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**APPLICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS IN EASTERN EUROPE,
THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA**

Addendum 1

**WORK ON THE APPLICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL
INDICATORS IN UZBEKISTAN**

Transmitted by the delegation of Uzbekistan

1. At an international conference held in Kiev in May 2003, the ministers of the environment of 51 countries (including Uzbekistan) considered and approved a set of "Guidelines for the preparation of governmental reports on the state and protection of the environment".
2. The guidelines place special emphasis on selecting environmental indicators required to evaluate the state of the environment; using modern information technologies to prepare and distribute publications; drawing on the reports in developing environmental policy and adopting environmentally important decisions; facilitating public access to the material contained in the reports; and methods for assessing the reports after they have been published.
3. Elaborating environmental quality indicators for the Republic of Uzbekistan is a priority among environmental protection activities. Indicators should be selected on the basis of parameters for which series of observations are available for a period of 5 to 10 years. At the

same time, the methodology for calculating and measuring indicators, the frequency of observations and measurements, and other parameters, must be harmonized so that the results can be used in comparative analysis.

4. An international project entitled “Environmental indicators for monitoring the state of the environment in Uzbekistan” has been developed and is being implemented in the country. The project forms part of the Government of Uzbekistan’s “Atrof-Muhit” environmental protection programme, supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The main task of this project is to develop a system of environmental quality indicators on the basis of available international and national experience, with a view to improving the system for monitoring specific environmental parameters, which will help coordinate the data collection efforts of various governmental and non-governmental organizations; to classify the indicators; and to define a procedure for their development and use.

5. Experience in and recommendations from individual countries and international organizations were taken into account when developing the environmental indicators for Uzbekistan. The indicators were mostly selected on the basis of the criteria used by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and European Environment Agency (EEA) experts for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA), namely:

- (a) Relevance to national environmental priorities;
- (b) Relation to international environmental policy;
- (c) Measurability;
- (d) Availability of time series;
- (e) Predictive ability: capacity to track the effectiveness of pursued environmental policy;
- (f) Role as a means of communication for public awareness;
- (g) Reliability.

6. On the basis of the conditions and requirements of the project, taking into account available international experience and the information received from the Uzbekistan Hydrometeorological Service, the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Management, the Ministry of Health, the State Committee on Geology and Mineral Resources, the State Committee on Statistics, the State Committee on Nature Protection, the Botanical Institute of the Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Zoology of the Academy of Sciences, the Central Forestry Administration, the State Committee on Land Resources and the Biological Control Department, 91 indicators have been selected, 68 of them from the international list recommended to the EECCA countries, and 23 indicators which characterize conditions specific to Uzbekistan.

7. The selected indicators were grouped in accordance with the following environmental priorities and sectors of the economy:

Air pollution	20
Water resources	25
Land resources	14
Biodiversity	8
Waste	9
Climate change	6
Energy	4

8. Taking into account the specific conditions characteristic of Uzbekistan, two more sections, related to the Aral Sea and the health of the population, have been included in the list of indicators:

Aral Sea	2
Health of the population	5

9. Guidelines for monitoring the selected environmental indicators have now been prepared and include a description of each indicator used, in accordance with the following outline:

1. General description

- (a) Code/subcode
- (b) Brief definition
- (c) Unit of measurement
- (d) Priority.

2. Environmental policy relevance

- (a) Purpose and usefulness in decision-making
- (b) International agreements in the area
- (c) International and national targets, standards and guidelines in the area.

10. Starting dates for the application of each indicator, agreed with potential users, have been proposed, and ranked as follows:

- Short-term, to be introduced in 2005;
- Medium-term, to be introduced in 2007-2008;
- Long-term, to be introduced after 2010.

11. The selected environmental indicators can serve as the basis for evaluating the state of the environment in Uzbekistan; improving the monitoring system and streamlining indicators for conducting observations in the environmental monitoring system; preparing national reports on the state and protection of the environment, taking into account available global experience and international standards; and elaborating environmental policy and adopting decisions.

12. A series of organizational, financial and methodological difficulties arose in the implementation of the project. These problems include:

- A low level of demand for environmental information for use in taking administrative decisions and defining an economic development strategy;
- The descriptive nature of the environmental assessment and insufficient comparison between the state of the environment, environmental loads and the measures being adopted;
- The large volume of minor and secondary indicators used;
- A lack of financial resources to complete work on the project in order to conclude, publish and widely distribute the “Guidelines for the application of environmental indicators for monitoring the state of the environment in Uzbekistan” and prepare, on the basis of this document, a national report on the state and protection of the environment.

13. In order to further incorporate the indicators into environmental reporting by the EECCA countries, we suggest developing “Environmental signals” on the basis of the indicators selected for individual regions (for example, Central Asia), which would make it possible for the EECCA countries to standardize reporting and prepare for the “Belgrade assessment”.
