchange of information for an integrated management of the Danube delta. The project builds upon a 2007 decision of ICPDR Heads of Delegations to co-operate towards achieving a good ecological status of the Danube delta in line with EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and international and regional environmental obligations, including the preparation of a coordinated Danube Delta Analysis Report.

ENVSEC support to mitigating risks from stocks of *obsolete pesticides* in Moldova has been largely completed, over 1100 tons of pesticides were centralised and re-packed with the help of NATO / NAMSA and the OSCE office in Chisinau. At the Government's request NATO is considering further possibilities to provide additional help to remove and destroy the now centralised stocks. OSCE is also evaluating options for assisting pesticide disposal in Transnistria. An ENVSEC-facilitated proposal to study situation at selected pesticide depots in Belarus and to advance plasma technologies for in-country pesticide destruction will be presented to NATO Science for Peace project panel in May 2008.

Addressing environmental impacts of *industrial and mining* activities, UNEP will start the inventory of mining waste in the Donetsk oblast of Ukraine. The work is coordinated with the Ministries of the Environment and Coal Industry in view of contributing to the closure or re-profiling of *Donbas* mines. A media workshop focusing on Donbas environmental issues will take place in July 2008. Donetsk experts and representatives of cooperating agencies will visit Hungary to study practical experience of using environmental information and monitoring systems for environmental risks assessment and making environmental quality information easily accessible to the public. In Belarus Potassium-mining district of *Soligorsk*, ENVSEC initiates a study of groundwater contamination to be followed by assessment of technological options for pollution prevention, clean-up and remediation.

On 5 March 2008, OSCE signed a memorandum of understanding with the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on cooperation in disposal of liquid rocket fuel (*mélange*). As financing gradually becomes available, a tender is under preparation for recycling the first 2,500 of 17,000 tonnes of the total accumulated stock of *mélange*.

Further questions about these or other ENVSEC activities not covered above can be addressed to ENVSEC secretariat, or directly to agencies responsible for design and implementation of respective projects activities.

Projects under preparations

The proposed by Ukraine and Belarus project on Pripyat flood monitoring and modelling is already mentioned under the Pripyat section above. Once funded, the project will start in 2009.

Ukraine's Ministry of Defence and NATO are preparing a project aimed at improving technologies for environmental rehabilitation of the Pryluky airfield. A technical mission was recently completed by Canada's Ministry of Defence. When the project is developed, its funding and association with ENVSEC will be discussed.

Responding to request of Belarus, ENVSEC is planning a feasibility study towards assessment and improved management of environmental risks at closed and operational military sites. Belarus neighbouring states may provide both expertise and financial support.

Pulling together multifaceted international expertise to meet demand from the region, ENVSEC partner agencies consider the development of guidelines on the use of international law and mediation to prevent and resolve environmental conflicts. This will help Governmental agencies to more efficiently use the existing international mechanisms to avoid and resolve controversies, and strengthen the overall climate of dialogue and cooperation in the region.

Updated regional work programme

Based on the discussions held last year (cf. information bulletin 2 / 2007), further per-project consultations, and the completion of a number of projects in 2007, the ENVSEC work programme for Eastern Europe has been updated to reflect the current situation. A summary of the updated work programme is included in the annex, its full version is available on the ENVSEC web site. Since the regional programme remains work in progress, we will continue soliciting project-specific comments and suggestions from the participating countries and agencies to take them into account.

Focal point news

ENVSEC environmental focal point in Moldova, Ms Violeta Ivanov, recently became the country's Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources. We congratulate Her Excellency on this new position and notably broader responsibilities, and look forward to our further and enhanced cooperation.

