

THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROGRAMME



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UNITED NATIONS

What is an EPR?

An **external assessment** of environment management practices carried out in a country by experts from other member countries

Organized and coordinated under the responsibility of the UNECE secretariat under the mandate of the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP)

ORIGIN of EPR PROGRAMME

It was launched in 1993 at the request of European Environment Ministers.

It parallels the EPR programme of OECD (*Western Europe and other countries-members of OECD*).

The EPR programme of UNECE is intended for **countries with economies in transition** (*Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia*).

The EPR programme is carried out by the Committee on Environmental Policy of the Economic Commission for Europe.

OBJECTIVES

To assist countries in transition to improve their management of the environment

To promote convergence of environmental conditions and policies throughout the UNECE region

Goals

Environmental Performance Review assesses a country's efforts:

- to reduce its overall pollution burden
- to manage its natural resources
- to integrate environmental and socio-economic policies
- to develop, adjust and implement its environmental policies and strategies
- to strengthen its cooperation with the international community

Focus of first reviews

- Environmental situation of various media and natural resources (air, water, soil, waste, biodiversity, mineral resources,...)
- Assessment of the framework for environmental policy and management (including international cooperation)
- Pressures from selected sectors of activities
- Impact on health

COUNTRIES REVIEWED:

First reviews (23)

- Poland (1994)*
- Bulgaria (1995)*
- Estonia (1995)
- Slovenia (1997)
- Belarus (1997)*
- Moldova (1998)
- Lithuania (1998)
- Latvia (1998)
- Russian Federation (1999)*
- Ukraine (1999)
- Croatia (1999)
- Kazakhstan (2000)
- Kyrgyzstan (2000)
- Armenia (2000)
- Romania (2001)
- Uzbekistan (2001)
- Albania (2002)
- The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2002)
- Serbia and Montenegro (2002)
- Georgia (2003)
- Azerbaijan (2003)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina (2004)
- Tajikistan (2004)

** OECD in cooperation with UNECE*

Focus of second reviews

Ministers at the 5th "Environment for Europe" Conference in Kiev (2003) decided to continue EPR Programme with the 2nd cycle of Reviews.

Emphasis on:

- Implementation of the recommendations in the first reviews;
- Implementation of national environmental policies and strategies and international commitments and enforcement of environmental legislation;
- Financing for environmental protection;
- Integration of environmental concerns into economic sectors; and
- Promotion of sustainable development.

Focus of second reviews (continued)

- Greater emphasis on the priorities of the countries, including, in particular, new concerns that have arisen;
- *More in depth* examine issues of financing, including domestic, bilateral and multilateral, and the use of economic instruments;
- Give greater emphasis to the integration of the environment with other sectors at all decision-making levels and to its socio-economic interface

COUNTRIES REVIEWED:

Second reviews (7)

- Bulgaria (2000)
- Estonia (2001)
- Belarus (2005)
- Moldova (2005)
- Ukraine (2006)
- Serbia (2007)
- Montenegro (2007)

Next countries to be reviewed:

- Kazakhstan (2007-2008)
- Kyrgyzstan (2008)
- Armenia (2008-2009)
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2008-2009)
- Uzbekistan (2008-2009)

Sample Structure of EPR

Second EPR of Serbia

I. Policy making, planning and implementation

1. Legal and policy-making framework
2. Information, public participation and education
3. Implementation of international agreements and commitments

II. Mobilizing financial resources for sustainable development

4. Revenues and expenditures for environmental protection

III. Integration of environmental concerns and promotion of sustainable development

5. Water management for sustainable development
6. Energy and environment

Examples of forestry-related chapters in second reviews

- Environmental management in agriculture and forestry (Belarus, Moldova)
- Land management and protection (Ukraine)

STAGES of EPR PROCESS

- The official request and its approval
- The preparatory mission
- Preparation for the mission
- The main mission and drafting of the Review document
- Expert Review
- Peer Review
- Publication of EPR, implementation and follow-up

REVIEW PROCEDURE

There are two key steps in the process:

- **Expert Review;** all recommendations and conclusions of the report are reviewed in detail by a group of independent international experts with participation of experts from the reviewed country.
- **Peer Review;** at the CEP annual session; representatives of the reviewed country are high-level officials, representing environmental authorities, usually Ministers of Environmental Protection.

REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

- Contains a series of recommendations (up to five per chapter)
- Recommendations are non-binding
- Authorities of the reviewed country make a commitment to implement the recommendations
- Countries are invited to report on implementation of recommendations after three years since the time of the Review
- Second EPR of the country contains Annex with an overview of implementation of Recommendations of the first Review

Publication

Once adopted by the CEP, EPRs are **published** in English and (if requested) in Russian by the UNECE, and may be published in the **national language** in the country reviewed.

EPRs are **officially launched** in the country by the national environmental authorities and the UNECE secretariat, with participation of other ministries, representatives of international community, civil society and media.



Benefits of EPR for a reviewed country

Being an external assessment with an independent view of the problems, EPR:

- raises awareness of environmental problems at the Government level;
- facilitates sectoral integration of environmental issues;
- points out areas for further progress;
- increases visibility to the international community and potential donors, attracts assistance

UNECE EPR Reviews

Are all available on our Web Site:

<http://www.unece.org/env/epr>

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EPR Reviews



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