

# **STRATEGIC REVIEW OF THE ENVSEC INITIATIVE**

**Final Report**

**Matthias Stiefel  
Geneva, June 2009**

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## Letter to the Chairman of the ENVSEC Management Board

Marco  
Director  
UN Economic Commission for Europe

Keiner

Dear Mr. Keiner,

I am pleased to transmit to you this final report that contains main findings and recommendations of the strategic review of the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), carried out at the request of the Management Board between March and May of this year.

The objective of the review was to critically examine ENVSEC six years after its inception in order to assess its continued relevance and to consider how well its approach, methodology and organization allow it to achieve its objectives.

As you will see, the report concludes that the thematic focus of ENVSEC, the interaction between environmental, security and conflict factors, remains highly relevant and is certain to gain in strategic importance in the years to come; that the partnership model, offering an integrated response to these complex environment/security challenges by associating development agencies and partners with different but complementary expertise and mandates, was and remains innovative and pioneering; and that the ENVSEC approach and methodology, emphasizing multi-actor participation, national ownership and donor coordination, was and remains appropriate and indeed necessary for ENVSEC to achieve its ambitious goals.

The report also shows, however, that the translation of this ambitious and pioneering vision into practice in ENVSEC program countries proved more difficult than expected. Indeed, the challenges of implementing integrated and participatory development approaches into practice, which are considerable even under the best of circumstances, are compounded in this case by the legacies of conflicts and crisis proper to these transition countries. The report also shows how difficult it is to practically operate such an innovative model of development cooperation that associates development agencies, donor countries and program countries in new ways, and to institutionalize these forms of cooperation and make them sustainable.

Throughout the first six years ENVSEC partners and donors have shown their determination to make this experiment work, and they have shown a healthy dose of self-criticism, manifest in multiple evaluations and subsequent reforms. The latest such reform, the "Blueprint" adopted by the Management Board and ENVSEC partners in late 2008 and presently under implementation, represents an important mile stone. I hope that the present report and its recommendations will assist ENVSEC in continuing on this path so that ENVSEC can become a truly innovative and effective model of multi-actor cooperation that can successfully respond to our globalized world's ever more complex challenges.

Geneva, 11 June 2009

Matthias Stiefel

## **Acknowledgements and Disclaimer**

The present report summarizes the findings and recommendations of a strategic review of ENVSEC carried out by Matthias Stiefel as an independent consultant to the ENVSEC Management Board. The author would like to express his gratitude to all those in the wider ENVSEC family and beyond who have generously contributed their time, experience and reflections and allowed this review to be carried out. Special thanks go to the staff from OSCE, UNEP Vienna and REC who have facilitated the field trips to the South Caucasus and South Eastern Europe, to the field staff of these organizations and to the many interlocutors in Armenia, Georgia, Macedonia and Serbia who have patiently answered my questions and shared their insights and perspectives. Special thanks go also to members of the ENVSEC Management Board for their availability and openness to critically review the initiative, and of course to the ENVSEC Secretariat in Geneva for their tireless support.

Though this report reflects the insights and reflections collected in numerous interviews, the author assumes sole responsibility for the opinions expressed in this report.

## Executive Summary

The present report represents the main findings and recommendations of a strategic review of the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) carried out between March and May 2009 at the request of the ENVSEC Management Board. It contributes to the Chairman's objectives for 2009 to review the vision and strategy of the Initiative. Its findings and recommendations should contribute to the process of reform, initiated with the "Blueprint document", aimed at enabling ENVSEC to successfully grow and perform effectively at higher levels of impact and relevance.

The review is based on a desk study of all available and directly relevant documents, on interviews with key informants, on insights gained during ENVSEC Management Board and Donor meetings, and on visits to two ENVSEC regions (Southern Caucasus and South East Europe) and four ENVSEC program countries: Armenia, Georgia, Macedonia and Serbia.

The Review offers a general strategic assessment of ENVSEC, six years after it was launched, of the relevance of its mission and of its impact. The reports also formulates recommendations in response to difficulties arising as ENVSEC applied its concept in the field, and in response to problems of growth encountered at the central level.

### Main Findings and Recommendations:

1. The thematic focus of ENVSEC – the interaction between environmental degradation and conflict – remains highly relevant and is likely to gain in strategic importance as long-term trends and processes such as climate change, the decreasing natural resource base and competition over the control of energy gain in importance.
2. Responding to these complex environment/security challenges requires a multi-disciplinary approach that integrates environmental, technical, economic and political perspectives. It also requires close collaboration between the State and civil society, as well as international cooperation. In ENVSEC countries these difficulties are compounded by conditions proper to post-conflict and transition countries.
3. ENVSEC remains unique as an innovative partnership of agencies offering an integrated response to such challenges.
4. Since its launch in 2003, ENVSEC has successfully carried out initial assessments at country and regional levels and has set up national ENVSEC mechanisms in program countries. It has implemented numerous projects, often of a technical nature such as remedial and clean-up actions. ENVSEC has also been able to provide a framework for regional cooperation, allowing countries to cooperate in managing trans-boundary natural resources and responding to trans-boundary challenges. This has proven to be particularly important in areas of "frozen conflicts". Over the years ENVSEC has grown considerably, both in terms of number and budgets of projects under implementation.
5. The ENVSEC experience not only demonstrates the value and potential of the principles embodied in the Paris declaration on Aid effectiveness, it also constitutes an innovative model of multi-actor

cooperation designed to respond to complex environment/security challenges in an integrated way.

6. As ENVSEC translated its innovative concept and approach into practice and applied its methodology in program countries, it encountered difficulties, mainly due to the special condition of post-conflict and transition countries. It was not able to build sufficiently strong national counterparts to ensure effective and lasting participation and national ownership. As a result ENVSEC activities tend to be donor-generated, project-based, with limited sustainability and limited capacity building components.
7. At the central level, ENVSEC has faced typical challenges of growth at management and governance levels as the scope and complexity of its work expanded. These were amplified by the innovative and experimental nature of ENVSEC's multi-agency approach. In consultation with main donors, the Initiative's Management Board has responded to the main problems by adopting a blueprint for reform which is at present under implementation.
8. The present report suggests a number of measures to deepen this program of reform and expand it to program countries, and thus to respond to some of the shortcomings revealed by this strategic review.
9. At the field level, the report suggests to build stronger national ENVSEC counterparts, and to greatly strengthen ENVSEC's capacity and presence at the country and regional level such as to be able to effectively train, accompany and resource them. It also recommends to move to a program based approach at both country and regional levels and to harmonize ENVSEC programs with national development strategies and national and regional donor strategies. The report recommends that more emphasis be given to local capacity building.
10. At the central level, the report commends ENVSEC's Management Board for the "Blueprint" of reforms, particularly its decision to separate governance and management functions and to set up a professional Secretariat as well a central fund management and administrative capacity. It underlines the importance of clearly defining and preserving the niche and central focus of ENVSEC's work and to continuously renew its vision and approach as it expands its partnership. The report suggests that ENVSEC start distilling its experience and lessons learned and contribute them to best practice and policy debates for the benefit of the wider development community. It suggests improving internal communication, to systematize and better structure fundraising and to explore new sources of funding. At the governance level, the report commends the Management Board for creating a Donors Forum and suggests ways to further clarify the role of donors in the governance of ENVSEC. It also recommends that a more prominent role be given to ENVSEC program countries, primarily at regional but also at central levels.
11. The report finally recalls four basic conditions for reforms to be successfully applied: the strong commitment of partner agencies, the quality of leadership and of staff, and the financial core support for the coming 3 to 4 years that is necessary to carry through these reforms.
12. The report concludes by challenging ENVSEC to successfully carry through the reforms over the coming years and thus to become a model of truly innovative and effective multi-actor cooperation. Expansion or replication of the ENVSEC Initiative in other parts of the world must then be explored.

## 1. Introduction – the ENVSEC Initiative

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) was launched in 2003 by three international organizations active in the transition countries of East and South-East Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia in response to the growing awareness of close links between environmental degradation, natural resource scarcity and conflict. The founding organizations were the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In the following years the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) joined the Initiative, and the North Atlantic Treaty Association (NATO) became an associate member.

Experience had shown that environmental and security factors could interact in both positive and negative ways, and that environmental challenges were at times a result of armed conflict, at times a source of conflict, but at times also a bridge for cooperation. Responding to these complex threats and opportunities required an integrated approach including environmental, economic, social and political expertise. Such integrated experience and expertise was available neither at the national nor international level.

ENVSEC was thus created as a partnership of international institutions with specialized but complementary mandates and expertise that could jointly provide such an integrated response to environment and security challenges and that could contribute to build such capacities within program countries.

The purpose of ENVSEC, as recently defined by its Management Board, is “to contribute to the reduction of environment and security risks and strengthened cooperation among and within countries”. ENVSEC pursues this goal by promoting at national and regional levels activities under three “pillars”: (a) In-depth vulnerability assessment, early warning and monitoring of environment and security risks, (b) Improving awareness on the interrelation between the environment and security, strengthening environmental policies, and improving the capacities and the roles of environmental institutions, and (c) Providing technical expertise and mobilizing financial support for clean-up and remediation activities.

ENVSEC’s approach and methodology advocate multi-stakeholder participation at assessment, project definition and implementation stages and are based on the principles of local ownership, integration of cooperation services and harmonization of donor policies and action. ENVSEC appears as a pioneering experiment in relation to the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda.

Since its launch in 2003 ENVSEC has grown considerably in its four core regions of Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, implementing in 2009 through its partner agencies more than 50 projects with a total budget of some 34 mio USD, of which about 2/3 is funded.

ENVSEC does not constitute a legal entity in itself, and actions carried out by its partner organizations are subject to their respective rules and regulations. The ENVSEC partnership is based on and governed by a

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that spells out respective roles and responsibilities of partner organizations, donors and partner staff seconded to the ENVSEC secretariat, and that defines governance as well as guidelines and principles for financial and project management.

