

April – June 2011

## The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC)

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) is a partnership of six international organizations (the OSCE, REC, UNDP, UNECE, UNEP, and NATO as an associated partner) that aims at identifying and reducing interlinked environment and security risks through strengthening cooperation among and within countries in four regions: Central Asia, Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe and Southern Caucasus. Specific regional developments during the reporting quarter include the following:

*ENVSEC Management Board meeting:* On 18 May, the ENVSEC Management Board met in Vienna, Austria. Key outcomes of the meeting included the approval of ten new project proposals which will be implemented in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus, as well as the launch of the Environment and Security Network. The network will serve as an alliance of various parties, inter- and non-governmental, public and private, working together towards the common goal of addressing interlinked environment and security issues worldwide, with a specific focus on Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States countries. For information on the network please see: [http://www.envsec.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=87&lang=en](http://www.envsec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=87&lang=en)

### Central Asia

Under an ENVSEC project on dam safety, results of the safety review of the Kirov dam were presented to Kazakh and Kyrgyz partners during the Chu-Talas Bilateral Commission meeting on 22 April in Taraz, Kazakhstan. The partners endorsed the baseline study report which concluded that while the dam was safe, monitoring equipment needed to be installed. A consultation session within the Transboundary effects of industrial accidents project was organized during the first week of May in Bratislava, Slovakia. The session aimed to begin analyzing the level of implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, identifying main enforcement gaps in Central Asian countries and sharing lessons learnt with Eastern European and other non-Central Asian countries. The Aarhus Centre in Khujand, Tajikistan, provided communities located at environmental hotspots with assistance in developing local environmental action plans. It also produced the first episode of its new regular environmental awareness-raising TV programme.

### Eastern Europe

In Chisinau, Moldova, on 18-20 April, a series of ENVSEC meetings took place to promote cooperation between Ukraine and Moldova in the Dniester River basin. The countries discussed ENVSEC Dniester-III project progress, the status of the Dniester basin agreement and new legal instruments



under development for jointly protecting Dniester biodiversity. A back-to-back working group meeting on flood management and climate change adaptation reviewed approaches to assess the basin's vulnerability to climate change and floods and explored automatic monitoring synergies with the World Bank, EU, World Meteorological Organization, UNDP and bilateral donors. Health authorities from both countries agreed to participate in a joint sampling of Dniester water quality and discussed how to further strengthen coordinated monitoring in the basin. On 26 May, food security experts and policy makers from Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine gathered in Kiev to discuss how food security in the region could be affected by climate change, and what policy measures should be taken to address arising challenges.

### South Eastern Europe

On 5 April, a National Consultation Meeting took place in Tirana, Albania, within the framework of the Transboundary water management in the Western Balkans project. Albanian representatives from the public and private sectors, water user associations, academia, NGOs as well as international organizations and donors met to initiate the development of a Drin water basin situation analysis, including the decreasing water level of Prespa Lake. Threats to biodiversity, water regulation from hydropower, water pollution and floods were also discussed. Enhanced transboundary cooperation for the sustainable management of the extended Drin basin, institutionalized through a joint commission, was acknowledged as one of the responses to decreasing the risk of serious floods, as well as enhancing the protection of biodiversity. Under an ENVSEC project in South-Eastern Europe, entitled Strengthening regional cooperation on environmental governance through participatory and informed decision making and implementation process, a new Aarhus Centre was launched on 14 April in Montenegro. The centre will facilitate and promote access to environmental information for the public and provide institutional support to Montenegro's implementation of the Aarhus Convention, which the country became a party in 2009. A workshop, entitled Synergies for Efficient Implementation and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and European Union

Environmental Legislation relevant to the mining sector in South Eastern Europe – a transboundary case, took place in Whistler, Canada, on 19-20 June. The workshop was attended by environmental experts from national authorities, specialized institutions and international organizations. Discussions focused on the application of pertinent EU legislation and multilateral environmental agreements in the context of transboundary cooperation on shared river basins heavily polluted by adjacent mining activities. Recommendations on how to enhance coordinated efforts to prevent pollution and industrial accidents in transboundary water bodies were put forward by participants.

programme, small grants were awarded to four NGOs working in the field of environment and security in Azerbaijan. These grants, ranging from 7,000 to 9,000, will finance projects promoting alternative energy sources in small farms, encouraging efficient energy use, managing hazardous medical waste and chemicals and improved monitoring of summer pastures.

### South Caucasus

On 24-25 May, a regional capacity building workshop on the Espoo Convention took place in Tbilisi, Georgia, bringing together 27 participants from the ministries of environment of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. Stakeholders reviewed their national systems of environmental impact assessments and gathered examples from countries with more effective systems. Under the Civic Action for Security and Environment (CASE)

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