



UNECE Weekly

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It's just happened ...

Legal empowerment of the poor



On 27 April UNECE held a meeting chaired by Leiv Lunde, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, to discuss progress so far and next steps needed to launch a High-level *Commission for the Legal Empowerment of the Poor*. The initiative has its roots in the Land for Development programme, which UNECE has facilitated over

the last three years. Participants at the Land for Development December 2004 Forum from 30 countries have endorsed a programme of work to be carried out at highest level to promote implementation of the Legal

Empowerment of the Poor Initiative. The work is intended to contribute to the achievement of the Poverty MDG by developing an evidence-based, action-oriented, practical Policy Reform Toolkit for policymakers. The UNECE secretariat is now engaged in the preparation of an official launch of the Commission and the mobilization of donor and other stakeholder support. To date the Norwegian Government and the UK Department for International Development have provided funding to support this work.

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Ammonia experts discuss good practices for reducing emissions from agriculture

The sixth meeting of the *Expert Group on Ammonia Abatement* (13-15 April, Segovia) discussed housing and feeding of cattle, pigs and chickens and manure management techniques to reduce ammonia emissions on farms. The agricultural sector is one of the greatest sources of ammonia in Europe. These emissions when deposited cause ecological effects – eutrophication (the effects of excess nitrogen) and, after oxidation of the ammonia, acidification. Ammonia emissions also contribute to the formation of fine particulates that can cause serious health problems. Parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution agreed to tackle the problem of ammonia when agreeing the 1999 Protocol

to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone. With the entry into force of the Protocol on 17 May, Parties are expected to initiate a protocol review when they meet in December. There will be calls for updated information on best practices in ammonia abatement, as well as putting forward new ceilings for ammonia emissions.



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Environmental Impact Assessment

Two bodies under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a Transboundary Context met recently.



The *Signatories to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment* (SEA) held their 2nd meeting on 25-26 April. Finland became the first Party to the Protocol on 18 April 2005 and the meeting discussed institutional and procedural issues of its entry into force. It considered a capacity-building needs analysis undertaken in five EECCA* countries in cooperation with UNDP within which pilot SEAs will be undertaken. A capacity-development Manual to support the practical implementation of the Protocol has been prepared in cooperation with the Regional Environment Centre for Central and Eastern Europe – a revised draft will soon be available on the Convention's website.

The *Working Group on EIA* began its 8th meeting, 27-29 April, with a workshop to exchange practical experience in the application of EIA for transboundary projects – involving the construction or operation of, for example, a road or a bridge, on both sides of an international border. The Central Asian countries have prepared guidance for the practical application of the Convention, and the South-east European countries will organize meetings to finalize a multilateral agreement to further implement it. Armenia and Ukraine also announced their readiness to host sub-regional workshops. The 10th anniversary of the Convention will be celebrated during the Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (September 2007, Belgrade).

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Not an official record - For information only

* Countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia

Air pollution modellers look to implement EMEP monitoring strategy

The 6th meeting of the Air Pollution Convention's *Task Force on Measurements and Modelling* (4-7 April, Zagreb) looked at the Convention's newly-adopted strategy to monitor air pollutants. Under the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) the monitoring strategy provides guidance for observing and measuring various atmospheric pollutants and sets standards regarding frequency of measurements and spatial distribution. Parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution are being encouraged to develop consistent monitoring strategies at national

level. The Task Force also considered the measurement and modelling of naturally emitted particles, such as those from wind-blown dust and sea salt. Fine particles, from both natural and man-made sources, will assume increasing importance under the Convention in future. A new Expert Group on Particulate Matter, led by Germany, will consider health problems associated with these pollutants and what measures might be taken to prevent their release.

For more information contact Brinda Wachs (brinda.wachs@unece.org).

Coming up soon ...

9-12 May Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods
 11-13 May Joint ECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on Quality of Work
 12-13 May ECE/AIECE Meeting on the Current Economic Situation in Europe and Short-term Prospects

Environmental Performance Review (EPR) of Tajikistan

The *Environmental Performance Review (EPR) of Tajikistan* presents the analysis and recommendations for the most pressing environmental issues of the country, one of the poorest in the region, that has been rebuilding its institutions and economy. In Tajikistan, the poor are particularly dependent on natural resources for their livelihood and are most affected by environmental imbalances. At the same time they often cause environmental degradation by conducting activities that are necessary for their survival (in particular, agriculture). The Government has begun to implement a number of steps to improve the environmental situation by strengthening environmental legislation and enforcing compliance. Considerable attention has been given to reducing poverty, raising the environmental awareness of the population, halting land degradation, and protecting biodiversity. However, in practice environmental protection still has a relatively low priority in governmental policies, and financing for environment both from domestic and external sources is insufficient. The Environment and Human Settlements Division is planning to launch the Review and its recommendations at a press conference in Dushanbe later this year when the Russian version of the publication is issued.

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Facts and figures:

Unemployment rate, total

South-east Europe and selected CIS countries
 (Per cent of civilian labour force, end of period)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
South-east Europe								
<i>Albania</i>	16.8	16.4	15.8	15.0	14.9	14.8	..	..
<i>Bosnia and Herzegovina</i> ^a	39.4	39.9	42.7	44.0	44.5	44.6	..	..
<i>Bulgaria</i>	16.6	19.9	17.0	12.7	13.4	12.0	11.0	11.9
<i>Croatia</i> ^b	17.0	16.3	14.4	14.5	..	13.8	..	..
<i>Romania</i>	6.9	6.5	8.0	6.8	8.9	7.7	7.6	8.1
<i>Serbia and Montenegro</i> ^c	12.6	12.9	13.8	15.2	..	..	..	..
<i>The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i> ^d	32.2	30.5	31.9	36.7	37.1	35.8	37.7	38.0
<i>Turkey</i>	6.3	10.4	11.0	10.3	12.4	9.3	9.5	10.0
CIS								
<i>Armenia</i>	10.9	9.8	9.1	9.8	9.8	9.3	9.1	9.0
<i>Azerbaijan</i>	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5
<i>Belarus</i>	2.1	2.3	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.4	2.2	1.9
<i>Georgia</i>	10.4	10.3	11.9	10.7	13.0	11.9	..	..
<i>Kazakhstan</i>	12.8	10.4	9.3	8.8	8.9	8.3	8.0	..
<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9
<i>Moldova</i>	8.5	7.3	6.8	7.9	..	..	..	..
<i>Russian Federation</i>	9.8	8.9	8.6	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.4	8.5
<i>Tajikistan</i>	3.0	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1
<i>Ukraine</i>	11.7	11.1	10.1	9.1	9.7	7.9	6.1	..

Source: UNECE Statistical Database, compiled from Eurostat, CISSC and national sources.

Note:

Non-italic - Labour force survey data according to ILO definitions;
 Italic - Registered unemployment.

^a Figures cover only the Bosnian-Croat Federation.

^b Average for the second half of the year for 2000-2003 and for the first half of the year for 2004.

^c Excluding Kosovo and Metohia.

Estimates for October of each year.

^d Estimates for April of each year for the period 2000-2003.

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