

Zoï Environment Network • Annual Report

2011



Zoï cares about the environment although, strictly speaking, no one needs to protect the environment, which could do quite well without us.

Zoï cares about people, but for whatever reason our work is called environmental protection not people protection. Ultimately, the idea is simply to protect people by saving things that others want to destroy, and restoring things that have already been destroyed. Some of these things are quietly smoldering on their own, and if you do not care to see, you may not even notice.

The Ukrainian city of Kalush, for instance, located south of Lviv, sits on a dark heritage. In the summer of 2011, Zoï organized a tour to this peaceful area that could at any moment become a wasteland. One impending disaster is hiding underneath some trees where thousands of tonnes of highly toxic hexachlorobenzene were buried during the Soviet era, when this chemical was used in herbicides. Once the barrels have rusted away, the toxic material will flow into the groundwater and the Dniester river.

A second disaster-in-waiting is hidden behind mud walls – two large salt lakes that are legacies of the Kalush potash fertilizer facility. If the levees break, the brackish waters would flow out like a tidal wave across the land.

As long as nothing happens, the world here looks idyllic and under control. But if something happens, the disaster will be quick and merciless. The Dniester would remain polluted for many years, leaving millions of people in the Dniester River Basin without drinking water.

Ignoring such hidden but known threats is one thing, but marching into disasters knowingly is plain stupid. Nevertheless, people do it over and over again.

The nuclear disaster at Fukushima Daiichi one year ago illustrates our ability to delude ourselves. The core meltdown is still continuing, but a strange normality has already replaced last year's horrors. The authorities resettled only the 70 000 people they determined had to be resettled. But this number of people is artificially low because the authorities raised the threshold value for radioactivity for the general population from 1 millisievert per year to 20 millisieverts per year – even for babies, children and pregnant women. The 20 millisieverts per year threshold is an occupational limit that normally applies only to nuclear power plant workers.

Sacrificing protective limits when disaster strikes allows us to pretend that nothing really bad has happened. Threshold values become unreliable. We would be better off doing everything possible to avoid creating risks – for us and for all who come after us.

This is Zoï's work – to identify the threats, reveal and explain the relationships and communicate what we learn. The more we understand the connections between people and the environment, the more we come to know that our work is protecting both.

Susan Boos,
Journalist, Wochenzeitung, Zürich (President the Zoï board)

• Environmental Policy

Zoï bases its environmental policy on a commitment to operate in an environmentally responsible and resource-efficient manner, and focuses its efforts on six specific areas – production, procurement, resources, waste, personnel and travel. Maintaining best practices in the first five areas has become a routine matter of green management. Travel, however, continues to be a challenge.

Last year Zoï staff and associates logged more than 200,000 air kilometres, accounting for more than 20 tonnes of CO₂ emissions. With many Zoï activities in Central Asia this year, Zoï air kilometres increased to more than 450,000 while emissions increased to 43 tonnes. Zoï compensated for its 2011 emissions through contributions to a Gold Standard project in Kenya.

In 2011, the Zoï staff averaged 4.7 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per person, compared to the United Nations average of 4.1 tonnes per person. The World Bank (7.4 tonnes/person) and UNEP (9.7 tonnes/person) were somewhat higher, while UNDP (2.1 tonnes/person) and the UNFCCC (3.2 tonnes/person) were somewhat lower.

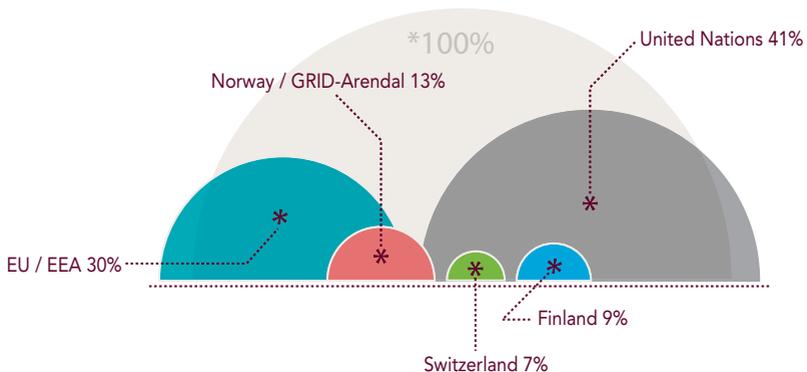


↑ Zoï around one table

• Financial Statement

	2010	2011
operating revenues	1,721,303	1,836,351
<hr/>		
operating expenses		
project expenses	721,657	1,058,331
project work in progress	309,717	21,121
personnel costs	607,513	639,555
other operating expenses	82,416	117,344
	1,721,303	1,836,351