## 2. The Strategic Review

### Objectives

As spelled out in the Terms of Reference (see Annex 2), the strategic review was to be “forward looking and strategic” and provide guidance as to ongoing and possible future reforms and generally in relation to the future development and expansion of the Initiative. It was to critically assess the strategic value and comparative advantage of ENVSEC, both in relation to its thematic environment/security focus, and in relation to its geographic coverage, and it was to assess cooperation between partners, donors, program countries and other stakeholders. The review was also to look at regional work programs in relation to program countries’ priorities and expectations, and to examine questions of funding and visibility.

In short, the strategic review was to critically examine the ENVSEC Initiative six years after it was launched. The objective was to assess ENVSEC’s continued relevance, to examine how its approach and methodology are translated into practice, and to suggest possible reforms that would allow it to function at higher levels of relevance and impact.

### Methodology

The Review is based on a desk study of all available and directly relevant documents from and about ENVSEC, starting in 2002 when the preparatory work for launching the Initiative was carried out. These include original founding documents, internal progress reports and work-programs, records of Management Board and other internal meetings, reports on field projects, external reviews carried out by CIDA (generally in 2006, and in relation to Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus in 2009) and by UNDP in relation to Central Asia in 2008. The review considered also academic documents, such as a PhD study on ENVSEC carried out by a student of the Central European University in Budapest, and documents drawn from the internet relevant to the environment/security challenges in Europe and to organizational and governance questions raised by the functioning of the ENVSEC partnership. The external reviews carried out by CIDA and UNDP were consulted at the end of this research such as not to unduly influence this review’s outcome. Not surprisingly, the conclusions of these partial assessments, particularly the last two carried out in 2008 and early 2009, largely corroborated the findings of the present review.

The desk study of documents was complemented by interviews with 69 key informants, by field visits to Armenia and Georgia in March 2009 and to Macedonia and Serbia in May 2009, and by attendance at meetings of the ENVSEC Management Board in March 2009 and of ENVSEC donors in April 2009. The informants that were interviewed (see Annex 1) represented ENVSEC partners, donor and development agencies, selected program countries and local stakeholders, as well as experts knowledgeable about ENVSEC and the broader environment/security questions in Europe. 30 of the 69 informants were interviewed during the field visits to four ENVSEC program countries

## Limitations

The present review represents a general and partial analysis of ENVSEC, its importance, achievements and shortcomings. The limitations of this review are due to resource and time constraints. Budgetary constraints limited this consultancy to a total of 35 days, and time and organizational constraints limited field visits to two of the four ENVSEC Regions, and to only four of some twenty ENVSEC Program countries. Findings based on ENVSEC's work at the field level are thus only based on first-hand investigation in Armenia, Georgia, Macedonia and Serbia and in the South Eastern Europe and Southern Caucasus regions. Extensive discussions with program staff about the Eastern Europe projects, and the recent (2008) UNDP assessment of ENVSEC in Central Asia, made it possible to establish some comparisons and to attempt to draw tentative general conclusions. Given the small and insufficiently representative sample on which findings and conclusions are thus based, they should be qualified as "impressions" rather than as findings.

The present Review thus offers a general strategic assessment of ENVSEC's relevance and impact and suggests a series of reforms to respond to some of the difficulties encountered as the original vision was applied in the field. It does not go into much detail and certainly does not represent another "Blueprint", as many of the recommendations require further in depth study before they can be translated into a program of action.

## 3. Main Findings

### 1. The central thematic focus of ENVSEC – the interaction between environmental degradation and conflict - remains highly relevant and its importance is likely to increase in the years to come

- **At the local level**, in ENVSEC program countries, all interlocutors unanimously stressed the strategic importance of environmental challenges that have real or potential conflict and security implications, and the urgency and difficulty to respond to them. They equally underlined how important it is to use environmental challenges that are common between neighbouring countries as a tool to build dialogue and cooperation, and in some cases to do this also within countries.
- **At the international level**, awareness of the importance of the complex and multiple ways in which environment and security factors and challenges interact has grown steadily since the launch of ENVSEC in 2003. This is manifest in the increasing number of studies, reports, policy and political declarations on this theme, and in the rapidly increasing number of actors – academic, scientific, governmental and non-governmental - that deal, or claim to deal, with these issues. The UN Security Council devoted a special session to the interaction between climate change and security in April 2007; the fact that this has not been followed by further action at the Security Council level does not indicate that the issue has lost in importance but is due to differences between member states as to the legitimacy of the Security Council dealing with such issues.

- Moreover, studies and projections relating to the direct and indirect impacts of climate change, to increasing natural resource scarcities, and to the difficult negotiations over control of energy sources and supplies, clearly indicate that in the years to come environmental factors will increasingly play an important if not primary role in conflicts and that they are likely to become a central consideration in security policy.

## 2. Responding effectively to environment/security challenges is difficult and demanding; in ENVSEC regions these difficulties are compounded by conditions proper to conflict, post-conflict and transition countries

Environment/security problems are difficult to respond to for a number of reasons:

- **Need for a multi-disciplinary, multi-policy and multi-actor approach:**  
Environment /security challenges are complex because they raise simultaneously technical, economic and political issues. They must thus be approached in a multi-disciplinary and holistic way, combining environmental, economic, social and political expertise. Different actors and institutions, presenting such specialized and complementary expertise, must join forces and act as part of an integrated and strategically defined plan of action. It thus requires a multi-disciplinary, multi-policy and multi-actor approach.
- **Need for a multi-level approach:**  
Environment/security challenges also require action simultaneously at local, national and regional levels. At local levels because that is where the impact of environmental degradation is directly felt, and where immediate remedies can be brought; at national levels because that is where policies are made and resources are allocated, and at regional or international levels because both environmental and security issues are normally “trans-boundary” issues. Action at all three levels needs again to be integrated, thus the need for a multi-level approach.
- **Need for participation, State-civil society collaboration and international cooperation:**  
To effectively respond to environment/security challenges also requires:
  - At the national level, close collaboration between the State and its organs and civil society, including the private sector. This requires effective participation by the people in an area which is politically highly sensitive, given security implications, and in a political context where the State is usually reluctant to delegate or divest some of its exclusive responsibility over security matters.
  - At the international level, strong regional cooperation, and this between countries whose relations may be beset by suspicion and tensions and who may have been at war.

**These difficulties, intrinsic to environment/security challenges, are compounded in ENVSEC regions by the particular characteristics of conflict, post-conflict and transition countries:**

- Governments tend either to be authoritarian, perpetuating past political practices under new forms, or to lack legitimacy and to be openly challenged by opposition forces, and thus to be weak and ineffective.
- In both cases, governments tend to be over-sensitive to security matters and to be unwilling to compromise on the State's monopoly over security issues.
- Given the overriding concerns for state-building, for providing security and consolidating peace, environmental issues are generally not high on the government's political agenda and tend to be seen as a technical problem and a burden to the budget, unless they affect directly or indirectly security issues.
- Decision-making processes tend to be top-down, with little or no consultation of stakeholders. There is little tradition of effective participation by the people in making decisions, and democratic culture is young and little developed. In general, governments tend to distrust participatory processes, and shy away from "multi-stakeholder" processes that they cannot control. They tend to view NGOs at best with suspicion, at worst as agents of the opposition or of foreign powers.
- Civil society is hardly developed as a structured and organized force. NGOs are young, with little experience, and little legitimacy.
- Government institutions are often over- bureaucratic and too complicated to allow for effective action. Mid-to-long-term strategic thinking is not developed, and capacity to effectively define projects and programs and to administer them tends to be low within line-ministries. Competition between government agencies and units with overlapping mandates works against coordinated action. Corruption often influences the allocation of scarce resources to programs and projects. The motivation of government civil servants is often low.

### **3. Six years after it was launched ENVSEC remains unique as an innovative multi-agency partnership offering an integrated response to complex environment/security challenges**

Given the nature and magnitude of the challenge of responding effectively to environment/security problems in post-conflict and transition countries it is not surprising that no alternative actor or agency appears to have emerged over the years, neither at international nor national levels, though an increasing number of organizations focus on specific aspects and dimensions of these problems and claim expertise in these fields. No single actor can indeed respond fully to these challenges, thus the value of ENVSEC's decision to create a loose partnership of agencies and organizations with specialized but complementary mandates and expertise. ENVSEC's structure, approach and methods, defined in 2002 and 2003, appear retrospectively as visionary and pioneering. The ENVSEC concept, as it was defined at its launch in 2003, retains all its validity, though its application in practice proved more challenging than was expected, as we will see below.

**Key elements of the ENVSEC concept that make its strength and define its comparative advantage are:**

- The thematic focus on environment/security challenges which defines an important strategic niche .
- The multi-agency partnership which offers a multi-disciplinary response to these challenges.
- The bottom-up participatory approach, defined and first put in practice in the first round of assessments carried out in the ENVSEC regions, and designed to ensure national ownership and sustainability.
- The regional approach which takes fully into account the “trans-boundary” nature of the challenges and provides a flexible framework for regional cooperation.
- The flexible and light organizational structure, where each partner organization keeps its own set of procedures, but that allows in practice to successfully combine different institutional cultures. This allowed for pragmatic ad-hoc solutions and quick responses as problems arose.
- The exceptional commitment of the founders and of original staff who consistently gave priority to the vision and objectives of ENVSEC over personal interests or those of their agencies and organizations and who elicited enthusiasm among stakeholders.

All these elements of the ENVSEC concept remain valid and necessary, though, as we will see below, some of them are difficult to apply in practice and to sustain over time. Experience also shows that they are not sufficient, and that some of the difficulties inherent in environment/security problems in post-conflict and transition countries have not been sufficiently taken into account.

