

FINAL REPORT

Project Title

Continuation of the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in Bosnia- Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia, and extension to Croatia

Regional Environmental Reconstruction Action Programme for the Balkans

August 2003

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Title: Continuation of the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment in Bosnia-Herzegovina and FYROM, and extension to Croatia

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Objective: Continuation of the EEA cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia and set up similar cooperation with Croatia, contributing to a successful integration of these three countries in the EEA work programme, and furthermore assisting their preparation for full EEA membership.

Specific objectives:

- To activate EEA cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia, developed under the Phare framework assistance between 1996-1999 and further supported through a small project by the Danish EPA in 2000;
- To bring Croatia on a fast track in relation to EEA work in order to achieve a coherent package of activities developed for the cooperating countries;
- To develop the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET) and facilitate the integration of the national networks in the EEA activities;
- Extend the EIONET telematics network to Croatia and maintain it in the three countries for exchange of data and information with EEA as well as to support national activities;
- Expand the work of the EEA European Topic Centres (ETCs) per each topic area to cover the three countries;
- Specific support to set up a regular reporting network and to include the three countries in the EEA reports;
- To extend the EEA work programme and activities to the three cooperating countries.

1. Executive Summary

The cooperation of European Environment Agency (EEA) with Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia started in 1997 with the financial assistance provided by the CEC PHARE multi-country programme together with the ten Phare candidate countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia). After three years of cooperation, at the end of 1999, the PHARE programme was oriented towards the accession process and funds were no longer available for the three cooperating countries due to the closing down of the PHARE multi-country programme (last budget available was from 1998). However, some activities continued in 2000 with the support of the Danish EPA (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, F.Y.R. of Macedonia) ensuring participation of the country experts to EEA events, and Phare programme support for extension of the EIONET telematics network to Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia. On a transitional basis the latter cooperation was assisted in 2000 by Phare expert team working at EEA. The present grant was the necessary financial aid to re-initiate the EEA cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia and to set up similar cooperation with Croatia. For the first time EEA received direct financial aid from the European Commission to work with the three countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, F.Y.R. of Macedonia and Croatia).

The main outputs of the project were:

- Ensuring continuation of the cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia and setting up similar cooperation with Croatia to include the three countries in the extended geographical coverage of EEA and EIONET;
- Developing the national EIONET network and its integration in the EEA activities to similar participation as of the EEA member countries;
- Inclusion of the three countries into the work of the five EEA ETCs by extending their work programmes in the five topic areas (Air and Climate Change, Water, Nature Protection and Biodiversity, Terrestrial Environment, and Waste and Materials Flows);
- Developing the reporting network and participation in the regular EEA reporting process (focus on Kiev pan-European assessment report) as well as in the topic databases and reports;
- Assisting the three cooperating countries in participation in the major EEA events, topic annual workshops, activities and main products;
- Extending the EIONET telematics network to Croatia and support to the three countries for maintenance, data and information exchange with EEA and development of national applications;
- Project management and coordination to ensure the project objectives and the outputs.

The project activities were managed and coordinated by EEA. The major work was performed by EEA and the EEA/ETCs. At the end of the project, the three cooperating countries were integrated in the main EEA activities working on similar basis as the 31 EEA member countries.



2. Fulfilling the objectives

The main objective of the project was fully achieved: the cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia was activated and the cooperation with Croatia was set up at the beginning of the project in the second half of 2001. The cooperation developed during the 1.5 years project duration to similar levels of activities as with the EEA member countries. The three cooperating countries were gradually included in the major EEA activities.

The specific objectives (listed on the first page of this report) were fully achieved as well.

The EIONET network of organizations in the three countries grew over the period of the project and they were gradually involved in the EEA activities. Their work was harmonized in accordance with EEA procedures and reporting process. Although the level of development and performance is below the level of most of the EEA member countries, the main aim, to re-activate the network and integrate it, was achieved. In the priority data flows (enclosed as annex 2), F.Y.R. of Macedonia gradually improved the performance (starting from 29% in 2000 and reaching 54 % in 2002). Bosnia-Herzegovina also improved in this short period taking into account a more complicated situation in the country and the difficulties to develop faster the national network (performance starting from 18% in 2000 and reaching 29% in 2002). Croatia is not yet rated in the priority data flows because of being a newcomer (since the end of 2001) which requires certain time to set up and develop the national EIONET network and consequently start regular data flows. However, data is coming from Croatia although not yet rated.

The EIONET telematics network was extended to Croatia. A system administrators and user training was performed immediately after the successful installations to ensure to proper operation of the system and its application. An Internet line was installed, financed by the project, for connection of the equipment to the information networks. Furthermore, the three countries were supported through dedicated helpdesk who ensured problems solving and application of the network by using the latest application tools for data and information exchange with EEA. Support for harmonization of the use of the network and developing the national portals for environmental information and services was provided until the end of the project. All servers were running well and used for exchange of data and information with EEA, as well as on national level.

