

## CROATIA



### Progress Towards Environmental Sustainability

The management of forests in Croatia has been based on natural renewal through care and protection under professional supervision. The state of forest ecosystems in Croatia in comparison to those of Europe has been judged as relatively good, as nearly 95% of the forest area is of natural composition. Forestland makes up 43.5% of the total surface area of the mainland part of the national territory.

During the period between 1991 and 2001, the number of protected natural sites increased from 371 to 427. Croatia has begun to prepare a National Ecological Network, which will include all the regions that are important for the species and habitats endangered on the European and national levels. The Preliminary Ecological Network for the Republic of Croatia, established in 2002, identifies the basic elements of the ecological network according to which organisms migrate and buffer zones. The key indicators of biological variety are grouped into ecological systems, species and subspecies and genetic varieties, and indicate the status, pressure and response of the society. Croatia has chosen ten such indicators, for which it is realistic to expect the regular collection of data and the establishment of a system for monitoring the state of the environment.

Croatia aims to provide 94% of the population with access to the public water supply system by 2015, compared to the 76% who had access in 2001. The financial means necessary for achieving this goal have currently not been secured, which makes funding one of the major priorities for the next period. Croatia also aims to provide 65% of the population with access to public sanitation by 2015, compared to the 41% who have access to public sanitation with second-degree purification of wastewater. The improvement of Croatia's waste management system is an additional country goal that also requires increased financial resources, public and private partnerships.<sup>1</sup>

## QUICK FACTS

<b>Total UNDP-GEF and Co-Finance:</b>	\$21,196,900
<b>Total UNDP and Co-Finance:</b>	\$2,260,000
<b>Total:</b>	\$23,456,900

## SPOTLIGHT

### Clearing Waste Clears Barriers to Recovery and Stabilisation<sup>2</sup>

Sustainable development is at the heart of EU policy and fundamental to balanced growth. However, this can only be achieved if environmental issues are dealt with adequately. Across much of the Western Balkans environmental planning is inadequate, and recent neglect of environmental considerations has left many scars, both visible and invisible. Among the most visible effects is the accumulation of garbage which became common in Croatia following the end of the conflict in 1995.

In December 2003, UNDP implemented \$1.8 million to support municipal environmental management, the 2-year Municipal Environmental Management Capacity and Infrastructure (MEMCI) project. The towns and municipalities of the counties of Sibenik-Knin and Zadar were the first recipient institutions in March 2004. The project is the first of its kind to implement waste management strategies developed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction, and will provide best-practice examples of planning and implementation to other towns and municipalities in Croatia.

The specific objectives of MEMCI are to build capacity for effective environmental services management among local waste management providers and to create a basis for municipal lending for investment in environmental infrastructure in towns and municipalities. The project has established an organisational framework for the regionalisation of waste management, and has secured the closure and remediation of uncontrolled and illegal landfills and dumps. The project will also address specific problems such as waste management on Croatia's numerous islands, waste management and tourism, and constraints to landfill development. The project is addressing some of the most pertinent issues facing waste management in Croatia, which will have significant benefits for Croatia's future economic and human development.

# STRATEGIES

UNDP Croatia supports the national, county and local government institutions and agencies in fostering cooperation and a better understanding of the country context in order to make informed choices among environmental policy options. The aim is to ensure that natural resources are used in a sustainable manner, and to comply with international obligations and agreements. The challenges in Croatia are mostly being addressed through the GEF. In addition, UNDP Croatia aims to mobilise supplementary resources in order to better address the complexity of environmental issues such as municipal waste management, effective management and conservation of nature protected areas, thereby contributing to MDG 7 for environmental sustainability.

**Cornelis Klein, Resident Representative**

## PORTFOLIO

**FSSD\*** UNDP is working to develop the capacities needed to answer the challenges of the environmental requirements related to EU accession, including the preparation of the National Sustainable Development Strategy. This is done through The Capacity Building of the Environment Division project. UNDP, through The Capacity Building of the Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development project, is also working to create the environmental competencies within the Bank and to integrate the environment and sustainability considerations into all banking practices. This assists in developing new financial instruments for "green" financing.

**WATER** Croatia is one of the participating countries in the GEF-funded Danube-region project, aiming to set up the institutional and legal instruments to assure nutrient reduction and sustainable water management, and also to support the implementation of the EU water framework directive.

**ENERGY** GEF provides assistance in the preparation of the First National Communications Report to UNFCCC in order to assess national capacities and needs on Climate Change issues. Efforts include the removal of barriers to energy efficiency implementation and practices, and the provision of policy-change recommendations. In addition, capacity building initiatives are underway to improve the quality of GHG Inventories in the countries of the region. Croatia also has a Programme of Capacity Building for the Removal of Barriers to the Cost-Effective Development and Implementation of Energy Efficiency Standards.

**BIODIVERSITY** The biodiversity programme goal is to ensure that the development path of the Croatian coast is environmentally friendly with the conservation of biological diversity firmly mainstreamed into that development path. Pending GEF approval, the activities envisioned will effectively transform the actions, practices and approaches of private operators in the tourism, agriculture and fisheries sector and in part by influencing the banking sector, thereby mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into these sectors' practices.



### CONTACTS

Ms. Sandra Balent – [sandra.balent@undp.org](mailto:sandra.balent@undp.org)  
Ms. Dunja Fadljevic – [dunja.fadljevic@undp.org](mailto:dunja.fadljevic@undp.org),  
Tel. 385-1-2361-623; (2361-666)  
Fax 385-1-2361-620  
[http://www.undp.hr/en/areas/environmental/envi\\_index.html](http://www.undp.hr/en/areas/environmental/envi_index.html)

### PARTNERS

**Some of our Partners working with UNDP and the Government in Croatia**

EU-CARDS

<sup>1</sup>Croatia MDGR 2004 [http://www.undp.hr/images/dokument\\_i\\_mdg/National%20Millenium%20Development%20Goals%20Report.pdf](http://www.undp.hr/images/dokument_i_mdg/National%20Millenium%20Development%20Goals%20Report.pdf); <sup>2</sup>UNDP Croatia website: [http://www.undp.hr/en/areas/environmental/projects\\_04.html](http://www.undp.hr/en/areas/environmental/projects_04.html); <sup>\*</sup>Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development