#### 4. Applying the ENVSEC concept in practice: Achievements

Some of the main achievements of ENVSEC, as it applied its vision and concept in practice, are:

- The **initial round of regional and local assessments** of environmental vulnerabilities and hotspots with security implications, the presentation of results in attractive and easily understandable cartographic form, and their discussion in national and regional consultations were undoubtedly very successful. The assessments were carried out in a broadly participatory way, and the process not only created awareness of the issues up to highest levels of government but also local enthusiasm and commitment to address these challenges with the assistance of ENVSEC and its partners.
- Through the **establishment of national ENVSEC mechanisms** and the definition of National Focal Points ENVSEC started to establish networks of stakeholder groups in program countries, including government agencies, NGOs, private sector, the academic community and donors and international agencies.
- **In areas of frozen conflicts**, particularly in the Southern Caucasus and in Eastern Europe, ENVSEC provided a unique facility that enabled the different countries and parties involved to start assessing, monitoring and responding to environmental challenges, at least through **policy dialogue**.
- Generally speaking, ENVSEC has been able to provide a space where politically sensitive environmental issues could be “de-politicized” and discussed on a technical level, thus **providing first steps for dialogue and cooperation**.

- An impressive number of technical investigations and “clean up and remedial” projects related to industrial and military pollution have been carried out in all regions, apparently successfully.
- ENVSEC provided a **convenient framework for regional cooperation** that allowed countries to engage in the joint management of trans-boundary natural resources, primarily waterways and rivers.
- Generally, ENVSEC often provided an easier and more convenient framework for regional cooperation on environmental issues than other established mechanisms (such as GEF, World Bank etc.).
- ENVSEC has provided a **catalytic and a “bridging” function**, allowing projects defined in the ENVSEC assessment process to be picked up, funded and implemented by other cooperation agencies, or providing a temporary cooperation framework between successive projects of GEF and other cooperation agencies.
- ENVSEC demonstrated practically the value and potential of the principles embodied in the Paris declaration on Aid effectiveness by harmonizing actions of donor and cooperation agencies within a common integrated response to environment/security challenges.
- Within the partner agencies, the ENVSEC Initiative seems to have been able to elicit and maintain an exceptionally high level of commitment of staff and of its core team.

**In relation to the partner agencies themselves**, participation in the ENVSEC Initiative brought numerous advantages:

- It has provided them with complementary expertise from other ENVSEC partners, allowing them to more successfully undertake projects in the environment/security field.
- It has provided them with a common interface to local authorities on the one hand, and to donors on the other, with all the advantages that this entails.
- It has provided them with a convenient framework to coordinate and harmonize UN and international action within program countries.
- It has provided them with a complimentary source of funding, allowing country offices of ENVSEC partners to engage in projects that would otherwise not have been possible.
- It has provided them with a pipeline of new projects, enabling them to enlarge their organization’s portfolio, at times at the expense of ENVSEC.
- It has provided them with an opportunity to share information and exchange experience and contacts thanks to the regular meetings organized by ENVSEC.
- In general, it has promoted inter-agency dialogue at both senior and mid-professional levels on areas where the agencies’ respective mandates overlap, i.e. the environment/security nexus.

**In relation to donors of ENVSEC**, they seem to have been attracted by ENVSEC not only because of their own interest in the environment/security nexus and their appreciation of the ENVSEC concept, but also because :

- ENVSEC provides them with a useful complement to their bilateral work in ENVSEC program countries.
- The ability to operate through an alliance of complementary partner agencies provides them not only with a wide array of complementary technical and political skills but also with more leverage.

- ENVSEC represents an interesting innovative model of multi-actor cooperation that may be of wider relevance in the context of UN reform.
- In the case of one donor government at least, participating in ENVSEC led to dialogue and interaction between different ministries and departments who are concerned with environmental and security issues but who would otherwise not have interacted.

## 5. Applying the ENVSEC concept in practice: Shortcomings and Limitations

The initial round of assessments carried out successively by ENVSEC first in South Eastern Europe and in Central Asia, then in the Southern Caucasus and lastly in Eastern Europe, had created enthusiasm and high expectations in program countries. Following up on these assessments with action projects was obviously more difficult. As ENVSEC started to translate the concept into practice, following national and regional consultations and the definition of priority areas of work, the magnitude of the challenge and the difficulty of consistently applying some of the core methods and values in the field became apparent. Initially these difficulties were offset by the infectious enthusiasm and boundless commitment of the founders and original ENVSEC staff as well as by successfully concluded initial projects. But high expectations initially raised in program countries were not fully met, and as natural turn-over led to a partial renewal of ENVSEC staff, as the ENVSEC partners' own institutional interests started to assert themselves and at times dominate, the initial momentum was somewhat lost, particularly in the field. While commitment of ENVSEC's core team, and believe in the value of the ENVSEC concept among partners and donors remained high, interest and belief in the ENVSEC Initiative seems to have waned within program countries; this all the more as alternative cooperation facilities became available that allowed national authorities to tackle some of their environmental challenges.

A gap seems thus to have developed between the ENVSEC concept and the ENVSEC practice as the concept was translated into action, which is not surprising, given the ambitious vision and goals pursued and the magnitude of the challenge of dealing with environment/security issues in these countries. This gap seems to have grown over time, appearing most pronounced in the regions where ENVSEC was launched in 2003, such as South Eastern Europe, and least where ENVSEC projects were started in 2007, i.e. Eastern Europe. This apparent difference between regions reflects probably also the Initiative's learning curve which has grown as ENVSEC progressed from one region to another. In general it must be recalled that comparisons between regions, in this report, reflect impressions rather than findings given the limitations of the review spelled out above.

### At the field level

The field visits to four ENVSEC program countries have revealed some of the problems, shortcomings and limitations encountered as ENVSEC started to apply its concept in practice in program countries. Many of these have also been identified in the UNDP evaluation of ENVSEC in Central Asia carried out in 2008, and

some in the CIDA assessments of ENVSEC's work. Some of the problems apparent at field level appear to be:

- **Local participation of stakeholders seems minimal and national ownership of ENVSEC activities little developed** in many program countries. Following the initial assessments and consultations, which seem to have elicited a considerable degree of participation of stakeholders and led to a sense of local ownership, local participation and ownership appear to have decreased. This seems due to a range of reasons:
  - Capacity for project development does not seem to be well developed among local government agencies and national counterparts. As a result, ENVSEC has and is receiving relatively few nationally defined projects.
  - ENVSEC projects are thus predominantly originating from and prepared by ENVSEC partners, often with little substantive participation by National Focal Points (NFP). These latter seem often to be consulted more *pro forma* and at the end of the process, at times even after the ENVSEC Management Board has given the green light.
  - National and Regional ENVSEC consultation meetings seem to concentrate on formal presentations and information sharing; they seem to make little room, nor prepare for, real substantive consultation with national stakeholders.
  - ENVSEC's field presence in program countries and regions is weak – limited to a part-time Regional Desk Officer (RDO) who can often not count sufficiently on the partners' network and country offices, except the one of the RDO's "home" organization. This is not sufficient to provide the necessary support to NFPs and accompany them as they try to build a national ENVSEC presence or to build local capacity; in some cases too weak even to provide the minimal support, information and communication functions with national NFPs and national stakeholders that they expect from ENVSEC. This is particularly the case when RDOs belong to partner organizations that do not have a country office in program countries, and where the RDO cannot count on the part-time assistance from support staff from these country offices. To offset the lack of communication and information with and between NFPs at the regional level, some RDOs have started to produce periodic newsletters for their region, but this practice seems to have been neither regular nor systematic in all ENVSEC regions.
  - No regular mechanisms have been foreseen to regularly repeat and update the initial assessment and priority setting exercises, which would be an opportunity to periodically elicit participation and put the local and national stakeholders back into the driving seat. ENVSEC has been encouraging RDOs to hold semi-annual and regional meetings where regional priorities can be discussed. Such meetings seem not yet to have become a regular and systematic feature in all regions. Also, as mentioned above, such "consultations" seem often to leave little room for genuine substantive program discussions.
- **ENVSEC has no regional or country programs**; its activities are entirely project based and its portfolio appears as rather piecemeal, lacking strategic coherence, increasingly reflecting

ENVSEC partner's concerns and interests rather than national demands and priorities. This seems due to several reasons:

- Following the initial assessments, ENVSEC limited itself to identify loosely defined regional priority areas for action. No regional or country programs were defined to respond to these identified needs, and it was left to the NFPs and the RDOs to come up with projects that would fit into these priority areas.
- Given the limited participation by NFPs and national stakeholders in project preparation, ENVSEC projects are, as explained above, primarily prepared by ENVSEC partners and appear to be more supply based than demand driven. Even in Eastern Europe a majority of proposed projects come from ENVSEC partner agencies who seek funding or complementary expertise.
- The ENVSEC project portfolio thus appears as a heterogeneous collection of loosely related activities, with little programmatic coherence, that often does not seem to reflect sufficiently national or regional priorities, nor to be integrated into national strategic frameworks. Nor do ENVSEC projects appear to be integrated into the wider regional donor strategies such as those elaborated by the UN.
- The increasingly loose definition of ENVSEC's thematic focus at the regional and country level – with each ENVSEC partner using its own interpretation of “security” – has not only created much confusion and ambiguity as to the nature of ENVSEC, it has also reinforced a piecemeal approach to project preparation and creates conditions in which both ENVSEC partners and local stakeholders propose activities that seem often self-serving and that stretch ever further the definition of ENVSEC's mandate.
- The broadening of the concept of “security” and of ENVSEC's thematic focus and mandate in general bears also the danger of turning ENVSEC partners into competitors, particularly those whose mandate includes operational project implementation. This seems to occur in some countries and regions; it obviously tarnishes the image of the ENVSEC partnership and confuses national counterparts.
- This review encountered a surprisingly large number of *de facto* “single-partner” ENVSEC projects within the project portfolios. It would be interesting to see whether the proportion of such projects has increased over time and how this is related to some of the other factors mentioned here. “Single-partner” ENVSEC projects seem to defeat the original purpose of ENVSEC as a multi-agency partnership.
- It must be pointed out that ENVSEC partners have recognized this problem and have prepared stricter criteria and guidelines for the preparation and validation of ENVSEC projects. And the ENVSEC Management Board has started to apply more rigorously these criteria, as part of the wider reform carried out under the “Blueprint”.
- **ENVSEC projects seem often not to be sustainable**, and follow up of initial ENVSEC projects, assessments and studies is often not ensured. This is in part the result of insufficient national participation and ownership of ENVSEC projects. It also reflects the fact that in most cases ENVSEC projects are not structurally linked to development and implementation agencies and facilities beyond those that are themselves ENVSEC partners.
- ENVSEC projects seem to carry out **little capacity building** at the local level, beyond some training courses and awareness rising events.