Zoï Environment Funding Sources 2011



• Climate Change

Caucasus:

Responding to the effects of climate change may not be mankind's greatest challenge in the 21st century, but it will definitely give us practice for anything else that comes along. Zoï continues its contribution to the cause with three new publications in the climate change series – on the South Caucasus, Eastern Europe and the West Balkans, all regions with newly defined countries struggling for stability.

The South Caucasus republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia gained independence after the fall of the former Soviet Union, and promptly plunged into devastating ethnic and civil wars. The three countries of Eastern Europe – Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, which also emerged from the Soviet collapse – had hardly existed as states within their current borders, and yet struggle for a consensus on their national identities. In the Balkans, democracy, economic development and even statehood itself are all less than secure, and the challenges to regional stability include disputed international borders and dynamic populations.



↑ Climate Change in the South Caucasus



↑ Climate Change in Eastern Europe

Eastern Europe:

The Zoï climate change reports identify the exposures and sensitivities in the regions, reveal and explain the connections between the environmental consequences and the capacity to adapt, and communicate the regional stories. These reports are intended to stimulate political debate, contribute to a better informed society and provide a base for planning and adaptation.

• Resource Efficiency

Green economy:

Today's economies are crucial to the achievement of sustainability, but fail to account sufficiently for pollution, resource depletion, declining ecosystem services and the inequities that affect the poor. The transition to a green economy would entail creating the conditions for public and private investments that include environmental and social goals. Advocates assert that such investments would drive economic growth while reducing carbon emissions and pollution, enhancing energy and resource efficiency and preventing further losses of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Zoï provided editing, design and graphics to the publication of a United Nations System-wide perspective on working towards a green economy.



↑ Green Economy :
A United Nations System-wide Perspective



↑ A Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the United Nations System

Sustainability:

In its efforts to “walk the talk” the United Nations System is taking steps to measure its greenhouse gas emissions with the goal of reducing them and eventually becoming climate neutral. Zoï has assisted this housekeeping exercise since 2009 as the helpdesk for UN organizations doing their inventories. As the UN discusses much broader sustainability concepts and safeguards, Zoï is supporting the process by producing the UN system-wide report on sustainability.

• Disasters and Conflicts

Environment and security:

Competition over declining natural resources threatens stability and peace, and transboundary pollution and environmental accidents sour relations between neighbouring states. Environmental cooperation prevents conflicts and promotes peace. Working from these premises, the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) assists governments and communities to identify common solutions to mutual problems.

Zoï has supported the initiative since its beginnings through analysis (participatory assessments) capacity building and communication. In 2011, we have implemented ENVSEC activities in the Balkans, Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, including work related to climate change, mining, transboundary rivers, industrial accidents and more. Outside ENVSEC, we also maintained our engagement in the Arab world and have published a report on Environment and Security Egypt and the Nile basin.



↑ Egypt & the Nile

Mining:

Mining is an important economic sector in Central Asia, Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Caucasus but unclear and shifting governance, mistrust and unrealistic expectations among local populations and the legacies of past mining operations have all undermined the orderly development of the region's mineral resources. Working with Finnish colleagues from the University of Joensuu and GAIA, Zoï has started the assembly of a toolkit for environmentally and socially sustainable mining with focus on Central Asia. When finished, the toolkit will integrate the processes for environmental and social assessments within an overall environment and security framework, and provide guidance on good practices, including for stakeholder involvement down to the valley or mine level of interest.

Zoï has also facilitated the assessments of Mining, Environment and Security in the Balkans and Armenia.



