

**EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT –
SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM**

GEORGIA COUNTRY REPORT



* Under UNSCR 1244 / 99
** The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

October-December, 2011
Tbilisi, Georgia



This project is funded by the European Union

European Environment Agency



This project is implemented by the European Environment Agency

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This project is financed through a service contract ENPI/2009/210/629 managed by DG EuropeAid.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BOD	Biological Oxygen Demand
CBD	Convention of Biological Diversity
CDM	Clean Development Mechanisms
CSI	Core Set of Indicators
DB	Data Base
DHI	Danish Hydraulic Institute
DNA	Designated National Authorities
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Environment Agency
EECCA	Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ERICA	European Rivers and Catchments
ESRI	Environmental Systems Research Institute
EU	European Union
GEOSTAT	Georgian Statistics Service
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIS	Geographic Information System
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel for Climate Change
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JTF	Joint Task Force
LEPL	Legal Entity of Public Law
LRTAP	Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
MAC	Maximum Allowable Concentrations
MEA	Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements
MENR	Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
MEP	Ministry of Environment Protection
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NFP	National Focal Points
NIP	National Implementation Plan
NWCIS	National Water Cadastre Information System
NWP	Numerical Weather Prediction
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutant
PRTR	Pollutant Release and Transfer Register

SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SDPIA	Sustainable Development Projects Implementation Agency
SEIS	Shared Environmental Information System
SIC	Spatial Information Center
SOE	State of the Environment
TEIA	Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
WOC	Water Objects Coding
WRF EMS	Weather Research and Forecast Environmental Modeling System

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Country Report was prepared for the European Environment Agency by Zoi Environment Network, with inputs from SEIS focal points and based on the discussions during EEA/SEIS country visit in Georgia on 9-10 June 2011.

The report has been prepared to explore the options of developing Environmental Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)-Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) project in Georgia. The overall objective of the ENPI-SEIS project is to promote the protection of the environment in the ENPI countries. Specific objectives include identification and further development of environmental indicators; improvement of capacities in the field of monitoring, collection, storage, assessment and reporting of environmental data; promoting setting up national and regional environmental information systems in line with the SEIS principles; and tracking progress of the regional initiatives.

The expected long-term outcome of the process includes improved assessment of the quality of the environment at regional level by using common tools and methodologies; stronger institutional partnership at national level; trained experts in all SEIS components; and improved regional cooperation and partnership with regional and international bodies.

In the regional meeting held in Brussels in November 2010 the following priorities were agreed for ENPI East region by the representatives of the countries: freshwater, household and municipal waste, and atmospheric air.

Thus, this Country Report describes the existing institutional cooperation in Georgia in the field of freshwater, waste and air emissions, assesses current environmental inter-institutional cooperation in the three priority fields and identifies the country's capacity for taking SEIS implementation forward.

Chapter 1 of the report describes the inter-institutional cooperation and national governance for environmental information and statistics in the priority sectors, including the links among the different bodies. Chapter 2 of the report presents the reporting obligations of Georgia according to multilateral, regional and sub-regional environmental agreements, and also describes environmental data and indicator availability, including analysis of existing datasets. Chapter 3 on infrastructure describes the current status of environmental monitoring and information systems, including the structure and content of the monitoring and information systems used in the country and a description of the duties of those responsible for the management of the systems.

Chapter 4 analyzes the strengths and weaknesses for SEIS implementation in Georgia. It points out lack of comprehensive environmental statistics and dilapidated monitoring system, as major obstacles for SEIS implementation, while among the strengths mentions on-going Georgia-EU negotiations on EU Association Agreement that should enforce development of national strategy on institutional reforms and approximation towards EU's major environmental directives, guarantying overall access to environmental information and data sharing.

And finally, Chapter 5 proposes follow-up steps for implementation of ENPI-SEIS project in Georgia, in particular: 1) strengthening institutional capacities of key stakeholder organizations for proper information management and database use on wastes, water and air; 2) develop comprehensive waste inventory methodology; 3) introduce electronic forms for statistical accounting of wastewater discharges and ambient air pollution; 3) develop PRTR consistent and GIS based electronic database inventory of point and mobile air pollution sources; 4) move towards Indicator Based State of the Environment reporting practice in Georgia.

1. INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

The **Ministry of Environment Protection– MEP** is a major institutional body within the Government of Georgia responsible for overall governance and policy making for national environmental information and statistics, including collection, processing and maintenance of most of the environmental information. The main mission of the Ministry of Environment Protection, besides this, is the development and implementation of effective environmental policy mechanisms based on the principles of sound environmental management (www.moe.gov.ge). Other ministries, such as the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Finances, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, also participate in the process of processing and dissemination of environmental information within the specific areas defined by their statutory mandates.

Since 2004 the Ministry of Environment Protection has undergone numerous changes caused by frequent reforms of the Georgian Government and the Cabinet. Until recently the Ministry had much wider functions and incorporated responsibility for management of natural resources, including licensing for ground and surface water use, extraction of mineral resources, permitting for environmental services, forestry management, protection against coastal erosion, radiation safety measures, environmental inspectorate for state environmental control, etc. Until recently functions and credibility of the Ministry of Environment was in a much better shape, defined mainly by the 2004 law and subsequent regulation acts on the Structure, Responsibilities and Rules of Activities of the Government, by which the following State Departments became structural parts of the Ministry:

- The State Department of Forestry;
- The State Department of Geology;
- The State Department of Hydrometeorology;
- The State Department for the Management of Reserves, Protected Areas and Hunting Farms;
- The State Department of Geodesy and Cartography.

The latest formulation of the government structure defined by Statement of the Government of Georgia for the Ministry of Environment dated March 16, 2011 re-delegates some of the key functions of the Ministry of Environment, including management of natural resources, forestry, geology, etc., to the Ministry of Energy. Moreover, the two Ministries have completely changed their structures and been re-formulated in the following way: the Ministry of Energy was renamed the **Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources** and the **Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources** - was renamed the Ministry of Environment Protection.

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