

Environment and Security initiative

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SPECIAL ISSUE

Regional retreat on ENVSEC activities and plans in Eastern Europe (Belarus – Moldova – Ukraine)

4 November 2007

Lausanne, Switzerland

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Narrative summary of the retreat

The ENVSEC regional meeting was the first of its kind in the Eastern Europe. It followed the model already applied in other ENVSEC regions: bring together the countries (national focal points or their representatives) and partner organisations (managers of ENVSEC projects) to discuss the progress of activities in the region (cf. ENVSEC work programme); exchange the latest experience, needs and propose solutions; bring up and share new ideas. The meeting that took place on 4 November 2008 in Lausanne, Switzerland allowed country representatives to directly confront agencies responsible for the design and implementation of specific ENVSEC projects, ask and answer questions, and clarify positions with respect to concrete issues and activities. The retreat was attended by all three countries, including all focal points or their representatives from the environmental sector (Ministries of the Environment), and two representatives from the foreign affairs community (Moldova's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ukraine's Permanent mission to the UN). All ENVSEC partner agencies were represented as well. Information materials was made available to the participants by the respective agencies, including project documentation, concepts, outputs to-date, as well as other related materials.

On behalf of ENVSEC partner agencies and the Management Board of the initiative the meeting was *opened* by J. Christophe Bouvier, UNEP's European Director and Representative. The format of the retreat and the five thematic clusters of the ENVSEC work programme were *introduced* by Nickolai Denisov, ENVSEC regional desk officer for Eastern Europe (UNEP / GRID-Arendal).

Cluster 1 on the management of shared natural resources, facilitated by Tamara Kutonova from the OSCE, includes activities related to shared waters (so far ENVSEC's main focus in this area). Whereas projects in the Dniester and Prut basins are well advanced, with the current focus on facilitating further legal work, monitoring and information exchange, others in the Pripyat and the Danube rivers and the Drysviaty lake basin are at their initial phase. The meeting discussed the added value of developing a Dniester-specific basin management agreement vs. the existing 1994 agreement on cooperation in shared water basins, both in general and in the context of addressing specific bilateral issues such as those related to construction of the Dniester Hydro-accumulating Plant. (With respect to which ENVSEC and individual partner organizations are prepared to support joint activities of Ukraine and Moldova should this be requested by the countries). For NATO-supported water monitoring of the Dniester and Prut an anticipated challenge is to ensure a full public and cross-border access to the collected data. NATO proposed to take a joint approach to data holders and to harmonise the delivery of the outputs with the information exchange component of the UNECE-OSCE-UNEP Dniester basin cooperation project and as one element of the respective Action Plan. UNEP described start-up activities in the Lake Drysviaty basin (where the first meeting will take place in Minsk in December 2007), and the preparation of projects for flow management and monitoring in the Pripyat basin. In the lower Danube basin UNECE with other ENVSEC partners will concretize possible activities to support bilateral environmental research.

Cluster 2 on the prevention and mitigation of security risks from pollution and waste was facilitated by Susanne Michaelis from NATO, who introduced two NATO-lead activities under the ENVSEC work programme. NATO's support to the inventory and destruction of obsolete pesticides in Moldova is well under way; in Belarus a proposal for research and analytical work for the removal of obsolete pesticides in near-border areas is under development, and is expected to be reviewed by NATO's Science Panel in early 2008. The meeting discussed the possibility of extending similar work to the Transnistrian region of Moldova; this may become possible as part of renewed Chisinau – Tiraspol dialogue as discussed in cluster 4 below. Another NATO-supported activity soon to be approved is the study of the distribution and flows of transuranic elements in the Belarus part of the Chernobyl 'exclusion zone' (Polesie Reserve). Ukraine expressed an interest in seeing support its Chernobyl-affected areas as well, and a discussion followed of an added value of it in the context of other ongoing activities and specific capacities of ENVSEC organizations (e.g. NATO's added value in this area is sometimes questioned by its member-states, whereas OSCE may have insufficient capacities and expertise of its own to follow-up on concrete requests). The conclusion was that ENVSEC's broader involvement is possible while it requires a thorough discussion of concrete needs and possible ways of support. Further on, UNECE outlined plans to support the application of provisions of the Espoo convention in Belarus, tentatively in relation to a development project on the border with Ukraine; the organization will communicate with both countries to further plan and implement the project. The secretariat of the TEIA convention at UNECE announced the meeting in Moldova in December 2007, dedicated to the prevention of industrial accidents with transboundary environmental impacts.

