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**International Forum
On Strategies And Priorities for
Environmental Industries**

Bratislava, 12-14 June 2002



organized by the
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
and the
UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Background Paper

**Proposal for the establishment of a
Forum on Remediation of Contaminated Sites in
Central and Eastern European Countries**

by
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CIS

ROUNDTABLE I

**Waste Management,
Recycling Schemes and
Related Technologies**

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UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY

***Proposal for the establishment of a
Forum on Remediation of Contaminated Sites in
Central and Eastern European Countries***

CEE FORUM ON REMEDIATION

Concept Paper

(Draft)

***“International Forum on Strategies and Priorities
for Environmental Industriesá***

**Organized by the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
in cooperation with UNIDO Director General**

**Bratislava, Slovak Republic
12-14 June 2002**

Background

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations dedicated to promoting sustainable industrial development in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

The International Centre for Science and High Technology (ICS-UNIDO) is an Institution operating within the legal framework of UNIDO, with headquarters located in Trieste, Italy.

The mandate of ICS-UNIDO relates to the transfer of know-how and technology in favor of developing countries and economies in transition, and is justified by the perception that a competitive industrial technological capability cannot be built-up without adequate scientific knowledge and commitment to a sustainable development approach utilizing new and environment friendly technologies.

In many countries, both industrialized and with economies in transition, there is the need to allocate substantive resources (scientific, technical as well as financial) for environmental protection and recovery. Environmental situation in each country is specific by type, distribution and extent of contamination and a proper integrated environmental strategy together with the availability of sound and suitable decontamination technologies is one of the priorities for the years to come. This is particularly valid for Central and Eastern European Countries

ICS-UNIDO, within the subprogramme on Remediation of the Area of Chemistry, is presently carrying out a series of initiatives with the aim of strengthening contacts/cooperation among institutions/centres of industrialized and developing/in transition economies dealing with environmental issues and establishing a common platform for harmonizing the actions and for launching joint projects in the field. This effort also aims at identifying the appropriate strategies, methodologies, tools and technologies to face the specific environmental problems of the countries within an international perspective, including transboundary aspects of soil and water pollution and priority setting of environmental recovery initiatives.

ICS-UNIDO has introduced this concept since 1996, implementing these topics into the subprogramme 1.3 on Remediation of the Area of Chemistry through a series of training courses, workshops and the promotion of various pilot projects, the development of databases and decision support tools, with particular focus on Central and Eastern European Countries.

In this regard, together with other initiatives, meetings of experts coming from various countries and mainly from CEE countries have been organized by ICS-UNIDO in July 2001 and in April 2002, where issues relevant to proper approach to environmental recovery were discussed and the possibility of concerted actions/initiatives was defined.

In the above meetings the environmental problems in CEE countries have been presented, analyzed and discussed and, as a first phase of the follow-up activities of those events, the reports of the countries which have been presented and finalized in the first meeting have been collected in the ICS-UNIDO publication *"Remediation of polluted sites in CEE Countries: current status and perspectives"* As result of the analysis of the environmental issues in each CEE country participating in the above meetings, it can be summarized that the availability of sound and suitable decontamination technologies, together with a proper global environmental planning, is one of the priorities for the years to come. For these reasons in CEE countries and, in particular, in EU candidate countries, there is the need to allocate extensive resources for environmental protection and recovery to reach EU environmental standards.

ICS-UNIDO, in tight cooperation with UNIDO branches, is therefore supporting an effective introduction and development of suitable instruments, methodologies and tools for the remediation of contaminated sites in Central and Eastern European Countries and promoting the establishment of a common platform for coordinated activities in the region, the "CEE Forum on Remediation" which would focus, in particular, on technical issues related to environmental recovery activities.

The Forum would serve as a platform of co-operation for representatives of the Ministries for the Environment, the European Commission and the European Environment Agency aiming to make available experiences in EU Countries to CEE Countries most efficiently and to support the progress of their integration.

Justification

Even though environmental pollution is a common problem for all countries, the status of pollution and the relevant prevention policies and decontamination strategies markedly differ between EU countries and CEE countries and between CEE countries themselves, because of the different socio-economic and industrial situation in the past and the present time.

As regards the remediation of polluted sites, Central and Eastern European Countries are facing problems similar to those in EU-Countries, particularly in areas with a long industrial history. However, progress to tackle problems related to localized soil contamination differs considerably from country to country. In general, for an effective management of localised soil contamination there is the need of:

- systematic approaches for the management of polluted sites and
- experiences for the adoption and implementation of innovative technologies
- specific legislation,
- tools for financing of remediation activities

To tackle the problems in EU Countries legal frameworks, technical know how and infrastructure have been established and are continuously improved. Sustainable technologies, decision support tools, funding mechanisms, networks of excellence and national as well as international legislation are some of the main components of the management process. International initiatives with regard to contaminated sites like the Common Forum, CLARINET, NICOLE, CABERNET or the Ad-hoc Working Group raise awareness of problems and support cost efficient management at national and international level in Western Europe.

For Accession Countries the possibility for participation in international initiatives already exists, nevertheless, none of these activities is specifically focused on CEE interests and problems.

In order to make available already gained experiences to CEE countries most efficiently and to support the progress of their integration, the establishment of the CEE Forum on Remediation á is then being proposed. The CEE Forum on Remediation would serve as a platform of co-operation between representatives of the Ministries of Environment of the Central and Eastern European States, the European Commission, the European Environment Agency and representatives of international initiatives on issues related to the remediation of contaminated sites.

