



# Advisory Assistance Programme

Expertise in environmental protection  
in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe,  
the Caucasus, Central Asia and other countries  
neighbouring the European Union

**Umwelt  
Bundesamt**

**AAP**  
Advisory Assistance  
Programme

German Environment Agency

# Environmental protection is a cross-border challenge

## Political upheaval and environmental know-how

In the early 1990s, the political upheaval in Central and Eastern Europe resulted in enormous challenges in the region, including those related to environmental issues. In response to these challenges, in 1991, the European environment ministers launched the “Environment for Europe” process in Dobris, near Prague. The idea was to pool available resources in the field of environmental protection. A total of 55 countries are participating in the process, which is still ongoing. Other efforts to benefit the environment in the countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the former Soviet Republics, resulted from multilateral environmental agreements and from bilateral efforts with the European Union (EU), targeting EU accession or an association agreement.

At that time, Germany and its environmental authorities already had specific expertise to support the transformation process with advice, for example the German experience in the development and re-organisation of environmental administration bodies and infrastructure in the new federal states during the 1990s, or in Germany’s worldwide pioneering role in the development of environmental technologies.

### Target region of the Advisory Assistance Programme

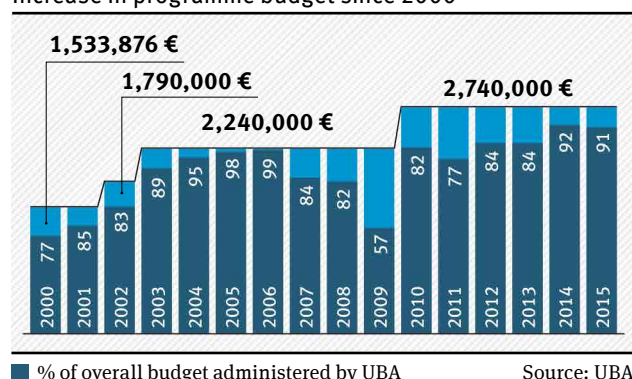
**Central and Eastern Europe:** Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine

**Caucasus region:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia

**Central Asia:** Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan as well as Mongolia

**Mediterranean region:** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey

Increase in programme budget since 2000



Source: UBA



## Precursor of the Advisory Assistance Programme

Since the countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS-states are not able to master the transformation process themselves, Germany has been backing up reforms in these countries with considerable financial means since 1990. However, with the purpose of helping those countries to help themselves, the German government launched the TRANSFORM programme in 1992. It advised decision-makers on the implementation of essential reforms in various fields, on the establishment of a democratic constitutional state and of a social market economy.

It was evident that efficient environmental administration bodies play a key role in reducing environmental pollution and in establishing an effective environmental policy. For example in Slovenia and Ukraine, national environmental administration bodies had to be built up from scratch. The German Environment Agency (UBA) provided around DM 29 million (approx. EUR 14.5 million) for 149 projects in the period from 1992 to 1999. Emphasis was given to climate protection, the rehabilitation of contaminated military sites, wastewater treatment and soil protection.

## Launch of the Advisory Assistance Programme

After the expiry of TRANSFORM, the Federal Environment Ministry (now the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Construction and Nuclear Safety, BMUB) decided to launch its own Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP), given the excellent international standing of Germany’s environmental policy and environmental technology.

This was mainly initiated by the following motives

- ▶ reduction of cross-border environmental pollution in Europe and the battle against global environmental problems,
- ▶ exertion of influence on negotiation processes for an international environmental policy,
- ▶ contribution to German environmental foreign affairs,
- ▶ expectations by other countries on German support payments,
- ▶ promotion of the transfer of environmental technologies and ratification and implementation of multilateral agreements and obligations, in particular within the frame of UNECE.

Image left: Water and soil protection are important environmental topics of the EU Acquis for EU member states. In 2013 Germany advised Bulgaria to adapt the utilisation of sewage sludge to comply with EU specifications.