Cluster 3 on the environmental effects of security policies was facilitated by Raul Daussa of OSCE. These ENVSEC activities address the environmental dimensions of energy security and defence issues including military legacy of the past. UNEP and UNDP outlined the concept of strengthening the environmental aspects of energy planning on the regional and the national level. A regional analysis looks at the environmental impacts of energy development scenarios on the region-wide scale. The idea of the national component has included the application of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to energy planning in order to promote a systematic approach to anticipating and minimizing adverse environmental impacts. A regional meeting is planned in 2008 to discuss the approach, and assistance of ENVSEC's national focal points will be required to fully engage countries' energy authorities in the discussion. A NATO-REC workshop on energy, environment and security (Budapest, November 2007) provides additional discussion opportunities. The OSCE presented ENVSEC activities in the military-environmental domain. The priority is the destruction of stocks of mélange in Ukraine, where fund-raising is currently the key. NATO may be able to the solution contribute in-kind by providing a Baku-based mobile plant for mélange destruction, although this requires a further discussion as competing requests from other countries may need to be met. Another OSCE-lead activity included in ENVSEC work programme at the request of Ukraine's Ministry of Defence – support to

environmental training of military personnel – needs further discussion. There also is a potential to harmonise it with training activities under Ukraine-NATO Action Plan. NATO introduced a new project proposal to develop technology for the clean-up of the Pryluky air-field in Ukraine. This project is still under development (i.a. NATO is seeking to strengthen its scientific base), and will be presented to ENVSEC once fully developed. With respect to military-environmental projects in general, a closer cooperation is anticipated between Ukraine's Ministries of Defence and the Environment. Belarus introduced a request to consider support to the rehabilitation of former military bases in the country (analysis, training, clean-up), and to help strengthen environmental management at its operational defence facilities. The focal point in Belarus will facilitate further detailing of this activity, while ENVSEC will start looking for funding opportunities which may include bilateral support from Lithuania and Spain.

Cluster 4 devoted to work in areas with overlapping environmental and security concerns was chaired by Henrieta Martonakova from UNDP. Main discussion was devoted to the emerging needs in the Transnistrian region of Moldova, following a meeting on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBM) in Odesa in October 2007. Moldova expressed its interest in seeing ENVSEC's involvement in one of the recently established working groups to assist in the development and implementation of environmental activities by the Chisinau and Tiraspol authorities. UNDP presented an ENVSEC project to introduce an environmental component into regional development planning in Crimea (Ukraine). The work is under way, and a meeting in Simferopol in November 2007 will discuss and introduce the approach to the local stakeholders. Other dimensions of support to environmental management in Crimea, such as adding an environmental dimension to on-going UNDP's security monitoring and responding to requests to help dispose of obsolete pesticides in selected districts, will be discussed in 2008. UNEP introduced activities in the Donetsk region of Ukraine and the Soligorsk regions of Belarus, where scoping missions took place in October 2007 and planning of interventions in the fields of mining and access to information is underway with the national and local counterparts. Ukraine suggested that the information component may eventually be replicated in other regions of the country.

