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Committee on Environmental Policy

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PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Second Review



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## *Foreword*

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Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) for countries in transition were initiated by Environment Ministers at the second Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” held in Lucerne, Switzerland, in 1993. As a result, the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy decided to make the EPRs a part of its regular programme.

Ten years later, at the fifth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Kiev, 2003), the Ministers confirmed that the UNECE EPR Programme had made it possible to assess the effectiveness of the efforts of countries with economies in transition to manage their environment. The Programme has addressed tailor-made recommendations to the Governments concerned on improving environmental management to reduce their pollution load, to better integrate environmental policies into sectoral policies, and to strengthen cooperation with the international community. The Ministers also reaffirmed their support for the EPR Programme as an important instrument for countries with economies in transition, and decided that the Programme should proceed with a second cycle of reviews. This second round, while taking stock of the progress made since the first review, puts particular emphasis on implementation, integration, financing and the socio-economic interface with the environment.

Through the Peer Review process, EPRs also promote dialogue among UNECE member countries and harmonization of environmental conditions and policies throughout the region. As a voluntary exercise, the EPR is undertaken only at the request of the country concerned.

The studies are carried out by international teams of experts from the region working closely with national experts from the reviewed country. The teams also benefit from close cooperation with other organizations in the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, and with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

This is the second EPR of Serbia published by the UNECE. The report takes stock of the progress made by Serbia in the management of its environment since the country was first reviewed in 2002, when the country was part of Yugoslavia. While looking closely at the implementation of the recommendations of the first review, the report also covers seven issues of importance to Serbia concerning policymaking, planning and implementation, the financing of environmental policies and projects, and the integration of environmental concerns into economic sectors, and the promotion of sustainable development. Issues receiving special attention during the review included compliance and enforcement mechanisms, economic instruments and environmental funds, and the integration of environmental concerns in energy and in water management.

I hope that this Review will be useful in supporting policymakers and representatives of civil society in their efforts to improve environmental management and further promote sustainable development in Serbia, and that the lessons learned from the Peer Review process will also benefit other countries of the UNECE region.



Marek Belka  
Executive Secretary  
Economic Commission for Europe



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## *Preface*

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The second Environmental Performance Review (EPR) of Serbia began in May 2006 with a preparatory mission, during which the final structure of the report was discussed and established. The team of international experts included experts from the Czech Republic, Germany and Italy, and from the secretariats of the European Environmental Agency and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

The review mission took place from 23 to 27 October 2006. The draft EPR report was submitted to Serbia for comments in April 2007. In May 2007, the draft was submitted for consideration to the Ad Hoc Expert Group on Environmental Performance. During this meeting, the Expert Group discussed the report in detail with expert representatives of the Government of Serbia, focusing in particular on the conclusions and recommendations made by the international experts.

The EPR report, with suggested amendments from the Expert Group, was then submitted for peer review to the fourteenth session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy on 29 May 2007. A high-level delegation from Serbia participated in the peer review. The Committee adopted the recommendations as set out in this report. The report will be translated into the national language with support from the United Nations Development Programme Country Office in Belgrade.

The UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy and the UNECE review team would like to thank the Government of Serbia and its experts who worked with the international experts and contributed their knowledge and assistance. UNECE wishes the Government of Serbia further success in carrying out the tasks involved in meeting its environmental objectives, including the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations in this second review.

UNECE would also like to express its deep appreciation to the Governments of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, as well as the European Environmental Agency and the United Nations Development Programme, for their support to the Environmental Performance Review Programme and to this review.



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**LIST OF TEAM MEMBERS**

Ms. Catherine Masson	ECE secretariat	Team Leader
Mr. Antoine Nunes	ECE secretariat	Project Coordinator
Mr. Jyrki Hirvonen	ECE secretariat	Introduction
Dr. Eva Kruzikova	Czech Republic	Chapter 1
Ms. Anita Pirc-Velkavrh	EEA	Chapter 2
Mr. Oleg Dzioubinski	ECE secretariat	Chapter 3
Mr. Dieter Hesse	ECE secretariat	Chapter 4
Mr. Dieter Hesse	ECE secretariat	Chapter 5
Mr. Matteo Bellinello	Italy	Chapter 6
Ms. Kathrin Werner	Germany	Chapter 7

The mission for the project took place from 23 to 27 October 2006. The peer review was held in Geneva on 29 May 2007. The ECE Committee on Environmental Policy adopted the recommendations set out in this document.

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UNECE Information Unit  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

Phone: +41 (0)22 917 44 44  
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 05 05  
E-mail: [info.ece@unece.org](mailto:info.ece@unece.org)  
Website: <http://www.unece.org>

## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

### National contributors

Mr. Sasa Dragin, Minister	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Jelena Cvetkovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Mihailo Djukic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Dunja Dobric	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Djurdja Djordjevic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Milica Durac	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Biljana Filipovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Jelena Jevtzovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Biljana Jovanovic Ilic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Snezana Kuzmanovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Natasa Lekic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Slavica Lekic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Jovanka Maric	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Dragana Mladenovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Penka Nikolovska	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Svetlana Nojkovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Zeljko Pantelic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Milutin Pantovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Gordana Petkovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Snezana Poledica	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Miodrag Radovanovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Valentina Radjenovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Jagos Raicevic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Slobodan Regner	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Miroslav Spasojevic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
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Ms. Ljiljana Stanojevic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
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Mr. Bozidar Vasiljevic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Ms. Natasa Veljkovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Zoran Veljkovic	Ministry of Environmental Protection
Mr. Aleksandar Vesic	Ministry of Environmental Protection

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