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Project Profile



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The European Union's long-term interest in successful transitions to democracy and market economies in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) requires, among other things, adequate environmental protection policies, in particular for ecosystems of regional and global importance.

One of today's most acute challenges - the environmental

degradation of the Black Sea and its main contributing rivers – evokes major concerns in the basin countries and the wider international community. A recent EU-funded study involving more than 100 scientists from 15 nations listed the Black Sea as one of several seas in “a serious state of decline” as a result of coastal development, overfishing and pollution from agriculture. The recovery and conservation of this unique ecosystem require adequate institutional capacity and financial resources. Support and partnership with the international community, as well as their own efforts, are essential for the Black Sea countries to muster the capacity and resources to achieve progress. In the last decade, collaborative efforts to protect the Black Sea have brought some positive results but still more needs to be accomplished. Towards this end the EU is continuing to provide support in the region.

One of the recent projects initiated by the EU through the European Commission (EC) is Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea in the four EECCA countries eligible for support under the Tacis program: Georgia, Russian Federation, Ukraine (coastal countries) and Moldova (which is in the Black Sea basin with borders very near the coastline.) This 30-month, Euro 2.2 million project launched in March 2007, is being implemented by the Consortium of Euroconsult Mott MacDonald (The Netherlands), Mott MacDonald Ltd (UK) and Milieu Ltd. (Belgium).

The Project seeks to improve regional co-operation and regional agreements for protection of the Black Sea, most importantly the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (the Bucharest Convention) and related documents. It works in connection with the Black Sea Commission (BSC), particularly with its Permanent Secretariat, while focusing on improving national capacities to develop and enforce environmental legislation to implement the Bucharest Convention. Documents developed under the Project take into account convergence with EU water related legislation, in particular the Water Framework Directive and the recently adopted EU Marine Strategy.

The Project includes specific activities from BSC annual work plans, and supports



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through pilot projects and other methods integrated coastal zone management for sustainable development of Black Sea communities, and the preparation of documents for the establishment of marine reserves.

The Project partners in beneficiary countries are: Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources in Georgia; Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in Moldova; Ministry of Environmental Protection in Ukraine. The final beneficiaries are the population (urban and rural) living within the coastal areas and river basins.

Information about the Project is disseminated to interested stakeholders through media and Internet. The stakeholders, ministries and agencies, local authorities, NGOs, academia, local private sectors and ordinary citizens are involved in consultations and discussions of the Project documents. The Project website (www.ecbsea.org) provides up-to-date information on Project activities and relevant events.

The Project is guided by a Steering Committee (SC) made up of officials of the European Commission and of the above mentioned environmental ministries in the beneficiary countries. At the first meeting (November 9, 2007, Brussels), the Steering Committee approved the Project's Inception Report, which defines activities and results to be achieved, and authorized the Project team to further elaborate activities bilaterally with the beneficiaries. The Steering Committee supported the decision of the European Commission to add the Permanent Secretariat of the BSC as a beneficiary of the Project, and took positive note of the work done on drafting amendments to the Bucharest Convention.

At the second Steering Committee meeting (May 19, 2008, Brussels) it was agreed to focus on technical amendments to the Bucharest Convention with a view to reach a political agreement at the Black Sea Ministerial Conference in October 2008 in Kyiv and to terminate activities on Biological Monitoring. The Progress Report on Project activities was approved. It was also decided to expand the Legal Component activities in Moldova and to conduct regulatory impact assessment for the two draft regulations to be developed. Additionally, the Project was also to provide expert assistance to Ukraine and the BSC Permanent Secretariat with preparation of the documents for the BS Ministerial Conference initially planned to be conducted in October 2008 in Kyiv and later delayed till April 2009 in Sofia.

As a result of these SC decisions, Project activities currently include Legal, Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), and Marine Protected Areas (Biodiversity) Components. These are implemented in the beneficiary countries with an emphasis on their regional dimension.

In light of the Project commitment to openness and transparency, public outreach events were conducted on Black Sea Day 2008 in Batumi, Georgia and in Odessa, Ukraine.

To discuss project progress and give further guidance, the third SC meeting took place in Brussels on November 17, 2008. Progress Report was positively accepted by the members of the Steering Committee.

In Ukraine, the Draft Law on Coastal Zone was prepared and passed to the Ministry of Environmental Protection for review and comments. The Guidelines for the Establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) in the Black Sea were completed and submitted to the BSC



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Permanent Secretariat. The pilot project on establishing MPA in Karkinitzky Bay has been completed. The project prepared a desk study and field survey report as well as GIS maps, which compose the MPA Designation Dossier for the development of the MPA management plan. A regional training course was delivered in association with the stakeholder meeting in March 2009 with the focus on best practices in establishing and managing MPAs in the Black Sea area and EU. Also the in situ training and intensive instruction in designing and implementing a grid-based stratified sampling programme for marine habitats in Karkinitzky Bay and applying digital GIS and data base tools was provided to the local experts. The final (3rd) regional WG meeting was held in March 2009 in Odessa where the updated version of the Guidelines for the Establishment of Marine Protected Areas in the Black Sea was provided and Designation Dossier for Karkinitzky Bay MPA presented and discussed.

