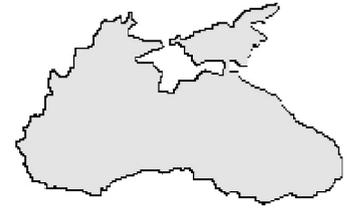


Black Sea Shared

Regional environmental NGO newsletter for the Black Sea



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Climate change

According to a study published by science journal 'Nature', between 15 and 37 per cent of all the planet's animal species will be threatened with extinction by 2050 due to global warming. The 19 researchers who carried out the study say a substantial part of the expected losses are likely to be caused by greenhouse gas emissions. They add that part of these losses will be inevitable because of damage caused by gases already present in the atmosphere. But they stress the urgent need to take action now to minimise emissions and move closer to the study's minimum scenario.

Drastic action to cut emissions is clearly needed by everyone, but especially by the USA. Russia's doubts about the Kyoto Protocol also create uncertainty. Many small and developing countries may lose interest in a contract that has been turned down by two of the largest polluters of Green House emissions.

These results are contested by the American Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) which argues the study used an 1859 theory on animal habitat which has since proved to be false. It dubs the research as "yet another salvo in the ideological battle" on climate change.

The European Commission confirmed commitment to the protocol and will use a set of eleven criteria to assess Member States' allocation plans for the EU's future greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme, says Communication issued January 7, 2004. (BSNN)

Framework agreement

Russia and Ukraine made a framework agreement on sharing the Azov Sea and the key Kerch Strait. Russian president Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart Leonid Kuchma signed the plan on the mutual use of these bodies of water in Crimea on December 24, 2003. The dispute over the strategically placed island of Tuzla was not directly discussed. The plan is vague on how the Azov Sea is to be divided.

Ownership of the Kerch Strait and its shipping routes have been discussed for years but came to a head in October with Ukraine sending border guards to the Tuzla island in response to Russia's building of a dike towards the Ukrainian island. Along with being economically important for shipping the Azov Sea supports a large fishing industry, and many feel that it has rich oil fields along its floor.

(Digest)

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Anti-monopoly action

The TogliattiAzot Company, Russia's largest ammonia producer, pressing ahead with the disputed project for the construction of a chemical port on the Taman Peninsula on the Black Sea, may face charges for breaking anti-monopoly legislation, the Russian Ministry of Anti-Monopoly Policy announced in December 2003. The charges will be against its fully owned subsidiary, Transammiak, controlling the strategic ammonia pipeline between Togliatti and Odessa, Ukraine. According to ministry spokesman Ilya Yuzanov,

Transammiak has established a monopoly on the pipeline barring other producers from access to it and forcing them to use the more expensive and dangerous rail-road transport. The Russian environmental organizations and the local communities have been fighting against the TogliattiAzot project, financed by the EBRD, for the construction of an ammonia handling terminal on the coast. They appealed to the EBRD to reassess the project and conduct a proper environmental impact assessment. The campaigners tried to bring the issue directly to president Vladimir Putin. Ukraine recently also expressed concern over the environmental impact of the construction. Environmentalists also report of a crevice in the ammonia storage facility in Taman where construction goes ahead. They warn again of the environmental risks associated with the construction site: seismic and volcanic activity, soft clay soils, and a sensitive marine ecosystem. (IES)

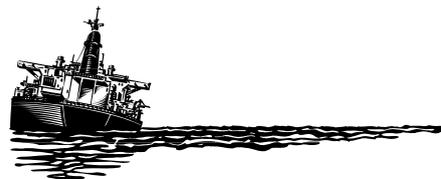
Court ruling

Ukraine's Constitutional Court, ruled on December 30, 2003, that President Leonid Kuchma can run for a third five-year term in 2004. Ukraine's first post-Soviet constitution, approved in 1996, limits a president to two terms in office. The Constitutional Court ruled that Kuchma's first term, which started in 1994, didn't count because it began before the constitution's approval. The court's ruling evoked opposition protests. The opposition vainly

tried to block the amendments drafted by Kuchma's supporters, saying they represented an attempt to keep him in office beyond term limits. Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko is chief contender for the post. (Digest)

President elected

Mikhail Saakashvili will become Georgia's next president. The 36-year-old lawyer was the heavy favourite in the January 4, 2004 election to replace Eduard Shevardnadze who stepped down on November 23rd last year.