Source: INTECUS GmbH

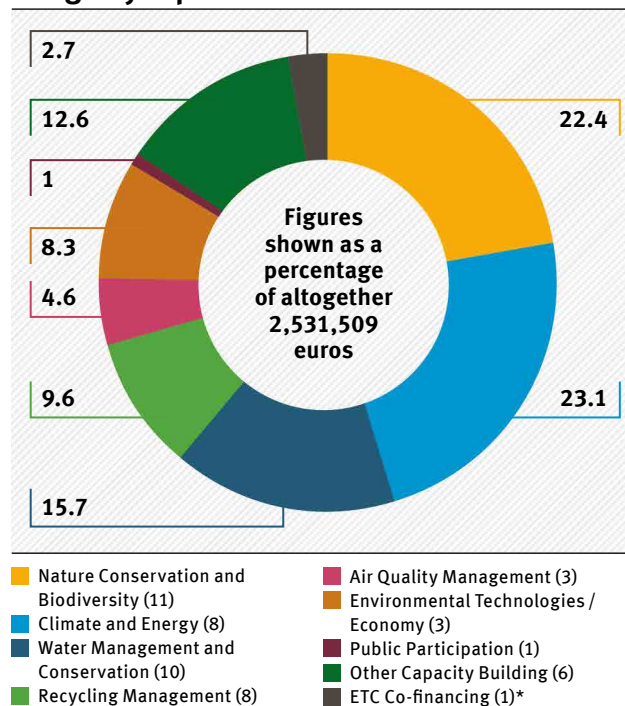
Since 2000, the AAP has supported the countries in its target region in a development which is aligned to European environmental standards. The new EU member states and EU accession candidates are mainly advised on the environmental part of the EU Acquis communautaire, which describes all valid laws of the EU (French for: "community law"). In order to become an EU member state, a country has to accept the full EU legislation, including the provisions of environmental law.

The exchange and transfer of know-how aims at strengthening environmental administration bodies, raising environmental standards and preparing for environmental investments. The results achieved with the projects include educational material, guidelines and policy recommendations. They contribute towards a sustained improvement of the environmental situation in the supported countries.

A Project Service Unit at UBA acts as a contact partner for advice recipients and for the organisations implementing the projects. It coordinates arrangements between the parties involved. Technical support for the projects is provided by the higher federal authority with responsibility in the respective area.

The share of AAP funds managed by UBA in 2014

### Usage by topic



In brackets = number of projects

Source: UBA

\*) ETC = European Territorial Cooperation

## AAP – Figures, topics and aim

**Project budget (2014):** 2.74 million euros,  
of which managed by UBA: € 2,531,509

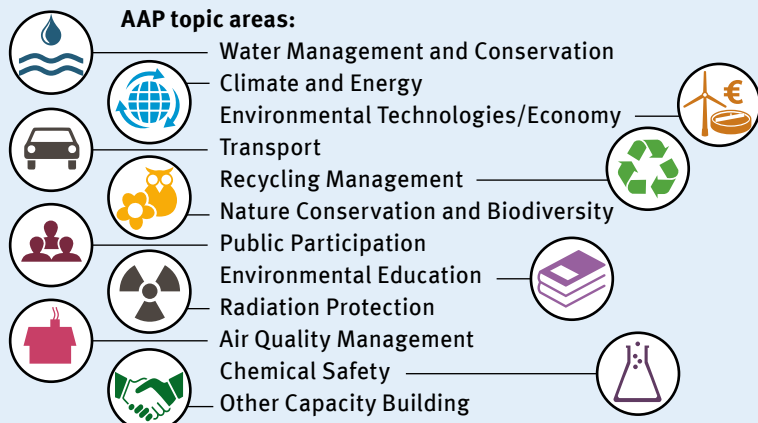
**Projects:** more than 350 since launch of the programme

**Project budget:** approx. € 1,000 to € 300,000

**Project duration:** between 2 months and 3 years

**Allocation of funds by topics:**  
according to needs (see chart, 2014 as example)

### AAP topic areas:



### Possible contents or objectives of advisory assistance projects include for example:

- ▶ Development of national and regional environmental policy programmes, strategies and plans;
- ▶ Development of pilot projects and best practice with regard to the introduction of resource-saving and environmentally friendly technologies;
- ▶ Fostering transnational cooperation and the formation of networks and communication structures, e.g. by means of round tables, working groups, workshops or study trips;
- ▶ Development of tools to assist with the autonomous implementation of legal obligations and standards;
- ▶ Establishment of educational and continuing training structures;
- ▶ Improvement of environmental awareness in the population;
- ▶ Fostering national, regional and local authorities;
- ▶ Preparation, support or follow-up measures for administrative partnerships (TWINNING projects).

