

Statement of His Excellency

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*Ministry of Environment
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ROMANIA

State of the environment and monitoring and assessment

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**Dear Mr. Chairman,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, please allow me to also express our gratitude to the Government of Serbia for their generous hospitality and excellent arrangements made for this Conference.

At the same time, I would like to congratulate the Environmental European Agency and the other countries and institutions involved for the high quality of the fourth assessment on the environmental state of the Pan - European Region. We consider that this assessment should be seen as a step in the journey towards a mutual benefit cooperation and partnership between Pan-European countries and a choice to provide better and more coherent environmental information.

Please allow me to briefly refer to the main chapters provided by the fourth assessment of the environment at the Pan-European region level:

Firstly, the **major environment - related health concerns in the pan-European region** continue to be linked to poor access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, air pollution, improper management of hazardous chemicals and loss of ecosystem services. All of us know that these are often interconnected through common driving forces or pressures.

Romania already has taken the necessary measures for an appropriate water and air quality monitoring, in order to give correct and in due time information and responses to environment-related health challenges. Of course, further investments are needed and we are deeply aware on the importance of this issue.

Secondly, as it results from the Report, **climate change** is reflected on the extreme weather events across the Pan-European Region and worldwide and has an impact on a range of socio-economic activities, society and natural resources. I'm

referring here to water scarcity and droughts and floods as well, which have been increasing both in intensity and frequency at European level and neighbouring regions in recent years. In order to mitigate as much as possible this trend, we think that one of the necessary urgent measure is the strengthening of cooperation between our countries and development of action plans on adaptation on climate change effects.

Also, considering the increasing vulnerability to climate changes and associated natural disasters in the South Eastern Europe region, we welcome and support the initiative of the Republic of Serbia to establish a Sub-regional Climate Change Centre in Belgrade.

Thirdly, as regards **biodiversity**, the Report underlines that the decline and the loss of ecosystem services continue to be a major concern in the Pan-European Region.

I' am sure that you also consider that halting biodiversity loss by 2010 will not be achieved without synergic and additional efforts.

We think the developing national and regional protected areas and integrating ecological networks into a global one will be an essential tool to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target. In this respect, we are ready to hardly work and collaborate with other states for technical and political progress for the Pan-European Ecological Network.

Fourthly, as regards the **marine and coastal environment**, and in particular the Black Sea marine environment, please allow me to inform you that in the last years we can see a slight but permanent improvement.

We are confident that once becoming a EU Sea, we will assist to a better protection of the Black Sea environment. In this respect, implementation of the Water Framework Directive for the Danube River Basin and Black Sea coastal waters will contribute and accelerate the marine wildlife recovery. For this goal, it is clear that we will have to enhance the cooperation of the countries from the Black Sea basin and therefore improvement of cooperation between Black Sea and Danube countries is one of the priorities of the 2007 Romanian Presidency of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River.

Fifthly, taken into account the Report provisions, the impacts on the environment of increased ***production and consumption*** are growing in the region.

Fundamental changes in the way societies produce and consume are indispensable for achieving global sustainable development. Therefore, in Romania, it is ongoing the adoption of a specific strategic action plan, encouragement and support for the ecologic procurement system, in the public administration and private sector system, the introduction of new ecologic technologies, the adoption of an environmental tax system, as well as the introduction of a large public awareness.

Finally, in the last chapter of the Report, is stipulated that there is still a need for stronger recognition of the fact that socio-economic and environmental objectives are not in conflict with each other, and the achievement of environmental objectives is an absolute precondition if the socio-economic goals are to be met in the long term.

In order to coordinate the integration of the environment protection into the national sectoral strategies and policies, since 2001, Romania set up an Inter-Ministerial Committee led by the Minister of Environment which had a driving role especially during the negotiation process of environmental chapter. We consider that only by a permanent integrated and transparent approach of all our actions we can assure a sustainability of our present and future life, at national, regional and global level.

Please allow me to end by concluding that there are still need clear information and knowledge on the state of environment at the Pan-European region level, in order to decide together the necessary steps to be followed for a healthy environment and life. We also strongly support the further efforts for improving environmental monitoring and the indicator-based environmental assessment, as well as for common framework on environmental reporting.

Thank you very much for your attention.