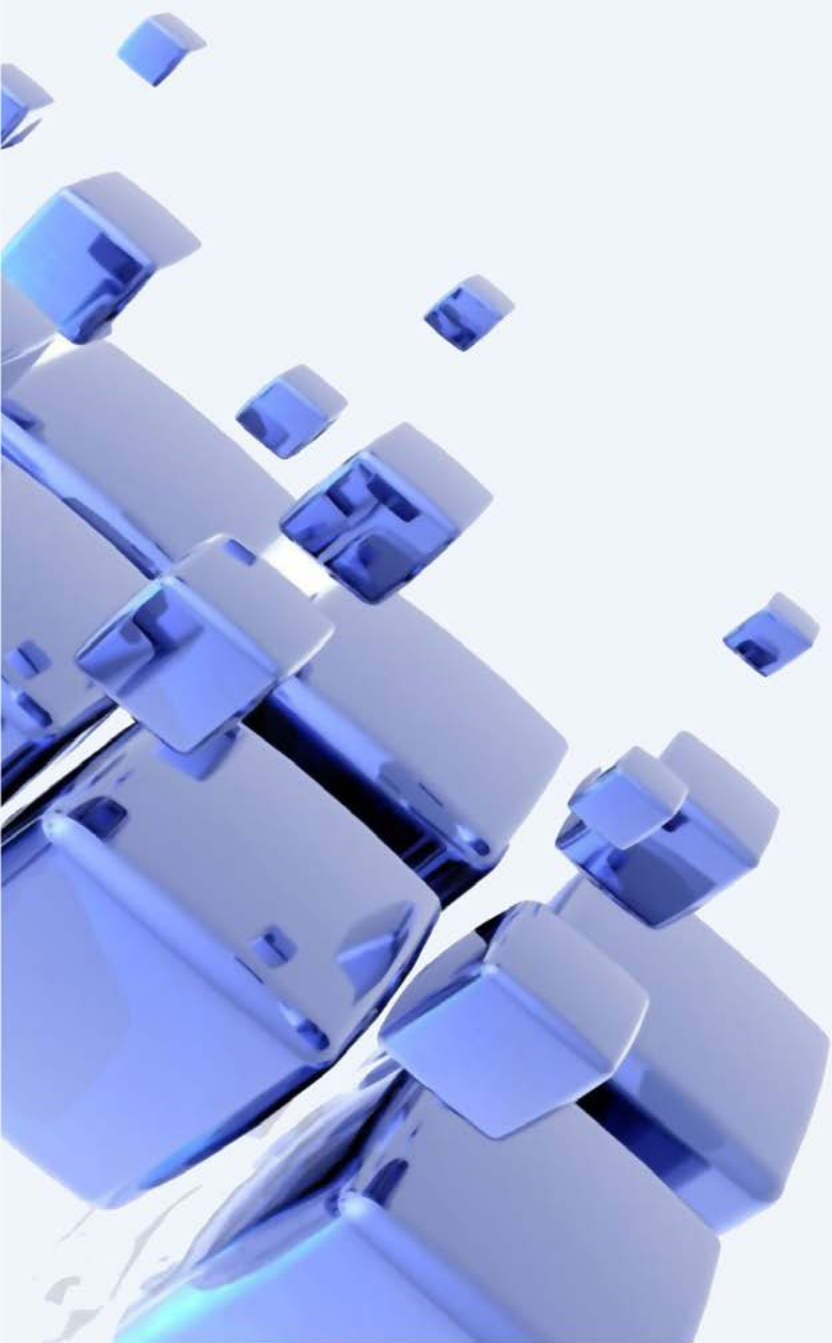


# STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT

# 2013



Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning

Republic of Macedonia

# STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT

## 2013

Macedonian Environmental Information Center

Skopje, Year 2014

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## CHAPTERS PREPARED BY

Activity carried out by: Macedonian Environmental Information Center

Editor in Chief: Svetlana Gjorgjeva

Design and DTP: Kateriina Nikolovska

BASIC DATA OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	Kateriina Nikolovska
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	Kaja Shukova
SPACE PLANNING	Violeta Drakulevska Sonja Furnadziska
CLIMATE CHANGE AND OZONE LAYER PROTECTION	Teodora Obradovik Grncarovska Climate Change Unit
AGRICULTURE	Arminda Rushiti
GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS	Jasmina Ginovska Marija Dirlevska Chalovska
WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	Ljupka Dimovska Zajkov
WASTE MANAGEMENT	Margareta Cvetkovska
CONTAMINATED SITES	Margareta Cvetkovska
CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT	Emilija Kupeva Nedelkovska
NOISE	Kateriina Nikolovska
AIR	Aneta Stefanovska Aleksandra Nestorovska Krsteska Nikola Golubov
WATER	Azemine Shakiri Ivica Tasik
SOIL	Margareta Cvetkovska
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND NATURE PROTECTION	Aleksandar Nastov Sasko Jordanov Daniela Kamceva
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	Daniela Stefkova Darinka Jantinska
ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	Dragana Cherepnalkovska Lile Dinev
STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT	Angelina Jovanovik Snezana Gjorgjieva
EDUCATION AND PROMOTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT	Angelina Jovanovik Snezana Gjorgjieva Kateriina Nikolovska

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# INTRODUCTION

*“We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors;  
we borrow it from our children” - Old Indian saying*

In many occasions, through wide public discussion and through their elected representatives, the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia have demonstrated that they are united in their commitment to the universally accepted concept of sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development promoted as a term in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro at the World Summit for Environment and Development, circulates throughout the world every day and intensively, and represents in essence the present concept of Green Economy, the purposes of which are improved man's wellbeing and social benefits, as well as reduced risks to the environment and shortages of natural resources. The concept of Green Economy does not replace the sustainable development, but it recognizes sustainable development as a far reaching objective to be achieved only through economy greening.

