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Polish Environment Minister fired



On 20 November, Poland's Prime Minister fired Environment Minister Marcin Korolec in a major government reshuffle of Poland's longest-serving team since the democratic changes in the country.

Mr Korolec was presiding over the 19th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Warsaw. Although fired from the cabinet, Mr Korolec has kept his role as the UNFCCC COP President until its conclusion.

It has been reported that the ministry's delays on much-awaited regulations concerning exploration for shale gas and other fossil fuels seems to be behind Korolec's dismissal. Maciej Grabowski, formerly at the Finance Ministry, is the new Minister.

More information [here](#).

European Commission wants to limit use of plastic bags



The European Commission has proposed a directive obliging Member States to reduce the use of lightweight plastic carrier bags on their territory. There is no clear target figure at the moment, only a desire to radically reduce the use of plastic bags, with Member States being able to choose the measures they consider appropriate to achieve this goal. Such measures could take the form of charges, national reduction targets, or, under certain conditions, a ban of the use of plastic bags.

More information, including the directive proposal, [here](#).

France reaffirms opposition to shale gas exploration



French Environment Minister Philippe Martin reiterated his government's strong opposition to the exploitation of shale gas, despite a parliamentary report advocating more flexibility towards unconventional gas. The French government announced on 28 November that it will not issue the permits for shale gas exploitation requested by the US company Hess Oil.

Hess Oil brought seven permits from the company Toredor, which had secured them in 2010. The oil covered by the permits is located in the Parisian basin. The permits were initially never clearly cancelled after the government set a law in 2011 prohibiting hydraulic fracturing. The cancellation could now cost the French state a substantial sum, as Hess Oil claims compensation for each permit. "In any case, it is nothing in comparison with the environmental and societal cost that this exploration would have represented," the Environment Minister said.

The decision of the Minister confirms the categorical opposition of the French government to shale gas exploitation, a position not shared by all. A French parliamentary expert office on science and technology (OPECST) presented a report which suggests that France should take a more flexible stance on the use of hydraulic fracturing.

France is thought to hold the largest resources in shale gas on the European continent. The only country to have more recoverable reserves than France is Poland, which exploits shale gas. According to the Polish Environment Minister, Maciej Grabowski, the first commercial exploitation in Poland will start in 2014, making Poland the first country to exploit this resource.

Read more [here](#).

Clashes amid huge Ukraine protest against U-turn on EU



Ukraine's President Viktor Yanukovich failed on 28 November to salvage an ambitious free-trade pact with the European

Union despite their warning that Ukraine was risking its future by not agreeing to the deal. Ukraine and the 28-nation EU had aimed to sign an ambitious trade and cooperation agreement at a summit in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, which would have marked a historic westwards shift by the former Soviet republic. But, reportedly under intense pressure from Moscow, Yanukovich renounced plans last week to sign the agreement in favour of closer ties with Russia, jeopardising the EU's efforts to build closer relations with former Soviet republics.

A huge rally took place the following weekend in the Ukrainian capital to oppose the government decision. Vast crowds rallied on Kiev's Independence Square, thus defying the government-imposed ban. The mainstream opposition and its leaders said they had nothing to do with those engaged in violence near the presidential headquarters, and that it was the work of "provocateurs". Protesters are demanding the resignation of President Viktor Yanukovich's government and new elections. The leader of the opposition Fatherland party, Arseny Yatsenyuk, told a news conference that the plan was to start a picket outside the Ukrainian government building. He also said a no-confidence motion had been submitted to parliament.

7th Environment Action Programme becomes law

On 20 November, the Council and European Parliament signed into law the Decision on the 7th EU Environment Action Programme (EAP), which will guide the EU policy action on environment and climate policy for the next seven years. The new programme identifies nine priority objectives for the period up to 2020, including i) protecting nature and strengthening ecological resilience, ii) boosting sustainable, resource-efficient, low-carbon growth, and iii) effectively addressing environment-related threats to health.