The work of the five ETCs was successfully extended to cover all the three countries. Specific support was provided to set up and maintain the data flows and to improve the national EIONET networks in the five topic areas (Air and Climate Change, Water, Nature Protection and Biodiversity, Terrestrial Environment, and Waste and Materials Flows). Specific country visits supported the development of the national aspects of the EIONET, improving the data flows with EEA and development of the European monitoring systems lead by the ETCs.



The first steps of involving the three countries in the EEA regular reporting took place. EEA extended its work on indicators towards the three countries and included them into the pan-European assessment report for the Kiev environment ministers' conference held in Kiev in 2003. This formed the basis for future inclusion into the indicator-based yearly reports.

The EEA dissemination and publication work was also covering these countries. The EEA Web site and EIONET Web site allowed better integration and increased visibility of EEA in that region. Specific EIONET place for the cooperating countries nominations and list of National Reference Centres (enclosed as annex 10) was established. The data exchange through the EIONET Web site was also extended to include the cooperating countries allowing them to use the central resources located at EEA, called Central Data Register (CDR). All EIONET members, including the cooperating countries, have access to the relevant EEA Interest Groups.

The country experts have participated in all major EEA events covered by the project funds. This allowed their involvement in all coordination/progress/topic meetings as well as assisted the integration of the national networks and development of EIONET.

Fulfilling the specific objectives assists the future enlargement of EEA with the three countries and is essential development, which will allow follow up for the gradual integration of the three countries in all activities included in the EEA Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) and preparation for full membership of EEA (the countries have applied to the European Commission to become EEA members).



3. Project Activities

This section contains a description of the project tasks and corresponding activities performed during the project lifetime, achieving the objectives.

The description of the performed tasks and activities below follow the structure of the five tasks as defined in the Description of the Operation (Annex I of the grant agreement).

All activities performed within the five tasks were a continuation of the EEA cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia already developed with the Phare Programme support (1997-1999) and setting up cooperation with the newcomer Croatia. At the same time the activities were following similar line of developments foreseen for the ten Phare candidate countries ensuring a coherent approach throughout Central and Eastern Europe in relation to EEA activities as defined in the EEA Multi-Annual Work Programme (1999-2003).

3.1. Extension of European Topic Centres work programmes to Bosnia-Herzegovina, F.Y.R. of Macedonia and Croatia (in the field of nature protection and biodiversity, air and climate change, water, terrestrial environment, and waste)

The ETCs were set up in 1994-97 to support the EEA in the core work of providing policy relevant information to Community Institutions, EEA and the Member Countries (MCs). In 1997-98 the European Commission Phare Programme funded the setting up of five Phare Topic Links (PTLs) in the areas of Land Cover (LC), Inland Waters (IW), Air Quality (AQ), Nature Conservation (NC) and Air Emissions (AE) to perform similar work with the cooperating Phare countries working together with the ETCs with linked programmes and activities.

The EEA cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia was supported by the PTLs on LC, IW, AQ, NC and AE until July 1999, August 1999, September 1999, April 2000 and September 2000 respectively. Due to lack of finance a clear gap was introduced in the cooperation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia with EEA in the five topic areas. The only link was maintained through the participation of national experts in the five topic annual workshops, funding ensured by a small Danish EPA project.

A revised ETCs structure was in place in 2001 comprising of five topic centres (Air and Climate Change, Water, Nature Protection and Biodiversity, Terrestrial Environment, and Waste and Material Flows). The ETCs technical annexes foresee to cover the EEA member countries only unless additional funding is available to expand the geographical scope of the work to other countries. One of the first steps after the start of the grant was to expand the work programmes of the five ETCs to include the three cooperating countries. Thus, the work of the ETCs with the member and cooperating countries was ensured to be performed on the same basis (common technical annexes) with the only difference – the

different fund sources. This solution helped to harmonize the ETC work with all the countries on the same level using the same procedures.

The activities of the five EEA ETCs can be summarized as follows:

a) Management and co-ordination of the extended European Topic Centres (in both geographical terms and activities) by also covering the three cooperating countries.

After the signature of the grant by EEA, one of the first actions was to extend the work of the five ETCs (Air and Climate Change, Nature Protection and Biodiversity, Water, Terrestrial Environment, Waste and Material Flows) and to include the respective amount from the grant to the EEA topic centres subventions for extension of the work to the three cooperating countries. The current grant allowed the work to be continued in a uniform way by the EEA ETCs taking on board the three countries. The work of the topic centres was performed under the following major tasks, defined in the ETC technical annexes under the additional subventions from the current grant:

- Support to EEA reporting cycle;
- Development of assessment tools, models and methodologies;
- Information collection and development of indicators;
- European level data handling, information, and public access to information;
- Support and coordinate national and international monitoring and EIONET data flows;
- Developing of topic aspects of EIONET;
- IT and data management.

The work of the ETCs and the extension to the three cooperating countries was managed by EEA through the coordination of the EEA Project Managers responsible for the five ETCs in close collaboration with the manager of this grant who was responsible for the overall coordination and implementation.

