

BUILDING A SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

with the Eastern Partnership countries



Since 2010, the European Union (EU) has been engaging the countries of the Eastern Partnership - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – in regional cooperation with the aim to improve national capacities for managing and sharing environmental data and information.

This cooperation was funded by the European Commission and implemented by the European Environmental Agency (EEA) under the framework of the project ‘Towards a Shared Environmental Information System in the European Neighbourhood’. The project supported the implementation of the Eastern Partnership flagship initiative on strengthened environmental governance.

The outcomes of the four-year regional cooperation show significant improvements in putting in place national coordination structures, mobilising capacities to produce environmental indicators and upgrading information systems for better reporting and easier sharing of environmental data.

To consolidate and sustain this knowledge base, further efforts are needed to prepare regular indicator-based State of the Environment reports (SoER) to address national and regional priorities, and provide input to global processes. This will in turn provide the frame for the countries to further conceptualise and develop their national environmental information systems, and embed SEIS objectives principles in the long-term strategies on e-governance.

A comprehensive overview of important advancements made in all Eastern Partnership countries can be found in the recently published Synthesis Report, available in English and Russian.



ARMENIA



- Formalisation of the cooperation on SEIS objectives with the EEA;
- Development of a new framework and sectorial laws introducing processes for environmental monitoring, data management and production of SoER;
- Development of centralised system to disseminate all environmental statistics and indicators;
- Data sharing using the EEA's reporting infrastructure;
- Conduct of a pilot exercise to integrate and manage data for the Lake Sevan basin.

The Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) is an EU initiative to modernise and simplify the collection, exchange and use of data and information required for designing and implementing environmental policy. The implementation of SEIS is underpinned by three main pillars:

1. Cooperation: building partnerships between the providers and users of data and information;
2. Content: generating policy-relevant and comparable information;
3. Infrastructure: using shared and modern web-based information and communication technologies.

UKRAINE



- Establishment of a national high-level, inter-agency SEIS coordinating body;
- Development of online national system of environmental indicators by the State Statistics Committee;
- Development of draft laws to formalise procedures around the national environmental monitoring system and the use of environmental indicators.

AZERBAIJAN



- Development of a policy document Azerbaijan 2020 – Look into the future, which addresses SEIS objectives;
- Publication online of the National Environmental Indicators System based on the regional indicators;
- Shifting towards indicator-based approach for the preparation of SoER;
- Public access to the first national digital water cadastre planned for 2015.

BELARUS



- Strong and formalised inter-institutional coordination;
- National Environmental Monitoring System (NEMS) - an organisational structure regrouping 11 independent types of monitoring;
- Development of a national system for environmental indicators in line with regional indicators;
- Formalisation of the cooperation on SEIS objectives with the EEA;
- Participation in a pilot exercise for sharing water-related data according to the Water Information System for Europe (WISE) methodologies.

GEORGIA



- Signature of a national inter-institutional agreement on data exchange;
- Establishment of the Environmental Information and Education Centre (EIEC) with the aim at facilitating access to information, and coordinating implementation of SEIS at national level;
- Participation in a pilot exercise for sharing water-related data according to the Water Information System for Europe (WISE) methodologies;
- Member of the Global Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) since 2014;
- Formalisation of the cooperation on SEIS objectives with the EEA.

MOLDOVA



- Partner country for increased cooperation with the EEA on further implementation of SEIS («InSEIS project», June 2014–July 2015);
- Development of the Government Open Data Portal embedded in the e-governance policy;
- Participation in a pilot exercise for sharing water-related data according to the Water Information System for Europe (WISE) methodologies;
- Formalisation of the cooperation on SEIS objectives with the EEA.

The SEIS initiative helps find common ground for dialogue and cooperation for information sharing and increased access to information