



Task Force for Implementation of the  
Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme  
for South Eastern Europe  
(REReP Task Force)

Third meeting  
September 7<sup>th</sup> 2001, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Report of the Third REReP Task Force meeting**



These activities have been completed with the financial assistance of the European Community. The views expressed herein are those of REReP Task Force, and can therefore in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Community.

**3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the  
REReP Task Force, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2001.**

**Draft Meeting report**

Co- chairs      Mr. Jean-Francois Verstrynge (European Commission)  
                      Mr. Marjan Dodovski, (FYR of Macedonia), outgoing co-chair  
                      Mr. Mehmed Cero (Bosnia and Herzegovina), newly elected co-chair

The Task Force for Implementation of the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for South Eastern Europe (REReP) held its third meeting in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on September 7<sup>th</sup> 2001. Governmental and NGO representatives of all SEE countries, high officials of the European Commission, Stability Pact for SEE, more than 10 donor country agencies, international organisations and financing institutions took part in the event, see List of Participants.

## **1-2    Opening formalities**

Participants were welcomed by the hosts of the meeting **Mr. Dragan Mikerevic**, Minister for European Integration, **Mr. Boris Britvar**, Deputy Minister in the Federal Ministry for Physical Planning and Environment, and **Mr. Nedjo Djuric**, Minister of Urbanism, Housing, Communal Work, Construction and Ecology of Republika Srpska. The ministers expressed appreciation for the work done within the REReP process, presented key environmental problems and priority needs of their country, explained the ongoing efforts to address them, emphasised their commitment to the successful implementation of the REReP “Quick start” projects and to better protection of the environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ministers called for more active donor support for REReP.

In statements that followed, the co-chairs of the meeting Mr. Verstrynge and Mr. Dodovski congratulated the support of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the REReP process and encouraged the continuation of the ongoing work for solving the environmental problems. The Co-chair reconfirmed the commitment of the European Commission to the Programme, which at present is backed up with financial contribution. He emphasised the need for active cooperation of each SEE country with its neighbours, as well as the necessity to strengthen the links between the REReP and the Stabilisation and Association process in view of the developing political framework. The REReP offers the opportunity to SEE countries to meet their obligations on regional co-operation under the Stabilisation and Association Agreements. He highlighted the similarities in the environmental path being followed by the SEE countries and that taken by the candidate countries some years earlier and invited them to draw on the experience of the candidate countries.

Mr. Ronald Dreyer expressed the commitment of the Stability Pact (SP) to assist in sustaining the growth of the REReP initiative, as well as its satisfaction with the progress of the Programme and the Quick Start project package. He informed the participants earlier this year that the European Union had decided that the environment should be a priority in the SP work.

He emphasised REReP's importance as a cornerstone of the Stabilisation and Association Process. The international financial institutions should incorporate environmental concerns into the SEE investment projects.

Environmental projects and activities should be broadly integrated into other areas and initiatives of the Stability Pact. The SP office announced an informal brainstorming session to draft an environmental approach for SEE to be prepared before the regional Donor Conference in October 2001 in Bucharest, Romania. Only projects with firm donor commitment could be presented to this event.

The Task Force adopted the Draft Annotated Agenda of the Second Meeting (see document attached Annex I REReP/TF/2/a).

### **3. New chairmanship of REReP Task Force**

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia have expressed interest in taking over the chairmanship of REReP Task Force. Both countries have reached an agreement that Bosnia and Herzegovina will be the only candidate for REReP Task Force co-chairmanship over the next one-year period. Mr. Mehmed Cero was nominated as a candidate for new TF co-chair by the co-ordination body of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Task Force members elected Mr. Mehmed Cero as new SEE co-chair of the REReP Task Force.

The co-chairs thanked Mr. Toni Popovski, former Minister of Environment of FYR of Macedonia and former co-chair of the Task Force, for his valuable personal contribution to the success of REReP process.