Project examples may be found in the AAP project database:

[www.uba.de/en/project-database-advisory-assistance-programme](http://www.uba.de/en/project-database-advisory-assistance-programme)





A stylized map of Central Asia and Mongolia is shown in the background. The landmasses are colored in shades of orange and yellow, while the surrounding water bodies are dark blue. The map includes labels for Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, each with a small white dot indicating its capital or a major city. The title '2000-2015' is prominently displayed in large white font at the top.

# 2000-2015

Milestones in EU development  
as a road map for the  
Advisory Assistance Programme

# Milestones in EU development as a road map for the Advisory Assistance Programme

In 2000 the Federal Environment Ministry launches the Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP) for environmental protection in the states of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

## 2000

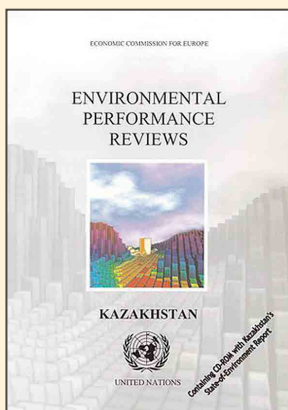
03.2001



**Other Capacity Building**

**Environmental Performance Review (EPR) for Kazakhstan**

The first AAP project supported and accompanied the UNECE EPR in Kazakhstan. EPR reports assess the progress made in improving the environmental policy in the countries analysed. Since 2000 UBA has funded as many as thirteen EPR missions in the frame of the AAP (see box on next page).



Front page of the EPR for Kazakhstan. Source: UNECE

29.10.2001

In 2001, Croatia and Macedonia are the first candidate countries to sign a stabilisation- and association agreement with the EU

## 2001

06.2000 – 05.2001



**Other Capacity Building**

**Assistance in setting up the Secretariat of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme (REPeP) within the framework of the stability pact**

The stability pact for South Eastern Europe was an important foundation for the cooperation with the successor states of the former Yugoslavian Republic. Joint activities in the field of environmental protection were to bring together Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and pave the way for permanently ensuring peace in these countries. The AAP contributed considerably towards establishing the secretariat for the EAP Task Force Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the OECD.

Since 2000, the AAP has also funded the establishment or continued development of regional environmental centres (RECs) in Eastern Europe, in the Caucasus and in Central Asia.

**EU Water Initiative (EUWI)**

The EUWI is launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. The Initiative intends to employ fair policy dialogues with various interest groups, also in the EECCA states\*, to enhance coordination and cooperation between participants, thus improving water management and ensuring more effective cooperation in the water sector.

## 2002

06.2002 – 02.2003



**Water Management and Conservation**

**Introducing indicators for comparing the performance of water utilities**

The AAP funded a study on ascertaining the status and working conditions in municipal water supplies and wastewater disposal in Ukraine. The results of the study constituted an initial data basis for political decisions in the Ukrainian water sector.

## 2003

12.2003 – 05.2006



**Recycling Management**

**Development of an integrated waste management system in the Kaluga region (Russian Federation)**

Russia produces a great deal of industrial waste that is not suitable for recycling or storing every year. The project created a framework for the environmentally friendly handling of waste in the Kaluga region. The city of Kaluga tested a software program for collecting, processing and administrating data on waste.



Rusty, illegally disposed drums containing industrial waste. Source: Fotolia, Jürgen Fälschle

\*EECCA states: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

**01.05.2004**

#### **Fifth EU expansion**

The states of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia join the European Union.

**12.05.2004**

#### **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**

With the ENP, the EU puts in place a uniform approach towards shaping the relationships with its neighbouring countries. The strategic aim of the ENP is to link the enlarged EU and its neighbours and enhance the security of all those involved through prosperity and stability.

**2004**




**01.01.2005**

As a new climate protection instrument the EU introduces trading in emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) to reduce the climate-wrecking emission of CO<sub>2</sub> by power plants and other industries.

**2005**

**10.2005 – 07.2007**

 **Environmental Technologies/ Economy**  
**Legal concept for the clearance of munitions in Latvia**



Old, rusted artillery ammunition.  
Source: Fotolia, joppo


Contamination resulting from weapons of war on former military sites was a problem in Latvia. The project targeted the development of a legal basis for searching for weapons and their recovery and its incorporation in Latvian legislation. This was ensured with a new concept for a long-term solution to the problem of weapon contamination.