More information [here](#).



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CITES and business experts break new ground to trace wildlife trade

Your bag in python skin, where is it from? For five long nights, 40 European entrepreneurs and business coaches worked side by side with wildlife experts to craft a system of a new kind – one that can respond to that simple question by tracing the origin of a wildlife product, for instance from the collection of a snake to the luxury products made from its precious skin. 'ASKING', a new smartphone application could help ensure the sustainable use of many species for food, medicine or fashion products.

NEST'up, the startup accelerator of "Creative Wallonia" collaborated on a pro bono basis with officials from the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora (CITES), which is administered by UNEP. Both teams are united in one objective: to help find practical and cost-effective solutions to better trace snake skins, confirm their legal origin and ensure the long term survival of the species.

John E. Scanlon, Secretary-General of CITES, analyzing the preliminary results of the initiative, said: "This is a very special collaboration that blends the expertise of CITES staff with the entrepreneurial flair of the private sector. We are particularly enthusiastic about the very pragmatic solutions that have been found - solutions that have the potential to both conserve critically important wildlife and support local jobs."

During the short but intense working period in which both groups of experts put heads together, the Startup Heroes of NEST'up developed a smartphone application that can trace snakes and snake products to confirm their legal origin: the hunter takes a photo of the snake he just collected, which in turn generates a unique tracking number for that specimen. The tracking number is automatically registered in a central database.

Better tracing will help consumers to distinguish between legal and illegal products by creating a higher level of reliability and precision of the CITES permit system. The application will also facilitate the work of customs authorities who will be better equipped to confirm legal shipments and identify fraudulent suppliers at the borders. More importantly, a robust system will support species conservation efforts, the livelihoods of local communities, and reward law-abiding companies.

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You want to have a better idea of how this has worked? <https://vimeo.com/80230401>

What future for European forests?

UNEP-ROE participated in the resumed 4th Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe (INC4) which was convened in Geneva, Switzerland on 7-8 November, at the invitation of the Swiss Government. The 4th Session, agreed to be the last session under the Oslo mandate, had been suspended in Warsaw principally because it could not reach a final agreement on the institutional arrangements for bringing the agreement under the UN. The two-day resumed session was preceded by informal consultations amongst negotiating parties on 6 November to try to resolve the outstanding issues. Close to 160 delegates from 38 countries, the European Union, and observers from the United States, five regional and international organizations, and 10 producer associations and non-governmental organizations participated in the session. FAO continued to serve as the Secretariat, assisted by the European Forest Institute and the Liaison Unit-Madrid of FOREST EUROPE. The resumed INC4 was still unable to agree on the bracketed articles of the draft convention text, the draft will now be sent to the Extraordinary Ministerial Conference, which will review the results of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) and future institutional arrangements. The Ministerial Conference would meet within six months in Spain, in line with the Oslo Mandate, for follow up action by the Ministers in charge of forests in Europe.

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II. UNEP ON THE GROUND

UNEP hosts Green Economy and Trade debate at EU Development Days

An inclusive and sustainable approach to trade is urgently needed. As part of the European Union Development Days 2013, held on 26-27 November 2013 in Brussels, UNEP hosted a roundtable discussion around its report on "Green Economy and Trade: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities."

At Rio+20, countries recognised the green economy – in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication – as an important tool for achieving sustainable development. The Rio+20 outcome document called for the post-2015 and associated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to encourage a continuation of economic growth and progress towards eradicating poverty in developing countries, whilst safeguarding the natural environment.

Anja von Moltke, UNEP's Acting Head of Trade, Policy and Planning Unit in the Economics and Trade Branch, participated in the roundtable discussion. Some of the key points noted included:

- An agreement to encourage the development of the green economy was one of the most important outcomes of the Rio +20 Earth Summit last year.
- The green economy is built upon the three pillars of sustainable development: environmental protection, social progress and economic growth.
- Policymakers can encourage the green economy via better regulations, institution building, encouraging investment and capacity building.