• Governance

Astana Environment for Europe Conference:

2011 has seen a major event on the pan-European environmental stage: the 7th meeting of Environmental Ministers under the Environment for Europe process. Zoi worked hard by helping the European Environment Agency prepare and get out to the Ministers and the public its flagship publication Europe's Environment: Assessment of Assessment. We were not only responsible for organising the writing of the two central chapters of the Assessment (Water and Related Ecosystems and Green Economy), but also for assisting the EEA in populating the AoA portal with references to international assessments and for translating into Russian, the key language of the region, both the Assessment of Assessments and the Synthesis of EEA's recent report The European Environment. State and outlook 2010. Physically present at the Environment for Europe conference in Astana, Zoi also directly contributed information and people to the EEA-UNDP-ENVSEC exhibition booth and their events.



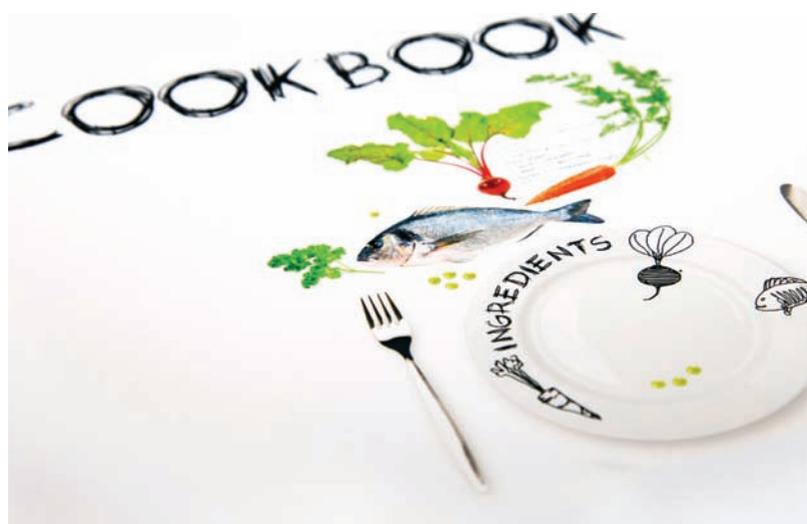
↑ Europe's environment, An Assessment of Assessments

Cookbook for Environmental Information Management:

Public authorities and international organizations collect huge quantities of environmental information for the very good reason that it is increasingly essential to the development of effective public policy. The data, however, are often fragmented, incomplete, dispersed or heterogeneous, and reuse of the data is costly, difficult and sometimes impossible. As technical developments have made the available solutions to these problems both cheaper and easier, a new system has emerged.

SEIS, the Shared Environmental Information System is a unifying model of the European Union that offers a process, methods and tools to take advantage of new technical opportunities to improve planning, to keep the public informed and to support national and international reporting obligations. Zoï has assisted the European Environmental Agency in organizing country visits to analyze the SEIS status in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and the Palestine Authorities.

The so-called SEIS cookbook developed by Zoï introduces practitioners to the concept, and provides examples of emerging good practices.



• Governance

Environmental indicators for South-Eastern Europe:

An environmental indicator reveals relationships and provides evidence on matters of broad public interest. Zoï has a similar mission, and approaches the task of compiling a set of indicators for the West Balkans with enthusiasm rather than the fear and loathing the job sometimes evokes. The payoff comes with the discoveries that can inform policy debates and the setting of public priorities – the decline in the share of renewable energy in primary energy consumption throughout the region during the last 10-15 years, or the still low percentage of the population connected to waste water treatment.

The compilation of indicators in this simple Zoï-produced booklet depends on a long process of helping public authorities, civil society and the private sector collect and compile environmental data on a regular basis. Information is passed on to those who want to understand the environmental situation, make comparisons and take action. More than 100 professionals from the region have contributed to this unique compilation of data and indicators, thus building an indispensable foundation for democracy.



• Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

Mercury:

A thorough knowledge of the commercial mercury trade is vital to the development of effective strategies and specific measures that address national and global mercury challenges. Such knowledge requires an understanding of the transactions inside any given country and between different countries and regions. Zoï explains the complexities of these quicksilver movements.

