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## Russia selects environmental goals for 2013

Russia is poised to focus on key environmental challenges as outlined on 9 January, during a meeting involving the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Sergey Donskoy, and the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev. The key challenges identified are environmental safety, waste management, protected areas, environmental education and culture, air quality, water and forests and they entail national, regional and international planning.

Outdated legislation, inadequate environmental monitoring, the need for better waste treatment facilities, and accumulated environmental damage are among key areas to be addressed. The country's new environmental strategy was approved last year aiming "to define ways of addressing challenges, set deadlines and outline responsibilities of designated state governance bodies" and also to stimulate green growth. For example, funding of the State Programme 'Environmental Protection' for 2012-2020 targets green growth and totals 335.9 billion rubles, of which 268 billion is from the federal budget.

Work on three of the 194 territories marked as being in critical environmental condition already started in 2012 and more than half of the nearly 23,000 illegal dumping grounds were removed, according to Minister Donskoy. Goals on water include better supply to households, industry and energy in ways that promote healthier living conditions.

Recent work by the Hydrometeorology Service led to more than 1847 meteorological and air pollution control stations being upgraded in the last two years; building on this work, a new radiolocation network is being established, and space monitoring satellites are being renovated. An environmental monitoring system is available in Sochi, host city of the winter Olympics 2014 with the Baikal region expected to benefit next from another environmental monitoring system, and all of Russia expected to be covered by 2020.

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## Kosovo: Draft laws on National Parks in Pristina adopted

Two draft laws on the National Parks "Bjeshkët e Nemuna" and "Sharri" were adopted last December by the Assembly of Kosovo (under the United Nations interim administration according to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244). National Park "Sharri", formerly called "Mali Sharr", has increased from 39,000 ha to 53,469 ha since the municipality of Dragash has been added to it. Moreover, a new draft law on the National Park "Bjeshket e Nemuna" has been adopted, covering some of the most scenic mountains around Kosovo and surrounding the municipalities of Istog, Pejë, Decan, Junik and Gjakovë.



Both National Parks are trans-boundary: "Sharri" borders with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and "Bjeshkët e Nemuna" borders with Montenegro and Albania. Such trans-boundary national parks may facilitate interregional cooperation. Since 2005, UNEP Vienna has been coordinating the project entitled "Improving regional cooperation for risk management from pollution hotspots as well as the trans-boundary management of shared natural resources." The project has been supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), under the aegis of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative.

The programme supports projects aiming to protect larger parts of the most important ecosystems and habitats and viable populations of wildlife.

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## UNEP Executive Director receives top German sustainability award

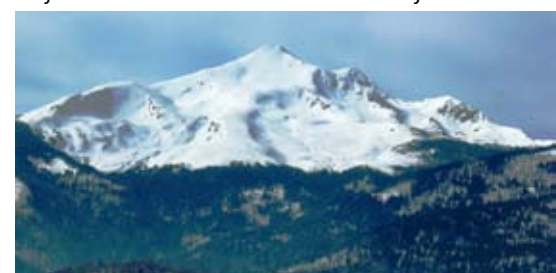


On 7 December, Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, received a top German honorary award for his distinguished efforts to protect the global environment. The German Sustainability Award is an initiative by the German Sustainability Awards Foundation and the German Federal Government, in collaboration with the German Council for Sustainable Development. Launched in 2008, the award recognises exemplary actions by business to achieve high levels of environmental and social responsibility while maintaining sustainable business growth. The award was presented by German Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwelle.

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Maja Jezercë in the distance in the Prokletije



Đeravica, eastern face



## European Bank for Reconstruction and Development supports Romania's energy strategy

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) continues to support Romania's strategy to increase its renewable energy production by lending €50 million to finance the operation of the Vutcani and Sarichioi wind farms.

Nandita Parshad, EBRD Director for Power and Energy, said: "We are delighted to finance our third project with EDPR in Romania and the first wind farm in Moldova region (Vutcani). The EBRD will continue to support project financing structures in renewables in Romania and will pave the way for further development of this sector."



**European Bank**  
for Reconstruction and Development

To date, the EBRD has invested about €6 billion in Romania in over 315 projects.