### **4. Adoption of Meeting report from the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the REReP Task Force**

The members of REReP TF adopted the Meeting report from the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the REReP Task Force, held on November 9<sup>th</sup> 2001 in Brussels, Belgium.

### **5. Major developments since the 2<sup>nd</sup> REReP Task Force meeting**

Brief presentations were made on major developments in REReP process since the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the REReP Task Force in Brussels, Belgium, on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2000.

Mr. Ronald Dreyer reported on the Stability Pact Working Table II meetings. He emphasised the potential of REReP within the Stability Pact initiatives, and called for stronger SEE political support for the integration of environmental concerns into all reconstruction activities, as well as for using the environment as an important factor for the political stability in the region. He underlined the need for a coherent and complementary approach in all projects in order to achieve critical mass for positive changes in SEE.

The Task Force members agreed to support cross-connections between other Working Table initiatives and the REReP, as well as with all environmental activities in SEE.

The REReP Task Force members took note of the report of Ms. Jelena Beronja on the NGO Steering Committee meetings and activities, as well as on the establishment of South East European Environmental NGOs Network (SEEENN). The Task Force members congratulated the NGO community for the establishment of the network and for their participation in REReP implementation. The co-chair informed the meeting of progress in establishing community financial support for SEE NGOs

## **6. Review of the environmental reconstruction, development and cooperation in the region**

Representatives from each SEE country briefly presented new developments in the environmental reconstruction, development and cooperation in the region. They reported on establishment of new or strengthening of existing environmental institutions, drafting and adoption of new laws, new cross-border cooperation initiatives, exchange of experience with more advanced CEE countries, development or update of National Environmental Action Plans, common problems and needs especially in water and waste sector, cooperation with the NGOs, etc. The progress achieved since the previous TF meeting was an indication of the growing capacity of SEE countries to manage the process of environmental reconstruction of the region.

- The SEE countries were invited to make available to the REReP TF Secretariat details of all current projects that fit the scope of the REReP in order to include them in the list.

According to a request from the previous REReP TF meeting, Mr. Branko Bosnjakovic from UN/ECE presented the status of signing, acceding and ratification of international environmental conventions by the SEE countries. He underlined the need for better national co-ordination, capacity building and pilot projects to support the convention implementation. He called for donor contributions to enable more active SEE participation in the international environmental processes and the negotiations of new international legal instruments.

## **7. Review of REReP mechanism**

Mr. Andrew Murphy, European Commission, presented the discussion paper, intended to examine the REReP process and make recommendations for change two years after its initiation. The meeting then discussed the proposals and the paper was revised in the light of comments received.

- The Task Force then agreed to the proposals in the revised version of the document, (see Annex I REReP/TF/3/g) to streamline the REReP programme.

## **8. Progress to date in the REReP implementation**

The Co-Chairs and the Task Force members discussed the progress in ongoing projects and expressed satisfaction with the level of donor support, which currently exceeds 17 M EUR.

- The Co-chairs will send letters to Austria, Belgium, Greece, Sweden and the United Kingdom for possible contribution to REReP projects. The Secretariat will draft the letters.

With the Quick start phase now at an end, further finance will be provided using the usual instruments (IFI loans, bi-lateral programmes or community instruments such as ISPA, CARDS, LIFE -Third Countries etc.).

The Task Force strongly encouraged other donors to support those projects yet without funding, as the needs of the SEE region are immense.

United Nations Environment Programme and German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) presented details on the progress of those REReP projects for which they serve as implementing agencies.

For details on new donor commitments, expression of interest and actions needed on specific projects see Annex III, REReP projects review TF/3 and REReP/TF/3 financial status table.

#### **9. Closing remarks and miscellaneous. Date of the next meeting.**

- The Draft Meeting Report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> REReP Task Force, the updated funding status table and the revised version of the paper on the review of REReP mechanism will be presented at the forthcoming SP donor conference in Bucharest in October 2001.

The next REReP Task Force meeting will take place on 18 (p.m.) and 19th (a.m.) April 2002 in Brussels, Belgium.