The five ETC reports are enclosed in this final report as annexes 5-9 (No. 5 on Waste and Material Flows; No. 6 on Water, No. 7 on Terrestrial Environment, No. 8 on Air and Climate Change and No. 9 on Nature Protection and Biodiversity). They provide detailed reporting of the activities and the results achieved by the ETCs.

b) Expand the European Topic Centre work in data collection, assessment and development of indicators as basis for the main EEA reports; assessment and development of additional indicators.

One of the major tasks of the ETCs is to develop indicators to feed EEA reporting needs for the production of the Indicator based reports. ETCs work with the countries for the data collection, processing and presentation of the indicators



based on standard fact sheets in close collaboration with the National Reference Centres (NRCs) and National Focal Points (NFPs). The work with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia was initiated by the PTLs in 1998 who collected the first data and tested the presentation of some indicators. This initial work continued in the second half of 2001 by the ETCs with the financial support of the current grant. In addition, the work was extended to Croatia in 2002 after the nomination of NFP and initiating the cooperation with this country. Based on the ETCs work and additional support (task 3.3 description in this report), the three countries have been fully covered into the Kiev assessment report (annex 1). Information from the three cooperating countries was used in the production of the Environmental Signals Report 2002 (third EEA report based on indicators covering the EEA member countries, see annex 15). The information used from the three countries was very limited due to the not yet well-developed regular data exchange with EEA in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. However, the major reason was that these countries are not yet EEA member countries, hence not targeted in the EEA reports focusing on the member countries. Nevertheless, the process of indicators reporting will gradually grow with the development of the cooperation and the regular reporting network. It takes time, certain work and resources in order to identify the needed data sets in the countries, to improve the data collection and data exchange, and to build up a regular reporting system feeding the EEA reporting data needs.

The first building block of that process was to set up and develop the data exchange following the EEA priority data flows. The priority data flows were initiated with Croatia and continued with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia. The information flow is standardised using the same procedures as with the EEA member countries. All countries (member and cooperating) are regularly assessed for the performance. The sixth progress report on EIONET Priority Data Flows 2002 (enclosed as annex 2) shows the performance of the countries in delivery of the priority data to EEA in 2002 as well as compares it with the status in 2001 and 2000. Priority data flows are standard set of reporting data agreed by the NFPs. The EIONET report shows that F.Y.R. of Macedonia gradually improved the performance (starting from 29% in 2000 and reaching 54% in 2002). Bosnia-Herzegovina also improved in this short period taking into account more complicated situation in the country and the difficulties to develop faster the national network (starting from 18% in 2000 and reaching 29% in 2002). Croatia is not yet rated in the priority data flows because of being a newcomer (since the end of 2001) what requires certain time to set up and develop the national EIONET network and consequently to start regular data flows. However, data is coming from Croatia and the country will be included into the next report on EIONET priority data flows for 2003. The EIONET priority data flows report provides detailed tables with analyses of the data flow per country. The ETCs work and output for this activity is detailed in the enclosed ETC final reports.

c) Support development of the European monitoring networks and information systems in the three cooperating countries (EUROWATERNET, EUROAIRNET, EUNIS/CDDA, CORINE Land Cover, WASTEBASE, CORINAIR, etc.).



The European monitoring systems maintained by the ETCs are based on the national monitoring systems by selection of subset of stations for providing standardized data for EEA reporting. EEA started the extension of these systems to the Phare countries (including Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia) in 1997 with the support of the Phare programme in the topics of Inland waters, Land Cover, Air Emissions, Air Quality and Nature. The basic station selection and first regular data flows started in 1998-1999. With the support from the current grant, the work was extended to Croatia. In addition the three countries were also assisted to participate for the first time into the information systems for Waste and Soils. The data coming from the three countries was processed and stored into the European databases in a harmonised way with the EEA member countries. This allowed to build up a consolidated database on European level including the cooperating countries. The specific work of the five ETCs under this activity is detailed in the final reports of the ETCs (see annexes 5-9).

The European monitoring systems implementation and the regular data exchange with EEA is on a different level in the three countries. The lack of finance in the few years before the present grant did not allow to follow up the initial steps made in 1998-1999. Since 2001, based on the financial support from this grant, the work was continued. The European monitoring systems and the data exchange are most developed in F.Y.R. of Macedonia, to a similar level of a member country. However, still more support is necessary in order to achieve complete coverage and full data exchange (the current level is slightly above 50%). The situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina is at the first level of setting up the basic systems. The difficulties of having two entities with separate institutions responsible for the environment and the additional needs of coordination reflected the setting up of proper EIONET network and consequently the implementation of the European monitoring systems. The national EIONET network is partly developed including some organizations from the country. There is more systematic work necessary in order to complete the basic stations selection and cover the whole country with regular reporting. The current level is about 30 %. It is also necessary to institutionalize the EIONET network. The systems are at the initial step of development in Croatia – the first ETCs country visits assisted to start the work. The first results will be assessed in 2004 data flows reports.

