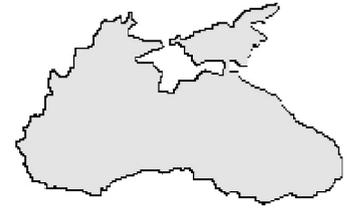


Black Sea Shared

Regional environmental NGO newsletter for the Black Sea



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Crises and concerns

The war in Iraq overshadowed and drove out of the news headlines a major environmental event the Third World Water Forum. That was very unfortunate as the participants had a clear message to mankind: fresh water is becoming so scarce that the world nations may soon be waging wars for control over its distribution. Besides the crisis in Iraq is unique in a sense that it illustrates the devastating effect of the oil and water conflicts brought together.

When oil wells in Central Iraq were set on fire observers commented that environment was the first 'casualty' of war. The results of the 700 Kuwaiti oil wells set on fire at the end of the Gulf War are still felt in the region. The impact of the use of chemical and biological arms can only be guessed at. And under Saddam in Iraq, environmentalists widely criticize schemes to drain marshlands at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, displacing hundreds of thousands of Marsh Arabs and causing partial desertification. With water so scarce in the region perhaps in a few decades wars for control over new territories and ethnic wars will be replaced by wars for control over water resources.

(BSNN)

World Water Forum

Close to 24 thousand government officials and representatives of international and non-governmental organizations, industry and water experts came together in Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka between March 16 and 23, to discuss the world water crisis and its solutions. Trying to break away from tradition, the organizers have asked the participants not to discuss issues, but describe real actions they have already taken and make real commitments to future actions. The situation with fresh water resources was viewed as extremely critical: a possible cause for future wars. About 300 potential water conflict zones have been identified by the UN. Good governance, effective management and equity in the access to fresh water of all segments of society were viewed as key issues, as well as building from bottom up a watchdog system involving independent parties to monitor the existing situation and the progress which is being made.

The conclusions are in line with the recent UN water report issued March 5, 2003. This crisis is one of water governance, essentially caused by the ways in which we mismanage water, the report says. The 23 UN agencies that

In this issue

- *Crises and concerns*
- *World Water Forum*
- *Oil vs. renewable energy*
- *Black Sea technical report*
- *NGOs criticise EBRD*
- *Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline*
- *Ornithological congress*
- *Marine conference*
- *New directory on BSERP site*
- *SBRGS: tradition in NGO work*
- *Introduction: KADOS*
- *Summer Maritime Academy 2003*

contributed to the World Water Development Report, "Water for People, Water for Life" together constitute the World Water Assessment Programme whose secretariat is hosted by UNESCO. More information and water related statistics at www.waterday2003.org (*Environment News Service*)

Oil vs. renewable energy

The World Wind Energy Association (WWEA) issued a press release on March 18, stressing that the world economy

does not need Iraqi oil but wider use of renewable energy. In the strongly worded document WWEA points out that one main aim of this war is to enable the industrialized countries to get the huge oil resources of Iraq under control. Such strategy, however, ignores the big threats of the existing world energy system that excludes hundreds of millions from welfare and creates enormous ecological, economic and political tensions and damages. Renewable energy resources are the only realistic alternatives offering sufficient, safe and clean energy supply for all parts of the world. These resources are not concentrated in few world regions, but they are available everywhere. The world community must now start serious efforts to mobilize these renewable resources by creating the necessary political commitments. One very important step will be the foundation of an International Agency for Renewable Energy IRENA. The Iraq crisis shows clearly that the world community must not rely any longer on fossil resources that again lead to severe military conflicts and also harm the global environment and climate. (WWEA)

Black Sea technical report

"The Rivers of the Black Sea", technical report No 71, prepared by: Shalva Jaoshvili, editors: Professor I. Khomerki, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor G. Gigineishvili, Doctor of river

Geographical Sciences, Professor A. Kordzadze, Doctor of Physics and Mathematical Sciences was published in English and Russian as a contribution to cooperation between EEA and the Black Sea Commission. Intended for Black Sea researchers the report presents the results of a study of the discharge of river water and river sediment load into the Black Sea. The volume of river water and load is investigated by individual rivers, by region and in total over the whole area. (European Environment Agency) http://reports.eea.eu.int/technical_report_2002_71/en



NGOs criticise EBRD

The new version of the environmental policy paper of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, a major investor in the CIS, came under public scrutiny at a seminar held in Moscow on 21 January 2003. Representatives of environmental

NGOs leveled strong criticism at the lack of transparency of EBRD projects, many of which have strong negative impact on the environment. The participants insisted on further improvement of the procedures for public consultation and environmental impact assessment and expressed dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the Environmental Consultative Council. They put special emphasis on the free access to important environmental information about sensitive projects, among them the construction of handling facilities for liquid chemical cargoes at the Azov seaport threatening the ecological balance of the fish rich Azov Sea and the ammonia handling facilities at the Taman Peninsula in the Black Sea. (Russian NGO Press release)

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline

Despite a protest by WWF, the operator of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, British Petroleum (BP) does not intend to alter the oil pipeline route. According to Mr. Tausand, Vice President of the company the route is final. The company presented to the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Georgia its plan of control measures over the section, crossing the Borjomi gorge. We have prepared our plan together with the Ministry of Environment Protection and I think that they agree with us, Tausand said. WWF has prepared a report, in which it expresses concern over