With the same outlook, the Republic of Macedonia, through the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, has been pacing towards the European Union with its status of collaborating country to the European Environmental Agency (EEA) as one of the key Agencies of the Community allowing equal participation of relevant experts from our country in numerous activities concerning different environmental media.

Our citizens already have the possibility to follow the activities and the achievements of the Republic of Macedonia through EEA's modern interactive web portal, where as a result of the efforts towards

EU membership, integrated planning and sustainable development, our results represent information available on the country's progress and success in reporting on several environmental thematic directions.

Through the activity of the Macedonian Environmental Information Centre (MEIC) Department, the Republic of Macedonia stands shoulder to shoulder with all European partners in their efforts to provide timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information for policy makers and public.

For the same purposes, MEIC contributes to the key European environment state and outlook reports (SOER2015) and to the effective thematic assessments through adoption and application of the European operational and qualitative principles and clearly defined methodologies.

Our participation in numerous thematic workshops and meetings has made the Republic of Macedonia equal in the observation of the best available techniques enabling us to apply modern methodologies as tools for timely information of our public and business sector with regard to the state and the trends of different environmental media. In this way and at the same time, the key objectives of timely, relevant and reliable information reflecting the state and the outlook of the environment are achieved and provide guidance for the planned sectoral policies, as well as possibilities for economic growth and development in the context of green economy.

The Report of Processed Environmental Quality Data of the Macedonian Environmental Information Centre is a tool for Ministry's activities planning and for environment protection policy making, on the basis of relevant database of its status.

We owe our success to uninterrupted cooperation with MEPP departments and offices, as well as cooperation with other relevant ministries and institutions, especially Public Health Institute of the Republic of Macedonia and regional Public Health Centers, State Statistical Office, Hydrometeorological Administration,

Hydrobiological Institute, industrial facilities, etc. Extending our appreciation of the past cooperation, we reaffirm our commitment to its intensification in the coming period.

Nurhan Izairi

Minister of Environment and Physical Planning





# BASIC DATA OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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## 1. Geographical position

Republic of Macedonia is situated in South Eastern Europe, in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula and covering an area of 25.713 km<sup>2</sup>. The country's capital and biggest city is Skopje holding the role of administrative, political, economic, cultural, academic and scientific centre.

Positioned in the heart of the Balkan Peninsula, the country borders Serbia (102 km) and Kosovo (179 km) on north, Bulgaria (173 km) on east, Greece (256 km) on south and Albania (186 km) on west, or its overall border is 896 km, of which 835

km overland, 14 km over river and 47 km over lake.

Two of the Republic of Macedonia's neighbouring countries (Greece and Bulgaria) belong to EU, and this adds to its favourable geo-political position. The Republic of Macedonia does not have access to sea, but it is located along transit roads for goods delivery from the Balkans to Eastern, Western and Central Europe and is connected to the nearest ports which provide possibilities for development of economic cooperation with neighbouring countries.



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## 2. Administrative division

Officially, Macedonia is divided into 8 (eight) planning regions adopted by the Assembly of Macedonia, which serve statistical, economic and administrative purposes. Besides regions, the first level administrative division of Macedonia is municipality. According to the latest territorial division of 2004, Macedonia is divided into 84 municipalities.

The biggest region by area Pelagonia covers 18.9% of Macedonia's area and has highest number of populated places, around 343, though it is characterized with low density of population of 49.4 inhabitants per square kilometer. The smallest region, Skopje, covers 7.3% of the area of Macedonia, has rather dense population of 336 inhabitants per square kilometer and absorbs more than one fourth (29.6%) of the total population in Macedonia. Rural municipalities are represented considerably in almost all regions, but most of the population lives in major urban centers, which indicates uneven concentration of the population in the regions.

Polog and Southwestern regions are distinctive by the high share of population living in rural area, while rural areas in other regions are less densely populated.

## 3. Structure of the relief

Relief is mainly hilly and mountainous, characterized with big and high mountain massifs between which vast valleys and plains spread, the average altitude being 829 m.

Mountains are big relief forms covering 79% of the country's territory. They are part of the old Rhodopian group of mountains in the eastern and young Dinaric group in the western part of the country. Rhodopian

group is made of mountains lower than 200 meters, with the highest peak of Ruen of 2.252 meters on Osogovo Mountains. Dinaric ones are much higher and reach over 2.500 meters, including the highest peak in Macedonia Golem Korab - 2764 meters. Vardar zone is situated between these two mountain groups, along both banks of Vardar River and Pelagonia horst anticlinoria in the central part of the country.

Valleys and larger fields are cut by mountainous relief structure covering 19.1% of the national territory. The most impressive are the valleys extending along Vardar River, including Skopje Valley (1.840 km<sup>2</sup>), while the largest plain is Pelagonia highland in the southwestern part of the country, covering around 4.000 km<sup>2</sup>, with average altitude of 600 meters. Wetlands occupy 1.9% of the total territory of the country.

## 4. Climate characteristics

Despite relatively small area size of Macedonia, climate is diverse, changing significantly from south to north, from west to east and from lower parts to valleys. We may distinguish the following climate areas:

- Submediterranean area (50 - 500 m)
- Moderate-Continental-Submediterranean area (up to 600 m)
- Hot Continental area (600 - 900 m)
- Cold Continental area (900 - 1.100 m)
- Submontane-Continental-Mountainous area (1.100 - 1.300 m)
- Montane-Continental-Mountainous area (1.300 - 1.650 m)
- Subalpine Mountainous area (1.650 - 2.250 m)
- Alpine Mountainous area (hs >2.250 m).