In Georgia, ICZM pilot projects were implemented in the local coastal community of Tskaltsminda village, near Poti, the major outcome was the developed Integrated Plan for Sustainable Development of Tskhaltsminda community. A media event was conducted in Tskhaltsminda village to present the ICZM pilot project activities and results. The Project also was assisting Georgia in developing a National ICZM Strategy, the first one in the region. The ICZM Working Group was established to facilitate this process. The Draft ICZM Strategy was discussed at a Public Hearing on 26 September, 2008 in Tbilisi. In February 2009 a Public Presentation of the ICZM Strategy for Georgia was held and the document was submitted to the Ministry, thereby completing this project activity.

In Moldova, project experts helped to improve water legislation working on its convergence with the EU requirements, in particularly with the EU Water Framework Directive and other water related EU Directives. The first drafts of regulations and convergence plans as well as regulatory impact assessments were discussed at a multi-stakeholders workshop in Chisinau on October 30, 2008. The 3rd Legal and Institutional WG meeting in December 2008 was held to support the drafting of new legislation or amendments to existing legislation in order to ensure convergence of national water related laws and secondary legislation with EU corresponding requirements. A public outreach event was held in March 2009 to inform the general public about the results of the legal component and outputs of the convergence work done under the Project.

The Project provided overall support to the Regional NGO Workshop (12-13 March, 2009) as a public event towards the Ministerial Meeting/Diplomatic Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Bucharest Convention (17 April, 2009, Sofia, Bulgaria). The objective of the Workshop was to discuss and formulate the standpoint of the Black Sea NGOs regarding the Bucharest Convention, other related key documents and their implementation, primarily focusing on access to information, public participation, compliance mechanisms and reporting requirements. The meeting summoned almost 50 participants including NGO representatives from all the Black Sea countries and Moldova, officials from EC Delegation to Ukraine, Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine, Permanent Secretariat of the Black Sea Commission and representatives of international organizations. The NGO forum came up with the conclusion that the Bucharest Convention should be amended and improved. It adopted Recommendations to National Governments of the Black Sea and Black Sea basin countries as well as Statement of the Black Sea Region NGOs "New Future for the Black Sea Environment". The Statement was presented at the Ministerial Meeting in Sofia. The amendments to the Bucharest Convention, developed by ECBSea Project were discussed at the Meeting. Five out of the six Black Sea countries agreed to adopt the amendments, except for the Russian Federation, which pointed out that it needed more



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time to study that matter. The Final Strategic Action Plan for the Rehabilitation and Protection of the Black Sea (BS SAP) and Protocol on Pollution Control from Land Based Sources Activities were adopted. The ECBSea Project played a role in finalizing these documents by providing expert time.

On April 28, 2009, the 4th ECBSea Project Steering Committee meeting took place at the Aarhus Centre of the Ministry for Environmental Protection of Ukraine. Representatives of the beneficiary countries: Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, officials from the European Commission as the members of the SC, Project team and guests participated. The results and outputs of the Project were highly appraised by the participants and the Progress Report 4 was adopted.

Outputs of the Project:

1. **Guidelines for the Establishment of Marine Protected Areas in the Black Sea (updated, March 2009)**
2. **Designation Dossier for the Establishment of the Marine Protected Area in the Black Sea: Desk Study of Small Phyllophora Field MPA in Karkinitzky Bay; Field Survey of Karkinitzky Bay MPA ; GIS maps of Karkinitzky Bay**
3. **Draft Law of Ukraine on Coastal Zone (updated version, February, 2009)**
4. **Background paper for the regional NGO workshop: “The Bucharest Convention: How to improve transparency and accountability?”**
5. **Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Georgia**
6. **Integrated Plan for Sustainable Development of Tskaltsminda Coastal Community in Georgia including GIS maps**
7. **Report on Results of Coastal Community Survey on Sustainable Development in Tskaltsminda village (Georgia)**
8. **Report on Water Directives Convergence Evaluation in Moldova in English (updated).**
9. **Report on Water Directives Convergence Evaluation in Romanian (updated).**
10. **Regulation on Surface Water Protection Against Pollution for Moldova (updated with stakeholder comments).**
11. **Regulation on Delimitation and Classification of Water Bodies for Moldova (updated with stakeholder comments).**
12. **Final Reports on Regulatory Impact Assessment in Romanian and English for both regulations.**

The text of their most recent versions can be found at the Project web site www.ecbsea.org

For more information, please visit the Project website or write to ecbsea@ecbsea.org



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ECBSea activities in pictures



Project Public Outreach Conference, December 2007, Kyiv, Ukraine



Meeting of the legal Working Group, March, 2008, Chisinau, Moldova



Participation in Europe Day, 11 May, 2008, Kyiv, Ukraine



ICZM pilot projects and Stakeholder Workshop, Tskhaltsminda village, Georgia, July, 2008



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*Regional Biodiversity Working Group,
September 4-5, 2008, Odessa, Ukraine*



*Field survey for establishment of marine
protected area in Karkinitzky Bay, Ukraine*



The Project office in Tbilisi at work



*Participation at the 8th International
Exhibition "MOLDECO-2008", October Chisinau*



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