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ANNEXES

Summary of ENVSEC activities in Belarus – Moldova – Ukraine

Focus areas and projects	Implementation		Funding available
	Organisations	Countries	
Management of shared environmental resources			
Transboundary cooperation and sustainable management in the Dniester river basin: implementation of the action programme	UNECE OSCE UNEP	MD, UA	partial
Real-time monitoring and decision support systems for international rivers: the Dniester and Prut rivers	NATO	MD, UA (with RO)	full
Cross-border assessment and management plan for the Drisviaty / Druksiai lake basin	UNEP REC	BY (with LT, LV)	full
Sustainable management of shared water resources in the upper Pripyat basin	UNEP OSCE UNDP	BY, UA	partial
Joint environmental monitoring, assessment and exchange of information for integrated management of the Danube delta	UNECE OSCE UNEP	UA, MD (with RO)	partial
Environmental assessment of development planning and environment-security monitoring in Crimea	UNDP UNEP	UA	partial
Mitigating security risks from sources of pollution and waste			
Mitigating risks from stocks of obsolete pesticides in transboundary basins and near-border areas	NATO OSCE (MD)	MD, BY	partial
Development of capacities for application of the Espoo Convention	UNECE	BY, UA	not yet
Assessment and capacity-building for managing environment and security risks in Donbas and Soligorsk regions	UNEP	BY, UA	full
Study of Plutonium, Americium and other radionuclides in the Belarus sector of the Chernobyl power plant's exclusion zone	NATO	BY with UA	full
Addressing environmental aspects of security policies			
Sustainability assessment of energy security strategies	UNDP UNEP	BY, MD, UA	partial
Training, awareness raising and institutional support to address environmental effects of defence activities	OSCE (UA)	UA with BY, MD	not yet
Disposal of stocks of rocket fuel toxic component (mélange)	OSCE (UA)	UA	partial
Strengthening institutions in the environment and security domain			
Needs assessment, technical, institutional and legal strengthening of environmental cooperation and management in Transnistria	OSCE UNEP	MD	partial
Prevention of illegal cross-border transport of hazardous waste: training of border and environmental authorities	OSCE (UA)	UA with BY, MD	full
Illegal logging: governance, implementation and enforcement	REC	UA (with SEE)	not yet
Awareness, public participation and education on environment and security risks and linkages	UNEP OSCE REC	BY, MD, UA	partial

envsec e. europe • 2008 • calendar of events

per april 2008

oct - dec

jul - sep

apr - jun

jan - mar

oct - dec 2007

- event
- activity / output
- = envsec / associated
- plain = external event

"tbc": to be confirmed

	oct - dec 2007	jan - mar	apr - jun	jul - sep	oct - dec	
shared natural resources	lake drisviaty - minsk s.e.a. for crimea dev planning - simferopol	dneister info group - kyiv	dneister & prut monitoring stations operational dneister III - kyiv dneister info group country meetings lake drisviaty mission and workshop - minsk pripyat survey osce navigation & env safety conf - odesa	s.e.a. manual for crimea osce navigation & env safety conf - odesa	dneister III - tbc pripyat & dbk meeting - pinsk dneister ngo conf - chisinau drisviaty data & fs	dneister pilot gis & data exchange
pollution and waste	fact-finding donbas - soligorsk ind accidents - vadul-lui-voda	transport of haz waste assessment - kyiv	donetsk monitoring study tour - hungary kerch oil spill mission [unep] ind accidents training [germany] - odesa	donbas mining mission ... & waste transport of haz waste training - tbc polesie reserve radiation survey	radiation safety & cooperation - kyiv energy & env scenarios - tbc	mining and env - tbc donetsk info pilot
env aspects of sec policy	energy brainstorm - lund	osce - ukr melange agreement and 1st phase tender preparation priluky base visit [nato - canada]				
institutional and cross-cutting	envsec regional retreat - lausanne	launch of envsec assessment - kyiv & donetsk	transnistria mission nato project monitoring - mold transnistria csbm meeting - odesa	donetsk media training regional media camp - tbc	envsec regional meeting - tbc	envsec board & advisory meeting - brussels
multi-regional events and activities	osce ministerial council - madrid environment for europe - belgrade	nato env security forum - brussels nato sps committee and advisory panel unep governing council - monaco	envsec board meeting - vienna nato project panel nato sps committee and advisory panel un chernobyl tf - new york osce 16 econ & env forum - prague	env diplomacy course - bossy	nato sps committee and advisory panel	

NB: Only major outputs / activities are shown. Information is per april 2008, the timing and placement of events is based on the best available knowledge at the time of compilation.