Specifically, the work of the five ETCs in that activity can be briefly summarized as:

ETC/WMF: reporting to the joint Eurostat/OECD questionnaire; processing and inclusion of the data to WASTEBASE; country visits and topic specific workshops.

ETC/Water: Support to select representative stations for EUROWATERNET from the national monitoring networks; processing and storing the coming data to WATERBASE; country missions and EIONET workshop.

ETC/TE: Update statistics and data bases (CORINE Land cover by country, by watersheds and by biogeographic regions); creation of maps for pressures of the urbanization and transport infrastructure including the three countries for the Environmental Signals 2002 report; EIONET workshop.

ETC/ACC: Support to implement the data exchange tools for AQ (AQ-DEM) and air emissions (CORINAIR); data collection, processing and storing to AIRBASE; specific workshops and country visits.

ETC/NPB: Elaboration of fact sheets for the proposed species for the European Nature Information System (EUNIS); data launch and data gathering of information for the national protected areas and its inclusion into the Common Data Base of Designated Areas (CDDA); assistance to use the NATURA 2000/EMERALD software; EIONET topic workshop.

d) Support to national EIONET development; maintaining regular contacts and information flow with the national EIONET networks (per topic area)

One of the key roles of the ETCs is to help develop the national EIONET network for the respective topic in the EEA member and cooperating countries. Regular contacts with the countries and information flow were maintained through the NFPs and the NRCs. The ETCs were in permanent contact with the countries sending questionnaires for information collection, elaborating reports with comments from the countries, providing support through country visits on site focusing on the development of the European monitoring systems, the reporting system and data flows with EEA. Each topic centre organised an annual workshop where the three country participants were also present. Specific workshops also took place. The detailed activities are described in the ETCs final reports (see annexes 5-9).

Specific support to the national EIONET network was organized by the ETCs as follows:

ETC/WMF: 5th EIONET annual topic workshop on waste and material flows, held in Tallinn, 2002; Regional workshop for the Balkan countries on waste and material flows, held in Athens, November 2002; Joint workshop with Eurostat on the implementation of the Waste Statistics Regulation; Country visits to Croatia, F.Y.R. of Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in October 2002.

ETC/Water: Annual EIONET workshop on developing EEA priority data flows for transitional, coastal and marine waters, held in Oslo, September 2001; Annual EIONET workshop on priority data flows on Water, held in Athens, April 2002; Country visits to Bosnia-Herzegovina (July 2002 and October 2002), F.Y.R. of Macedonia (November 2002), Croatia (November 2002).

ETC/TE: Annual EIONET topic workshop held in Barcelona, March 2002.

ETC/ACC: 7th EIONET workshop on Air Quality Management and Assessments, held in Geneva, March 2002; 3rd EIONET workshop on Inventories and Projections of Air Emissions (air pollutants and greenhouse gases), held in Cordoba, May 2002; Country visits to Croatia (November 2002), F.Y.R. of Macedonia (December 2002) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (February 2003).



ETC/NPB: EIONET Annual topic workshop held in Budapest, October 2001; 2nd EIONET-NRC Seminar on Nature Protection and Biodiversity 'From dataflow to Biodiversity Indicators' held in Nice, October 2002; country visits Bosnia-Herzegovina (September 2002), F.Y.R. of Macedonia (March 2002), Croatia (November 2002).

In total there were 10 workshops attended by 27 country experts. There were 13 country visits attended by more than one hundred national experts. The ETC experts taking part in the direct support to the national EIONET were 16.

3.2 Development of the EIONET telematics network in Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia and its extension to Croatia

The setting up and maintaining the European Environmental Information and Observation Network (EIONET) is a major task of EEA. The EIONET telematics network is the basic communication infrastructure, which provides the tools for communications and information exchange within EIONET.

The EIONET telematics network, called now eEIONET (electronic EIONET), uses the latest information technology tools and is based on Internet connection.

The EIONET telematics network was expanded in 2000 to Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia through a Phare support project. The IT and ITTAG experts of Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia have been trained for system administration as well as the end users were trained in practical application and use of the network.

The current grant allowed to continue the development of the eEIONET in Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia and to extend it to Croatia.

The detailed final reports are attached as Annexes 11, 12 and 13.

The activities can be summarized as follows:

- a) Extend the EIONET telematic network to Croatia and provide system administration and user training

The expansion of the network followed the same specifications as the original EIONET telematics network and its extension to the Phare countries and followed similar development. The equipment and services provided took into account the existing national facilities ensuring their full integration. The expansion of the network was performed by Finsiel – the same company who designed the system configurations and expanded the EIONET telematics network to the 12 Phare countries and provided the system administrator and user training.