- ENVSEC activities focus primarily on environmental and developmental problems and often on technical aspects; they seem **not to take into account, nor to sufficiently focus on political, social and institutional aspects, forces and realities**. This was true at the assessment stage, when technical assessments identified environmental challenges but did not carry out a corresponding political analysis of local and regional actors and institutions and of their constraints and capacities to respond to, or not, to these challenges. It seems also true at the project identification and formulation stage. This reflects a general bias and weakness of ENVSEC, already apparent in the original ENVSEC approach, and it limits the impact that ENVSEC can have in program countries. Particularly in post-conflict and transition countries it is imperative to set technical issues and projects within the political and institutional context, and to adapt them accordingly, to optimize chances of success. The lack of attention paid to political and institutional factors reflects probably also the professional training and expertise of ENVSEC staff: They are primarily interested in and trained in environmental matters and do not seem to have the necessary training and experience in political analysis and practice, nor do they master the kind of conflict resolution and peacebuilding and consensus building skills that are necessary to achieve results in post-conflict and transition countries.

### At the central and general level

At the central level, the ENVSEC Initiative has experienced difficulties at the management and governance levels as it has grown and become more complex over the past six years. ENVSEC started its joint operations in a relatively informal way, with personal commitment of managers and staff and flexible adaptation of procedures by partner agencies allowing for pragmatic and ad hoc solutions and relatively low-cost central operations. The growth of ENVSEC activities and the corresponding challenge of managing an increasingly diverse and complex set of projects required that management tools and procedures be standardized without losing flexibility, and that governance structures be reformed such as to give program countries, partner agencies and donor countries clear roles and responsibilities in the governance of ENVSEC.

Shortcomings and limitations at central management and governance levels have been identified by ENVSEC donors and by ENVSEC partners themselves, and many of these are addressed in the **“Blueprint”** of reforms, adopted by the Management Board in November 2008 and last discussed with donors in April 2009. It is thus sufficient to briefly refer to them here without further discussing them:

- Central governance and management structures were overlapping and thus confusing; thus the decision to separate governance and management functions; to combine the latter with administrative and coordination responsibilities and entrust it to a professional secretariat led by a senior manager.
- Clear criteria for defining ENVSEC projects, and of guidelines to prepare them, did not exist until recently or were not applied, thus the decision to review project criteria.

- Diverging and at times contradictory definitions of ENVSEC’s thematic focus, and thus of its mandate, are being used by different ENVSEC partners as a result of conflicting interpretations of the term “security”.
- The role of donors in the governance of ENVSEC is not sufficiently clearly defined, thus the decision to establish the Donors Forum.
- The funding base remains insecure since ENVSEC has not significantly expanded its donor base so far nor linked up in a structured way with major players such as the EC or the World Bank and EBRD.
- Internal communication remains insufficient, unsystematic and unreliable.
- External communication is not sufficiently effective and external visibility of ENVSEC remains low.

Some additional shortcomings became apparent in the course of this strategic review:

- ENVSEC Program countries have no role in ENVSEC apart from being considered “beneficiaries” of the ENVSEC Initiative. They have no clear roles and responsibilities at the regional level, nor do they have a role in ENVSEC at the central governance level
- The absence of a defined program of work at country and regional levels reflects itself naturally also at the central level. There seems to be no central ENVSEC “work-program” to speak off – what is presented as such seems to represent a compilation of country or regional projects provided by the RDOs and partners to the central secretariat.
- ENVSEC does not seem to have a structured system and mechanism of quality control that would ensure that its concept is correctly applied. Monitoring seems restricted to projects, and there is no mechanism in place that would allow an assessment of the overall impact and success of the ENVSEC Initiative at regional or wider levels. This is of course a reflection of the lack of programs with defined benchmarks and expected results.
- The critical role of RDOs does not seem to be sufficiently recognized and is not sufficiently supported nor resourced by ENVSEC. Also, the allocation of RDO posts to ENVSEC partners can create conflicts of interest at the program country level. It furthermore tends to advance the identity and visibility of individual partner agencies in “their” regions at the expense of a common ENVSEC identity.
- The status of ENVSEC is not sufficiently clear in some of the ENVSEC partner organizations, nor is ENVSEC sufficiently recognized and supported by some of them. This needs to be remedied to give ENVSEC the organizational commitment, recognition and support that it needs, and to allow these partner agencies to better draw on and profit from the ENVSEC Initiative and its experience. It is also a pre-condition for considering the expansion of ENVSEC beyond its present geographic area.

## 4. Recommendations

As we have seen, ENVSEC has experienced typical problems of growth at governance and management levels as it successfully grew and expanded its operations over the past years, implementing in 2009 more than 50 projects with a total budget exceeding 30 million USD. These problems of growth are normal and were to be expected, particularly in such an innovative and experimental organization which was started with much good will but little structures and rules. To some extent, ENVSEC has been victim of its own success.

Main difficulties seem to have been encountered by ENVSEC at the field level as it tried to apply its concept in practice. This is again normal, and was to be expected; it seems primarily due to the fact that the ENVSEC leadership somewhat under-estimated the magnitude of the operational, institutional, technical and political challenges that are intrinsic to ENVSEC's mission and ambitious goals.

It is now time to continue, deepen and systematize the program of reforms initiated by the Management Board in November 2008 and to expand it to the regions and countries where ENVSEC is presently active. This will strengthen and equip ENVSEC and allow it to successfully perform and pursue its ambitious vision and goals.

The following recommendations spell out a series of suggested reform measures, some of which are already in part initiated under the "Blueprint" package of reforms. Measures suggested below are intended to provide general advice about the direction in which ENVSEC should go; they do not represent an additional reform package ready to be applied,. Many of the following recommendations require additional study before they can be turned into a plan of action.

## 1. Measures to strengthen ENVSEC performance at the field level

- **Build strong national counterparts in program countries:**

ENVSEC needs to build stronger national ENVSEC counterparts in program countries, organized around a revised concept of National Focal Points (NFP) and structured through a newly to be created group, tentatively called a National Coordination Group (NCG).

- **National Focal Points:** rather than selecting them within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment (or what comes closest to it) ENVSEC could follow the GEF model which designs a Political NFP and an Operational NFP. The Operational NFP can then be selected from whatever substantive ministry is most relevant, while the Political NFP will be selected by the national government at a sufficiently high position – usually at Minister or State Secretary level – to be able to ensure political support for ENVSEC projects and activities. The Operational NFP needs to be given support staff in the form of a designated Assistant NFPs and their support staff need to be given extensive training in program and project preparation; they need to be accompanied and supported in their work on a regular basis by ENVSEC staff, and they need to be motivated through various incentives that give them status and recognition, locally and within the wider regional and global ENVSEC structure (participation at bi-annual regional ENVSEC meetings, and at an annual central ENVSEC meeting, etc). NFPs also need to be given a

small budget (10'000 – 15'000 USD/year) to cover operational expenses linked to their ENVSEC functions, including the organization of the regular NCG meetings and other periodic consultations.

- **The National Coordination Group** (could also simply be called Working Group): its objective is to provide a structured framework that brings together periodically all relevant government representatives and all other national actors that have or should have a stake in ENVSEC activities. Great care must be taken that all relevant ministries and government offices are represented at sufficiently senior levels, and that civil society and the private sector (and not just local consultancy firms) are properly represented. The idea of creating a NCG is not new, and in setting it up it is important to build on past experience. The idea was originally proposed in 2003 when ENVSEC was launched in South Eastern Europe, and RDOs and NFPs in several other regions have spoken about the need of a body like this and considered setting it up (such as a Steering Committee in Georgia, or an Advisory Group in Armenia.). An NCG was actually set up in Macedonia but it has not functioned properly so far, apparently for lack of support from the government and ENVSEC alike. The reasons for this need to be studied further.
- The presence of a strong national ENVSEC capacity that can successfully interact with ENVSEC is a pre-condition to successful substantive participation and to national ownership. Given the often ineffective national government structures and administrations and their limited capacity to engage in strategic planning and project design, ENVSEC and its partners will have to invest time and resources into training and capacity building.
- **Strengthen ENVSEC capacities and presence at regional and country level:**

To build such strong ENVSEC national counterparts, ENVSEC needs itself to greatly reinforce its capacity at country and regional levels such as to be able to ensure a regular and continued presence in the field. This will entail:

- **The Regional Desk Officers:** The role of Regional Desk Officers (RDO) needs to be re-defined. This role is of crucial importance to the whole ENVSEC concept, as RDOs provide literally the bridge between the vision and concept and its translation into operational projects and activities. The role of RDO, whose importance seems to have been underestimated, needs to be re-defined, strengthened and properly resourced. It is the function of the RDO to build strong national ENVSEC capacities in program countries, to accompany and support the program and project definition processes at country and regional levels, to ensure regular communication between program countries and ENVSEC, to nurture the ENVSEC partnership locally and seek wider alliances with bilateral and multi-lateral implementing agencies and donors, and to assist in resource mobilization for country and regional activities. RDOs should probably be renamed and become ENVSEC Program Coordinators or Field Coordinators as their function is not desk-based but field-based. This should be a full-time position occupied by a relatively senior professional and based in the region. The RDO should be employed by a “neutral” ENVSEC implementing agency such as UNOPS, and accountable to ENVSEC, and not employed by and accountable to ENVSEC partner organizations. In regions where the number of program countries is large, such as South East Europe and Central Asia, ENVSEC RDOs

should be supported by an assistant. They should also be given an operational budget. The present practice of assigning RDO responsibilities to ENVSEC partners who then charge the central budget for a part-time post has some advantages and many disadvantages. The main problem is that this can lead to real conflicts of interest when the RDO has to choose between advancing and defending the ENVSEC cause and portfolio or those of the RDO's own organization. In most cases the RDO will try to align the interests of the two; this is the main reason why regional ENVSEC programs bear strongly the imprint and identity of the RDO's "home" organization, sometimes at the expense of a larger unified ENVSEC identity.