As part of her presentation, Ms von Moltke highlighted examples of green economic development in places such as Ghana, Peru and Vietnam, where UNEP is undertaking pilot projects to examine the policy reforms and enabling conditions required to maximize sustainable trade opportunities in key sectors.

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Brussels launches Emissions Gap Report 2013



On 5 November – a week before the opening of the Warsaw climate conference – the UNEP Liaison Office to the EU held the Brussels launch of UNEP's Emissions Gap Report 2013. This event brought together a panel of distinguished speakers consisting of EU Climate Commissioner Connie Hedegaard, Sylvie Lemmet, Director of UNEP's Division for Technology, Industry & Economics, and Michel den Elzen, a lead author of the report, to reflect on the report's conclusions and discuss how the gap between current emission reduction pledges and the reductions needed to stay within the 2°C target could be bridged. The speakers called on governments to step up their ambition levels given the report's main conclusion that although pathways exist that would allow us to stay below the 2°C target with higher emissions, not narrowing the gap will exacerbate mitigation challenges after 2020.

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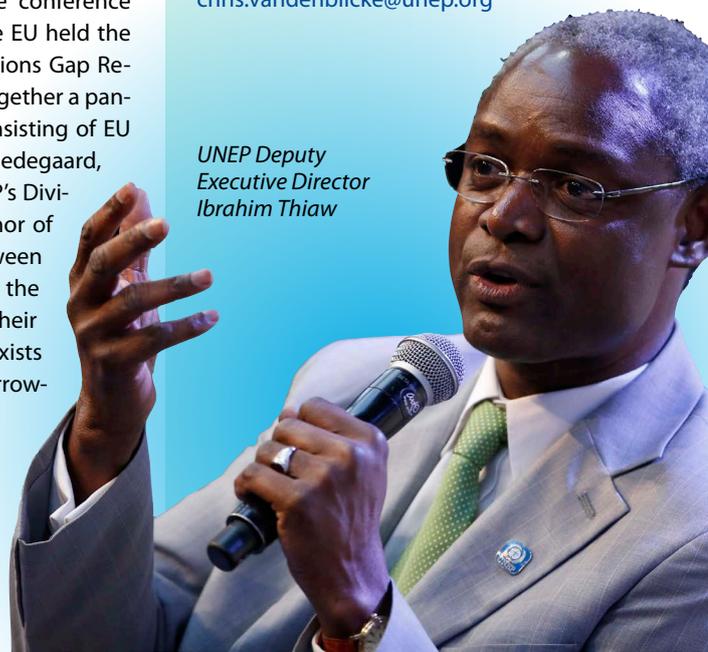
UNEP Deputy Ibrahim Thiaw on Poverty Eradication & Climate Change

UNEP's Deputy Executive Director Ibrahim Thiaw spoke at EU Development Days 2013 in a session organized by DG Climate Action entitled "Poverty Eradication and Climate Change: Friends or Foes?" on 27 November 2013 in Brussels. EU Climate Commissioner Connie Hedegaard began by stating that it seems impossible to meet the proposed new overarching global development goal of eliminating extreme poverty by 2030 without genuinely addressing climate change, and vice versa – something echoed by fellow panellists from France as well as UN-Habitat and UNDP-GEF and a youth representative.

Mr Thiaw emphasised the urgency of addressing climate change: since many reports now say that we could potentially exceed the 2-degree target, the urgency to act is even greater. He went on to illustrate the connection between poverty and the environment, directly speaking of the situation in the Sahel where conflict and poverty, he said, has grown out of competition for natural resources. Competition for natural resources, as Mr Thiaw explained, is the root cause of the situation in Mali. Climate change can exacerbate such crises.

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UNEP Deputy Executive Director Ibrahim Thiaw



Women's empowerment in natural resource sectors critical for peace in war-torn countries



Empowering women in key natural resource sectors such as land and agriculture can strengthen peacebuilding and recovery in war-torn countries, according to a new UN report. Released on 6 November by UNEP, UNDP, UN Women, and the Peacebuilding Support Office, the report demonstrates how women continue to be excluded from owning land, benefiting from resource wealth or participating in decision-making about resource management in peacebuilding settings.

