

Environment and Security in South Eastern Europe:

Improving regional cooperation for risk management from pollution hotspots as well as the transboundary management of shared natural resources

BRIGHT SIDE

mountain biodiversity



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Mountain biodiversity

One of the most beautiful and untouched areas of wilderness in Europe is the mountainous region on the borders of the South East European countries. Due to unsustainable economic activities in agriculture, forest management, illegal logging, hunting, husbandry and collection of medicinal plants, as well as uncontrolled construction, biodiversity loss has been recognized as a security risk in South Eastern Europe (SEE). On the other hand, good technical cooperation in the field of natural resource management can contribute to stability and sustainable development of the region.

To encourage regional cooperation in transboundary mountain areas in SEE.

- ▶ To develop a network of mountain protected areas in the region as a regional platform for cooperation and capacity building
- ▶ To support concrete cooperative initiatives, such as “Peace Parks” and creation of protected areas in border regions
- ▶ To organize capacity-building and exchange with other mountain regions of Europe

Support concrete action in or exchange of experience between transboundary mountain areas:

- Sharr/Shara Mountains and Korabi (Serbia (Kosovo*)/Albania/Macedonia), Bjeshket e Nemuna/Prokletije Mountains (Albania/Serbia (Kosovo*)/Montenegro)
- Orjen – Snježnica (Bosnia and Herzegovina/Croatia/Montenegro)
- Vlahina – Maleshevska – Belasica (Macedonia/Greece/Bulgaria)
- Sutjeska – Durmitor – Tara river valley (Bosnia and Herzegovina/Montenegro)
- West Stara Planina (Serbia/Bulgaria)
- Tara Mountain – Drina (Bosnia and Herzegovina/Serbia)
- Osogovsky Planine/Osogovo (Macedonia/Bulgaria)

Support to the Balkan Peace Park Project (BPPP) and local stakeholders in Prokletije/Bjeshket e Nemuna.

Promote the establishment of a National Park Shara in Macedonia
Capacity building and exchange with the Alpine and Carpathian regions

* Territory under UN Administration



Environment and Security (ENVSEC) is an initiative of five partners and one associate member: The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) specializes in early warning, conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides authoritative assessments of the state of the environment as well as project-management and technical skills. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) oversees the UN's global development network, which seeks to reduce poverty and promote the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) formulates environmental policy and develops international environmental law, including five regional environmental conventions. The Regional Environment Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) carries out field projects addressing a wide range of environmental concerns and promotes sustainable development in the region. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) supports the Initiative as an associate member by strengthening civil science and innovation through its Science for Peace and Security Committee.

The Initiative focuses on four pilot regions: Central Asia, Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and South Eastern Europe.



THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
for Central and Eastern Europe



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DARK SIDE

mining pollution



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Mining pollution

Badly operated or abandoned mining sites have already caused severe pollution in the Balkans. Some, like cyanide, heavy metal spills and various other releases into water courses, are a principal cause of transboundary accidental pollution. Such incidents create additional political tensions at a time when peace and cooperation are at the top of the agenda. Chronic and acute pollution associated with accidents have had serious impacts on human health in the past and pose considerable risks in the future. In addition to their direct environmental impacts, these problems create a negative atmosphere for economic investments, desperately needed in the South East European (SEE) region.



To reduce transboundary environmental and human safety risks from sub-standard mines in SEE.

- ▶ Targeted assessment of transboundary environmental and health risks resulting from mining
- ▶ Development of appropriate policy and technical options
- ▶ Demonstrations and pilot activities, in particular focusing on innovative, local and cost-efficient risk reduction and management measures
- ▶ Capacity building to address problems at a regional and local level, including tools for early warning, civil protection and conflict resolution.

Identify prioritized “environmental hot spots”

Catalyze follow-up on pilot sites, such as:

Rubik, Rrëshen, Kurbnesh, Fushë-Arrëz, Kukës, Gjegjan, Elbasan (Albania), Bor mines, Krupanj – Veliki Majdan, Majdanpek, Kolubara (Serbia), Trepča (Serbia – Kosovo*), Vareš, Srebrenica (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Šuplja Stena, Mojkovac (Montenegro), Sasa, Lojane, Buchim, Probishtip and Dobrovo (FYR Macedonia)

Regional capacity building “Mining for Closure”

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC): An international partnership for managing conflict and risk

It is widely recognized today that the destruction and over-exploitation of natural resources and ecosystems can threaten the security of communities and nations. Similarly, disputes over environmental issues such as cross-border pollution or shared assets such as rivers and lakes can cause political tension and even conflict. Countries experiencing an economic transition or political stress are particularly vulnerable to environmental damage and competition over resources.

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) was conceived to support countries in their efforts to manage environmental risks. This international partnership recognizes that the best path to addressing environmental and security concerns is through international dialogue and neighbourly cooperation. It therefore assists Governments to identify common solutions and to develop joint projects for achieving them.



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