- **Country offices of ENVSEC partners:** The ENVSEC partnership needs also to be strengthened at the country level by ensuring close cooperation between the country offices of ENVSEC partners (OSCE, REC and UNDP) and the RDO. Country offices need to actively support the RDO in its task and relate to the NFPs and the NCG as ENVSEC partners and allies. Instances of open competition between ENVSEC partners over projects and portfolios must be avoided and, if necessary sanctioned.
- **Repeat periodically assessment, priority setting and stock-taking processes and link these closely to project definition and implementation:**

ENVSEC needs to build into its country and regional activities mechanisms that ensure that the initial assessment of environment/security challenges and the ensuing consultations and priority setting exercises are periodically repeated, ideally every 2-3 years. These do not have to be as large-scale exercises as the initial assessments were. The primary purpose of these periodic assessment and stock-taking exercises would be to periodically renew a broadly participatory process, to renew national ownership of the priorities, to renew high-level governmental support, and to periodically put the local and national actors "back into the driving seat". These assessments would also be an opportunity to take stock of progress in responding to identified environment and security issues and to draw lessons for the next phase.
- This periodic assessment, priority setting and stock-taking exercise must of course be closely linked, and indeed provide the basis for, the process through which ENVSEC programs and projects are defined. Carrying out periodically these environment/security assessments in all regions and countries will require that ENVSEC creates or maintains some professional assessment capacity, probably best sub-contracted to a qualified partner organization.
- **Define ENVSEC Programs at country level and have local actors play a main role:** ENVSEC field projects must be part of larger coherent programs of work designed at country and regional levels, and these must reflect periodically defined vulnerabilities and priorities. An important responsibility of the RDO and of ENVSEC country offices is to ensure that local and national actors participate actively in the definition of such programs and projects, and that, over time, they come to play a main role in this process.
  - **Responsibility for priority setting** must move to the national ENVSEC counterparts, and **responsibility for programming and for project definition** must be shared by national counterparts and ENVSEC and its partners. On the national side, the NFPs must play a leading role and the NCG should provide the organizational structure. It is politically and symbolically very important that national actors are in charge of priority setting. As regards programming and project definition, RDOs and partner

agencies will always have to play an active role. But here too, the balance should increasingly shift towards national programming and project definition, with the RDO and partners' country offices playing a supporting and capacity building role.

- ENVSEC programs must be **in tune with national development strategies**, and its concept mainstreamed into these national strategies. Moving from a project to a program approach will be in line with the present move by many national governments to initiate a Program Based Approach (PBA) for key development sectors.
- To strengthen national ownership of ENVSEC projects, it is suggested that **co-financing rules** be explored whereby national governments and actors would contribute 10% to technical assistance projects, and 25% to investment projects.
- ENVSEC work programs must define clear goals, objectives and expected outcomes such as to avoid raising unrealistic expectations and to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects.
- Newly defined ENVSEC guidelines and project criteria must be strictly and systematically followed when vetting new ENVSEC project proposals. It is important that the thematic focus be clearly defined and that there is no ambiguity as to the precise “niche” that ENVSEC fills.
- ENVSEC must ensure that **monitoring and evaluation** mechanisms are built into the programs and projects, both for the sake of good management, to allow for quality control and to build over time the value of the “ENVSEC Brand”.
- When defining ENVSEC programs and projects one should focus on issues where ENVSEC can really make a difference and have an impact. This does not mean that ENVSEC should look for “quick fixes”, on the contrary; environment/security problems always require long-term attention and investment to bring solutions. One should keep in mind that ENVSEC should above all have a **catalytic** function.
- ENVSEC's work program should thus also be **harmonized with national and regional donor strategies** (such as the UN's CPAPs and UNDAFs, or the World Bank's CAS/CPSs and PRSPs), and structured links established with bilateral and multi-lateral implementing agencies to ensure follow up of ENVSEC projects. This can also provide an opportunity for ENVSEC to mainstream some of its concepts and approaches into these national and regional donor strategies. Possible links between ENVSEC projects and GEF's operational program must be explored in areas where mandates and activities overlap.
- **Develop Regional Programs and take the lead role at the regional level:** ENVSEC needs also to define regional programs of work, in line with assessed environment/security challenges and nationally defined priorities and programs of work. It is important that **Regions become also targets and beneficiaries of ENVSEC and its work**. At the regional level ENVSEC needs to take the lead role, and it needs to develop an attractive framework for regional cooperation that it can offer to program countries. The ENVSEC RDO must organize at least twice a year a meeting at the regional level to enable NFPs to meet, to participate in the definition of regional activities and to gradually take ownership. It should also be examined whether the Environment and Security Conference, that ENVSEC plans to organize every second year, could possibly be replicated at the regional levels.

- **Maintain and nurture high levels of local participation and ownership** through a variety of measures such as the above-mentioned National Coordination Group and its regular meetings, the periodic assessment, priority setting and stock-taking exercises, but also through regular national and regional consultations. Such consultations cannot be reduced to one-off half-day meetings but must be part of a wider process. The practice of carrying out such **National and Regional Consultations** must be systematized in all regions.
- One of the important functions of the ENVSEC RDO will be to ensure and maintain a regular flow of **information and communication**, horizontally within the region, and vertically between the country, regional and central levels of ENVSEC. Some RDOs have recently issued newsletters, which in one region seem to have been produced periodically. This is an excellent initiative that needs to be extended to all regions. The possibility of creating regional ENVSEC web pages should also be explored, taking care, however, not to compete with the collective ENVSEC identity.
- **Capacity building** must be integrated into and become a key component of all ENVSEC activities at country and regional levels. It is surprising that this has been given so little attention so far. Building of local capacities to enable national and regional actors to themselves cope with and respond to environment/security challenges is an integral part of the ENVSEC vision and mission.

The above set of measures may appear overwhelming and possibly not realistic to those who are familiar with conditions in ENVSEC post-conflict and transition countries. They may question to what extent bottom-up participation and consensual decision-making is at all possible in these countries, and if yes at what stage and what level, and how much a locally driven priority setting and programming process can be structured. These questions are legitimate. What is certain is that environment/security challenges cannot be solved by top-down, agency and donor-driven processes, and that local, national and regional actors must ultimately be strengthened so that they can deal with them in both preventive and remedial ways, in close cooperation with the international community of course. ENVSEC can draw on a rapidly growing body of expertise and experience, including within some of its partner agencies, on how to successfully operate in the difficult and volatile contexts of post-conflict and transition countries. Drawing on this expertise, and on that of organizations that specialize on working in these environments, ENVSEC can successfully reach its ambitious goal if it pursues an approach that is broadly enabling and empowering. The above measures will help it reach that objective.

## 2. Measures to strengthen ENVSEC at the central level

### Mandate and Identity

- **Clearly define the niche and focus of ENVSEC:**  
ENVSEC needs to re-define very clearly its niche and identity to be effective and have impact. It thus needs to clearly define its geographic and above all its thematic focus of work. The fact that each partner agency interprets “security” in its own, usually self-serving way dilutes the concept and identity of ENVSEC and creates ambiguity and confusion at all levels. **The thematic focus:** As regards the thematic focus, a narrow definition of security is advisable as it lends itself better to the definition and consolidation of a clear niche and identity. Using a

“human security” definition is definitely much too large: it reinforces the natural tendency of partner agencies to broaden the scope such as to enlarge the project portfolio, it creates too much overlap between their own mandates and ENVSEC’s thus broadly defined mandate and may thus turn them from partners into competitors. A narrower definition should be based on the notion of national or political security and extend to problems of environmental security when and where these have a clear conflict potential. In some regions there seems to be a tendency to adopt the “trans-boundary” criteria to define ENVSEC’s mandate, justifying this by referring to the legacy of conflicts in the region, but this broadens it obviously too much. Given the natural tendency of partner agencies as well as of national stakeholders to enlarge the ENVSEC mandate, it will also be important to clarify that ENVSEC’s new emphasis on climate change will focus on its security impacts and implications. **The geographic focus:** As regards the geographic focus of its work, ENVSEC should maintain its present regional approach but extend it flexibly and pragmatically to include, as possible, neighboring countries and regions (such as Russia, Afghanistan, Iran, Greece etc) when they are affected by, or in turn affect, environment/security challenges under consideration. As a complement to this regional approach ENVSEC could also start using an “eco-region” approach (ex. The Black Sea, etc).

- **Upgrade the political and security focus:**

While ENVSEC presents itself as an inter-agency partnership that addresses both environment and security issues and the nexus where they meet, its primary focus and expertise is on issues of environmental governance and regulation, and the security element comes second. ENVSEC may wish to maintain or to correct this imbalance; in either case it must give greater attention to the political, social and institutional forces, factors and realities in the countries and regions where it works. It either needs to upgrade its own capacity to do so, through training or selection of new staff, or enter into cooperative arrangements or partnership with new trusted organizations or resource persons who have experience in political actor and peace-conflict analysis and in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

- **Renew the ENVSEC concept and develop an ENVSEC Brand and Quality Standard:**

Reforms initiated by the Blueprint and under the present Chairman’s objectives for 2009 should allow ENVSEC to regain the conceptual, methodological and ideological focus and rigor that was manifest when it was launched and that seems to have somewhat been lost with the expansion and operationalization of the concept. Based on its by now rich operational experience it should now review rules of operation such as to increase ENVSEC’s capacity to apply its concept faithfully and successfully in program countries. It is important to continuously renew and uphold the ENVSEC concept as operations and types of activities expand. Over the years ENVSEC should aim to develop an “ENVSEC Brand” and a corresponding quality standard that should stand for excellence, professionalism and sophistication in responses to environment/security challenges. This would greatly help to strengthen collective identity and external visibility; it could, over time, become a source of income.