"At a practical level, women form the majority of resource users and managers in peacebuilding settings, but this responsibility seldom translates to the political or economic levels. This has to change," said Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director. "Peace and development can only be achieved when both men and women access and benefit from natural resources in an equitable and sustainable way."

Failing to engage women in negotiations and peacebuilding process is a major missed opportunity, as they have been shown to consistently prioritize access to natural resources, such as land, forests and water, as an important part of peace. More equality in the access to and management of natural resources could also enable women to support their families more effectively, contribute to community decision-making and reduce distortions in the control of natural resources that can trigger conflict.

The report urges governments and the international community to invest in the political and economic engagement of women in natural resource management and to end the entrenched discrimination that women face in accessing, owning and using critical natural resources in sustainable and productive ways.

Financed by the Governments of Finland, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the Republic of Korea, this report draws on field research from over 20 different countries and some 200 academic sources and institutions.

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Global knowledge platform on peacebuilding and natural resources launched

A new website providing users with free access to dozens of case studies as well as teaching and training materials on the role of natural resources in peacebuilding was launched by UNEP, the Environmental Law Institute (ELI), the University of Tokyo, and McGill University.

Launched on 6 November, the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict, the website provides a global platform for sharing information, experiences, and learning on the linkages between natural resources, conflict, and peace.

"A key goal of the Environmental Peacebuilding platform is to provide resources to decision-makers, practitioners and researchers on how to improve peacebuilding through more effective natural resource management," said UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

The contents of the site were produced as part of a broad collaboration led by ELI, UNEP, McGill University, and the University of Tokyo, together with 225 researchers and practitioners around the world. Six books including 150 case studies and other analyses examining experiences from 60 conflict-affected countries and territories are being released to the platform, with 76 case studies already available online.

The knowledge platform is made possible through the generous support of the Government of Finland, the United States Agency for International Development, the European Union, the EU-UN Partnership on Land and Natural Resources, and other partners.

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Two new European Countries joining the Group of Friends of Paragraph 47

The Governments of Brazil, Denmark, France and South Africa formed the Group of Friends of Paragraph 47 (GoF47) in June 2012, following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), also known as Rio+20. Paragraph 47 of the outcome document "The future we want" acknowledged the importance of corporate sustainability reporting. Since then, the Governments of Austria, Chile, Colombia, Norway and Switzerland have joined the Group.

Meeting in Geneva on 7 November, the Group extended the Government of France's Chairmanship of the Group until April 2015. The French Delegation is led by Robin Edme, Senior Advisor for Responsible Finance from the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, with the support of Marine de Carné, Ambassador for Corporate Social Responsibility from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This meeting was organized back-to-back with the UNCTAD International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) meeting, focusing on regulatory and stock exchange initiatives in the field of sustainability reporting.

On the same day, the Geneva Environment Network organized a session on GoF47 work and achievements, led by the Chair of the Group, with the participation of representatives of other member countries and the GoF47 Secretariat.

More information on the Group of Friends of Paragraph 47 is available on [UNEP's website](#).

Paragraph 47. We acknowledge the importance of corporate sustainability reporting and encourage companies, where appropriate, especially publicly listed and large companies, to consider integrating sustainability information into their reporting cycle. We encourage industry, interested governments and relevant stakeholders with the support of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to develop models for best practice and facilitate action for the integration of sustainability reporting, taking into account experiences from already existing frameworks and paying particular attention to the needs of developing countries, including for capacity building.