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline crossing the Borjomi gorge. The length of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline on Georgian territory equals 248 km. The construction in Georgia will start in April in Tsalka (South Georgia) and is to be completed in early 2005. The company has already started purchasing land from over 339 land owners. The population of Georgia will receive 12-13 million USD as compensation. (Interpress)

Ornithological congress

Over 50 leading ornithologists from Ukraine took part in the XXIII congress of the Azov and Black Sea Ornithology Union in Mykolaiv, February 21-23, 2003. The forum was highly attended by scientists and representatives of public nature protection organisations. At the congress were presented reports and reviews on problems covering: monitoring of nesting, migrating and wintering birds; prohibition of spring hunting in Ukraine; scientific cooperation on bird monitoring (migration, nesting, wintering) within the wetlands and the adjoining territories of the Azov and Black Sea region. Special attention was given to the scientific estimation and review of the publication of Wetlands International "Directory of the Azov and Black Sea Coastal Wetlands, 2002". The congress discussed a number of wetland related environmental issues suggesting possible solutions. (RBSNPO)

Marine conference

The Institute of Oceanology in Varna, Bulgaria, is organising a conference on scientific policy challenges towards effective management of the marine environment, to take place from 13 to 18 October. The event has been initiated by the EU supported CESUM-BS project. Funded under the Fifth Framework Programme's international cooperation programme,



the project aims to provide a 'tool box' of measures for sustainable development and management of the Black Sea region, while harmonising regional regulations with those of the EU. The conference will be followed by a forum on the 'global monitoring for environment and security' (GMES) initiative. (CESUM)

New directory on BSERP site

New Public Participation Directory has been activated on the BSERP web site at www.blacksea-environment.org/text/default.htm, providing yet another opportunity

for communication and update of information on Black Sea issues. Interested NGOs can join a forum for discussion on the site. (BSERP)

SBRGS: tradition in NGO work

One of the oldest established non-governmental organizations in the network is the Sochi Branch of the Russian Geographical Society (SBRGS) with its 210 members, 26 of them scientists, and 35 volunteers. The society has several sections, covering local culture and history, science (together with marine club 'Alexandria'), tourism and education. The SBRGS has its own library with 7000 items, archives and geological museum. Work for the society is mainly voluntary and the membership fee is a token sum the equivalent of 2 dollars annually.

SBRGS implemented several important projects, among them making an inventory of the flora in the Sochi coastal area for the Red Book of Sochi. In the process of work the participants prepared a display of 3000 dried plant species and are currently working on a similar display of seaweed and algae from the Black Sea.

Another project involved the description of nature landmarks. The participants compiled detailed descriptions of the 12 most renowned local protected areas, primarily in the coastal zone of Sochi, famous for the endemic Pitzunda pine species,

maritime flora of the surf area etc.

The environmental expert statement entitled 'Town planning environmental concept of the development of the mountain and climatic resort Krasnaya Poliana' was produced by the society. That revealed the absence of true environmental protection in the town planning documents. The concept is now being improved.

The SBRGS was instrumental in the establishment of protected conservation zones in the coastal Imeritine lowlands, the only surviving Colchis wetlands on Russian territory, a stop on the flight route of migrating birds with unique local flora and fauna. So far society activists have managed to prevent the construction of a cargo port in the region of the wetlands but they realize the zones need full inventory and identification descriptions and protection from pollution and construction activities. (SBRGS)

Introduction: KADOS

The Istanbul based Kadiköyü Friends of Science Culture and Art Association (KADOS) is a voluntary organization providing a platform for establishing communication channels between citizens. The founding committee of KADOS made of scientists,



engineers, artists, writers, architects and students has extensive experience with NGOs. The objectives of the association are oriented both to the environment and culture.

The local activities of KADOS are series of meetings of scientists and artists with the citizens, seminars for primary school students and their teachers on renewable energy technologies and the social cost of human activities, workshops about NGO capacity building, social interaction between citizens, networking with other environmental NGO's and networks. KADOS was an accredited association for the Johannesburg Earth Summit. The Chairman of the Executive Committee of KADOS has taken active part in EuroMed civil forums held in Stuttgart and Marseilles.

International Networks, which KADOS participates in and cooperates with, are: MARE-Mediterranean Social-Ecological Youth Network, Black Sea NGO Network, SAN-South Access Network. (KADOS)

Summer Marine Academy 2003

For the fourth year running the youth club Friends of the Sea, Varna, Bulgaria will hold its Summer Marine Academy for training young people in seagoing and marine skills. This year's project is funded under the PHARE-Access 2000 grant of the European Commission. Support

was also provided by Vointech Co, Varna naval base, some private businesses. The chairwoman Ms Darina Ivanova explained that the target group for this year's vocational training consists of 30 boys from coastal places like Varna, Byala, Kavarna and Shabla. The young men are either orphans or come from families in difficult material circumstances that have no financial opportunity to support them. The boys will be trained to become skippers of small vessels up to 20gt and divers. After completing the course they can be employed in fishing, marine repair companies or the navy. 'Nearly all of them get their certificates. The certificates are international and give opportunity for further qualification and employment', Ms Ivanova explained. 'Usually the participants are well motivated and enjoy the theoretical classes and practice held by certified instructors'. The navy has employed a few of the former trainees as professional seamen and divers. (Friends of the Sea)

Newsletter of the Black Sea NGO Network

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