More information [here](#)

## Performance reviews of Turkmenistan and Tajikistan released



The first Environmental Performance Review of Turkmenistan

covers policymaking, planning and implementation, financing of environmental policies and projects, integration of environmental concerns into economic sectors, in particular sustainable management and protection of water resources, waste management, air pollution, forestry, biodiversity and protected areas, energy and climate change.



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More information [here](#)



Meanwhile, the "Second Environmental Performance Review of Tajikistan"

was released by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). It covers environmental policymaking, planning and implementation; financing of environmental policies; waste and water management; biodiversity conservation; and integration of environmental issues into energy and health policies.



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More information [here](#)

## New Efficiency Labelling in Europe

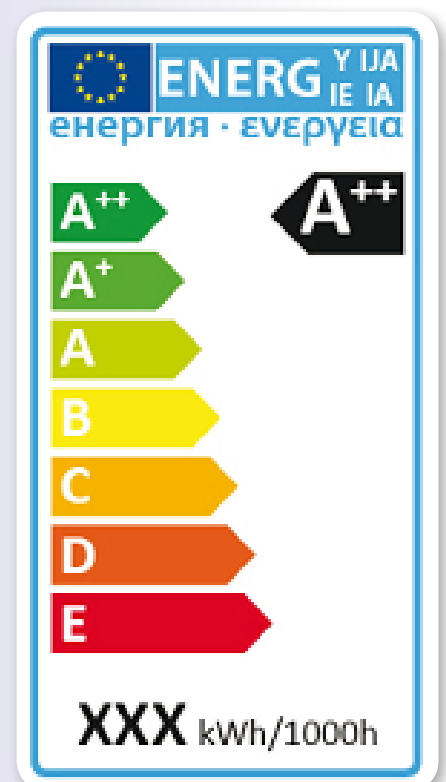


The European Commission has published the final regulations for the energy efficiency labelling of all types of lamps to take effect as of 1 September 2013.

The new regulation (EU) No 874/2012 will replace Directive 98/11/EC. The most noticeable change is the new scale with the letters A++ to E and the obligation to show the power consumption in kWh per 1000 hours. Because of these changes, no existing energy label will remain the same after 1 September 2013.

The majority of European countries have adopted the existing European energy label to harmonize communication on the efficiency of lighting products, therefore, if countries do not update their energy label at the same time, it could cause confusion in the marketplace.

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# Think. Eat. Save: global campaign against food waste launched



Simple actions by consumers and food retailers can dramatically cut the 1.3 billion tonnes of food lost or wasted each year and help shape a sustainable future, according to a new global campaign to cut food waste launched on 22 January by UNEP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and partners.

The "Think.Eat.Save. Reduce Your Foodprint" campaign is in support of the SAVE FOOD Initiative to reduce food loss and waste from food production to consumption, targeting consumers, retailers and the hospitality industry. It is run by the

FAO, trade fair organiser Messe Düsseldorf and UN Secretary General's Zero Hunger Initiatives.

Worldwide, about one-third of all food produced, worth around USD 1 trillion, is lost or wasted according to data released by FAO. Food loss occurs mostly at the production stages – harvesting, processing and distribution – while food waste typically takes place at the retailer and consumer end of the food-supply chain.

"In a world of seven billion people, set to grow to nine billion by 2050, wasting food makes no sense – economically, environmentally and ethically," said UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

"In industrialised regions, almost half of the total food squandered, around 300 million tonnes annually, occurs because producers, retailers and consumers discard food that is still fit for consumption," said José Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General. "This is more than the total net food production of Sub-Saharan Africa, and would be sufficient to feed the estimated 870 million people hungry in the world."

Per-capita waste by consumers is between 95 and 115 kg a year in Europe and North America/Oceania, while consumers in sub-Saharan Africa, south and south-eastern Asia each throw away only 6 to 11 kg a year.

Part of the trigger for the campaign was the outcome of the Rio+20 Summit in June 2012, in which Heads of State and governments gave the go-ahead for a 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns.

The campaign website, [www.thinkeatsave.org](http://www.thinkeatsave.org), provides simple tips to consumers and retailers, will allow users to make food waste pledges, and provides a platform for those running campaigns to exchange ideas and create a truly global culture of sustainable consumption of food.