**12.06.2006**

Albania signs an agreement on stabilisation and association with the EU

**2006**

**08.2006 – 12.2006**

 **Other Capacity Building**

**Fifth German-Russian Environment Days in the Kaliningrad region**

The German-Russian "Environment Days" have been organised jointly with the Kaliningrad regional government since 2002. In 2006 BMUB and UBA took over the responsibility for the German part of the organisation from the German Environment Foundation (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, DBU). In 2006 the topics „Energy efficiency for residential buildings“, „Urban water management/river basin management“, „Sustainable fishing“ and „Sustainable tourism/agriculture“ were addressed.

**01.01.2007**

#### **Sixth EU expansion**

Bulgaria and Romania join the EU.

**15.10.2007**


**Montenegro signs an agreement on stabilisation and association with the EU**

**06./07.12.2007**

**Intensification of the German cooperation with Russia**  
During their 11th steering group meeting, Germany and Russia agree on expanding their cooperation in environmental protection.

**2007**

**11.2007 – 01.2016**

 **Climate and Energy**

**Improved resource efficiency in Poland**

Three different projects focussing on regional and local structures for the efficient use of resources and for climate protection measures advised local politicians and farmers on creating scope for an innovative regional energy and resource policy and on developing model projects.



Mixed fruit cultivation comprising camelina and peas.  
Source: Institute for Energy and Environmental Technology – IEU



29.04. & 16.06.2008

**Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina sign an agreement on stabilisation and association with the EU**

10.09.2008

**Kazakhstan in the spotlight of the German environmental policy**

Germany and Kazakhstan agree on closer cooperation in climate protection and the transfer of environmental technologies.

## 2008

08.2008 – 08.2009



**Chemical Safety**

**Legal framework for implementing the EU Detergents Regulation in Bulgaria**

The AAP funded support for the Bulgarian administration and the development of a national system on the enforcement of EU regulation 684/2004 on detergents in Bulgaria. Detergents are substances that are found in cleaning agents and washing powder. They are understood to be naturally occurring and synthetically produced surfactants.

07.05.2009

**The European Union enters into an “Eastern Partnership” with the six former Soviet Republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus.**

**The Eastern Partnership (EaP)** is part of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with the aim to support and encourage the EaP countries in their process towards a political association and further economic integration.

## 2009

10.2009 – 12.2010



**Nature Conservation and Biodiversity**

**Walk on the Wild Side – transboundary nature conservation along the south-eastern European Green Belt**



Border region of Macedonia and Kosovo.  
Source: T. Pezold (IUCN)

The project strengthened the cross-border cooperation on nature conservation along the borderland between Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia, a region with outstanding biodiversity in high mountain areas. The idea of the European Green Belt Initiative is to put the area along the former Iron Curtain under international protection.

## 2010

11.2010 – 11.2015



**Environmental Technologies/ Economy**

**Accident prevention and crisis management in the Danube River delta**

The AAP funded a project of the UNECE Industrial Accident Convention in the Republic of Moldova, in Romania and in Ukraine to protect the occurrence of industrial accidents in the Danube delta region. The oil terminals located right above the Danube River delta are an example of this protection. This region has an increased hazard potential for the ecosystem and for the Danube River Delta Natural World heritage site. The project targeted the improvement of cross-border communication in risk management between these three countries located in the Danube River delta.



Oil terminal in Giurgiulesti.  
Source: Danube Logistics

## 2011

04.2011 – 10.2013



**Public Participation**

**Implementing the Aarhus Convention with the development of PRTR systems in selected countries in the Western Balkans**

The project elucidated the possibilities for public participation to enable stakeholders to express their interest in a healthy environment and, ideally, be able to enforce it. Participants were trained in how to submit a contribution to decision-making processes and to improve their access to courts. In order to implement Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR), handouts were drafted in various languages and Internet portals were set up.



01.03.2012

### Serbia becomes an EU accession candidate

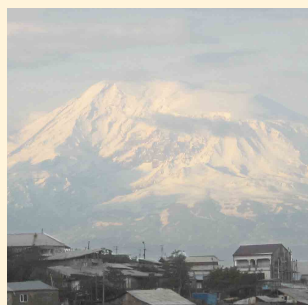
Serbia now has EU accession candidate status following its submission of an application in December 2009.