- **Enlarge the mandate by distilling lessons and adding to best practice and policy debates:**

After six years of operational experience ENVSEC should start to systematically document and distill lessons learned and disseminate these in the form of recommendations, inputs into best practice processes and as a contribution to policy debates at OECD-DAC and elsewhere. ENVSEC should carry out such work in association with academic and research institutions such as IES,

Adelphi Research or IISD in order not to burden its secretariat with new tasks and to create new links of cooperation. (Discussions seem to be underway with IES on the production of a joint handbook reflecting their respective experiences with environmental assessment methodologies.) Establishing such partnership with academic and research institutions can also serve to systematize a feedback loop from practice to theory, and to assist ENVSEC in assessments, evaluations and quality control.

## Structure:

- **Enlarge the ENVSEC partnership in search of synergies:**

ENVSEC should not aim to become an organization of its own. It should remain a multi-agency partnership, composed of organizations with different but complementary mandates and expertise, with a common Secretariat, program of work and common services. ENVSEC should be inclusive about membership and open to welcome new partners if they can offer needed expertise, services and contact networks. It should pro-actively seek new forms of alliance and cooperation with carefully chosen organizations that can bring complementary resources and strengthen ENVSEC's work. Most important among them are:

- Bilateral and multi-lateral implementing and financing agencies and facilities (such as main bilateral agencies present in ENVSEC countries, the World Bank, EBRD, GEF etc.) ENVSEC needs to link these in an organic and structured way to the process of program and project definition to increase the chances of follow up of initial ENVSEC work and of funding such activities. ENVSEC can also put at their disposal its renewed assessment capacities, or provide these services for a fee
- NGOs with complementary diplomatic, conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills (such as Interpeace, SFCG, the Independent Diplomat, etc)
- Academic and research institutions (such as IES, Adelphi Research, IIDS etc) that can assist in the distillation and dissemination of lessons and policy recommendations, the assessment and monitoring exercises etc.
- Important donor groups (such as OECD-DAC) and major individual donors that are missing such as the EC

- **Manage an enlarged partnership: preserving the ENVSEC concept:**

As ENVSEC enters into new alliances and as the partnership becomes more diverse it is ever more important to preserve and uphold what is common to all partners and activities and is at the heart of it all – the vision and concept of ENVSEC. It is thus crucial that newly defined ENVSEC rules of procedure and operation and project criteria be strictly applied and that values that are fundamental to the ENVSEC approach be upheld and govern all new activities and partnerships. All partnerships should be limited in time. New and existing partnerships and alliances should be reviewed every three years in the light of performance and impact on ENVSEC's work and in the light of the partner's demonstrated commitment to ENVSEC, its mission, values and rules.

- **Manage differences in institutional cultures and agendas:**

The ENVSEC partnership is composed of widely differing organizations with different mandates, agendas and institutional cultures. Enlarging the partnership will reinforce this fact. It is important that tensions resulting from these differences are identified and coped with so that institutional diversity leads to enrichment rather than division. ENVSEC could try to promote exchanges between partners' staff and field mixed teams, and it should consistently promote the collective ENVSEC identity as opposed to the partner organizations' distinct identity. It should not be assumed that cooperation between partner agencies within ENVSEC is natural and easy, on the contrary. As long as staff is employed by the partner agencies, incentives and reward mechanisms will ensure that the staff's primary loyalty is to the agency, and not to ENVSEC. This is why key staff necessary for ENVSEC's work, such as RDOs, must be employed by a "neutral" ENVSEC implementing agency such as UNOPS, and accountable to ENVSEC. If inter-agency cooperation is to really work, staff from different agencies must more frequently work together and their senior managers must encourage them to so. More opportunities should be created to form personal bonds of trust among different agency staff, as seems to have happened already to some extent among the members of the central secretariat.

### Management and Administration:

- **Separate governance and management:**

As part of the "Blueprint" of reforms, governance and management functions will be separated, and management duties combined with administrative and coordination responsibilities and entrusted to a professional secretariat, led by a senior manager, based in UNEP Geneva. This is a very important step in the right direction: it allows ENVSEC to professionalize the management of an increasingly complex operation, and it allows the present Management Board (which should become a Steering Committee) to play an effective governance role and to focus on defining strategic directions, exercising oversight, providing guidance and support.

- **Replace the RDO with a newly defined and strengthened function of Program Coordinator/Officer or Field Officer:**

This has been discussed above

- **Create a central fund management and administrative implementation capacity:**

Central fund management can be achieved through the establishment of an ENVSEC Trust Fund or a virtual trust fund in the form of a designated ENVSEC "Project". Locating overall management, central fund management and administrative implementation together in UNEP Geneva, as is foreseen in the "Blueprint" reform, seems to make sense. This should not generate additional costs and can greatly facilitate ENVSEC operations, provided UNEP can deliver such services flexibly and efficiently. Alternatively, some of these functions need to be sub-contracted to a specialized actor such as UNOPS, or even to a private entity.

- **Assign special responsibility to ENVSEC partner agencies for supporting the Secretariat in specific areas of expertise:**

It has been suggested above that RDO functions be de-linked from particular partner agencies and attached directly to the ENVSEC Secretariat. In order not to weaken the commitment of partner

agencies, and for functional reasons, the assistance and support of ENVSEC partners could be enlisted to provide specialized support services in their areas of expertise. UNDP could, for example, assume special responsibility for project and program preparation and for training in this field, for which there will be much need in program countries.

- **Define clear rules and criteria for approving ENVSEC projects and programs and applying them strictly and systematically:**

A good step in this direction has already been made. This needs to be pursued and new rules and criteria applied rigorously and systematically

- **Define a coherent global ENVSEC Program of Work:**

Once coherent programs of work are defined at country and regional levels (as suggested above), ENVSEC needs to integrate these into a global program of work that spells out common goals and objectives for the Initiative as a whole and that defines expected results. This will be helpful internally in clarifying clear common goals and objectives, and externally in relating to present and potential donors and in communicating about ENVSEC.

- **Create mechanisms to ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of activities and quality control of the work:**

This is essential, both to ensure good management and efficient use of donor resources, and to ensure that the basic components of the ENVSEC concept, and related Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness, are actually implemented and followed in practice.

## Communication:

- **Improve internal communication in line with clearly defined objectives:**

Both internal and external communication need to be improved. The most urgent is to make internal communication more systematic, better structured and more reliable. The ENVSEC website must be regularly maintained and updated, and a central, password protected repository of up-to-date ENVSEC documents and reports should be created which is available to all members of the ENVSEC family. Internal communication must also be adapted to the objectives it is supposed to serve: Particular attention must be given to better and more systematically inform donors of ENVSEC work. Internal communication also serves to establish and maintain close links between all parts of the large ENVSEC family, from the country to the regional and central level. This is important to keep motivation alive and make local and regional stakeholders feel that they are part of a wider global exercise. Internal communication should also serve to horizontally exchange experiences between countries and regions.

- **Communicate and enhance the visibility of ENVSEC externally:**

Thanks to attractively presented assessment reports and other communication tools ENVSEC has communicated quite well externally; in fact it has probably “oversold” its achievements, particularly at the field level. What seems to have been lacking is the strategic dissemination of such information to clearly defined target audiences. Visibility can also be improved by disseminating lessons learned and contributing to targeted policy debates, as suggested above.

Once the bulk of reforms is underway, a professionally designed communications strategy should be elaborated to help put ENVSEC better on the map.

- **Ensure regular, accurate and reliable reporting from the field:**

Both internal and external communication rely of course on regular, accurate and reliable reports from the field that bring local stories and tell about results of ENVSEC work. This will only happen if special resources and time are allocated for this reporting task at the local and regional level and in the RDOs office and budget.

## Resource mobilization and funding:

- **Share responsibility for fundraising within a common fundraising strategy:**

ENVSEC will have to build a more secure funding base to ensure stable core funding and adequate project funding, and the amounts required will increase as ENVSEC grows. Fundraising is the responsibility of all members of the ENVSEC family – RDOs, the Secretariat, the Management Board and ENVSEC partners - and is already pursued by most of them. All these efforts must now be better coordinated, systematized and harmonized by the Secretariat. Eventually this activity should be guided by a professionally developed **fundraising strategy**. Improved external communication and enhanced visibility will have to support these efforts.

- **Secure core funding to support the reforms and bring ENVSEC to a new level of relevance and impact:**

What seems most important in the short term is to secure stable core funding to support reforms and central operations during the coming 3-4 years, the time it takes to put main reform measures in place and for them to start producing results. Once credible, integrated ENVSEC work programs are available at country, regional and central levels donors can be approached in a more structured way, including through annual pledging conferences organized in October/November for the following year's program of work. Overheads on project and program funds should eventually become the main source of funding for core expenses.

