



## Strengthening of the Environmental Monitoring System in Albania (StEMA)

### **Beneficiaries:** (in ALBANIAN)

Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration (MoEFW) of Albania and related institutions.

### **Background:**

The Albanian Environmental Monitoring System (EMS) was assessed in 2002 as part of the UNDP projects "Environmental Performance Review of Albania". This assessment concluded i.e. that the EMS and related program are suffering from the following shortcomings:

- Weak implementation and anchoring of the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) and the National Program of Environmental Monitoring (NPEM)
- Isolation of the institutional staff from modern know-how, which results: in out-dated (obsolete) choice of methods, no (or very poor and fragmented) measuring of output quality, superfluous tests and sub-optimised investigations
- Poor status of facilities and equipment, and poor safety conditions
- A financial set-up that results in: lack (or bad quality) of reagents and consumables; large, expensive pieces of equipment that are defective, unused or underused; reports encountering results with poor anchoring in tests
- A legal framework that supports measurements that have limited use, is not well-aligned with EU legislation for monitoring, gives duplicate and are incomplete with respect to the set-up of a modern environmental monitoring system
- A public relation status that does not support to a reasonable extend the work of the MoEFW.

With the present situation in Albania, it is recommended to strengthening the existing structure with only minor changes, but more shift and strengthen the responsibilities at different level of responsibility. Especially it is recommended to maintain the system with environmental units in each of the 12 regions, and to form a unit, directly under the MoEFW, responsible for the practical implementation and Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) of the Environmental Monitoring System.

### **Global and specific objectives:**

The global objective of the assignment is improvement of the quality of environment due to increased capacity to monitor and formulate policies and measures to prevent environmental degradation and pollution.

The project will include the establishment of the above mentioned unit as a National Environmental Reference Center (NERC) and the initial plans for centralisation of the services through selection and upgrading of institutions that proved to be the most competent on data quality and efficiency for selected services.

The specific *objectives* of this assignment are to:

- Establishment and consolidation of an updated and effective environmental monitoring system capable of tracking the status of environment by using the environmental norms and directives of the European Union as general reference guidelines.
- Improvement of the data quality through the development of an up-to-date, cost-effective and sustainable integrated environmental monitoring system according to the standards of EEA and other relevant European institutions.



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The present project will undertake the necessarily *activities* to achieve the mission results:

- Establish a database of point and diffuse sources of water and air pollution and water uses in Albania, and perform a prioritization (including a economic analysis) and identification of the set of monitoring measures
- Establish an integrated national environmental monitoring system for Albania by setting up monitoring stations nationwide, covering the fields of (a) spatial monitoring of pollution sources of air and water compartments, (b) time trend monitoring of chemical and microbiological parameters, biological quality elements and biodiversity
- Develop an integrated information management system compatible with the GIS-based system in the MoEFW consisting of independent web-based GIS-databases covering the monitored parameters
- Establish a monitoring network of institutions capable of enforce and strengthening the environmental monitoring system in line with the requirements of the EU
- Improve the capacity of the monitoring system for sampling, measurements, data processing/storage, supply and management of information through the provision of necessary equipment, manual of procedures on monitoring and appropriate training of the involved staff
- Update National legislation in the field of air and water monitoring in line with the respective EC Directives
- Assist in Certification and accreditation at national level of the main institutions and laboratories (identified to be of national reference) involved in the monitoring network for the chosen parameters
- Together with the members of the monitoring network complete the first round(s) of monitoring, covering the major environmental compartments and fields.

Expected *results* of the project:

- Establishment of a NERC with certified and accredited institutions and/or laboratories at national level, to be capable and fully responsible for monitoring of the environment, as well as to coordinate other activities related to environmental protection and preservation in Albania-to include (i)the installation and putting into operation of several monitoring stations and up to date equipment as well as (ii)training of local staff to use the new equipments and new StEMA approach, so that Albania can report to EEA certified environmental data and indicators of the same quality as other EU countries do-what will mark the Integration of Albanian Environment Monitoring System (EMS) into EU EMS
- Establishment of a Integrated Environmental Monitoring System in line with the respective EC Directives, covering the whole territory of Albania
- Establishment of a environmental databank with certified information produced by monitoring of major environment compartments
- Anchoring of the IEMS by implementation of the first monitoring campaigns together with the NERC, following new and improved methodologies in line with EU requirements
- Enhanced awareness within the Albanian public and all Albanian stakeholders and institutions (from NGO to line Ministries) for the importance of environmental protection

The above activities will be carried out in close corporation with the beneficiaries, in first row the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Water Administration. The MoEFW will establish an advisory Steering Committee comprising all major project stakeholders including the Project Beneficiaries, EC Delegation and representatives of other organizations/projects whose activities are directly relevant to the project.

### Time frame:

This assignment will last 30 months, from December 5, 2005 to June 5, 2008.