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REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK
CROSS-SECTORAL ACTIVITIES
ENVIRONMENT AND SECURITY INITIATIVE
BUILDING CAPACITY AND PARTNERSHIP – ENVIRONMENT
AND SECURITY INITIATIVE

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I. THE ENVSEC PARTNERSHIP

1. The Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative has been established to assess and address environmental problems, which threaten or are perceived to threaten security, societal stability and peace, human health and/or sustainable livelihoods, within and across national borders in conflict prone regions. The Initiative collaborates closely with Governments, particularly foreign, defense and environment ministries, national experts and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

2. Together with the stakeholders ENVSEC has carried out assessments and published reports illustrated by maps, for understanding the linkages between environment and security in the political and socio-economic reality of South Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia. Based on the assessments, the Initiative develops and implements work programmes aimed at reducing tensions and solving the problems identified.

II. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND SYNERGIES

3. ENVSEC was established in 2003 and includes the following partners: the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Regional Environment Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC-CEE). The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an associate member and participates with its Science for Peace and Security Programme.

4. The partners of the ENVSEC Initiative have a joint Secretariat hosted by UNEP (Geneva) and work closely together to coordinate their activities and find synergies where possible.

III. INPUT OF UNECE – WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONVENTIONS

5. The UNECE Environmental Conventions are an important pillar for the ENVSEC activities and the number of ENVSEC projects that UNECE is engaged in is increasing.

A. ENVSEC projects under the Water Convention:

- (a) Capacity building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia.
- (b) Enhancing Regional Exchange of Water Resource Information in Central Asia, CAREWIB II.
- (c) Transboundary cooperation and sustainable management of the Dniester river.
- (d) Support to a bilateral agreement under the UNECE Water Convention between Azerbaijan and Georgia.
- (e) Bi-/multilateral arrangements for prevention of transboundary environmental conflicts: the Timok River shared by Bulgaria and Serbia.
- (f) Pilot applications of Guidance for climate change adaptation.

B. The EIA Convention:

- (a) Implementation of the EIA Convention in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.
- (b) Joint research related to activities with transboundary impact in the Danube delta.
- (c) Development of capacities for application of the EIA Convention in Belarus and Ukraine.
- (d) Strengthening Implementation of the EIA Convention in Armenia.

C. The Transboundary Accidents Convention:

- (a) Strengthening national and local capacities to assess and prevent risks from transboundary accidents in Central Asia.

D. The Aarhus Convention:

- (a) The establishment of several Aarhus Centres in conflict regions.
- (b) Support to the implementation of the Protocol on Pollutants Release and Transfer Register to the Aarhus Convention.

E. Other UNECE activities of relevancy to environment and security

6. UNECE implements a Programme component “Regional dialogue and cooperation on water resources management” in the GTZ Program “Trans-boundary Water Management in

Central Asia”. The objective is to strengthen the capacity of regional institutions for water resources management in Central Asia.

7. Water Quality in Central Asia - a project aiming to establish a regional platform for cooperation on water quality management.

8. A new project on the Chu and Talas rivers shared by Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan supports the further broadening of the cooperation improve the management of water resources in these rivers.

IV. CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF ENVSEC

9. Challenges for the future development of ENVSEC are:

(a) Further development of cooperation and achievement of synergies between ENVSEC Partners.

(b) Improved external and internal communication.

(c) Improved fund-raising.

10. As Chairman of ENVSEC, in 2009 UNECE is pursuing the following objectives: (a) establishing a new management structure for ENVSEC and renewing the Memorandum of Understanding between the partners; (b) reviewing the vision and strategy of ENVSEC; (c) further enhancing the visibility of ENVSEC; (d) developing ENVSEC work on climate change adaptation; and (e) improving fund-raising. A key activity in 2009 is the elaboration of the three-year work programme (January 2010–December 2012).
