

Eco equipment: Cleaning Kosovo's air

Despite progress in recent years, several air quality standards are still widely exceeded in the European Union's most densely populated areas, especially from pollutants such as particulate matter, ground-level ozone, and nitrogen dioxide.

In Kosovo, the situation is no different. With economic development came high levels of air pollution from two old power generating plants and increased traffic flows. Kosovo also lacked the technology to determine pollution levels in and around populated areas and to assess the impact on human health and the environment.

According to a 2012 World Bank report, air pollution in Kosovo causes 835 premature deaths, 310 new cases of chronic bronchitis, 600 hospital admissions and 11,600 emergency visits each year.

The project "Supply and Installation of Equipment for the Air Monitoring System in Kosovo", funded by the European Union, is addressing the problem by installing air quality monitoring equipment across the whole territory.

BETTER HEALTH, LESS POLLUTION

Experts identified five locations for installing monitoring stations across Kosovo. Criteria for their choices included information about the source of pollution, geographic area and number of inhabitants.

The new system will allow the staff of the Kosovo Environment Protection Agency and the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning to identify major air pollutants and to act promptly by reducing emissions if limit values are exceeded.

The result? Better air quality, improved public health and the sustainable economic development of Kosovo. The system will also create the basis for the control of greenhouse gas emissions and help authorities adopt the right climate change policies for the region.

Clean air will serve as a catalyst for less respiratory diseases among the residents of Kosovo. In fact, life expectancy across the region should increase as the air improves. Less pollution will also lead to healthier forests and higher crop yields. Buildings also stand to gain as they will experience less corrosion.



*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

The project partners are convinced that the project results will also have a profound positive impact on the quality of environmental information which will be made available to decision makers, environment experts, the people in Kosovo and the European community.

Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)

Kosovo

IPA – AN INVESTMENT IN EUROPE. AN INVESTMENT IN SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY.

“As a direct result of the Air Quality Monitoring System, we will have more reliable data to properly assess the air quality for all of Kosovo,” says Muhamet Malsiu at the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP). “These assessments can be used to propose plans and programmes to reduce air pollution and improve the air quality, particular in urban areas and around large industrial installations.”

In fact, the Ministry is currently developing the air quality strategy for Kosovo. According to experts, the

information gathered from the system will be important for developing the environment protection strategy, land use plans and the region’s water strategy.

Future plans include improving the laboratory analyses and bringing the entire monitoring system up to a level where it will receive quality certification and accreditation. This is crucial for complying with EU standards.

PROJECT DETAILS –

Supply and Installation of Equipment for the Air Monitoring System in Kosovo

Partners:

HMIK – Hydro Meteorological Institute of Kosovo
MESP – Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning

Total cost in €: 2 million

EU Contribution in €: 2 million (100%)

Start date: May 2011

End date: November 2012

Results: Better air quality leading to improved public health.

Techniques: Supply and installation of air quality monitoring stations and calibration laboratory equipment in key locations across Kosovo
Installation of a data collection system