The Khaidarkan mine, in the remote mountains of southern Kyrgyzstan, is the world's last known mercury mine to sell its output abroad. In cooperation with UNEP, the Kyrgyz government and other partners, Zoï reveals the area's alternatives to mercury mining, analyses the prospects for economic change and communicates the opportunities for sustaining people's livelihoods in a post-mercury world.

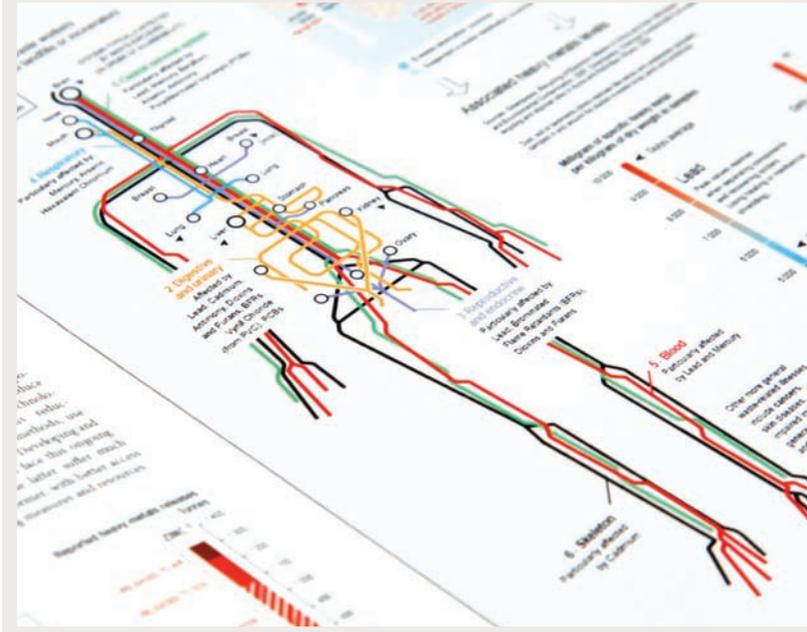


↑ Khaidarkan Alternatives
Towards a mercury-free future

• Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

Waste:

As a by-product of human activities, waste can represent a significant burden for human society and the environment. We need a vision that accommodates new developments and realities as well as ensures that unavoidable wastes are managed in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. Many options have been and are being developed to translate our shared responsibility into effective measures. The Zoi-produced report for the Basel Convention, *Vital Waste Graphics*, extends this series and identifies interesting prospects for both business and society in general in terms of innovation and sustainability.



• Ecosystems Management

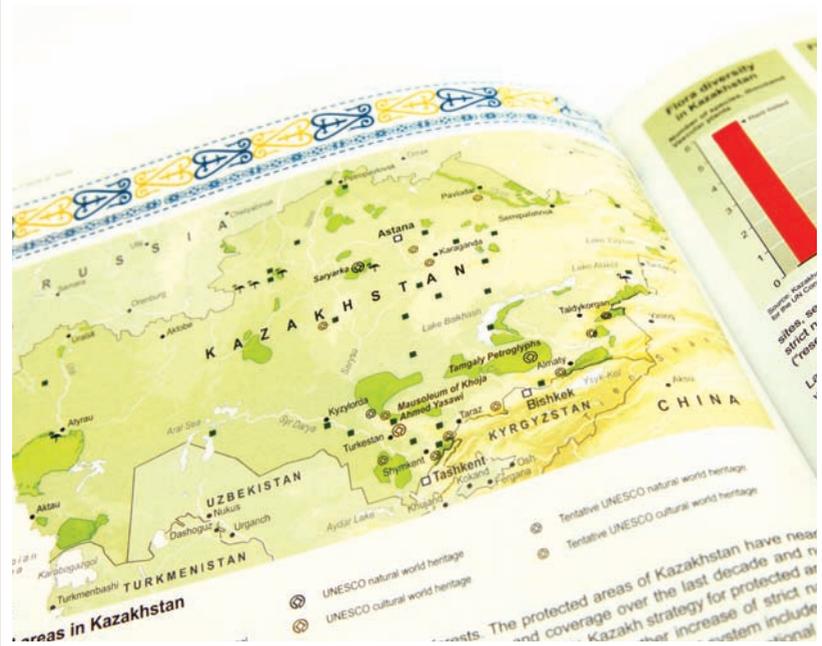
Desertification:

Drylands support the habitats, crops and livestock that sustain nearly one third of humanity. In no other ecosystem are the interactions between the challenges of climate change and the conservation of biodiversity so closely linked to food security and poverty reduction. Desertification affects the livelihoods of rural people in drylands, particularly the poor, who depend on livestock, crops, limited water resources and fuelwood. Practical solutions exist at many levels and are being successfully employed by communities around the world. In many countries, combating desertification and promoting development are virtually one and the same. In 2011 Zoï produced two flagship publications. Desertification – a visual synthesis compiled in cooperation with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) – explains and illustrates issues of desertification at the global scale, and has been translated into all UN languages. Global Drylands, the joint response of the United Nations System to desertification, was produced and illustrated by Zoï too.



Biodiversity:

High mountain ranges rise from the vast flatlands of deserts and steppes in Central Asia and host a rich variety of indigenous and endemic flora and fauna in a range of vibrant ecosystems. Arctic, Mediterranean and Indo-Eurasian species meet and interact in the same hotbed of diversity where culture and trade intersect. Close cooperation and the coordination of multilateral agreements will pave the way for biodiversity management that benefits from synergies with other environmental management activities. A Zoï report – prepared by experts to communicate the challenges of biodiversity protection – synthesizes biodiversity information in Central Asia for global and national audiences.



• Transboundary Water Management

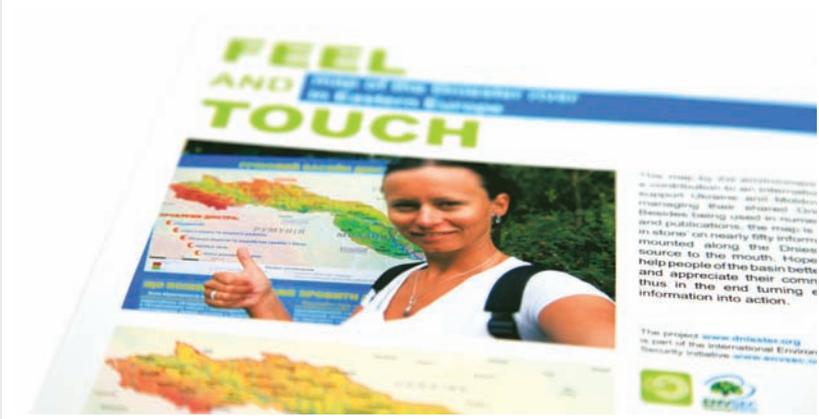
Work in the field:

Zoi has worked with international and local partners to promote cooperation in transboundary waters throughout the East of Europe, often in cooperation with the Environment and Security initiative (ENVSEC) or its member-agencies.

In the Dniester river basin we worked to further improve information exchange, we have helped train the basin's hygienists in common methods of detecting viruses, and organised the first in 12 years Moldo-Ukrainian field study of water quality along the river. The Dniester press tour brought 20 journalists to the field too.

On the lower Danube, plagued by international disputes over development project, we participated in a first-ever joint survey by Ukraine, Romania and Moldova, as well as contributed to improved environmental safety of the region's industry. In the Neman river basin we worked with Belarus, Lithuania and Russia an assessment of the impacts of climate change.

In Central Asia we continued to support the regional exchange of water information. Following the official launch by ENVSEC of the Zoi-produced assessment of the Amudarya river basin, we started a project with UNECE to bring together hydrologists and environmentalists of Afghanistan and Tajikistan to help them better protect the part of the river which both countries share.



← Dniester river in Eastern Europe

Caspian Sea:

When GRID-Arendal and Zoï published the first edition of Vital Caspian Graphics, our goal that it be read in the streets of Astrakhan and Aktau may have been too ambitious – or visionary. Undeterred, and flush with revolutionary spirit to create a better world, we decided to produce a second edition. The region around the Caspian Sea is changing, and we are determined to capture and report these changes. This vital graphics publication is a companion piece to the first State of the Environment report, and presents lesser-known aspects of the region. One of the highlights are the photographic essays by Mily Tessaieva and Rena Effendi.