The following major work was done in this activity:

- Design of the system configuration and elaboration of the final shopping list with the NFP of Croatia. The final configuration was approved by Croatia before the purchase took place (Finsiel);
- Preparation with the NFP and IT expert in Croatia the facilities and preparations for installations; agreement on training agenda and configuration (Finsiel);
- Purchase and delivery of the equipment – this work was performed by NetCom Denmark who used the shopping list produced by Finsiel to purchase and deliver the equipment to the installation site in Croatia;
- Market research for Internet supplier in Croatia (Finsiel), tendering and contracting (EEA), installation of the Internet line with one year license (Iskon Internet, Croatia);
- Configuration, system installations, system set up and system acceptance tests (Finsiel);
- On-site system administrators and user training (Finsiel).

b) Helpdesk service

A dedicated helpdesk, for the three countries was established at the Finsiel premises. All requests for helpdesk were channelled through the EEA helpdesk (Network Management Centre - NMC) and then transferred to Finsiel in order to ensure the same procedure for all countries contacting the helpdesk. Finsiel elaborated a specific document for the helpdesk activities describing the approach and the procedure for the three countries. The document was used as guidelines for helpdesk by the countries. The work in this activity was to solve problems of the three countries in using the EIONET telematics equipment, including remote administration of the servers. Final goal was to ensure normal operation of the network.

c) Promote the use of the network, assist its application and development in the three countries

Within this activity Finsiel undertook two surveys: Inventory of the IT status and Website survey. The result of the first survey was useful for the harmonization of the IT technological tools used by EEA and the countries. It also produced a list of the main hardware/software used in the EIONET organizations in the three countries. The Web site survey covered only Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia because of the network not yet being expanded to Croatia. The results of the survey allowed making evaluation of the status of the EIONET servers, the EIONET Web sites and the tools used at the time of the survey. Further follow up of the initial surveys was the support to the countries to install the latest information exchange and communication tool CIRCA, which is regularly updated with new versions. Assistance was also provided for the development of the national EIONET servers in hosting environmental information, data exchange with EEA and development of national applications for environmental reporting.



3.3. Assistance to the three countries in participating to the main EEA reporting activities (Kiev Indicator based report)

EEA reporting is based on five-year cycle State of the Environment reports and interim Indicator based assessment reports. The two reports are key EEA products targeting the policy makers on European level, EEA member countries as well as the general public. The cycle of these reports provides a benchmark for the state of the environment as well as assessment of the integration of the environment into the sectors (transport, energy, agriculture, tourism, etc.). The reports are based on a European level set of indicators for the state of the environment. In order to produce the reports, a reporting network based on the national EIONET networks of organisations is developed. Furthermore, a regular data flow between EEA and the countries is established for the EEA needs of data for the reporting process. The three cooperating countries were not included into the yearly EEA Indicator based reports and five years SoE reports until now. The major reason is their focus on the EEA member countries. Thanks to the support of the current project, the work on development of indicators with the three countries started. It will be the bases for their inclusion into the future EEA main reports. Nevertheless, limited information from the three cooperating countries was already used in the production of the Environmental Signals Report 2002 (third EEA report based on indicators, see annex 15). The focus of the current task was to include, fully for the first time, the three countries in the pan-European Kiev Assessment report (enclosed as annex 1) published in 2003. This objective was fully met by providing dedicated support for the three countries, which covered the activities:

- Direct support to the countries to organize the data collection;
- Ensure the relevant socio-economic data;
- Support the development of the national reporting network;
- Assist reviewing and commenting of the drafts;
- Country missions;
- Direct support to the EEA reporting procedures.

Including the three cooperating countries in the EEA reports allows us to compare a wider set of European countries, EU member countries and non-EU member countries, EEA member countries and EEA cooperating countries, in a more harmonized way.

The work under this task in the countries and the direct country support was subcontracted to IEEP (Institute for European Environmental Policy). The detailed final report is enclosed as annex 14. The target was by using a senior consultant in the reporting to assist the three countries for full participation in the Kiev assessment report, their provision of the necessary information for the preparation of the report and last but not least to assist them in capacity building for environmental information management, particular in their relationships with the EEA. IEEP worked closely with EEA and the ETCs in the completion of the tasks.



The main activities were:

- Data collection phase;
 - Supporting the questionnaire exercise: distribution of questionnaires and guidelines, providing helpdesk support, progress control, follow-up.
 - Where necessary, by identifying data sources and collecting data sets needed to produce the indicators.
 - By collecting in co-operation with the NFP additional data that provide alternative figures for those requested by the questionnaires and making these available by translating and summarising them.
 - By appraising the difficulties encountered and needs in collecting and reporting data information, identifying the gaps.
 - By making available collected data to the relevant ETCs;
- Data processing phase; support to the EEA in:
 - Compile data in data base format to be entered in a data-warehouse, including appropriate meta-information
 - Undertake quality control of the data
 - Co-operate with teams working on data regarding the rest of Europe
 - Consistency checking;
- Data analysis review phase;
- Production of the draft report;
- Review of capacity assessment needs for environmental information management;
- Overview of the data;

The work of IEEP was roughly divided in four parts: 25 % spend in Bosnia-Herzegovina (3 missions), 25 % spend in Croatia (2 missions), 25 % spend in F.Y.R. of Macedonia (2 missions), and 25 % spend working on the report with EEA (3 missions).

