

Example project: Implementation of the Aarhus Convention

The Republic of Moldova was the first country to sign the UN Aarhus Convention in 1999, thereby committing itself to informing the public on environmental matters and giving it rights of participation and legal action in environmental matters.

However, steps towards transposing the Convention into national law have been initiated only sporadically since then. Political pressure to act has grown in the meantime. The Aarhus Convention is a topic included in the approximation process which has been ongoing between the Republic of Moldova and the EU since 2005. In addition, the Republic of Moldova will host the next Conference of the Parties in 2011. The Moldovan Government has therefore set up a permanent working group for the implementation of the Convention. The aim of this cooperation project is to consistently support Moldova in implementing the Aarhus Convention. In cooperation with the working group, the project partners are drawing up an action plan for implementation of the Convention, which has three pillars (information, participation, rights of legal action). As regards rights of participation, they are developing detailed legislative proposals. Furthermore, "good-practice models" of cooperation between the administration and NGOs are being devised to illustrate the need for a participatory approach to environmental protection.

Duration of the project: 05/2009 - 02/2011

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Advisory Assistance
Programme for Environmental
Protection in the Countries of
Central and Eastern Europe,
the Caucasus and Central Asia



The Programme

In the course of the transition processes in Central and Eastern Europe, Germany has concluded bilateral environmental agreements with numerous countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

In order to implement the agreements and support these countries in introducing ambitious environmental standards, the **Advisory Assistance Programme** was set up. It serves as an instrument for knowledge transfer which Germany uses to share the **expertise** it has gained from its own experience. With its idea of **long-term integration** of high environmental standards in participant countries, the programme provides impetus towards lasting change.

The German Federal Environment Ministry and the German Federal Environment Agency are also using existing national, regional and local cooperation structures to intensify **cross-border cooperation** in the environmental sector.

For example, they support the **"Environment for Europe"** process and the Environmental Action Programme for Central and Eastern Europe (EAP) which was agreed by the environment ministers in the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe).

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Programme contents

The Advisory Assistance Programme is dialogue-oriented. Projects are geared to the needs of the target country and the political priorities of the German government. The wide range of advisory services includes:

- ▶ Transfer of know-how in environmental and financial engineering
- ▶ Adoption, transposition, implementation and enforcement of EC legislation
- ▶ Building of environmental administrations (including training)
- ▶ Support for cross-border cooperation, e.g. within river basins
- ▶ Support for measures to improve environmental awareness, mainly via support for non-governmental organisations



Representatives of Latvian municipalities visiting a modern sewage treatment plant in Krefeld

Programme priorities - regional

The programme is increasingly supporting the **new neighbours** east and southeast of **the EU** (western Balkans, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) and countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia. Cooperation with the Russian Federation forms a separate priority.

The **new EU Member States** (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia), as well, continue to require advice in developing environment policy.

Programme priorities - thematic

Current thematic priorities comprise capacity building, industrial environmental protection, waste management, remediation of contaminated sites and water protection, water supply and disposal as well as nature protection, energy and climate protection.

The programme in figures

The Advisory Assistance Programme was launched in 2000, originally with an annual budget of 1,53 million Euros, increased to 2,24 million Euros since 2003. Since 2010 it has an annual budget of 2,74 million Euros, which is used to award 30 to 50 projects annually on a contract or grant basis. The projects usually have a duration of one to two years.