• Zoï year 2011

Outputs & Events

- Zoï attended the event (and usually contributed to, though not always)

✦ (co-)organized by Zoï

January

- UN Mercury negotiations INC 2, Chiba, Japan

February

- * Taking Land Crimea photo exhibition and book vernissage Geneva, February and London, March
- * Mining, environment and security toolkit meeting, Helsinki, Finland, February

- OSCE workshop on climate change and food security, Lviv, Ukraine

- * ENVSEC regional meeting E Europe Lviv

- * Mining, environment and security toolkit meeting, Fiskars, Finland

- * Mountain partnership Rio+20, Rome, Italy

- * UNECE TEIA simulation of on-site inspection, Vienna, Austria

March

- * UNECE TEIA training session on on-site inspection Zagreb, Croatia

- EEA Assessment of Assessment meeting, Copenhagen

- UNECE Climate change and floods in the Dniester basin, Bratislava

April

- Chernobyl, 25 Years. Safety for the Future, Kyiv, Ukraine

- * Mining, environment and security toolkit meeting, Geneva

- MINEX Mining Conference, Astana, Kazakhstan

- Round table on mining and local communities, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

- * Dniester III Chisinau, Moldova

- UNECE water & climate Geneva

- Stockholm convention COP, Geneva

May

- UNECE 2nd water assessment consultations, Geneva

- Swiss GEF constituency meeting, Bern, Switzerland

- * UNECE TEIA Workshop on the use of indicators the strategic approach, Bratislava

- EEA SEIS country visit, Ramallah, Palestine

- OSCE/EEA Scenario development for climate change adaptation in Eastern Europe, Kyiv, Ukraine

- ENVSEC board Vienna

- UNECE EfE CEP Geneva

June

- CBD Biodiversity strategies and PEELS seminar, Geneva

- * EEA core set of indicators training, Prishtina, Kosovo

- * EEA core set of indicators training, Podgorica, Montenegro

- * Zoï retreat, Nyon, Switzerland

- ENVSEC-IUCN meeting Gland

- * Kyrgyzstan mercury meetings and mining field work, Chatkal and Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

July -----

- REC sustainability course, Venice
- UNECE forest and water week, Geneva
- UNECE WGEMA Geneva
- * Central Asia Mountain report review and consultations, Bishkek and Issykkul, Kyrgyzstan
- * Dniester press tour Lviv Kalush Novodnistrovsk Chernivtsi
- Dniester expedition, Hotyn - Novodnistrovsk

August -----

- * Neman, Bratislava, Slovakia

September -----

- ENVSEC Finland meeting Helsinki, Finland
- * EEA SEIS country visit, Chisnau, Moldova
- * EEA SEIS country visit, Minsk
- UNECE TEIA Danube workshop and working group on hazard management, Galati, Romania
- FOEN and SDC project meetings, Bern, Switzerland
- EfE Astana, Kazakhstan

October -----

- Lucerne Mountain Conference, Lucerne, Switzerland
- CBD regional workshop, Istanbul, Turkey
- UNECE WGEMA, Geneva
- ENVSEC board and the EU Brussels
- * Neman Vilnius, Lithuania

- * EEA High level official country visit Belgrade, Serbia

- OSCE/EEA Scenario development for climate change adaptation in the Balkans, Belgrade, Serbia
- Dniester board meeting, Yaremche, Ukraine

November -----

- UN Mercury negotiations INC 3, Nairobi, Kenya
- * EEA SEIS country visit, Kyiv, Ukraine
- * EEA SEIS country visit, Moscow, Russia
- SAICEM open ended working group, Belgrade, Serbia
- EEA SEIS steering group meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark
- SDC project meetings, Bern, Switzerland
- UNECE water & climate, Geneva
- * UNECE TEIA training in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and Dushanbe, Tadjikistan
- * EEA West Balkan regional workshop, Bar, Montenegro
- * Dniester III Kyiv november-december

December -----

- * UN Rio+20 preparation, Geneva, Switzerland
- * UNECE-GIZ Central Asia water information and CAREWIB, Almaty, Kazakhstan
- USAID glaciers Central Asia, Almaty, Kazakhstan
- Eye on Earth, Abu Dhabi

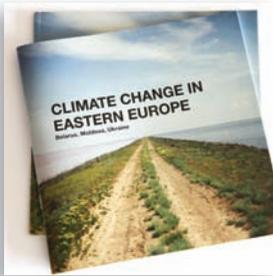


• Zoï Books •

Most recent publications produced by Zoï Environment Network.

