



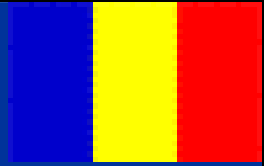
Romania

United Nations Development Programme

Newsletter

Issue #9
12-13 May

2005



Reducing Environment and Security Risks from Mining in South Eastern Europe and Tisza River Basin

The Sub-Regional Conference “Reducing Environment and Security Risks from Mining in South Eastern Europe and the Tisza River Basin” was held on 12-14 May 2005 in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and United Nations Development Programme Romania (UNDP) organized it jointly under the leadership of EnvSec. The high level panel was attended by Mrs. Sulfina Barbu, Mr. Miklos Persanyi, Environment Ministers of Romania and Hungary respectively, Mr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP, Nairobi, Kenya and Mrs. Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative. More than 80 participants from SEE countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, UNMIK, Romania and Serbia & Montenegro) in the region attended the event along with a huge presence of national and international media.

EnvSec is a collaboration between UNEP, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), UNDP and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The initiative is aimed at providing a framework for co-operation on environmental issues across borders, promoting peace and stability through sustainable development. It is structured in three distinct but interlinked pillars, dealing with: 1. Vulnerability assessment and monitoring; 2. Capacity building and institutional development; 3. Policy development and implementation.

Apart from presenting the progress since the last EnvSec meeting in Skopje, Macedonia, the Conference in Romania introduced a number of reports prepared by UNEP, including: “Desk Assessment on Reducing Environment and Security Risks from Mining in South Eastern Europe” and “Rapid Environmental Assessment on the Tisza River Basin”. Pollution from mines and related industries has been pinpointed by countries in South Eastern Europe and the Tisza River Basin as one of the biggest environment and security threats. A report from EnvSec group “Mining for Closure” argues that pollution of water, emanating from toxic mines wastes or ‘tailings’, is among the overriding issues countries need to address. The report also identifies why mining in the region has become such a big issue.



Rosia Poeni Copper Mine

“Unfortunately past practices have left a legacy that can no longer be ignored if we are to improve stability both within and between countries. I hope the declaration from this important conference, so ably organized by the Government of Romania, will now finally close this less than sparkling chapter and open a new cleaner, more prosperous and more secure one for the region and its people,” said Under Secretary General, Mr. Toepfer.

The Conference concluded with a consensus on the strategy to reduce the environmental risks of mining in Eastern Europe to be adopted by the governments. Ministers and officials of all the countries in the region agreed to lead detailed assessments of sites whose continued operation has become a source of pollution and tension in an already volatile part of the world. Mr. Toepfer said “We now have a firm commitment from countries in this region to tackle the real and genuine threat from mining and related industries. I hope this commitment will be matched by support from governments outside the region, bodies like the European Commission, industry and others, so that we can put mining in this region on a sustainable track”.

For more information please contact environment@undp.ro



High Level Panel



Participants