Cluster 5, strengthening of institutions in the environment-security domain (public authorities, civil society, mass media), was facilitated by Stephen Stec from REC. UNEP presented the status of strengthening public participation in hydro-plant planning in Belarus. Whereas the issue remains relevant, the current situation and needs for support require further clarification with Belarus. In addition to the Aarhus convention, the project would also need to incorporate the provisions of the Espoo convention joined by Belarus. Another activity presented by UNEP was awareness-raising on environment-security issues. While in 2007 such work centred around ENVSEC events per se (the launch in Prague, launches in Chisinau and Minsk; press clippings were circulated among the participants), in 2008 the focus will have to move to concrete issues and projects, where ENVSEC models from other regions can be used (media workshops, media tours planned with national authorities and project counterparts). OSCE explained the preparation of the project to build capacities of Ukraine's competent authorities to prevent illegal traffic of hazardous waste. Upon agreement with the national counterparts the implementation can start in 2007. Moldova described the ENVSEC-supported development of the National Environmental Security Strategy, now adopted by the Government and implemented by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. REC introduced a project on illegal logging, developed for South-Eastern Europe with a potential to involve Eastern European countries. (The country representatives were asked to react on the feasibility of the project by the end of November 2007.)

In *conclusion* to the retreat, Nikolai Denisov gave an overview of some forthcoming developments including ENVSEC Advisory Board meeting in Geneva on 6 November 2007 and a joint presentation of ENVSEC assessment / work programme and UNECE's Environmental Performance Review of Ukraine in Kyiv tentatively in February 2008. The next meeting of ENVSEC for Eastern Europe will take place in the region in 2008. The facilitator thanked the participants for valuable inputs during the discussion, and invited representatives of countries and organizations to provide further comments on the discussed items and activities by the end of 2007. Based on the discussion and the received inputs, the secretariat will respectively update ENVSEC regional Work Programme.

Status and follow-up of ENVSEC projects in Eastern Europe

summary conclusions from the regional retreat in Lausanne
4 november 2007

Project	sta- tus	fun- ding	Follow-up actions
1. management of shared natural resources			
Transboundary cooperation and sustainable management in the Dniester river basin	3	2	- start the information exchange component (2007-08) - continue work towards a basin agreement - re-affirm MD-UA interest in joint work on the Dniester reservoir
Real-time monitoring and decision support systems for international rivers: the Dniester and Prut rivers	3	3	- include into Dniester cooperation action plan, and harmonise with its info exchange component - joint approach to data sharing (ENVSEC letter to MD)
Cross-border assessment and management plan for the Drysviaty / Druksiai lake basin	3	2	- start-up meeting in December 2007
Cooperative flow and flood management in the upper Pripyat / Dnieper - Bug canal basin	2	1	- finalise full project proposal (UNEP-OSCE on flow management, NATO on flood monitoring)
Joint research related to activities with transboundary impact in the Danube delta	2	2	- conceptualise joint research activities to follow up findings of the Espoo inquiry commission
2. security risks from pollution and waste			
Mitigating risks from stocks of obsolete pesticides in transboundary basins and near-border areas	2	2	- streamline BY project proposal to NATO - consider action in other regions at request (Transnistrian region – MD, Crimea – UA)
Development of capacities for application of the Espoo Convention	2	2	- finalise project concept / plan with BY - invite UA for full participation
Mapping and analysis of distribution and flows of radionuclides around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant	3	3	- monitor / ensure the added value of the project - discuss with UA whether ENVSEC can do more on Chernobyl
Strengthening capacities to assess and prevent risks from hazardous activities	3	3	- MD / regional workshop in December 2007
3. environmental aspects of security measures			
Assessing environmental implications of energy development policies and trends	2	2	- re-think the capacity-building component (regional meeting, link to energy-environment scenario building) - promote at REC-NATO Budapest workshop
Training, awareness raising and institutional support to address environmental effects of defence activities	1	1	- further conceptualisation; mid-term pipeline 2009 - link to NATO support to environmental management in UA armed forces
Disposal of stocks of rocket fuel toxic component (mélange)	3	1	- fund-raising is the major issue (EUR 700K out of 10M available) - NATO mobile plant for mélange destruction may be available in-kind; possibility / feasibility to be discussed
<i>Technology for environmental rehabilitation of the Pryluki airfield (new – NATO)</i>	2		- not yet submitted as an ENVSEC project, needs further conceptualisation by UA and NATO, including strengthening the scientific part