Objectives of the CEE Forum

To support CEE countries in tackling problems related to soil and groundwater contamination, with special regard to:

- information management: streamlining of existing/relevant information and activities
- better understanding and effective implementation of EU legislation and standards
- knowledge transfer, exchange of data and expertise with regard to remediation technologies and their application.
- Improvement of knowledge and promotion of development of innovative promising remediation technologies
- support the development and implementation of decision support tools in risk based management of contaminated sites and in remediation technology evaluation and selection
- exchange of information concerning funding possibilities and support in the implementation of financing strategies for contaminated land and groundwater remediation

Proposed structure of the CEE Forum

The CEE Forum on Remediation would consist of representatives of the Ministries for the Environment of CEE Countries, experts and all stakeholders and decision makers dealing with environmental issues. Participation of and communication with other UN Agencies and Community Organisations, in particular the DG's Research, Environment and Enlargement and the European Environment Agency should be of a mutual nature. Links and collaborations within UNIDO initiatives/programmes in the field will be of support for the project.

According to the emerging issues the CEE Forum on Remediation would benefit from the participation of representatives of relevant network organisations.

The CEE Forum on Remediation would specifically be focused and work on interests and problems of CEE countries, however, in sharing common interests with EU countries the already existing Common Forum for Contaminated Land could serve as a sort of umbrella for these activities.

Being mainly focused on technical aspects of remediation, the Forum could also represent a suitable complementary platform for the exchange of technical information and for the development of joint activities within the UNIDO initiatives/programmes in the field specifically addressed to CEE countries.

Tasks of Interest of the CEE Forum

The following tasks are regarded to be of key relevance for CEE Countries and are proposed to be dealt with:

Networking and Knowledge Transfer

Efficient transfer of information to right stakeholders by

- identification of relevant topics (e.g. risk assessment, remediation technologies, decision support tools, etc.)
- identification of relevant stakeholders (regulators, researchers, industry,...)
- setting-up of information exchange network
- promotion of other means of knowledge transfer (expert meetings, workshops, conferences, ...)

Training and Research

The CEE Forum on Remediation would support the establishment of a European Research Area, as it is key mission of the 6th EU Framework Programme for RTD by streamlining training and research in remediation of contaminated sites.

EU Standards and Legislation

There is no specific EU legislation for the management of contaminated sites. However, the issue is addressed in various EU policy documents such as the Water Framework Directive, the IPPC directive, the Landfill Directive, and others. With regard to support full integration of CEE Countries specific indications would be provided to understand and implement EU requirements and standards.

Decision Support Tools (Databases, Tech. Info, etc.)

With regard to contaminated sites management various decision support tools (DST) have been developed and are implemented throughout Europe. Gained experiences would be provided in adopting of existing DST, developing new tools and in their implementation.

Funding/Financing instruments

Most CEE countries are lacking appropriate financing instruments for the remediation of contaminated sites á application of the polluter pays principle is in most cases insufficient or not possible. Moreover, a variety of mechanisms for funding of projects exists with completely different objectives; i.e. funding of research, regional funding, funding of innovative environment protection measures and other. The CEE Forum on Remediation would assist in assessing and identifying relevant funding opportunities, in evaluating their possibilities for implementation and in developing projects.

Case Studies and Pilot Projects

The CEE Forum on Remediation would assist to investigate the realisation of innovative remediation approaches in the frame of Case Studies and Pilot Projects and support fund raising.

Activities of the CEE Forum

- Driving force and fund raising for realisation of specific products by making use of results from Task Groups.
- Networking activities: maintenance and improvement of regular communication with other organisations, Community Organisations, International Agencies, etc. with regard to research needs, updates of contaminated sites management in the CEE countries, pilot projects, decision support tools, and needs for technology transfer, realised by a permanent secretariat
- Establishment of Task Groups according to emerging issues.
- Regular meetings, preferably connected to Common Forum Meetings.
- Maintenance of a homepage

Funding of the CEE Forum

The establishment of the CEE Forum and the continuous implementation of its activities has necessarily to be based on various available funding opportunities (to be identified) provided by international structures/organizations/bodies, like EU and EC (e.g. 6th Framework Programme), UN Agencies, GEF, World Bank, etc.,.

At the same time the support of CEE countries participating in the Forum by means of national co-funding mechanisms will be essential for its establishment and development.

Possible next actions to be undertaken

A number of activities within the ICS-UNIDO subprogramme on Remediation, specifically addressed to CEE countries, which have been carried out in the past (workshops, training courses, expert meetings, etc.) to promote awareness and capacity building in the field of remediation could also be considered as supporting elements of the process for the promotion of the Forum.

Within the planned activities of the ICS-UNIDO Subprogramme of Remediation, some follow-up initiatives could also be considered as a contribution to the promotion of the project, namely:

- the organization of the ICS-UNIDO workshop on *“Remediation Technologies Applications for Heavily Polluted Sites in CEE countries”* to be held in Bratislava from 24 to 26 June next, in which, among other issues, the preparation of the plan for the promotion of the CEE Forum on remediation will be discussed
- the preparation of the second edition of the publication *“Remediation of polluted sites in CEE Countries: current status and perspectives”* in which the reports from the countries not included in the first version (*Romania, Moldova, Ukraine*) will be added and all the reports will be updated;

However, in order to fully develop the initiative of the CEE Forum, it is essential the availability of substantial resources and support, in particular the access to international funding mechanisms, the cooperation with other institutions/organizations together with the support of CEE countries by means of national co-funding schemes.

One of the possible ways for funding the project or even parts of it, which has to be explored and taken into account, is the submission of the proposal to the next EC 6th Framework Programme. This possibility seems to be promising as some key characteristics of the FP6 directly correspond to the requirements for the realization of the CEE Forum, namely the thematic priority: given to *“Sustainable Development”* focus on new instruments of cooperation, promotion of Centres of Excellence and priority for integrated projects.