

INTRODUCTION - 2002 COUNTRY PROFILES SERIES

Agenda 21, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, underscored the important role that States play in the implementation of the Agenda at the national level. It recommended that States consider preparing national reports and communicating the information therein to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) including, activities they undertake to implement Agenda 21, the obstacles and challenges they confront, and other environment and development issues they find relevant.

As a result, in 1993 governments began preparing national reports for submission to the CSD. After two years of following this practice, the CSD decided that a summarized version of national reports submitted thus far would be useful. Subsequently, the CSD Secretariat published the first Country Profiles series in 1997 on the occasion of the five-year review of the Earth Summit (Rio + 5). The series summarized, on a country-by-country basis, all the national reports submitted between 1994 and 1996. Each Profile covered the status of all Agenda 21 chapters.

The purpose of Country Profiles is to:

- Help countries monitor their own progress;
- Share experiences and information with others; and,
- Serve as institutional memory to track and record national actions undertaken to implement Agenda 21.

A second series of Country Profiles is being published on the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development being held in Johannesburg from August 26 to September 4, 2002. Each profile covers all 40 chapters of Agenda 21, as well as those issues that have been separately addressed by the CSD since 1997, including trade, energy, transport, sustainable tourism and industry.

The 2002 Country Profiles series provides the most comprehensive overview to date of the status of implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level. Each Country Profile is based on information updated from that contained in the national reports submitted annually by governments.

Preparing national reports is often a challenging exercise. It can also be a productive and rewarding one in terms of taking stock of what has been achieved and by increasing communication, coordination and cooperation among a range of national agencies, institutions and groups. Hopefully, the information contained in this series of Country Profiles will serve as a useful tool for learning from the experience and knowledge gained by each country in its pursuit of sustainable development.

NOTE TO READERS

The 2002 Country Profiles Series provides information on the implementation of Agenda 21 on a country-by-country and chapter-by-chapter basis (with the exception of chapters 1 and 23, which are preambles). Since Rio 1992, the Commission on Sustainable Development has specifically addressed other topics not included as separate chapters in Agenda 21. These issues of trade, industry, energy, transport and sustainable tourism are, therefore, treated as distinct sections in the Country Profiles. In instances where several Agenda 21 chapters are closely related, for example, chapters 20 to 22 which cover environmentally sound management of hazardous, solid and radioactive wastes, and chapters 24 to 32 which refer to strengthening of major groups, the information appears under a single heading in the Country Profile Series. Lastly, chapters 16 and 34, which deal with environmentally sound management of biotechnology, and transfer of environmentally sound technology, cooperation, capacity-building respectively, are presented together under one heading in those Country Profiles where information is relatively scarce.

At the release of this Country Profile, Albania had not updated it and therefore any new changes will appear on our web page: <http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natlinfo>.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 2: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND RELATED DOMESTIC POLICIES.....	1
CHAPTER 2: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND RELATED DOMESTIC POLICIES - TRADE.....	2
CHAPTER 3: COMBATING POVERTY.....	3
CHAPTER 4: CHANGING COMSUMPTION PATTERNS.....	4
CHAPTER 4: CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS - ENERGY.....	5
CHAPTER 4: CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS - TRANSPORT.....	6
CHAPTER 5: DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS AND SUSTAINABILITY.....	7
CHAPTER 6: PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HUMAN HEALTH.....	8
CHAPTER 7: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT.....	9
CHAPTER 8: INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN DECISION-MAKING.....	10
CHAPTER 9: PROTECTION OF THE ATMOSPHERE.....	12
CHAPTER 10: INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND RESOURCES.....	13
CHAPTER 11: COMBATING DEFORESTATION.....	14
CHAPTER 12: MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS: COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT.....	15
CHAPTER 13: MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS: SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT.....	16
CHAPTER 14: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT.....	17
CHAPTER 15: CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY.....	18
CHAPTER 16 AND 34: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY AND TRANSFER OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND TECHNOLOGY, COOPERATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING.....	19
CHAPTER 17: PROTECTION OF THE OCEANS, ALL KINDS OF SEAS, INCLUDING ENCLOSED AND SEMI-ENCLOSED SEAS, AND COASTAL AREAS AND THE PROTECTION, RATIONAL USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR LIVING RESOURCES.....	21
CHAPTER 18: PROTECTION OF THE QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF FRESHWATER RESOURCES: APPLICATION OF INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND USE OF WATER RESOURCES.....	22
CHAPTER 19: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF TOXIC CHEMICALS, INCLUDING PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN TOXIC AND DANGEROUS PRODUCTS.....	23
CHAPTER 20 TO 22: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF HAZARDOUS, SOLID AND RADIOACTIVE WASTES.....	24
CHAPTER 24 TO 32: STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF MAJOR GROUPS.....	26
CHAPTER 33: FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS.....	28