The GoF47 Secretariat is provided by the UNEP and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

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International Geneva at the Automnales Fair

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG). On this occasion, CICG coordinated the guest-of-honour stand at the Automnales Fair, dedicated to international Geneva, which are the major users of their infrastructure. This was a unique opportunity for the 135,000 visitors from the region to learn more about the work carried out by international organizations based in Geneva. In partnership with the Swiss Confederation, the Republic and Canton of Geneva and the Town of Geneva, the CICG brought together a whole range of actors from the international community of Geneva to present their activities through exhibitions, films, happenings and games.

From 8-17 November, the Geneva Environment Network Secretariat manned the UNEP booth at the Automnales Fair, with the collaboration of various UNEP offices based in Geneva. This was the occasion to communicate on the joint UNEP and FAO campaign on food waste "Think.Eat.Save", on e-waste activities conducted by the Joint Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, hazardous chemicals and wastes body burden activities of Safe Planet and other major activities of the international environmental Geneva.

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World Conference on Sport and the Environment

The 10th World Conference on Sport and the Environment took place in Sochi, Russian Federation, from 30 October to 1 November. It was organized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and UNEP, with the support of the Russian Olympic Committee and the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi.

The conference brought together over 500 delegates from national olympic committees, international federations, organizing committees for the Olympic Games, and representatives from the International Labor Organization, World Health Organization, United Nations High Commission for Refugees, governmental and non-governmental organizations and educational institutions under the theme "Changing today for a better tomorrow". Presentations were made in plenary and dialogue sessions, in which participants extensively discussed and deliberated on the role and contribution of sport to achieving sustainable development.

Through the different sessions, participants were shown practical examples of how sport is being used as a tool to promote environment sustainability. The conference statement and declaration are available [here](#).

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Europe and Central Asia regional consultation helps shape the Post-2015 agenda

The UN Europe and Central Asia regional consultation on the Post-2015 development agenda took place on 6-8 November in Istanbul. The consultation was a multi-stakeholder event, bringing together representatives from governments, the UN system, international organizations, civil society, the private sector, academia and media. The meeting featured a series of thematic panel discussions and concluded with an open forum that identified regional priorities for the Post-2015 agenda. UNEP together with UNECE coordinated and led one of the panels on sustainable management of natural resources, changing consumption and production patterns and climate-neutral cities. UNEP worked very closely with the panel members to ensure the articulation of the issues and messages presented at the consultation.

The panellists addressed a number of areas including how to integrate valuation of natural capital and ecosystems into policy and decision making to support and promote sustainable management and use, to change unsustainable production patterns and create a more efficient use of energy and resources, and the smart choices and priorities that are needed to transform our cities into low-carbon and ultimately climate-neutral cities vibrant places full of opportunities and services.

The consultation process recognized that the MDGs agenda is unfinished business and there is an urgent need to accelerate efforts to achieve the MDGs, in particular on issues where progress is lagging. There is also common consensus that the fundamental areas covered by the MDGs – in particular education, health, jobs creation, gender equality and environmental sustainability – remain critically important and should therefore be taken up in the Post-2015 agenda. In addition, as governments prepare to frame the new global development agenda beyond 2015, a converging message that has come out from the consultations is the call for a single, integrated, comprehensive and coherent agenda, universal in nature, with a consistent set of goals, which aim to eradicate poverty and integrate sustainability into development.

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Sustainable development talks in Central Asia

The Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) held its meeting on 19 - 21 November in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Strengthening regional cooperation in Central Asia for the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes and the Post-2015 development agenda was the key theme of this forum. UNEP was represented by Jan Dusik, Acting Regional Director, who delivered a keynote speech at the high-level segment "Inclusive and Sustainable Development through Regional Cooperation". The Interstate Committee on Sustainable Development (ICSD) of Central Asia held its parallel session and put forward a set of draft recommendations to improve ICSD's institutional set-up and its programme delivery.