Saakashvili helped lead what is being called the "rose revolution" against Shevardnadze after November 2, 2003 parliamentary elections were said to be rigged in favour of Shevardnadze's For a New Georgia party. Shevardnadze joined the estimated 97 percent of the 1.7 million voters who cast their ballot for Saakashvili. The percentage of voters who went to the polls is a new record for Georgia, which has a population close to five million. Parliamentary elections in Georgia have been rescheduled for March 28, 2004. (Eurasianet)

Pipeline construction

The construction of the Georgian section of a pipeline that will carry Azerbaijani oil from Baku to the

Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan via Tbilisi is proceeding according to schedule. By the end of December half the work on the section had been completed and 25 per cent of the pipes had been welded in place. David Woodward, president of BP Azerbaijan, the company building the pipeline, said oil would start being pumped through the pipeline early next year. Construction began in April last year and will finish in the fourth quarter of 2004. Exports of oil from Ceyhan will start in the second quarter of 2005. The project is valued at \$3.6 billion, including \$2.95 billion allocated for construction work. (CENN)

Single hull tankers out

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) decided on December 5 to back the EU on their plan to speed up the phase out of single hull tankers. The immediate ban by the EU on single hull tankers carrying heavy grade oil came in response to the Prestige and Erika disasters. Not everyone is happy with the ban. Intertanko, the International association of independent tanker owners, has sided with Japan, the Philippines, South Korea and Singapore against the ban, stating that the ban would hurt heavy grade oil trades. (EuNews)

Investment in Constanta

Dubai Ports International (DPI) has won the management contract for the new container terminal in Romania's Port of

Constanta making it the first contract for the Dubai organisation in Europe. The others in the bidding were Contship Italia, Dragados of Spain, HiliPort of Malta, and local bidders. The terminal will be the biggest on the Black Sea and DPI's contract involves an 18-year rental concession.

Operations at the new terminal are expected to commence in the first quarter of 2004. The Black Sea region has been growing in importance and there is potential for Constanta to become the economic and multi-modal transportation hub for the region. MSC and CMA-CGM have both recently announced direct services to the port from the Far East. *(Gulf-news)*

Boost to tourism

Turkey has announced plans to bound forward in the market of tourism. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that by 2010 Turkey would boast 30 million tourists a year with an annual income of US\$30 billion. Erdogan, along with the Tourism Minister, Erkan Mumcu, revealed a two-part plan that would catapult the country to the numbers quoted.

Part one starts this year and runs through 2006 and will create an estimated 500,000 new jobs. The second part of the plan will start in 2007 and run through 2010 at which time the government plans on having 3 million new jobs in place. An estimated investment of at least US\$25 billion will be needed over the next seven years

to get Turkey to the goal. Most of this will go to Istanbul turning the capital into a museum city as well as adding new golf projects, conference centres and accommodation facilities. The Black Sea and Eastern Anatolian regions will be synonymous with winter and cultural tourism. *(Digest)*



IBSD 2003 in Georgia

The Black Sea EcoAcademy (BSEA) of Batumi, Georgia acted as a principal liaison between various environmental and civic groups, the media and the population of the Georgian coastal zone during preparations for the celebration of IBSD 2003. Since public awareness on the issue of eutrophication and the related problems is very low, it was practical to include in a brochure information, which described the nature and origin of eutrophication, and its impact on the Black Sea ecosystems in relation with the goals and objectives of BSERP.

In the beginning of October BSEA held a meeting for coastal NGOs, environmental agencies, academic and scientific institutions, and the local government. The

main objective was the collection of proposals of activities for marking the International Black Sea Day, including those with emphasis on nutrient reduction. Several proposals were selected with regard to their impact on the general public, and their informational and education value. Co-financing was provided by EU TACIS BSERP.