- **Explore other sources of funding:**

A number of other sources of funding can probably be developed and should be explored:

- **Partners' core contributions:** It seems important that ENVSEC partners make a regular financial contribution to the Initiative's core budget, if this is not already the case, and that in addition they support ENVSEC's work in indirect ways. What is important here is more the symbolic value of making a commitment, taking responsibility and sharing ownership and responsibility for the common "baby" that is ENVSEC, than the actual financial value of these contributions. ENVSEC partners must be part of the Initiative because of its intrinsic value and importance and be ready to support it financially, and not because they see this as a convenient pipeline to increase their project portfolio and raise extra-budgetary funds.
- **Co-financing of field projects:** The same objective of confirming a commitment to ENVSEC *per se* and of enhancing ownership of its work also applies to program countries. Thus the

suggestion to introduce co-financing rules for country-based ENVSEC projects, with local contributions ranging from 10% to 25% of the project budget. (see above)

- **Selling services and marketing the ENVSEC Brand:** ENVSEC should explore the possibility of selling some of its services and expertise. These could include selling its analytical assessment capacities once these have been established and reinforced to service the needs of ENVSEC program countries and regions. Over time ENVSEC should also explore the possibility of marketing the “ENVSEC Brand”, once it has proven its worth and comes to stand for quality and professional excellence in the approach of complex environment/security challenges.
- **Explore GEF as a source of funds:** At a different level, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) should be closely studied both as a possible source of funding and as a possible organizational and governance model, and closer links to GEF both at central and field levels should be explored. GEF is a financial mechanism that covers incremental costs incurred by developing countries as they put in place measures to achieve agreed global measures in environmental fields. Under its present fourth replenishment phase GEF 4 has set up a system to provide funding for work in specific focal areas, including climate change (RAF - the Resource Allocation Framework), and this should be expanded to other focal areas under GEF 5. The possibility of using this financial instrument, already used extensively by some ENVSEC partners such as UNEP and UNDP, to provide funding for some of ENVSEC’s work and priorities must be explored (see also paragraphs 113 and 114 of the UNDP Evaluation of ENVSEC in Central Asia).

## Governance:

- **Separate governance and management functions:**

(see above)

- **Better define the role of donors in governance:**

Past attempts to better define the role that donors should play in governance of ENVSEC have not been very successful, and both ENVSEC Management and donors have called for a clarification of respective roles and responsibilities. The objective is to ensure Donor’s role in and contribution to oversight and governance, but also to ensure that they do not get involved in the management of the ENVSEC Initiative. The “Blueprint” reforms created a **Donors Forum** and a first meeting was held in November 2008 in Brussels. The decision to provide donors with their own framework where they can meet on a regular basis alone with ENVSEC partners and management is an important step in the right direction. Many questions remain open and need to be clarified in a consultative process: how does this Donors Forum interact with the Management Board, and what weight do its decisions have, legally and *de facto*? How does this new Donor Forum govern itself? How, when and by whom are sessions organized and prepared, and who is invited or not to attend them? Experience suggests that:

- Both actual and potential donors be invited to this forum

- Donor participation at these forum meetings be at a sufficiently high level, usually from headquarters rather than local mission
- Donor Forums be organized twice a year: in March/April to receive reports on progress and performance in the past year, and in October/November to receive and endorse proposed programs of work for the following year. The October/November forum could also take the form of a Pledging Conference, since part of its objective is to secure funding for the next year.

It is important that relations with donors be also cultivated at regional and country levels, and that those donors who have a representation in program countries be associated with the development of ENVSEC programs and projects at the country and regional levels.

- **Define a clear role for program countries at both regional and central levels:** Program countries should take a more active and prominent role in ENVSEC: they should also commit and materially contribute to the Initiative and in exchange be given a clear role at regional levels, and to a lesser extent at the central level. At regional levels they should obviously participate in the definition of regional programs and activities. At central levels it is suggested that they be invited to participate in the October/November meeting of the Donors Forum when new work programs are presented and contributions are sought.

- **Study alternative models of governance of multi-actor and “hybrid” partnerships and initiatives** (such a UNAIDS, Interpeace, GEF, etc.):

A growing number of such hybrid and multi-actor partnerships have been launched in the past years to respond to ever more complex challenges that call for integrated multi-actor responses. They typically involve inter-governmental, governmental, NGO, civil society and often also private sector actors, and always include donors, operating agencies and beneficiary countries and organizations. ENVSEC needs to study some of these models to see what arrangements could be best adapted to its specific mission. Most of these models include donors and beneficiary countries in the formal governance structures, and a formula that would allocate a few seats on the ENVSEC Management Board (or future Steering Committee) to donors and program countries should also be examined.

### 3. Reforms and beyond – some concluding remarks

Reviewing the vision and strategy of ENVSEC and implementing the management reforms adopted as part of the “Blueprint” are part of the Chairman’s objectives for 2009. This report suggests that the reform of ENVSEC can and should go further and deeper. To succeed, four conditions must be fulfilled:

- **Commitment of partner agencies:**

At this stage of transition and reform it is important that ENVSEC partner organizations formally re-commit to the vision and concept of the Initiative and to the longer term strategic goals pursued by its reform. This is also an opportunity to clarify the role of ENVSEC within these agencies and to recognize and raise the level of organizational commitment, recognition and support. Without the full commitment of partner agencies to the vision and to the partnership,

and without political support at highest levels within the agencies, it will be difficult to successfully pursue the required reforms.

- **Experienced and committed ENVSEC leadership:**

The successful pursuit of these reforms requires exceptionally experienced and mature leadership that is fully committed to the longer term vision and to the pursuit of the reforms to achieve this.

- **Highly qualified, and exceptionally committed, experienced and mature staff:**

ENVSEC is and will always remain an innovative and somewhat experimental undertaking. To make this work requires flexibility, the willingness to innovate and take risks and to constantly explore new avenues. Staff must have high levels of professional and technical qualifications but also be experienced and mature. It is the quality of the ENVSEC staff and leadership rather than institutional arrangements and procedures that will ultimately determine whether ENVSEC succeeds in its ambitious vision and goals, or whether it will end up being simply another somewhat complicated development initiative.

- **Secure core funding over the coming 3-4 years to carry through the reforms** (discussed above)

What then are the chances of success? ENVSEC does have committed partners, it has a highly committed and motivated leadership and staff, and it is at advanced stages of discussion with donors who have recognized the importance of this Initiative and seem ready to provide the necessary core support to allow it to successfully carry through this reform. Chances seem thus high that the above four conditions can be fully and rapidly met. ENVSEC seems then well equipped to succeed. Having been launched as an innovative and experimental initiative it has a long tradition of experimentation, questioning and successive reforms, and several of the suggested reforms have in part already been initiated, particularly at the central management and governance levels.

By carrying through these reforms ENVSEC will come to constitute a successful innovative model of multi-actor cooperation uniquely equipped to respond to complex environment/security challenges in an integrated way. As such its model will be of wider, global relevance, both in the environmental and other fields. Replications of ENVSEC and its work in other parts of the world such as Africa or the Middle and Near East, must then be considered.

As the field visits have shown, environment/security challenges remain acute and are likely to grow, and national governments and cooperation agencies alike require the kind of integrated response that only ENVSEC can provide at this point. As one of the interlocutors during the field visits stated, "If ENVSEC would not exist we would have to invent it"!

## Annexes

### 1. Interviews and Field Visits

Following is the list of people interviewed in the context of this strategic review. In some cases interviews were carried out by telephone.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
<b><u>ENVSEC partners</u></b>		
Mr. Marco Keiner	Director, Environment, Housing and Land Management Division Chair of the ENVSEC Management Board	UNECE (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. Bo Libert	Regional Advisor on Environment	UNECE (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. Christophe Bouvier	Director, Regional Office for Europe	UNEP (Geneva, Switzerland)
Ms. Marika Palosaari	ENVSEC Coordination Officer	UNEP (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. <a href="http://www.unep.ch/roe/Nickolai_Denisov">http://www.unep.ch/roe/Nickolai Denisov</a>	ENVSEC Regional Desk Officer for Eastern Europe	UNEP (Geneva, Switzerland)

Mr. Frits Schlingemann	Special Adviser, Former Director of the Regional Office for Europe	UNEP (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. Harald Egerer	Head, UNEP Vienna	UNEP (Vienna, Austria)
Ms. Jelena Beronja	ENVSEC Regional Desk Officer for South Eastern Europe	UNEP (Vienna, Austria)
Ms. Dunja Krause		UNEP (Vienna Austria)
Ms. Jasmina Bogdanovic	UNEP consultant, Former ENVSEC RDO for South Eastern Europe	UNEP Vienna – GRID Arendal
Mr. Henrik Slotte	Chief Post Conflict & Disaster Management Branch	UNEP – PCDMB (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. Asif Zaidi	Operations Manager Post Conflict & Disaster Management Branch	UNEP – PCDMB (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. David Jensen	Policy and Planning Coordinator Post Conflict & Disaster Management Branch	UNEP – PCDMB (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. Otto Simonett	Programme Director	UNEP – GENF SEC (ex-GRID Arendal) (Geneva, Switzerland)
Mr. Ajiniyaz Reimov	ENVSEC Regional Desk Officer for Central Asia	UNDP (Bratislava, Slovak Republic)

Mr. Jens Wandel	Deputy Regional Director and Regional Centre Director	UNDP (Bratislava, Slovak Republic)
Mr. Bruce Jenks	Director, Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships	UNDP (New York, USA)
Mr. David Swalley	ENVSEC Regional Desk Officer for the Southern Caucasus	OSCE (Vienna, Austria)
Mr. Marc Baltes	Deputy Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities	OSCE (Vienna, Austria)
Ms. Marta Szigeti Bonifert	Executive Director	REC (Szentendre, Hungary)
Mr. Radoje Lausevic	Deputy Executive Director for Environmental Programmes	REC (Szentendre, Hungary)
Ms. Gordana Kozuharova	Regional Director for SEE	REC (Szentendre, Hungary)
Mr. Mihail Dimovski	Senior Expert	REC (Szentendre, Hungary)

Ms. Ana Popovic	Project Manager	REC (Szentendre, Hungary)
Ms. Susanne Michaelis	Associate Programmed Director Science for Peace and Security Section	NATO (Brussels, Belgium)
<b><u>ENVSEC Program Countries</u></b>		
<b>Armenia</b>		
Mr. Viktor Martirosyan	Director, Natural Resource Management and Poverty Reduction  ENVSEC National Focal Point	Ministry of Nature Protection
Ms. Dziunik Aghajanian	Director International Organizations Department	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms. Nouné Zastoukhova	ENVSEC National Focal Point (?)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Armen K. Saghatelian	Director	Center of Ecological and Noosphere Studies
Mr. Christoph Opfermann	Economic and Environmental Officer	OSCE (Country office)
Ms. Gohar Ghazinyan	Senior Environmental Assistant	OSCE (Country office)
Mr. Armen Martirosyan	Portfolio Coordinator Environment	UNDP (Country office)
<b>Georgia</b>		