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UNEP Regional Major Groups and Stakeholders Consultation for Europe

On 4-5 November, the 2013 Regional Major Groups and Stakeholders Consultation for Europe (RCM) brought together Major Groups (MGS) partners from the region and explored opportunities and options for stakeholders to contribute to the Rio+20 outcome linked to UNEP. It also showcased the ongoing work on Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNEP made a presentation on both themes of Rio+20 on Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD/IEG) and the Green Economy in the context of sustainable development poverty eradication, and highlighted the implication of paragraph 88 on IFSD, paragraphs 59, 64, 66 on green economy, 226 on the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP) to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns; and para 246 on sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The RCM was extensively briefed and subsequently discussed UNEP's role in the Post-2015 development agenda and SDGs based on the UNEP Discussion Paper on Embedding the Environment in SDGs; the state of preparations for the 1st session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to UNEP (UNEA1); role and new mechanisms for the engagement of MGS in UNEA; the implementation of the 10YFP; and regional delivery of UNEP Programme and priority issues.

The RCM offered an opportunity to discuss and seek the views of MGS and include their perspectives into the work and contribution of UNEP towards the different thematic areas and processes linked to the Post-2015 Development Agenda and SDGs deliberations including the UNEA, as well as address other regional challenges and opportunities. The participants of the RCM worked on a set of recommendations and also elected two regional representatives to represent them at the UNEA.

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The Environment and Security Initiative 2003-2013 and beyond

On 6 November, the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) celebrated its 10th anniversary. Over the past decade, UNEP has worked hand in hand with UNDP, UNECE, OSCE, REC and NATO to transform shared environmental risks in the pan-European region into cooperation and joint management of precious resources.

On this occasion, over 70 participants including government representatives, project stakeholders, experts and organizations gathered in Brussels for the ENVSEC Partners meeting, to share results and achievements and to debate the way forward for regional cooperation in environment and security.

Over the past decade, ENVSEC has worked with around 30 partner countries and over 100 local and international partners. More than 150 projects on environment and security have been implemented in the regions of Central Asia, Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe and South Caucasus. Approximately 170 million people have benefited from this work. The experience gained shows that shared environmental risks can be transformed into opportunities for regional and cross-regional cooperation, which lay the foundations for sustainable development. The publication "Transforming risks into cooperation - Environment and Security Initiative 2003-2013" was launched at the event, summing up results, lessons learned and best practices from this work.

Among the unique features that contribute to the added value of the ENVSEC Initiative are its multi-level, cross-border and participatory approach and its long-term standing for investments in disaster risk reduction and environmental diplomacy.

The ENVSEC partner organisations, combining their complementary mandates with the unique ENVSEC methodology and joint approach, will continue to strengthen regional dialogue and cooperation on assessing and addressing environment and security hot spots, including the adverse effects of climate variability and global warming, promoting coordinated adaptation strategies and shared regional approaches to transboundary river basins, mountains, and hazardous waste, for the countries to protect human security and enhance stability.

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ENVSEC PUBLICATION: "Transforming risks into cooperation - Environment and Security Initiative 2003-2013"

Taking stock of the first decade of ENVSEC, its partner organisations have identified and analysed lessons learned and added value of the Initiative. The publication "Transforming risks into cooperation - Environment and Security Initiative 2003-2013" is based on a series of interviews with project staff and stakeholders, and reviews of several independent evaluations conducted on ENVSEC. Concrete results achieved on the ground are presented through a number of case studies

"The ENVSEC Initiative is an excellent example of a well-functioning multi-agency cooperation, a joint effort that can provide an effective integrated response to environment and security challenges."

Antti Rytövuori, Minister, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Finland in Geneva, Rio+20 regional preparatory meeting, December 2011

from the regions of Central Asia, Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and South Eastern Europe. The publication describes the history, methodology and key results achieved through the experience, skills and networks of the ENVSEC partners, and indicates best practices. These findings captured in a concise easy-to-read manner may be beneficial to policy makers and practitioners in the fields of environment, development and security across the globe.