October 31 was marked with children's drawing exhibitions in Batumi and Poti, beach clean-up activities in Batumi, Kobuleti and Ureki. Farming association Elkana organized an interesting seminar in Poti dedicated to environmentally friendly agriculture and the prospects for its development in the Georgian Black Sea coastal zone. The Elkana seminar was mainly dedicated to nutrient reduction and described the methods and advantages of organic farming. *(BSEA)*

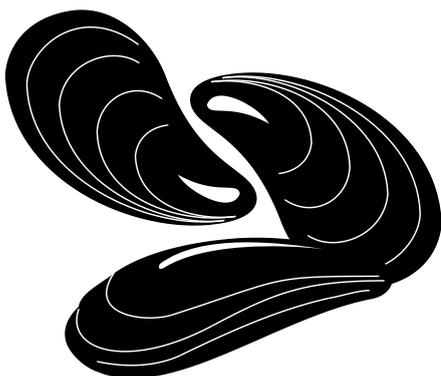
Reduce the use of pesticides

The Black Sea Centre for Environmental Information and Education (BSCEIE) in Varna, Bulgaria is implementing a project aimed at raising farmers' awareness on the multiple implications of the use of chemical pesticides. The project is supported by PAN Germany with a grant by the British Rausing Trust. In December 2003 the BSCEIE organised a meeting with farmers from the Varna and Dobrich region, NGO activists, and experts to discuss the issue in

view of environmental protection and human health.

Environmental awareness on the use of chemical pesticides and chemical substances in general is rather low among farmers. Some of them cannot afford to consult agronomists due to economic difficulties. Others are making only short-term plans for the use of their land. Chemical pesticide wholesalers are using various incentives to attract farmers to buy their products. Having bought the pesticides the farmers feel obliged to use the whole quantity, often at their own discretion. In the long run the quality of land deteriorates. Needless to say some of the pesticides are washed away and find their way into the sea.

Farmers are willing to learn more about pesticide use reduction and especially about switching to organic agriculture. They feel they need more support from the government to achieve this. Working with NGOs and their experts is received with interest from the farming community. The farmers are anxious to learn more about EU practices and regulations related to agriculture. (BSCEIE)



Human rights activist released

Mikhail Konstantinidi, the well-known Russian human rights campaigner from Novorossiysk, who was sentenced on made up charges to five years in prison and the confiscation of property, was released on parole ahead of term on January 16, 2004, the Independent Environmental Service (IES) informs. Konstantinidi the chairman of the local Democratic Forum organization was one of the key figures among activists who in 2000 brought to court the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) on charges of environmental safety, and poor design and technology.

In an unprecedented move the greens of Novorossiysk rallied great public support and managed to stop the construction for a short time, obtaining a court ruling sustaining their claims. The regional court of arbitration in Krasnodar however overruled the earlier decision and construction was resumed. Shortly after, charges were brought against Konstantinidi and he was sentenced in 2001. Now his associates and environmental activists are worried by his conditional release in view of the prospects for his further life and activities. (IES)

Joint efforts

In the autumn of 2003 the Kadiköyü Friends of Science, Culture and Art Association (KADOS), of Istanbul, Turkey,

conducted an environmental awareness campaign associated with a project reaching out to a wider area including the Black Sea and the Marmara region. The campaign, entitled the Marmara Environmental Platform, involved teachers, scientists, environmentalists and professional associations related to waters, forestry, engineering, agricultural bourse, unions of agricultural workers etc. The seven conferences within the campaign attracted lively public interest. They took place in Zonguldak, Bartın, Biga Canakkale, Samsun, Sinop, Ordu, and Trabzon.

KADOS prepared a review of Turkish studies on the eutrophication issue with relation to the marine environment. KADOS is active in maintaining links and communication with NGOs from the Mediterranean Environmental Platform. Meetings of both platforms were held in December to discuss specific environmental problems and issues of common interest. (KADOS)

Newsletter of the Black Sea NGO Network

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