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## ROMANIA

### Emergency Preparedness for Hazardous Waste Spills

#### Disaster Context

Water pollution accidents in Romania's inland waterways over the last few years indicate that the current system for prevention and mitigation of hazardous waste spills needs improvements in order to function efficiently.

In January 2000, cyanide and heavy metals spilled into the Tisa-Somes River Basin after water breached the retention dam of the reservoir of a gold mine. The breach was caused by a combination of inherent design deficiencies, inadequate operating conditions and bad weather.

#### Project Title

- Emergency Preparedness for Hazardous Waste Spills in the International Inland Waterways of North-west Romania

#### Sectors

- Emergency preparedness
- Capacity-building through training
- Support in emergency situations
- Support to mitigation programmes
- Public awareness campaigns
- Risk and vulnerability assessment
- Coordination

#### Funding

UNDP, through BCPR, released \$50,000 for immediate support. A contribution of \$32,259 from UNDP core TRAC resources was added to this amount.

#### Partnerships

- Ministry of Waters and Environment Protection
- National Company "Romanian Waters"

- Donors

#### Programme Activities

The project aims to create a model that can be applied to different geographical areas and to other types of disasters if more resources are allocated.

Current emergency response structures represent a good basis for the creation of a sound disaster preparedness plan. Information and data required for establishing appropriate national strategies largely exist, but need to be better coordinated and synthesized. It is important to stress that Romania already has technical expertise, but what it lacks is a comprehensive emergency system that must include the following:

- An environmental water polluting emergency preparedness programme as an integral part of an overall emergency plan and reflecting inter-agency and inter-department linkages;
  - Guidelines for an increased capability to respond to pollution incidents and to stop their escalation;
  - Sources for proper emergency equipment and more operating funds.
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