The Kiev assessment report was coordinated and managed by EEA with the help of the ETCs. The EEA established the set of the fact sheets for the indicators production, the content of the report, the production of the report, the drafting and the commenting up to the final publication. The report was widely disseminated to all countries.

3.4. Support to the national experts of these countries to participate in the EEA major events

The EIONET network of organizations is one of the three instrumental pillars of EEA. It is the EEA counterpart for the work with the countries, from coordination of all activities with EEA through the organization of country data collection and

data deliveries to reporting. The EIONET network in Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia was established at the beginning of 1997 and extended to Croatia at the end of 2001 with the support from the current grant. Since the beginning of the current grant, the three cooperating countries have regularly participated in all major EEA events, annual topic workshops and annual EEA Management Board – Top executive meetings. The current grant provided support to preserve and continue the development of the EIONET network in the three Balkan countries and ensured experts participation in all regular EEA events during the project period. The extension of the EEA work programme and the ETCs work programmes to cover the three cooperating countries ensured similar development with the EEA member countries. 63 National Reference Centres (NRCs) and 3 NFPs are forming the three countries national EIONET network, in total 66 nominations. The NRCs are institutions among the Main Component Elements (MCEs) nominated by the country to work with EEA on specific topics and to coordinate the national activities in the topic area playing the role of contact point. The national EIONET network is very well developed in F.Y.R. of Macedonia, to less extend in Bosnia-Herzegovina (missing the official nominations of the NRCs although they exists and work), and it is starting in Croatia gradually extended.

The EIONET network list in the three countries is enclosed in this report as annex 10. It shows the role of the NRC and the nominated institution and expert.

The EIONET experts from the three cooperating countries participated in the following events funded by the current grant:

1. NFP/EIONET meeting – 1-3 October 2001 (EEA premises)
2. ITTAG/CDS annual meeting – 6-9 October 2001 (Thun, Switzerland)
3. Reporting meeting – 11-12 October 2001 (Brussels)
4. EEA MB – Phare top executives meeting – 28-29 November 2001 (EEA premises)
5. Environmental communication meeting – 3-4 December 2001 (Brussels)
6. NFP/EIONET meeting – January 2002 – (EEA premises)
7. Reporting meeting – 22 March 2002 (EEA premises)
8. EEA MB – Phare top executives meeting (EEA enlargement) - 16-17 May 2002
9. NFP/EIONET meeting – 28-30 May 2002 (EEA premises)
10. ITTAG/CDS annual meeting – 26-28 September 2002 (Vienna, Austria)
11. NFP/EIONET meeting – 7-9 October 2002 (EEA premises)
12. WGEM special session for the Kiev report – 28-29 November 2002 (Geneva, Switzerland)
13. Reporting meeting – 16-17 December 2002 (Helsinki, Finland)
14. NFP/EIONET meeting – 3-5 February 2003 (EEA premises)

The participation in the annual topic events was funded by the ETCs (see 3.1, c; 27 travels of national experts to ETC EIONET workshops and specific meetings)

The total number of travels of the country experts is therefore amounting to 63 of which 36 are highlighted in this project component.

3.5. Overall management and project coordination

The overall project management and coordination (including budget and administrative services) was provided by EEA directly in order to ensure the counterpart work and coordination. This work was covered from the resources from the current grant and additional resources from EEA core budget.

The EEA in-house support continued the work initiated by the Phare expert team working at EEA from 1996 until the end of 2001. It ensured inside EEA expertise on the particular areas and needs of the three cooperating countries following the EEA work programme. One EEA expert with secretarial support was working on the implementation of the grant ensuring the achievements of the objectives, reporting and payments. Many EEA Project Managers were working as well on the implementation of the different tasks and activities.

To coordinate the project activities, EEA staff (Project and Programme Managers) have participated in meetings with the countries in six events covered by the current grant:

1. EIONET workshop – 12-15 March 2002 (Barcelona)
2. Reporting meeting – 21-24 March 2002 (Hungary)
3. Meeting on waste – 17-21 June 2002 (Tallinn)
4. eEIONET conference – 26-28 September 2002 (Vienna)
5. ETC water management committee meeting – 16-20 October 2002
6. WGEM special session – 28-29 November 2002 (Geneva)



4. Conclusions

The EEA cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia was set up in 1997 financed by the Phare programme. The cooperation gradually developed and covered the major EEA activities financed separately from the EEA budget and coordinated by an external consultant team (EEA Phare Team) working at the EEA premises. At the end of the Phare programme support for the two cooperating countries, in 2000, there was a need for additional financial support in order to continue and develop the started cooperation with the two Balkan countries. The current grant was an in-time support, which helped to re-initiate the cooperation and develop it to broader integration into the EEA Work Programme and set up cooperation with a new country from the Balkan region - Croatia. The major target - the three cooperating country integration and enlarged EEA coverage – was completed successfully.