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UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner at the launch of the Think.Eat.Save. campaign

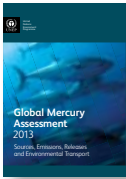
## Key Protocol Signed at Caspian Environmental Conference



On 12 December, the five Caspian countries (Iran, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Russia) reached another crucial milestone by adopting and signing one more protocol to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention) – The Protocol for the Protection of the Caspian Sea against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (LBSA Protocol), at the Tehran Convention COP 4 in Moscow, Russian Federation. This progress follows the 2011 adoption and signing of the Aktau Protocol on Regional Preparedness, Response and Cooperation in Combating Oil Pollution Incidents, at COP3 in Kazakhstan. The signing of the LBSA Protocol addresses one of the major ecological threats to the Caspian environment, aiming to safeguard coasts and waters from the detrimental effects of pollution from land-based sources such as agriculture, industry and urban settlements. The Caspian environmental process, supported for many years by UNDP, GEF, the European Union and other international donors, led to the signing of the landmark Tehran Convention in 2003 and its entry into force in August 2006.

Assessing the progress achieved by the Caspian States throughout the years, and in particular at COP4, the UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said: "Environmental cooperation is an essential basis for the overall economic and social development of the region, a crucial first step on the road to a green economy, equitable management of resources, and a sustainable future for all Caspian states."

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## Global mercury agreement to lift health threats from lives of millions worldwide

On 19 January, international effort to address mercury - a notorious heavy metal with significant health and environmental effects - got a significant boost with governments agreeing to a global, legally-binding treaty to prevent emissions and releases.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury - named after a city in Japan where serious health damage occurred as a result of mercury pollution in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century - provides controls and reductions across a range of products, processes and industries where mercury is used, released or emitted.

These range from medical equipment such as thermometers and energy-saving light bulbs to the mining, cement and coal-fired power sectors.

The treaty, which has been four years in negotiation and will be open for signature at a special meeting in Japan in October, also addresses the direct mining of mercury, export and import of the metal and safe storage of waste mercury.

Mercury and its various compounds have a range of serious health impacts including brain and neurological damage especially among the young.

Initial funding to fast track action until the new treaty comes into force in the expected three to five years' time has been pledged by Japan, Norway and Switzerland.

Support for developing countries is also expected from the Global Environment Facility and a programme once the convention is operational.

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UNEP, which convened the negotiations among over 140 member states in Geneva, said at the close: "After complex and often all night sessions here in Geneva, nations have today laid the foundations for a global response to a pollutant whose notoriety has been recognised for well over a century."

The decision to launch negotiations was taken by environment ministers at the 2009 session of the UNEP Governing Council and the final and fifth negotiation took place this week in Geneva.

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## Basel Convention develops framework for waste management

The Technical Expert Group (TEG) of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal has completed a framework for the environmentally sound management (ESM) of hazardous wastes and other wastes at its third meeting, held from 21 to 23 January, in Glion, Switzerland.

The group consisted of 18 of the 30 international experts nominated by Parties to the Basel Convention, joined by 15 observers to finalize work on the framework as a practical guide for all stakeholders participating in the management of hazardous and other waste. The framework establishes a common understanding of ESM and identifies tools and strategies to promote its implementation. The framework will be considered and possibly adopted at COP11 of the Basel Convention in April 2013.

In developing the framework, the group also discussed the main challenges for implementation of ESM, among them ensuring a uniform interpretation of ESM, tackling the vexing problem of illegal traffic and ensuring the development of adequate national capacity for ESM.

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## UNEP launches initiative in Congo to protect the supply of safe water to Kinshasa

UNEP has initiated a water scheme in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that aims to protect the Lukaya river basin, source of drinking water to about 380,000 Kinshasa residents.

Environmental pressure due to rapid population growth and unplanned development in urban areas with inadequate basic infrastructure make the pilot water project even more critical. Through its main approach - Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) - communities themselves will lead the dialogue and coordination process, assess and reconcile water needs and set the priorities for effective water management. State and local authorities will also be engaged to help build capacity and disseminate the experience in other parts of the country.

Indeed, one of the Millennium Development Goals is to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world's population without sustainable access to safe drinking water.

