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Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia



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Preface

The “Environment for Europe” process, under the aegis of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, has worked since 1991 to strengthen international cooperation to protect and improve the environment across Europe.

At the fourth “Environment for Europe” Conference, in Aarhus, Denmark, in 1998, Environment Ministers recognized that mechanisms for coordinated monitoring, data collection, processing and management in the pan-European region were often inadequate. The difficulties were particularly acute in countries in transition, including the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. For the Ministers improving these mechanisms and state-of-the-environment information were top priorities.

To meet this goal, the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy set up an Ad Hoc Working Group on Environment Monitoring in September 2000. The Working Group was charged with providing recommendations, proposing action plans and strengthening international initiatives within the UNECE region in environmental monitoring and related fields. It supported the preparation of the third pan-European environmental assessment report (*Kiev Assessment*) by the European Environment Agency and discussed problems and prospects of environmental monitoring and state-of-the-environment reporting in individual countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

This publication provides an overview of the challenges faced by national environmental monitoring and reporting systems in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It presents recommendations and guidance to these countries on how to improve the situation. The publication is aimed at officials and experts working for environmental authorities in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries, environmental citizens’ organizations and researchers. It is my sincere hope that it will prove very valuable to them.



Brigita Schmögnerova
Executive Secretary

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Abbreviations

AMAP	Arctic Monitoring Assessment Programme
CLRTAP	Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
EMEP	Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe
EU	European Union
IUCN	World Conservation Union
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MSC	Meteorological Synthesizing Centre
NEAP	National environmental action plan (or programme)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
PRTR	Pollutant release and transfer register
SoE	State of the environment
UNCSD	United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNSD	United Nations Statistical Division

Country groups

East European, Caucasian and Central Asian (EECCA) subregion: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The name of this group of countries and its abbreviation is for the purposes of this document only and does not constitute an internationally recognized term based on either geographical or socio-economic criteria.

Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

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