Ms. Nino Sharashidze	Deputy Head of the Environmental Policy and International Relations Department	Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources
Ms. Nino Gokhelashvili	Head of the International Relations Division ENVSEC National Focal Point (?)	Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources
Mr. Giorgi Kolbin	Coordinator GTZ Project, Former ENVSEC National Focal Point	Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources
Mr. Ilia Imnadze	Counsellor of the UN Division ENVSEC National Focal Point	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms. Khatuna Gogaladze	Centre Manager	Aarhus Centre Georgia
Ms. Nino Gvazava	Coordinator	Aarhus Centre Georgia
Ms. Malak Shukurova	Executive Director	REC Caucasus
Mr. Georgi Arzumanyan	Deputy Executive Director	REC Caucasus
Mr. William Hanlon	Environment and Economic Programmed Manager	OSCE (Country Office)

Mr. Nino Malashkhia	ENVSEC Initiative Coordinator	OSCE (Country Office)
Mr. Malkhaz Adeishvili	Project Manager	UNDP/ENVSEC Project: Development of the legal framework for cooperation in the Kura-Aras River basin
Ms. Mariam Shotadze	Programmed Analyst for Environment and Energy	UNDP (Country Office)
<b>Macedonia</b>		
Mr. Kosta Trajkovski	Head of Project Preparation Division ENVSEC National Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
Mr. Ljupco Melovski	President	Macedonian Ecological Society + Faculty of Science, Institute of Biology
Ms. Katarina Stojkovska	Country Director	REC (Country Office)
Ms. Anita Kodzoman	Environment Practice Coordinator	UNDP (Country Office)
Mr. Robert Sarlamanov	Programme Officer	Austria - Austrian Development Agency (Country office)
<b>Serbia</b>		
Mr. Aleksandar Vesic	Assistant Minister ENVSEC National Focal Point	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

Ms. Dragana Milovanovic	Head of the Department Water Directorate  Timor River Project	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management
Ms. Ivana Avramov	Advisor Timor River Project	Ministry of Economy
Mr. Jovan Pavlovic	Country Director	REC (Country Office)
Ms. Zorica Korac	Project Manager	REC (Country Office)
Mr. Aleksandar Macura	Programme Officer, Energy and Environment Officer	UNDP (Country Office)
<b><u>Donor and Development Agencies</u></b>		
Ms. Sandra Wibmer	Environment and Natural Resources Officer	Austria - Austrian Development Agency
Ms. Cathy Mains	Senior Manager – Europe Regional Programme	Canada – Canadian International Development Agency
Mr. Camille Pomerleau		Canada – Canadian International Development Agency
Mr. Marc Giacomini	Deputy Director – UN Department	France - Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Matti Kaariainen	Ambassador – Department for Russia, EE and CA	Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms. Birgit Krasilowsky		Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Jouko Eskelinen	Environmental Adviser	Finland – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Thomas Heimgartner	Diplomatic Officer – Section International Environmental Affairs	Switzerland - Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Alistair Clark	Corporate Director – Environment and Sustainability Department	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Mr. Matti Lehtonen	Policy Officer Peacebuilding Support Office	UN New York
<b><u>Others</u></b>		
Mr. Alexander Carius	Director	Adelphi Research (Berlin, Germany)
Mr. Ronald Kingham	Director – Brussels Liaison Office	Institute for Environmental Security (Brussels, Belgium)
Mr Mark Halle	Executive Director Europe Office	International Institute for

		Sustainable Development
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## 2. Terms of Reference of the Strategic Review

### Terms of Reference for the “Strategic Review” of the ENVSEC Initiative<sup>1</sup>

12.03.09

#### 1. Introduction

The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) partners decided in their Management Retreat in July 2008 to conduct a future looking strategic review of the Initiative. It was agreed that the review should be done in 2009 with the help of an external consultant and in collaboration with partner countries of ENVSEC. The strategic review will be used in the preparations of the ENVSEC work programme for 2010-2012.

The ENVSEC Initiative was established in 2003. It includes five full and one associate partner. The *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP), the *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP), the *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe* (OSCE), the *United Nations Economic Commission for Europe* (UNECE) and the *Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe* (REC) are full partners. The *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation* (NATO) became an associate member of the Initiative in 2004, through its Public Diplomacy Division. The ENVSEC Initiative works to assess and address environmental problems, which threaten or are perceived to threaten security, societal stability and peace, human health and/or sustainable livelihoods, within and across national borders in conflict prone regions. The Initiative collaborates closely with governments, particularly foreign and environment ministries, national experts and NGOs. During the first five years of its existence, the Initiative has

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<sup>1</sup> As approved by the ENVSEC Management Board in its third session, on 11 March 2009.

seen major progress and development, but it still faces challenges partly due to its complex institutional set up. These have been brought to light in written form mainly by:

- A mid-term assessment, conducted in 2006 by the consulting company Le Groupe Conseil Baastel Itée, which had been mandated by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), one of the main donors of the ENVSEC Initiative;
- Two letters from CIDA to the ENVSEC Chair (February 2008) and ENVSEC Management Board (June 2008) reiterating the concerns raised by the external evaluation mentioned above;
- The PhD thesis of a Central European University (CEU) student, Ms. Fiona Borthwick, who analyzed in detail the institutional partnership upon which ENVSEC is founded; and
- Statements from the ENVSEC Chairpersons. These include the Chair's 2008 letter, and the papers on "Communications", "Consolidating the Partnership", "National Ownership", and "Fundraising" written by the 2007 ENVSEC Chair.
- Conclusions of the Management Retreat organized in July 2008
- Review of ENVSEC activities in Central Asia (UNDP)

## **2. Purpose and objectives**

The purpose of the review is to identify lessons learned and provide recommendations for guiding the future focus of the ENVSEC Initiative. The main objectives of the review are to identify and analyse:

- a) The Initiative's strategic value and comparative advantages in relation to its thematic and geographic focus: to what extent is ENVSEC a relevant response mechanism to the environment and security challenges in the countries of its operations;
- b) Guidance on future focus of the Initiative and its regional work programmes, taking into account the priorities of the recipient countries and donor governments
- c) Partner base and collaboration with key stakeholders
- d) Funding and visibility

Based on existing reports and other available sources of information, the review will also provide observations regarding the partnership's achievements to date and its impact "on the ground".

## **3. Consultant's contribution**

The Consultant is expected to answer to the following questions, and expand on these as deemed necessary:

1. The Initiative's strategic value and comparative advantages in relation to its thematic and geographic focus:
  - a) The Initiative's strategic value and comparative advantages in the field of environment and security work as well as the wider UN-system and international community;
  - b) The thematic focus and the areas of activities of the Initiative and needs for refocusing of activities: (e.g. definition of security (human security vs. security of nation states and territories); activities in the field of climate change and security)

Recommended vision for future focus and activities of the regional work programmes

- c) Possible untapped potential and ways of operationalizing it
  - d) Geographic focus of activities: lessons that may be drawn in dealing with environment and security issues in other regions
  - e) the role of the country based offices and recommendations for strengthening them, based on organizational limitations
2. Partner base and collaboration with key stakeholders:
    - a) The partner base: strengths and weaknesses of the current set-up, possible need for changes
    - b) National ownership and possible ways to strengthen the role of the target countries
    - c) Potential additional synergies and partnership with relevant stakeholders

### 3. Funding and visibility:

- a) ENVSEC's funding base, resource mobilization strategy as well as existing and forthcoming potential funding opportunities
- b) The Initiative's visibility and image
- c) In addition to the three main areas of questions, the consultant will identify findings regarding the impact of the Initiative in the countries of operations. Achievements "on the ground" will be defined and analyzed to the extent possible using previous reports, evaluations and statements made by the ENVSEC partners and their stakeholders. The topics of interest are:
  - a) The impact of the ENVSEC interventions: level of cooperation achieved between the countries as a result of the assessments and project activities;
  - b) Level of implementation of follow-up projects, type of projects, impact and magnitude of projects
  - c) Financial impacts of the Initiative (financial scope of activities catalyzed by the Initiative etc.)
  - d) Efficiency of use of project finances and recommendations for possible changes

#### 4. Methodology

The review will consist of an analysis of relevant documents (to be provided by the ENVSEC Secretariat), interviews with representatives of the ENVSEC partner organizations, partner countries and other relevant stakeholders such as representatives from the key donor countries and local actors, and field visits to selected program countries.

The Consultant will prepare a report that describes the strategic review and puts forward its findings, recommendations, lessons learned, and potential for future programming and funding. The presentation of results is to be intrinsically linked to the evaluation issues, establishing a flow of logic development derived from the information collected.

#### 5. Timeline and Consultant's scope of work

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activity</b>
March	Finalization of the ToR and of a work plan Approval by the ENVSEC Management Board
11 March – 15 May	Data collection and analysis (desk study, interviews and field visits)
15 May – 5 June	Preparation of the draft report
1 or 2 July	Workshop to present the preliminary results of the review
3 July – 17 July	Finalization of the report based on comments received from the partners and the participants of the workshop And submission of financial statement

#### 6. Deliverables

The Consultant will produce a report, prepared in English and submitted to the ENVSEC Secretariat electronically via e-mail and in Word format on a CD.

a) The Consultant will submit an interim report for review by the ENVSEC partners by **5 June 2009**. This report will serve as the background document for a workshop to be organized with ENVSEC partners and relevant stakeholders on 1 or 2 July.

b) The Consultant will revise the report in the light of discussions and conclusions from this workshop and will submit a final report including an executive summary by 17 July. Three (3) copies in hard copy format (and a soft copy) are to be submitted.