Round Table Discussion on the Implementation of the SEA Protocol in Belarus

Belarus is advancing towards identifying and limiting security risks from environmental hazards. At a Round Table in Minsk, held last September, the Preliminary Report of the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) on Improvement of Environmental Legislation in Belarus was presented. The meeting, arranged by the "Linking Environment and Security in Belarus" project, under the auspices of UNECE-UNDP-UNEP, and in the framework of the "Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood" programme, was attended by ministry representatives, international organisations, NGOs and legal experts. Participants discussed the need for a strengthened legal regulatory and technical framework for environmental protection and identified steps that are needed to integrate environmental issues into decision-making processes, should Belarus wish to join the SEA Protocol.



Trilateral Vision for the Protected Area "Sharr/Šar Planina-Korab-Dešat/Deshat"

In November, the Environment Ministers of the bordering countries of Albania, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) signed the joint vision for the transboundary protected area "Sharr/Šar Planina-Korab-Dešat/Deshat". The ministers highlighted their common standing on the protection of the mountain, which will also contribute to ecological value and socio-economic prosperity through development of eco-tourism. The vision represents a stepping stone towards achieving the protected area through cooperation and partnership between the countries. The meeting, held in the FYROM, was organized by UNEP with the attendance of local community representatives from the countries.

Participants to the meeting on creating a protected area in the Sharra mountains



III. ON THE CALENDAR

Outreach of technology information during international congress in Belgrade



In cooperation with the Serbian Society for Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning (SMEITS), the Serbian Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, UNEP's Regional Ozone Network for Europe & Central Asia (ECA network) is organizing a discussion forum on ozone- and climate-friendly technologies during the 44th International Congress and Exhibition on Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning in Belgrade, Serbia, 4-6 December. Publications of UNEP and its partner agencies will be outreached at the joint booth and disseminated on

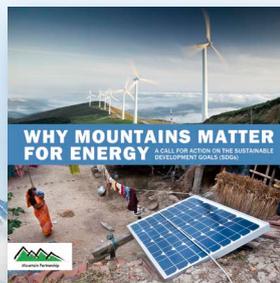
USB sticks. Further information is available from the conference [website](#) and the [ECA website](#). The activity is part of the regional awareness activities of the ECA network and Serbia's HCFC phase-out management plan. Similar events were organized in 2011 and 2012.

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Why mountains matter for the Sustainable Development Goals

In the context of the Mountain Partnership, UNEP, together with other partners, has geared up to mainstream mountains into the current Post-2015 process and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) discussions. UNEP, GRID Arendal and partners such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), CDE Bern and FAO support the development of a series of briefs "Why mountains matter for the SDGs". The brief's topics are energy, climate change and disaster risk reduction, biodiversity and forestry and its purpose was to serve as important input for discussions in the context of the Open Working Group (OWG) meetings in New York on 25-27 November. As a first outcome of this joint effort, a brief on energy was produced to be shared with stakeholders of the OWG during the New York meetings. UNEP ROE, through its Vienna Office, is also organizing a series of events in Vienna on the occasion of International Mountain Day 2013 (11 December as designated by the UNGA) to raise awareness for mountain issues and the need to mainstream those issues into the SDGs discussions.

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Tunza youth conference for Europe

The youth meeting, which will be held in Munich on 6-8 December, will focus on a number of thematic areas including the role of youth in the Post-2015 development agenda, implementation of the 10 Years Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP); priority areas for the development of the future UNEP long-term strategy on the engagement and involvement of young people in environmental issues, youth engagement in environment and health issues, youth employment; and other regional opportunities for youth participation in sustainable development issues.

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3rd meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF)

The 3rd meeting of EHTF (Brussels, 10-11 December) will review progress towards the achievement of the Parma commitments (2010-2014) and discuss the preparation of the high level EHTF Mid Term Review and initiate discussion on priorities and focus of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in 2016, as well as the relationship between EHP and Health 2020 and Sustainable development policy frameworks.

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Tehran Convention Institutional and Planning meeting

On 19-20 December in Geneva, the Tehran Convention will have a negotiation and planning meeting with representatives of the five Contracting Parties for the finalization of two protocol texts and in preparation of the COP5.

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