This grant agreement was the first one, which provided direct support to EEA for the work with the three cooperating countries. The project budget was distributed in the correspondent EEA budget lines according to the work to be done as defined in the Description of Operation (Annex I of the grant agreement) and the EEA projects as defined in the EEA work programme. The amounts from the grant were monitored separately following the project budget breakdown. The EEA financial procedures were used for the expenditures. The project was coordinated on the overall level by an EEA Project manager and managed on EEA Work Programme project level by the responsible EEA Project managers. Part time secretarial support was also provided. The project activities covered all seven EEA work programme areas: topic databases and reporting, integrated assessments, periodical reporting, reporting system support, service and network infrastructure, administration and management, strategic and institutional development.

The project activities started at the end of August 2001 and were completed 28 February 2003. All tasks started at the beginning of the project and were performed until the end. After the project end, a new grant from the CARDS programme is anticipated (2004-2006) in order to continue the work with the three cooperating countries. It is expected that the new grant will include also Albania and Serbia and Montenegro, and possibly Kosovo, in order to have the same approach and working procedure with all West Balkan cooperating countries. Thus the continuity with the former projects supporting the EEA cooperation with the Balkan countries will be ensured and continued without gaps aiming at full EEA membership of each of these countries in the future.

ETCs, as extensions of EEA, received a share of the assistance for part of the project activities for extending the geographical scope of their work covering the three cooperating countries (including the participation of the country experts to the related topic events and on site country visits to help development of the national EIONET networks, European monitoring systems and databases, and regular data flows). In that way the cooperating countries and the EEA member countries were addressed in the same uniform way.

External contractors have been used for the support of the EIONET telematics network extension to Croatia and support of the equipment in the three countries,



and the participation of the three countries in the Kiev pan-European assessment report.

The rest of the activities were performed by EEA staff, mainly project coordination and management to ensure continuity and harmonization. From the total budget of 699.820 MEuro from the grant, a total of EUR 595.567,13 has been used to develop the project, complete the project objectives and produce the outputs.

Fulfilling the objectives:

The main objective of this project:

‘Continuation of the EEA cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia and set up similar cooperation with Croatia, contributing to a successful integration of these three countries in the EEA work programme, and furthermore assisting their preparation for full EEA membership’ was fully achieved. The three cooperating countries were involved into the EEA reporting and fully covered in the Kiev pan-European assessment report. Furthermore, EEA extended its work on indicators towards the three countries that will allow including them into the next regular EEA Environmental Signals/Snapshots and SoE reports.

Each of the ETCs signed an agreement with EEA with technical specifications extending the coverage with the three countries, financed by this grant. All main tasks of the ETCs were extended, and the ETCs had different activities on specific support to maintain the data flows and to improve the selected stations for the European monitoring systems. All ETCs managed the tasks well and produced the required outputs.

The EEA Work Programme is now extended to cover the cooperating countries as well as the EEA work. EEA secretaries were in charge of the logistic activities in order to support the country experts’ participation in EEA regular events.

EEA staff from all EEA programme areas was largely involved in the work and the coordination and management of the different project activities. In order to coordinate project activities, EEA staff members participated in six different events with the three cooperating countries.

The EEA visibility was increased in the three countries by the work done, the country visits and the different events. Including the countries into the dissemination of materials and information contributed as well. Furthermore, the EEA and EIONET web sites were extended to include the three cooperating countries.

Since 1997 when the EIONET network in the Phare countries was established, Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia have regularly participated in all major EEA events, annual topic workshops and annual EEA Management Board – Phare top executive meetings. Croatia was taken on board after setting up the cooperation in the autumn of 2001. The three cooperating countries participated in various EEA events funded by the current grant. There were 28 different EEA workshops with a total of 63 participants from the three countries and 13 country visits attended by more than one hundred national experts.



The extension of the EEA work programme to cover the cooperating countries ensured harmonised development with the EEA member countries and integration of the EIONET network of organisations. 63 NRCs and 3 NFPs are forming the three countries EIONET network.

The extension of the EIONET telematics network to Croatia and the support to its development in the three cooperating countries included three major tasks on helpdesk services, wide dissemination of the best practice and assistance in the development of the national environmental Web sites. All EIONET servers were running and used for the data and information exchange with EEA as well as on national level applications.

Multiplier effects

The present project assisted the three countries in the cooperation with EEA process in developing a harmonized approach with the EEA full members. All activities developed with Bosnia-Herzegovina and F.Y.R. of Macedonia over the last years with the Phare programme support were continued and developed to regular activities of EEA and coverage in the EEA Work Programme. Similar development was followed by Croatia since the end of 2001. The national EIONET networks become EIONET partner at similar level as the EEA member countries'. The project was an invaluable bridging element between the lack of finances and slowing down activities to a harmonized cooperation with EEA similar to the member countries. None of the activities underway before the project start were discontinued but on the contrary - further developed and consolidated. At the same time none of the investments made by the Phare programme were lost but enhanced.