Funded jointly by the European Union and the United Nations, the project builds on the recommendations of UNEP's Post Conflict Environmental Assessment (PCEA) of the DRC that identified 13 major "hot spots" of environmental degradation in and around urban centres in the country. The aim is to expand this project to other parts of DRC, specifically in the Kivus and Katanga provinces. Needed investments should reach approximately USD10 million over a five-year period.

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### “Big Foot” partners meet at World Heritage Site

The Fifth partner meeting of the project “Big Foot. Crossing Generations, Crossing Mountains,” took place in Kalambaka, Greece, in the vicinity of the magnificent Meteora, a UNESCO World Heritage site, on 13-15 December. The project, funded by the EC Lifelong Learning Programme, aims at promoting inter-generational learning as an innovative approach to sustainable community development in rural mountainous regions. UNEP Vienna – ISCC (Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention) contributes to the project by coordinating inter-generational learning and sustainable development, and disseminating the project approach and results throughout the Carpathian Area.

The project has been tested in three municipalities: Berkovitsa, Bulgaria; Gubbio, Italy; and Kalambaka, Greece, where older and younger generation had the opportunity to rediscover the cultural and natural heritage of the area. The partners discussed project findings, information dissemination and exploitation activities. The Final Conference of the Big Foot Project is being organised by UNEP Vienna – ISCC on 5-6 June in Vienna, Austria, to partly coincide with the World Environment Day celebrations.

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### Tunisia and Morocco conduct workshops on national efficient lighting strategies

The first inception workshop for the Middle East and North Africa took place on 27-28 November in Tunis, Tunisia. During the same week, a similar meeting was held in Rabat, Morocco. Direct support is being provided to Tunisia and Morocco, as a key component of the Global Partnership Programme, a voluntary initiative for countries to work with the UNEP en.lighten initiative to draft a national efficient lighting strategy. Support is provided by en.lighten, along with its international partners, for the development of policies, strategies and actions for the phase-out of inefficient lighting products. The Global Partnership Programme, including Morocco and Tunisia, aims for the global phase-out of inefficient incandescent lamps by the end of 2016.

The meetings in the region introduced the current status of energy efficient lighting initiatives to a wide audience including: local and regional government representatives, non-governmental organizations, utilities, universities, private sector companies and members of civil society.

The meeting established the following priorities for the region: strengthening lamp monitoring and testing capacities, and the development of environmentally sustainable management of spent lamps. In February, Jordan will be the next country to conduct an inception workshop.

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## Ozone-depleting substances, refrigeration and air-conditioning to be discussed for Turkey

The Regional Ozone Network for Europe and Central Asia (ECA network) of UNEP's Ozone Action Programme jointly with the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization of Turkey is holding a contact group meeting on Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) and F-gas legislation in Ankara, Turkey, on 18-19 February. The overall object is to facilitate the implementation of the HCFC phase-out management plan in Turkey as a candidate country to the European Union through adoption of suitable policies and legislation in line with EU regulation on ODS, the F-gas regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases as well as the Mobile Air-Conditioning (MAC) systems Directive.

Another meeting on training and certification schemes for refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) technicians will be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 21-22 February to facilitate the creation of training and certification schemes for RAC servicing technicians as required by the F-gas regulation.

Both meetings are thanks to the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol with UNEP as the implementing agency and are being organised in cooperation with the European Commission, UNIDO, and experts from Poland and Hungary.

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## II. UNEP ON THE GROUND



### EU Commissioner for Climate Action meets with young professionals

Discussing the future of our global climate alongside careers for young professionals was the aim of an event hosted by UNEP in Brussels on 13 December. In the wake of the Climate Change COP18 in Qatar, Brussels interns dialogued with Connie Hedegaard on both the substance of negotiations and their place in the process. As well as giving her views on the recent talks, the Commissioner said that she was proud to have many young people in their 20s and 30s on the EU team, who bring significant value whilst also learning from those who have been involved in the complex negotiations for many years. The event was the first in a new series called "Round Tables with Round Cakes" aimed at bringing together both newcomers and the more experienced to discuss pressing global issues that will frame the career opportunities for young professionals. The event was organised by UNEP in partnership with the European Youth Press and the blog, "Debating Europe".



For a video of the event, the online debate and more, see [here](#)