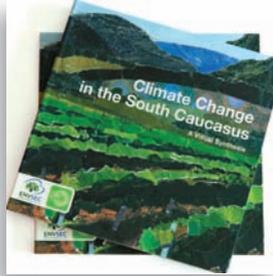
Available on www.zoinet.org

• MOST RECENT BOOKS •



Eastern Europe

A visual synthesis of Climate Change
60 p. English & Russian
ENVSEC, Zoï



Caucasus

A visual synthesis of Climate Change
60 p. English
Zoï, ENVSEC



Vital Caspian Graphics 2

Opportunities, Aspirations and Challenges
80 p. English & Russian
GRID-Arendal, Zoï



Armenia

Mining
32 p. English
Zoï Report



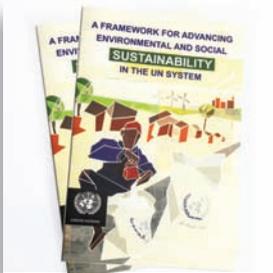
Egypt

Environment & Security
24 p. English
Zoï Report



Jordan

Environment & Security
24 p. English
Zoï Report



Sustainability

80 p. English
United Nations, Zoï



Green Economy

204 p. English
United Nations, Zoï



Global Dryland

132 p. English
United Nations, Zoï



Desertification

A visual synthesis
52 p. English, French & Spanish

Report, Map, Convention text
UNCCD, United Nations, Zoï



Vital Waste Graphics 3

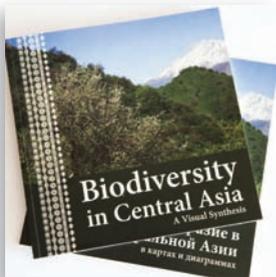
48 p. English
Basel Convention, Zoï, GRID-Arendal

West Balkan

Environmental Core Set of Indicators
44 p. English
EEA, Zoï

Geo Cities Manual

Environmental Assessment of Urban Areas
64 p. English & Russian
UNEP, Zoï



Biodiversity in Central Asia

A visual synthesis
84 p. English & Russian
Switzerland, Zoï

Amudarya

98 p. English & Russian
UNEP, ENVSEC, Zoï

Coalland

43 p. English
UNEP, ENVSEC, Zoï



Khaidarkan alternatives

Towards a mercury-free future, 2012
56 p. English & Russian
UNEP, Kyrgyz Mining Association, Zoï

Central Asia

Sustainable Mountain Development, 2011
60 p. English
UCA, Zoï

Second Assessment

of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters
448 p. English & Russian
UNECE, Zoï

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jeremy.wates, Secretary-General of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Brussels

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We remain closely associated with friends and colleagues at our mother institution GRID-Arendal.

• Zoïstory

Ça doit être un russe...
↓ Lac Lemman, Juin 2011



↑ She just can't get enough of the handmade Zoï reports; Marina Isoy, Geneva January 2012



↑ Zoï waiter and waitresses serving the SEIS cookbook. Astana 2011.

Przhevalski or Mannerheim?
↓ Zoï fieldwork in Song-Khul, Kyrgyzstan, July 2011



↑ Dniester River.
Environmental journalist's sweatshop, July 2011

↑ Miner's World.
Chatkai, Kyrgyzstan, May 2011

The Geneva-Based Zoï environment network is a new answer to some stubborn old questions. An international non-profit organisation, Zoï's mission is to reveal, explain and communicate connections between the environment and society.



'Sustainability' artwork by Maria Libert;
Report design and layout by Carlyne Daniel