

BULGARIA



Progress Towards Environmental Sustainability

MDG7

Bulgaria is one of the European countries with the richest biological diversity. Protected territories cover about 5% of the total area of the country, but their management is not at a desired level of effectiveness. Fires have posed a serious threat to biological diversity in recent years. Forests make up about 35% of the country.

Bulgaria has a well-developed water supply system, serving more than 98% of the population in 84.6% of the human settlements. This proportion, however, is different for towns and villages. Unlike cities and town, which have 100% coverage of access to safe drinking water, only 81% of the villages enjoy access to a safe drinking water supply. Villages without, or with only a partial water supply, are located mostly in the mountainous areas.

Almost all emissions of substances contributing to air pollution have been reduced in recent years. Methane and cadmium are an exception as they have shown some increase. Carbon dioxide emissions result mostly from domestic firing processes, road transport, and industrial combustion processes. Positive changes are due to a shrinking of the industrial sector, and to successful measures taken for pollution reduction.

Bulgaria's environmental sustainability targets aim at considerable improvement of living conditions in poor neighborhoods and villages. Improving environmental conditions will depend to a great extent on compliance with EU environmental standards.

QUICK FACTS

Total UNDP-GEF and Co-Finance:	\$46,982,054
Total UNDP and Co-Finance:	\$2,490,000

Achieving all MDG 7 targets will require a constructive and effective dialogue between government agencies, environmental NGOs, scientific circles, and business interests.¹

SPOTLIGHT



Capacity Building of Municipalities Initiates Energy Efficiency Activities²

Bulgaria's heating and energy system is based on the burning of low-quality coal, resulting in high emissions of pollutants. Increased air pollution has made energy efficiency a critical issue to be addressed. However, addressing this has been difficult due to limited experience nationally in incorporating energy efficiency considerations into public and private decision-making. The institutions and individuals needed to deliver the technical, managerial and financial services necessary for an energy-efficient society required strengthening.

In 1998, a GEF-supported project of US\$ 2.575 million and a total budget of US\$ 7.436 million supported a local NGO, EnEffect, in launching a project to introduce energy efficiency practices at the municipality level. These practices included overcoming barriers to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions of GHGs and other environmental pollutants. Capacity building activities were the heart of the project. These activities focused on municipalities as the critical political and socio-economic unit for bringing about change in Bulgaria. They included municipal energy management, training and financing activities. Supporting demonstrations in street lighting, district heating, and building retrofit projects displayed how capacity building could be applied to future projects. Project management supported these efforts and the rapid diffusion of capacity building and demonstrations to other municipalities, reaching at least 30 municipalities – a critical mass for ensuring that the reforms continued throughout the country after the project was concluded.

The project has been a successful catalyst in initiating energy efficiency activities and developing the necessary expertise in Bulgaria. Over 40 energy efficiency projects have been developed and implemented in participating municipalities and training in energy planning, project development and finance were successfully performed. The results of the project were disseminated among other potential beneficiaries through the national Municipal Energy Efficiency Network, EcoEnergy.

UNDP draws on global expertise to help Bulgarians build sustainable livelihoods through nature conservation and sustainable energy practices. UNDP's involvement ranges from policy and strategy advice and options in natural resource management and energy services to demonstration projects.³ "Access to clean water and sanitation remains an important element of our on-going cooperation with the government and municipalities of Bulgaria under the issue of improving living conditions for disadvantaged minorities in urban areas. UNDP is also developing projects on better integration of environmental priorities into spatial and development plans to make sure development of cities, towns and villages in Bulgaria truly reflects the ideas of sustainable development."



Neil Buhne, Resident Representative

PORTFOLIO

FSSD* The overall objective of the GEF-funded capacity project is to develop at individual, institutional and systemic levels for meeting the key obligations under the three Rio Conventions. Activities include capacity building for mainstreaming global environment into the regional development policy, planning and budgetary processes.

ENERGY GEF is supporting the promotion of an energy efficiency market in public and private buildings. Efforts include raising awareness, building the capacity of the local energy service providers to effectively market their services, and facilitating effective replication and dissemination of the results. GEF is also working to increase energy efficiency in household appliances.

LAND Bulgaria's long-term development objective is to enhance capacity for arresting land degradation and to establish sustainable land management practices that contribute to improving ecosystem health, integrity, functions and services, while promoting sustainable livelihoods. GEF is facilitating this, in addition to supporting efforts to implement a coherent land policy while focusing on mainstreaming, institutional and technical capacity building, and establishment of financial mechanisms and resource mobilisation for sustainable land management.

BIODIVERSITY Efforts to preserve the globally important migratory species and their habitats along the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast will be achieved through the mainstreaming of conservation concerns and principles into urban development, tourism and energy industries and policies, with the support of GEF funds. Other biodiversity objectives include ensuring the long-term conservation of the globally-important biodiversity of the Ponor Mountain grasslands, also through GEF. A Rhodope Mountains project, funded by GEF, is working to conserve and sustainably use its biological diversity, while devising innovative and adaptive practices to mitigate and prevent threats to biological diversity.

CHEMICALS Bulgaria is participating in a regional GEF-funded project, managed by UNEP in partnership with UNDP, that aims to rapidly phase-out all non-exempted uses of methyl bromide (MB). The project addresses the key barriers that have prevented the adoption of MB alternatives to date by providing training for MB users, resources to assist the procurement and installation of alternatives, and policy development and capacity building. The project will transfer and install existing MB alternatives. It will also build capacity and carry out pilots to ensure the ongoing adoption of environmentally sustainable alternatives in the longer term.

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PARTNERS

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

SIDA
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¹Bulgaria MDGR 2003 <http://www.undp.bg/en/publications.php?content=yes&ID=2&PHPSESSID=d7032e68416fc971a39a5a1f00761e3a>; ²UNDP Bulgaria, 'Energy Efficiency Strategy To Mitigate GHG Emissions - Energy Efficiency Demonstration Zone In The City Of Gabrovo, Republic Of Bulgaria', Final Project Evaluation Report April 2004. Ji. i Zeman and Nikolas Karadimov Project Name: Energy Efficiency Strategy To Mitigate GHG Emissions; ³http://www.undp.bg/en/focus_areas.php; ⁴Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development