## 2012

02.2012 – 03.2015

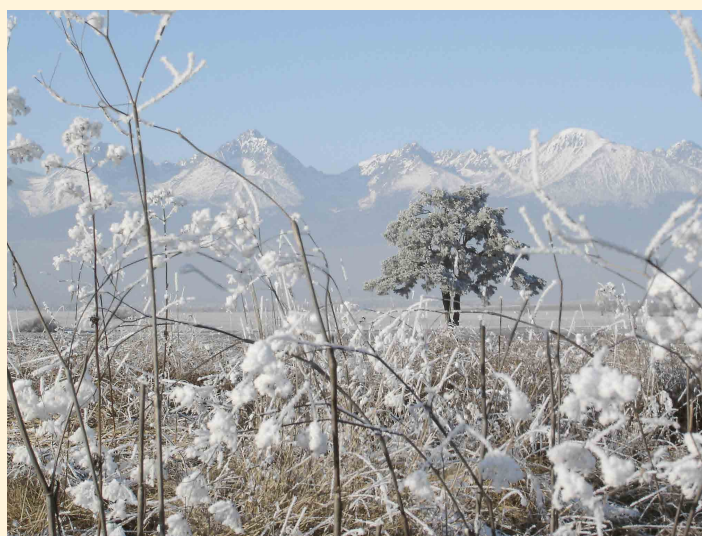
### Other Capacity Building

Advising Armenia on a  
framework on environmental  
legislation



In the shadow of Mount Ararat:  
advisory assistance in Armenia.  
Source: Ralf Jülich

The project supported the modernisation of Armenian environmental legislation and its alignment with EU requirements. This promoted environmental protection in Armenia.



01.07.2013

### Seventh EU expansion

After nine years as a candidate country, Croatia joined the EU as its 28th member state.

## 2013

03.2013 – 04.2015

### Nature Conservation and Biodiversity

Strategy for sustainable  
tourism development in the  
Carpathians

On 26 September 2014, the contracting states in the Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Ukraine) adopted a mutual strategy for sustainable tourism development in the mountain region. The AAP funded the development of a strategy for the expansion of this unique natural and cultural heritage site to become a competitive tourism destination in Europe.

24.06.2014

### Albania becomes an EU accession candidate

Currently, also Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey are EU accession candidates (status as at editorial deadline).

27.06.2014

Georgia, the Republic of  
Moldova and Ukraine sign an  
agreement on stabilisation  
and association with the EU

## 2014

07.2014 – 01.2017

### Water Management and Conservation

Environmentally sound  
concepts of maritime spatial  
use for the Baltic Sea Area  
of the Russian Federation

Marine spatial planning is a vital instrument in sustainable marine development, in particular in terms of territorial waters and the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). German experience is to support Russia in the coordination of various uses of maritime areas. A spatial utilisation concept with a focus on environmental matters will be developed for a pilot region in the Baltic area.

27.10.2015

The Kosovo signs an agree-  
ment on stabilisation and  
association with the EU

### Expansion of the AAP target region

BMUB is expanding the AAP target region in order to also embrace the Mediterranean countries (parts of the MENA region, in particular Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) in environmental cooperation. Mongolia also became an AAP partner country in 2015.

## 2015

07.2015 – 09.2015

### Air Quality Management

Expert mission for air quality  
management in Ulan Bator,  
Mongolia

German experts analysed the air quality situation in Ulan Bator and included the results of current advisory projects in their studies. They discussed the results as well as examples of good practice in Germany and the EU with Mongolian specialists. The experts jointly elaborated on ideas and potential focus areas for future cooperation in the area of air quality management.



High Tatras (Western Carpathians)  
in winter.  
Source: Zuzana Okanikova

Smog in Ulan Bator.  
Source: G. Baumbach

## Project series

The AAP provides continuous support to specific topics given their long-term actuality. Examples are:



### UNECE-Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs)

Since 1996 the UNECE EPRs analyse the progress made by individual countries in enhancing their environmental policy. More information available at:

<http://www.unece.org/env/epr.html>

Since 2000 UBA has been supporting the UNECE with its EPRs for the following countries:

- ▶ Kazakhstan, Bulgaria (2000)
- ▶ Serbia, Montenegro (2007)
- ▶ Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (2011)
- ▶ Albania, Romania, Tajikistan (2012)
- ▶ Republic of Moldova, Croatia (2014)
- ▶ Belarus, Georgia, Tajikistan (in progress)



### German-Russian Environment Days in the Kaliningrad region (Russian Federation)

The Environment Days have taken place almost every year since 2002. They comprise specialist events on current environmental policy issues in German-Russian cooperation, with a special focus on the Kaliningrad region.