<i>Management of environmental risks at closed and operational military sites (new – Belarus)</i>	1		- proposal by BY, needs more precise formulation - explore financing options (e.g. Spain, Lithuania)
4. areas with overlapping environment-security concerns			
Needs assessment, technical, institutional and legal strengthening of environmental cooperation in Transnistria	1	2	- should be conceptualised in the frame of the new cooperation process in MD (Chisinau – Tiraspol working groups). Pending request from the government
Environmental assessment of development planning and environment-security monitoring in Crimea	3	2	- SEA workshop in November 2007 - discuss other elements in 2008 (monitoring, pesticides)
Assessment and capacity-building for managing environment and security risks in Donbas and Soligorsk regions	2	2	- take stock of fact-finding missions in October 2007 - consider new aspects in Soligorsk (surface erosion, brown coal, mining training facility) - info component could be used by other UA oblasts
5. institutions on the environment-security interface			
Public participation and exchange of information on hydropower development on the Neman and Zap. Dvina rivers	1	1	- verify the current state of the issue and feasible directions with BY - consider adding an Espoo-related component
Prevention of illegal cross-border transport of hazardous waste: training of border and environmental authorities	2	3	- discuss in-depth / endorse the project concept with UA
Development of Moldovan national environmental security programme			- completed
Awareness, public participation and education on environment and security risks and linkages	2	2	- formulate concrete activities for 2008, discuss in-depth with the countries
<i>Illegal logging (cross-cutting project, also present in SE Europe – REC)</i>	3		- expecting countries' reactions on the project idea by the end of 2007

Key to the table

	project status		project funding
concept clear, most activities are ready for implementation	3	3	full funding
needs clarification of certain issues	2	2	partial funding / gap exists
needs further discussion and conceptualisation	1	1	no / marginal funding

NB: new projects / ideas for consideration are in *italic*

Agenda of the ENVSEC Eastern European Retreat

Hotel Aulac, Lausanne, November 4, 2007

- 9:30 INTRODUCTION
- Welcome and opening: Jean Christophe Bouvier, Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe
Tour de table (introduction of participants)
Retreat objectives and format: Nickolai Denisov, ENVSEC regional desk, UNEP / GRID-Arendal
- 10:00 ENVSEC WORK PROGRAMME: state of the art and future directions
Presentation of projects in the work programme (ENVSEC partner organisations)
Country additions and perspectives (country representatives)
Discussion of linkages, opportunities, new ideas for the future (all)
- Cluster 1: Management of shared environmental resources
(facilitator: Tamara Kutonova, OSCE, Economic and Environmental Activities)
- 11:00 COFFEE-BREAK
- 11:30 Cluster 2: Mitigating security risks from sources of pollution and waste
(facilitator: Susanne Michaelis, NATO «Science for Peace and Security» programme)
- 12:30 LUNCH
- 14:00 Cluster 3: Addressing environmental aspects of security policies
(facilitator: Raul Daussa, OSCE, Economic and Environmental Activities)
- 15:00 Cluster 4: Integrated approach to areas with overlapping environment-security problems
(facilitator: Henrieta Martonakova, UNDP Regional Centre in Bratislava)
- 16:00 COFFEE-BREAK
- 16:30 Cluster 5: Strengthening institutions in the environment and security domain
(facilitator: Stephen Stec, Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe)
- 17:00 OTHER ISSUES (facilitator: Nickolai Denisov, UNEP / GRID-Arendal)
General, organisational and strategic issues
Conclusion

Participants of ENVSEC Eastern European retreat

Hotel Aulac, Lausanne, November 4, 2007

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[summary statistics : 22 persons • 17 nationalities • 14 organisations • 11 cities • 2 genders]