This issue of the bulletin covers developments under the Environment and Security initiative (ENVSEC) in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine between December 2008 and May 2009. The period has been particularly busy with regard to cooperation in shared water basins (Dniester, Danube, Pripyat, Drisviaty lake). Highlights in other dimensions include progress with mélange and hazardous waste trade in Ukraine, a study tour to Hungary, and a visit of ENVSEC field projects in Moldova and southern Ukraine by Canada International Development Agency. As usual, we will be grateful for all feedback, corrections and thoughts. Details about ENVSEC are found at www.envsec.org.

Project news December 2008 - May 2009

A series of ENVSEC events aimed at supporting stronger cooperation in shared water basins. These included the Dniester (meeting in March 09 in Chisinau), the Danube (December 08 in Vienna and March 09 in Izmail), the Pripyat (February in Kyiv), and Drisviaty lake (April in Visaganis). On the concrete level, feasibility studies for introducing joint management plans for shared basins are being finalised for Drisviaty lake and the Danube Delta region (the latter also welcomed by ICPDR Standing Working Group meeting in May). A field survey on the upper Pripyat completed the basis for water allocation rules between Belarus and Ukraine, aiming at their formalisation by 2010.

In the Dniester basin, a pilot geoinformation system was completed and presented to the basin states. New activities that will be started under ‘Dniester III’ project umbrella include new consultations among experts on legal issues of basin management (towards a basin-wide legal agreement); protection of fish and biodiversity, monitoring and information exchange; stronger publicity work on the local level; and a feasibility study for improved joint monitoring in the basin. A new component for flood control and climate adaptation will be developed during 2009.

Meeting on illegal trade in hazardous waste in Chernihiv in April 09 included, in addition to Ukraine’s, also oblast-level authorities from Belarus. Ideas for continuation included helping countries to check the effectiveness of their border check procedures, embed the topic into establish professional training, and further popularise the problem (not least in cooperation with the Basel Convention).

In Donetsk, a regional pollution register is being prepared by oblast authorities and specialists. Mapping of mining waste was also initiated. A workshop with Ukraine’s Ministry of Coal in June will discuss ENVSEC study of environmental impacts from Donbas mining, and discuss strategic approaches to limit them (EU and the World Bank have been interested in the study too). In April, mining and information experts from Ukraine and Belarus took part in a study tour to Hungary.
NATO project on obsolete pesticides in Belarus officially started in January, and is preparing for sampling at the Petrikov and Brest near-border depots. In Moldova, NATO has already helped repack and centralise some 3000 tonnes from over 400 unregistered pesticide dumps. 1300 tonnes were already destroyed under a GEF / World Bank project, with NATO’s analytical support. Funds for destroying another 1900 tonnes are being raised under NATO/PfP/ENVSEC. The Chisinau-Tiraspol Ecology Working Group met in Tiraspol in February, discussing among other topics ENVSEC-OSCE proposal for how to approach repackaging and destruction of obsolete pesticides in Transnistria.

A NATO-facilitated radiation study in Belarus’ Polesie Radiation Reserve moved into the second field season: starting with a joint sampling in May, fieldwork will continue until September.

After signing an agreement in December 08 for destroying part of mélange (rocket fuel oxidiser) stock in Ukraine, OSCE organised a tender selection panel in Ivano-Frankivsk in March, coupled with site visits for bidders. Funds for the first phase of destruction are available.

In April, REC in Szentendre, Hungary held training in the prevention of environmental crime. It is expected that Ukraine will benefit from ENVSEC’s linked project to combat illegal logging, based on rich South-Eastern European experience. Connection was also established between this project and World Bank’s Forest Law Enforcement and Governance initiative (FLEG) where Ukraine already participates.

Following last-year training in Strategic Environmental Assessment for Crimea’s districts, one will be selected for a full SEA. Results will be reviewed by a national workshop in Simferopol in late 2009.

And a mission from the Canadian International Development Agency visited Odesa and Chisinau in March, interviewing ENVSEC partners and appreciating results achieved on the ground since 2007.

Outlook for the rest of the year

Project work will continue throughout 2009 and beyond, not least leaning upon continued support provided to ENVSEC by the recipient countries and donor governments. A cooperation agreement was reached with Finland for 2009-13, and a renewed agreement is being discussed with Sweden for 2010-12. In April, a concept for cross-border monitoring of floods on the Pripyat river was introduced to NATO’s SPS Committee; the applicants (Ukraine, Belarus and Slovakia) were invited to present a full project plan at Committee’s next meeting in 2009. A dialogue with the EU is maintained on specific cases of mutual interest (Donbas, Pripyat, Transnistria, the Danube, energy-security-environment).

Based on an analysis of energy-environment interactions and strategies in the region, an ENVSEC workshop with country experts and the European Environment Agency will take place at Lund University in October. Looking at the environmental dimension of national energy strategies, the meeting will also explore modern approaches to long-term scenario analysis in the energy-environment domain.

On the sub-regional level, Belarus has chosen a pilot project for applying Espoo procedures. A process for a projected hydropower plant on the Neman river will start in summer with the support of UNECE’s Espoo Convention and OSCE. (The plant may affect Lithuania and Russia’s Kaliningrad oblast.)

Overall, ENVSEC will try to further improve awareness of environment-security connections among the region’s public and media. Media training is planned in Belarus in connection with the national ‘Environmental Security’ film festival this autumn. On the local scale ENVSEC will support environmental awareness in the city of Novopolotsk in Belarus and in Crimea in Ukraine.

In 2009, ENVSEC’s coordination meeting for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine will take place within the region. In addition to a usual review of ENVSEC operations and programming in Eastern Europe, it will discuss a special topic: interactions between the region’s environment, security and a changing global climate.
### Projects in the work programme

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<td>Destruction of pesticides using thermal plasma technology (including analytical work at near-border depots)</td>
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Country presences of ENVSEC partner agencies (OSCE, UNDP, NATO), and ENVSEC national focal points in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine: please see http://www.envsec.org/easteur/index.php#res
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envsec e. europe • 2009 • calendar of events
per may 2009

NB: Only major outputs / activities are shown. Information is per may 2009, the timing and placement of events is based on the best available knowledge at the time of compilation.