

ALBANIA



Progress Towards Environmental Sustainability

Over the last ten years, forests in Albania have been exploited and financial resources for good management have been limited. There has been insufficient control over illegal activities such as indiscriminate woodcutting, overgrazing, and occupation of forest and pasture lands. Although a significant decrease in forest damage has been noted after 1997, much of the illegal logging activity has continued to occur and is mainly driven by commercial interests and poverty, especially in the rural areas.

Albania is a country rich in biological diversity. The total surface of the land area protected for biological diversity has significantly increased over the last decade. Although progress has been made, the size of current protected areas remains insufficient to ensure effective conservation of the country's biological diversity. In addition, the biological integrity of existing protected areas has been compromised due to illegal hunting, fishing and wood collection. Monitoring and enforcement is inadequate and comprehensive management plans still do not exist.

The situation regarding drinking water is problematic. Access to drinking water is low, especially in rural areas, and the drinking quality of the water is poor and unsafe. In rural areas, less than 50 % of residents have access to running water and less than 25 % have access to running water inside their dwelling. For the country as a whole, access to running water is 66 % and access to running water inside the dwelling is 50 %.

The overall minimum additional resources that need to be mobilized for the period 2004 through 2015 to achieve certain key MDG targets in Albania total some \$22 billion.¹

QUICK FACTS

Total UNDP-GEF and Co-Finance:	\$860,000
Total UNDP and Co-Finance:	\$1,473,457
Total:	\$2,333,457

SPOTLIGHT



Solar PVs Pump Water to Rural Areas and Generate Incomes²

Albania is undergoing a serious energy crisis due to insufficient investment in power generation and distribution, combined with a major increase in energy demand. Prices have been rising, putting pressure on those with low incomes. At the same time, usage limits are also becoming stricter. This is particularly a problem for the poor, as it denies them access to water for drinking and irrigation of their crops, to sustain their livelihoods.

With a grant from the GEF's Small Grants Programme of \$29,960, in 2002 the Energy Efficiency Center (EEC) was able to carry out a project to test the viability of using solar energy to pump water to two villages. In one village, solar photovoltaics (PVs) were used to pump water for household use, and in another, they were used for agricultural irrigation. The villages had some existing water supply infrastructure that had been put in place by the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD). The project made as much use of this infrastructure as possible to pump water. For example, instead of installing battery systems for storing electricity, it proved to be more cost-effective to construct water reservoirs to deal with peak hours of water consumption. After receiving training from the supplier, members of the EEC installed the water supply systems and then trained villagers to maintain and operate them. In the village where PVs are used for irrigation, the panels were mounted on a farmer's roof and he became responsible for maintaining them. The second village chose to pay someone to take care of maintenance. Installation was followed by an awareness-raising campaign and a survey to assess the impact on villagers' lives.

The villages now have access to drinking water for household use and for irrigation, which increases the farmers' ability to grow crops and generate income.

Albania's developing market economy is putting strong negative pressure on its environment. The country is suffering from unplanned urban expansion, unsustainable consumption, inherited historical pollution, and a weak monitoring program.³ "In response to these needs, UNDP has been expanding its support in environmental programmes and has doubled its environmental projects during the last two years. This has been done within the overall framework of the Millennium Project recommendation including: projects and proposals that address immediate environmental concerns such as reforestation, "Clean and Green" initiatives; and solid waste management."



Anna-Kristina Stjærnerklint, Resident Representative

PORTFOLIO

FSSD*

UNDP and SIDA are supporting efforts to respond to the priorities of the Government in support of the enhancement of local governments' capacity to provide better public services in the area of environmentally related initiatives including public awareness. These efforts are combined to provide temporary employment to unemployed citizens.

GEF is assisting Albania, through the NCSA process, in critically reviewing achievements regarding fulfilling the commitments made to the UN CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD and focuses on cross-cutting issues and synergies between the Conventions.

ENERGY

GEF supports efforts to maintain and enhance national capacities to prepare National Communications, to ensure a continuity and improvement of this process, and to meet the country's needs for identification and assessment of climate change friendly technologies.

UNDP is working to support local level management of energy resources and propose ways of improving energy availability through feasibility studies of energy efficiency measures and provide guidance, advice and capacity building in energy planning and efficiency within the local government and communities.

BIODIVERSITY

The Government of Albania and GEF are working to reinforce the legal, regulatory and institutional conditions and tools required for the conservation of biodiversity under threat in the wetlands and ecosystem sites of Narta, Orikumi, Llogara and Karaburun. At the national level, efforts include identifying and applying innovative tools needed for integrated management.

GEF, KfW, UNDP, and the governments of Greece, Macedonia and Albania are supporting integrated ecosystem management in the trans-boundary region of Prespa Park with the participation of all stakeholders.

CHEMICALS

In support of the country's objectives under the Stockholm Convention, UNDP, using GEF funding, is working with the Government and national stakeholders to implement an enabling activity that will result in development of a National Implementation Plan for Albania. This project is setting the foundation for further consideration of national initiatives in POPs management.

CONTACTS

Mr. Vladimir Malkaj – vladimir.malkaj@undp.org
 Mr. Batkhuyag Baldangombo – batkhuyag.baldangombo@undp.org
 Tel. 355-42-33-122(148, 149)
 Fax 355-42-32-075
<http://www.undp.org.al/?practices,6,projects>

PARTNERS

Some of our Partners working with UNDP and the Government in Albania

SIDA
 Government of Italy
 (University of Rome)
 KfW
 Government of Greece
 FYROM

¹Albania MDGR 2004 <http://intra.undp.org.al/ext/elib/download/?id=659&name=Albania%20National%20MDG%20Report%202004%20%28Albanian%29%2Epdf>; ²GEF SGP, 'Responding to Climate Change Generating Community Benefits', 2003 and SGP Online database: <http://sgp.undp.org/index.cfm?Module=Projects&Page=ShowProject&ProjectID=5513>;

³<http://intra.undp.org.al/ext/elib/download/?id=660&name=CCA%20Albania%202004%2Epdf>; *Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development