

**World Bank Talking Points for Belgrade Conference  
Item 5 -Capacity Building (b) South-East European Perspectives**

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**Plenary 11 a.m - 1 p.m.**

- **Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this session on Capacity Building in Southeast Europe. Alignment to the EU Acquis is presenting a significant change in the scope and organization of responsibilities in government and demands a greater focus on strengthening capacity to implement environmental laws.**
- **Sustainability of environment investments rely heavily on a strong institutions, environmental laws, and capacity to enforce them.**
- **I would like to Raise awareness of a new World Bank publication "Journey to a Cleaner Future- Investing in People and Institutions that make Environmental Laws Work" which is available at World Bank Booth and posted on our website.**
- **Behind this report were surveys and interviews with over 380 Environmental professionals and stakeholders in CEE states who shared their key capacity building and reform challenges faced while adapting to the environment acquis.**
- **Over 60% of respondents ranked human capacity as the most problematic issue during pre-accession and reported struggles through a difficult time consuming trial and error learning process. Ultimately this was also the area of the largest gain, showing that the accession process itself was a capacity building process.**
- **The report discuss the transformation process which occurred and compares SEE countries today against key measures such as staffing, fragmentation of environment institutions, environment expenditures, governance, environmental enforcement, protection of nature, waste permitting etc.**
- **Reported benefits of the environment acquis include improved governance and high shared benefits with other sectors. A key message was that time taken early on to educate citizens, government partners, and businesses of these benefits will pay off later in better preparation for necessary change.**
- **Decentralization and Public Administration Reforms most often interfered with or contradicted necessary environment reforms and in hindsight, more can be done to coordinate these objectives.**
- **Lessons provided good practiced examples which reinforced the importance of: detailed plans for investment and capacity building; investments in basic**

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<sup>1</sup> The present document is a scanned copy of a statement received on 11 October 2007 during the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, 10-12 October 2007). The document has not been formally processed by the UNECE.

**environmental enforcement; proactive public information strategies; and strengthened institutional coordination mechanisms.**