All activities developed in the project are expected to be continued following the anticipated three-year grant from the CARDS programme to cover the developments in 2004-2006. All national structures presently working with EEA will be consolidated and become an integral part of EIONET. Due to the multi-country nature of the assistance the ownership aspects stay with all recipients (the cooperating countries and EEA) on equal basis.

The outcome at the policy level is support to the starting stabilization and association process of the West Balkan countries in the priority area of environment. It also supports the environmental compliance process, and harmonization and integration of the monitoring and reporting systems on European level. The other dimension is assisted EU, EEA and the cooperating countries' policy makers with provision of timely and reliable information on the environment and future policy plans in the region contributing to the development of an enlarged EEA in the future.

Recommendation for future implementation

The application of the current grant through standardized EEA procedures and fully equalized approach with the EEA member countries was very helpful for the initial integration and harmonization of the activities with the cooperating countries. However, during the project development, it became clear that these



countries have different needs of assistance, especially of specific support in developing the cooperation with EEA. Therefore, it is recommended to include more direct country support in the next grants, as well as the work with the cooperating countries to be clearly specified in the technical annexes of the topic centres with concrete outputs per country. Using of consultants in the areas of reporting and telematics network proved to be of high value. The EEA financial and administrative procedures applied to the current grant, have to be considered more carefully because they introduce certain delay and inconvenience in using the funds due to the different life-time of the funds – EEA has annual budget approved by the Management Board, while the grants start and end at different time and are not linked to an yearly cycle, neither with the EEA budget. A Project Manager working full time is also of high importance and necessary not only for the implementation of the grant but also for the work with the countries and the direct support to them.

5. List of Annexes

1. Europe's environment: The third assessment (Environmental assessment report No. 10)
2. EIONET priority Data Flows 2002
3. The shAIR scenario; Towards air and climate change outlooks, integrated assessment methodologies and tools applied to air pollution and greenhouse gases (EEA Topic Report No. 12/2001)
4. Children's health and environment: A review of evidence. (Environmental issue report No. 29)
5. ETC Waste and Material Flows final report
6. ETC Water final report
7. ETC Terrestrial environment final report
8. ETC Air and climate change final report
9. ETC Nature Protection and Biodiversity final report
10. EIONET network in the three cooperating countries: list of NRC's
11. The EIONET telematics network and IT inventory support in the three cooperating countries – final report
12. Provision of Internet line for the EIONET telematics node in the Croatian Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, final report.
13. Provision of informatics services, service contract.
14. Assistance to Bosnia, Croatia and Macedonia for production of the Kiev report, final report.
15. Environmental Signals 2002, Environmental assessment report No. 9



6. Abbreviations

ACs =	10 Phare Candidate Countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania Slovak Republic and Slovenia)
AE =	Air Emission
AQ =	Air Quality
CDDA =	Common Data Base on Nationally Designated Areas
CDR =	Central Data Register
CDS =	Catalogue on Data Sources
CEC =	Communities of European Commission
CEECs =	Central and Eastern European countries
CIRCA =	Communication & Information Resource Centre Administrator
CoE =	Council of Europe
CORINE =	Coordination of information on the environment. A
DEM =	Data Exchange Module
EEA =	European Environment Agency
EFTA =	European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway)
EIONET =	European Environment Information and Observation Network
ETC =	European Topic Centre
ETC/ACC=	European Topic Centre on Air and Climate Change
ETC/NBP=	European Topic Centre on Nature Protection and Biodiversity
ETC/TE=	European Topic Centre on Terrestrial Environment
ETC/WMF =	European Topic Centre on Waste and Material Flows
EU =	European Union
EUNIS =	European Nature Information System
EUROSTAT =	The EU's Statistical office
FAO =	Food Agriculture Organisation
FYROM =	Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia
GIS =	Geographical Information Systems
IEA =	International Energy Agency
IEEP =	Institute for European Environment Policy
IR =	Inception Report
ITTAG =	Information Technology and Telematic Advisory Group
IW =	Inland Waters
JRC=	Joint Research Centre
LC =	Land Cover
MAWP =	Multi-Annual Work Programme
MB =	Management Board
MC =	Member Countries
MCE =	Main Component Element MS = Member States
NC =	Nature Conservation
NFP =	National Focal Point
NMC =	Network Management Centre
NRC =	National Reference Centre

OECD =	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
Phare candidate countries =	ACs (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia)
PM10 =	Particulate matter 10 programme proposed in 1985 by the European Commission, aimed at gathering information relating to the environment on certain priority topics for the European Union (land cover, coastal erosion, biotopes, etc.).
PTL =	Phare Topic Link
RS =	Remote Sensing
SoE =	State of Environment
TERM =	Transport and Environment Reporting Mechanism
TERRIS =	Geographical information system on terrestrial environment
ToR =	Terms of Reference
WGEM =	Working Group on Environmental Monitoring
WP =	Work Programme