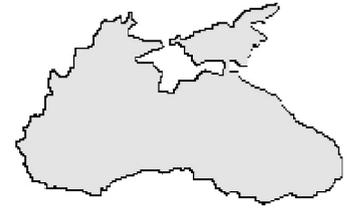


# *Black Sea Shared*

*Regional environmental NGO newsletter for the Black Sea*



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## **Strategic partnership**

The process of regional cooperation in the wider Black Sea basin has been encouraging over 2003. The implementation of two capacity building projects for the Danube and Black Sea, supported by GEF-UNDP, created more activities aimed at remedying the very acute problems of the two related water bodies. All too often they are the final destination of wastewater disposal.

The Danube today is heavily affected by pollution from agriculture, industry and cities. The pollution ends up in the Black Sea affecting a very large area. This is why the EU, along with the international financial institutions, is striving to make the countries of the region work closer together and has stepped up its own involvement in improving the state of environment in the region. With the endorsement of the Strategic Partnership Approach for the wider Black Sea basin by the GEF common strategic goals were set. With phase I of the Black Sea Ecosystem Recovery Project coming to an end in a couple of months it is time to assess results and impacts in view of the future. Stakeholders including the NGO community are in a process of assessment of their own achievements. (BSNN)

## **IBSD 2003 in Mikolayiv**

For marking the International Day of Black Sea the RBSNPO of Mikolayiv, Ukraine carried out actions entitled 'Clean coast' on sites of beaches of Black Sea in Regional Landscape Parks "Kinburn Spit" and "Tiligul". Such traditional activities consist of information and field activities e.g. informing the public on the state of the Black Sea, Dnieper-Bug and Tiligul Estuaries, a quiz 'What do you know about the Black Sea' with prizes and cleaning of beaches. RBSNPO also held a round table for representative of local authority, business, public organizations, and mass media on October 28. The participants discussed the implementation of the Black Sea Strategic Action Plan, Pan-Ukrainian Program of Restoration and Protection of the Azov and Black Seas. In Mikolayiv State University was organized a Week of the Black Sea. Pan-Ukrainian conference of young scientists 'Conservation of a Biodiversity as a Key Element of Sustainable Development: Regional Aspect' was held on October 30. Competition for mass media 'Let's protect the Black Sea together' was held. New thematic editions such as the directories, booklets, posters were disseminated during all actions.

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## **In Memoriam**

Galina G. Kuzminskaya, distinguished Russian oceanologist and chairperson of the Sochi Branch of the Russian Geographic Society, died this October after six months of illness. The regional scientific community and organized civil society have lost an invaluable fellow member and merited public figure. The Black Sea was the object of study and great concern for G. Kuzminskaya who is well known for her scientific achievements and numerous articles. The tenth revised edition of her famous book 'The Black Sea' - first published in 1960 and having sold over one million copies - is under preparation. We all deeply grieve for her passing. (BSNN)

Institute of Ecology, South Branch issued a collection of materials of the scientific - practical conference devoted to the 10-anniversary of the establishment of Regional Landscape Park "Kinburn Spit". Projects "Formation of an ecological network of the Mikolayiv Region, development of the appropriate program" and "Delimitation of wetlands of international importance Yagorlik Bay and Tiligul Estuary" are executed. Within the framework of project BSERP the project "Promote Cost-effective water treatment facilities for small coastal communities in Ukraine" was executed. (*RBSNPO*)

### October 31 in Russia

The seventh anniversary of IBSD was marked in Taganrog, Russia by a students' scientific conference entitled 'Environmental Problems of the Azov Sea'. The event attended by over 200 participants was organised by the student scientific society and the department of chemistry and environmental studies at the technical university. Younger school children organized a theatrical performance 'By the most blue sea'. Representatives of the environmental authorities and public organisations gave accounts of their activities related to the specific problems of the Azov Sea and improvement of water quality in the Taganrog Bay. The celebrations ended with award ceremony for prize-winners in competitions and quizzes. (*Sailing Academy*)

