

## **INTERVENTION BY THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

The Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) continues to assist its beneficiaries to implement the objectives of the UNECE strategy on ESD. The REC has several initiatives on ESD within the UN/ECE region, they can be summarised under two banners: 1). Supporting ESD policy development and 2). Implementing EE/ESD projects. RECs work has been done through engagement in the UNECE process, but also through the implementation of certain tangible projects:

- In the area of teaching materials and curricula development the further development of the **Green Pack** – a multi-media education resource for teachers – has meant that it is now adapted for, implemented in and is continuing in nine countries<sup>1</sup> (also in English).
  - Co-operation with NGOs, teachers, business, education institutes, and the ministries of environment and education in these countries has been immensely valuable to the success of the work and has led to an estimated 1.5 million pupils receiving lessons from the Green Pack materials to date and some 12,000 teachers have been trained in these countries through specifically tailored training programmes.
  - There is current work in the Western Balkans, in FYR Macedonia (supported by Austria), and Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (supported by The Netherlands), and planned projects for Central Asia (Kazakhstan & Kyrgyzstan) and Romania (where support is being sought). Through these projects the pack continues to be enhanced further towards SD issues.
- Building on the success of the Green Pack, the REC has developed<sup>2</sup> the **Green Pack Junior** (GPJ) a new set of environmental education materials for younger school children and for schools with less technical equipment. REC intends to begin disseminating these materials in the first pilot countries this year.
- In order to assist government officials in building their knowledge and skills on sustainable development issues the Center has offered - with a partnership of universities and supported by Italy - the **Course for Sustainability**. Since 2004 four courses have taught 220 civil servants from eleven CEE countries. The course will now be tailored to other regions (a course is starting for Kazakh officials in April 2008) and for other stakeholders (businesses and municipalities in South East Europe and the Black Sea regions).

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russian Federation (Moscow region & St. Petersburg), Slovakia, and Turkey.

<sup>2</sup> The Green Pack Junior launch event was launched during the Environment for Europe Conference in Belgrade on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2007.

Through these activities the REC has shown that the educational approach being promoted by the UNECE Strategy for ESD is possible and resolves to continue its work in this field.

However ESD is still a particular challenge for the countries of South Eastern Europe and those countries have asked for specific support at the Environment for Europe Conference in Belgrade. REC reiterates the call for a concerted sub-regional process for the SEE sub-region and believes that a commitment from the countries at this meeting to assist in that would be a positive achievement.