The seminars each aim at presenting the current situation on the basis of selected examples and concepts, and at developing recommendations on the next steps in order to promote the development within the topic areas of German-Russian cooperation.

The results of the long-term cooperation with the Kaliningrad region are available at [www.uba.de/kaliningrad](http://www.uba.de/kaliningrad) (webpage in German and Russian).



### Support for the National Park Programme in Turkmenistan with technical support from the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation

Since 2008 a series of advisory assistance projects has aimed at establishing initial model national parks for Turkmenistan from two characteristic Soviet conservation areas, according to the criteria of the World Conservation Union (IUCN).



In 2010 an expert workshop prepared for the establishment of the Artschabil National Park. The assembly of human resources for establishing national parks in Turkmenistan was funded until 2012. Until 2014 the AAP supported the reinforcement of an expert group to establish national parks in Turkmenistan.

## Bilateral environment agreements

The foundation of many advisory assistance projects are bilateral environment agreements between Germany and the countries of the programme target region.

### I. Treaties & intergovernmental agreements on environmental cooperation

From 1991 until the establishment of the AAP, agreements were concluded with Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine.

Contracts with Kazakhstan (2012) and Armenia (2013) have been added since 2000.

### II. BMUB interdepartmental agreements and sub-contractual instruments for environmental cooperation

BMUB interdepartmental agreements and other sub-contractual instruments were agreed with Albania, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland until 1999.

Agreements with the Czech Republic (2004), Kazakhstan (2007, 2012), Turkmenistan (2009), Armenia (2013), the Republic of Moldova (2014) and Romania (2015) have been added since 2000.

## Multilateral environment agreements

Multilateral environment agreements are vital instruments in the promotion of environmental protection worldwide.

The Advisory Assistance Programme and its projects provide active support for the following agreements in particular:

- ▶ Carpathian Convention
- ▶ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- ▶ Helsinki Convention on the Protection of the Baltic Sea Area Marine Environment
- ▶ UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matter (Aarhus Convention)
- ▶ UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention)
- ▶ UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP)
- ▶ UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention)
- ▶ UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents
- ▶ UNESCO World Heritage Convention
- ▶ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- ▶ Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer

## The Advisory Assistance Programme takes effect ...



Environmental pollution and its consequences do not come to a halt at borders. The general public has been aware of the mutual responsibility borne by all the states for a world we can live in ever since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Since this time, people's dependence on their environment and the effects of human behaviour on global environmental changes have increasingly been the subject of negotiations and been translated into action at an international level. States have reached a number of multinational and bilateral agreements on cross-border cooperation for environmental protection, and the EU environmental policy is constantly developing. Within this framework, BMUB's Advisory Assistance Programme is an effective instrument for the purposive implementation of agreements and conventions Germany committed to for the establishment of environmental standards.

The German Environment Agency (UBA), together with the other higher federal authorities in the Environmental Department and on behalf of the BMUB, uses its wide competence spectrum and the considerable technical qualifications of its staff to guarantee a high quality for advisory assistance projects. The programme and UBA thus contribute towards improving the environmental situation in the programme area, towards intensifying cooperation with the countries in this area, and establishing new cooperation projects. The involvement of international organisations in AAP projects facilitates the achievement of multilateral, far-reaching benefits from the project results. For example, with the help of a checklist method developed in AAP projects for enhancing the safety of tailings management

facilities in the mining industry, it was possible to add a user-friendly instrument to the recommended UNECE safety guidelines. The method is now available to all the UNECE countries, and training courses on the instruments are on offer in a number of countries as part of the work programme of the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.



The AAP Project Service Unit at UBA coordinates the intensive cooperation with BMUB, the advice recipients in the programme area, the implementing organisations in all project phases and with the other technical administrative authorities. The key role of the service unit is one of the programme's success factors in that it guarantees its flexibility and hence the possibility to respond to changing requirements.

## ... and continues to have an effect

The unabated high demand for advice and for a transfer of know-how has also been reaching the AAP from the new partner countries since the expansion of the programme area, showing that the AAP meets the needs of its target countries. The programme will therefore continue to remain committed to long-term solutions for the protection of our environment. The UBA will maintain its aim of ensuring that AAP project results have a permanent effect in its partner countries, and it will constantly improve its tailor-made, impact-orientated advice service.

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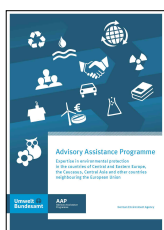
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Federal Ministry  
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