### Regional NGO workshop

The BSNN organised regional workshop of Black Sea NGOs was held in Varna, Bulgaria 13 – 15 November 2003. The event was entitled 'GEF-UNDP Black Sea Ecosystem Recovery Project: Regional NGO collaboration on Black Sea Environmental Issues'. Participants from the littoral countries exchanged information on the overall project implementation and their own small grants projects. They shared experience and ideas outlining problems and voicing expectations for the second



phase of BSERP Small Grants Programme. The BSNN adopted an appeal to the Black Sea Commission (BSC) reconfirming commitment to the BS-SAP and support to the BSC activities. In the appeal the BSNN declared readiness to be involved on regional and local level in the management of BSERP SGP II including the establishment of criteria of eligibility and assessment, weighting, project monitoring including financial monitoring and ex post evaluation of results

and impact. If requested the BSNN can develop a procedure for the second phase of small grants.

The participants agreed that a clear and project-oriented strategy for the BSERP SGP II would be very helpful as groundwork for the call. Participants also agreed that they should: start working actively toward collecting information about ongoing projects and littoral laws to create a benchmark; work more closely with advisory groups and activity centers and provide list of laws for future harmonization and compliance; be more active as policy makers and observers on national and regional level and learn from experience; create a benchmark of stakeholders to enhance better cooperation with them; develop forms and methods to improve environmental education on regional biodiversity and nature conservation, even if possible propose in a consortium for small grants; provide support to PS of BSC as coordinator of ACCOBAMS ; strengthen capacity to fundraise and discuss creation of Black Sea information centres with in-kind input from municipalities and other governments.

The workshop provided an answer to the question what can NGOs and BSNN do in the second phase of the small grants programme. The types of projects were technically divided into two specific groups technical such as management of wetlands, afforestation, protected areas and influencing the policy process,

such as public participation, advocacy, information, education. In terms of percentage of the grants the suggestion is that 40 % should be allocated to technical projects, 30% to education and 40% to specific projects for influencing policy. Weighting for each category can also be provided. The participants agreed to establish a regional expert group on advocacy issues. (BSNN)

### Prestige anniversary

Marking the anniversary of the Prestige oil disaster in Spain, the European Union on Friday, November 14, 2003 published an international list of ships banned from its waters and another of vessels receiving a final safety warning. Ten ships were banned and 143 that will be if they do not improve safety. The EU's executive commission also warned the 15 member states to provide full contingency plans for ship disasters or face legal action after a February deadline. Under the rules, said Loyola di Palacio, the EU's transportation commissioner, disasters like the sinking of the Prestige last year and the Erica in 1999 will be less likely. Last year, the 26-year-old Prestige tanker sank off Spain and disgorged most of its 77,000 metric tons of fuel oil onto the beaches of Northern Spain and France. In 1999, the single-hulled tanker Erika sank off the Atlantic coast of France after breaking in two and spilled 10,000 metric tons of crude oil across French beaches. Of the vessels given a last warning, Turkey tops the list,

with 41 ships. The European Union is phasing in restrictions on single-hulled oil tankers, which face a total ban starting in 2010. All single-hulled tankers over 23 years old are already forbidden. (EU news)

### Elections in Georgia

Despite that new measures were in place to help fight against fraud, the parliamentary elections in Georgia on November 2, 2003 still fell short of international standards. Confusion over timelines and registered voter lists complicated procedures. With no single candidate, though the factioned



opposition to President Shevardnadze's party, For a New Georgia, took, as a whole the majority of votes. The Opposition has finally come together to hold protests, upwards of 10,000 people, to decry what they see as voter fraud. People are angry over the conditions of Georgia's economy and what seem to be hollow promises by President Shevardnadze and his bloc. What makes this election very important is those elected will have a good chance at the presidency which

Shevardnadze is expected to step down from in the next presidential elections in 2005. (*International media*)

### Bulgarian local elections

Voter turn out this year was at a record low 39 percent in Bulgaria where municipal elections were held on October 25 and November 3. The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), the former communist party, failed to do as well as it appeared in early accounts. In the 236 municipal councils involved in the elections the BSP won about a third of the seats. A second round of elections were held in the two largest key cities of Bulgaria, Sofia and Plovdiv, where no candidate had been able to grab a majority of the votes. Both current mayors for Sofia and Plovdiv, from the Union of Free Democrats and the Union of Democratic Forces respectively, won the runoffs against candidates from the BSP. (BTA, Sofia echo)

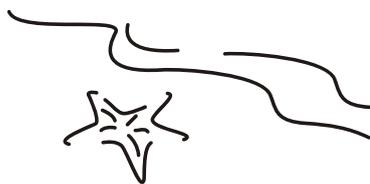
### Disputed island

After the talks in Kiev between foreign ministers of Ukraine and Russia on October 30, debate will continue over the ownership of Tuzla island in the Kerch Strait. While work has been suspended on the controversial dam being built by Russia close to the island, Russians blame Ukraine with not removing their border guards as promised. Ukraine states that they were merely going to look

into the matter of troop removal. It is not so much a question of who owns the island (that up until 1925 was connected to Russia) but that with the island goes control of the strait. For the moment all non-Ukrainian ships must pay service fees though the majority of such ships are Russian or headed for Russian ports. Both countries have expressed a will to use military might but are working towards a peaceful resolution. (*Interfax*)

## Diplomatic note

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry has sent a diplomatic note to the Russian Foreign Ministry asking for an explanation of the situation surrounding the construction of the much disputed EBRD-financed project of the TogliattiAzot ammonia terminal on the Taman Peninsula, separated from Ukraine's Crimea by the Kerch Strait. This is not far from the Kerch Strait, where the controversial causeway was being constructed towards the Ukrainian island of Tuzla causing a border dispute between Ukraine and Russia. Ecologists say the project for unloading ammonia in the Black Sea water area is extremely unsafe. IES informs the IFC and EBRD suspended credits for the construction to review



environmental impact assessment and public participation. (*BBC, IES, gazeta.ru*)

## Bosphorus issue

The head of Turkey's coastal safety organization on November 15, 2003 urged oil exporters, such as Russia, using the crowded Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits to find alternative routes for their crude in order to reduce congestion. He based his appeal on the limited physical capacity of the straits. Shipping traffic faced big delays the previous week due to bad weather. On November 10 the Georgian-flagged Svyatoy Panteleymon broke in two and leaked some of its 220 tons of diesel and 260 tons of fuel oil into the straits. A Cambodian-flagged cargo ship sank on November 11 after it had set sail from Istanbul Strait to the Black Sea. Turkey's overriding priority was security, the official said, and stressed the Turkish straits are becoming one of the most dangerous waterways in the world. (*after AA, Reuters, Interfax*)

## Protest

The Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB) started a protest campaign against the development of a wind farm with 12 turbines at Balchik, on the northern coast because the proposed location is part of an Important Bird Area of Global Importance. The Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Waters in Varna on 27 October 2003 adopted decision in support

of the project that is to be implemented by the Bulgarian company Tessa Energy Ltd. BSPB appealed to the environment minister to stop the construction, as it would inevitably lead to killing a large number of soaring birds. (BSPB)

## Bartın Platform

The Environmental Platform of Bartın (EPB) in the West Black Sea Region of Turkey is a civil society formation consisting of local NGOs, professional unions, chambers and two parties aimed at the solution of specific environmental problems of the city. So far the platform has carried out five main activities. In 1998 it took measures to remedy the disastrous effect of a big flood in the area. Another campaign stopped construction in green areas. EPB launched a big protest campaign against a mobile power plant of 100 MW, using fuel, on the Bartın river and near the Black Sea coast and had the unit removed from the area. (*EPB*)

## Newsletter of the Black Sea NGO Network

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