CHAPTER 35: SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.....	29
CHAPTER 36: PROMOTING EDUCATION, PUBLIC AWARENESS AND TRAINING.....	30
CHAPTER 37: NATIONAL MECHANISMS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.....	31
CHAPTER 38: INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.....	32
CHAPTER 39: INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS.....	33
CHAPTER 40: INFORMATION FOR DECISION-MAKING.....	34
CHAPTER: INDUSTRY.....	35
CHAPTER: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM.....	36

LIST OF COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

ACS	Association of Caribbean States
AMCEN	Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community and Common Market
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development of the United Nations
DESA	Department for Economic and Social Affairs
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECCAS	Economic Community for Central African States
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FIDA	Foundation for International Development Assistance
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GAW	Global Atmosphere Watch (WMO)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEMS	Global Environmental Monitoring System (UNEP)
GESAMP	Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GLOBE	Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment
GOS	Global Observing System (WMO/WWW)
GRID	Global Resource Information Database
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
ICSU	International Council of Scientific Unions
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
IEEA	Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFCS	Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety
IGADD	Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development

ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPCS	International Programme on Chemical Safety
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IRPTC	International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
LA21	Local Agenda 21
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategies
OAS	Organization of American States
OAU	Organization for African Unity
ODA	Official Development Assistance/Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
SACEP	South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARD	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRO	Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNU	United Nations University

WFC	World Food Council
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WWW	World Weather Watch (WMO)

CHAPTER 2: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND RELATED DOMESTIC POLICIES

Decision-Making: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Department for Economic Development and Foreign Co-ordination (DEDAC), and other line ministries are responsible for international cooperation in Albania. Economic development and environmental protection are matters of international common concern. In the course of its development, Albania has become increasingly aware of the fact that its future would not be outside of this international community. In 1993, the government of Albania prepared a National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) which includes an action programme for short, medium and long term actions as well as a series of priority projects related to sewage treatment, urban waste, deforestation, and others. The NEAP was approved by the Government in January 1994.

Programmes and Projects: On the basis of NEAP, several environmental projects and programmes are now being undertaken with the assistance of international donors, including the Environment Programme for Albania- PHARE, National Water Strategy- PHARE, and Water treatment systems in different regions, among others.

Status: No information available.

Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: The latest Public Investment Programme (PIP) (1995-1997) assumes rapid increases in the level of public investment linked to the increasing utilization of external financing. The sectors which have had the most success in securing external financing commitments for their projects have been transport, agriculture and social safety net, where total commitments secured during the years 1994-1995 represented more than 50% of the sectoral resource allocation for the 1995-1997 PIP period. By contrast, relatively little success was achieved in securing financing for the environment, housing, and urban and rural infrastructure.

Cooperation: International co-operation for sustainable development is an important component of the reform policy, with the most significant sources of multilateral aid financing for public investment being the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) and the European Union's PHARE programme. Annual commitments of IDA funding have been falling from US\$50 million in 1995/96 to US\$35 million in 1996/97. Presumably the annual commitments from the EU/PHARE national programme are at a current level of 30-35 million ECU. Funding from other multilateral agencies such as IFAD, the OPEC Fund and the Islamic Development Bank is expected to continue at an existing level of US\$15-20 million per year. The major bilateral donors are Italy, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands and the Kuwait Fund. There is also financing from non-concessional external borrowing, from IBRD, EBRD, and EIB, as well as financing from non-governmental organizations.

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CHAPTER 2: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND RELATED DOMESTIC POLICIES - TRADE

Decision-Making: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, the Department for Economic Development and Foreign Co-ordination (DEDAC), and other line ministries are responsible for trade in Albania.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: The primary focus of international trade in Albania at the present includes sustaining the market-determined exchange rate, maintaining a liberal trade and exchange system, normalization of external financial relations following the agreement on debt restructuring with foreign commercial banks, and strengthening of institutional capacities in the financial services sector for handling foreign transactions. International trade will also be facilitated by Albania's accession to membership of the WTO. A number of radical changes immediately followed the collapse of the communist regime, including removal of the state monopoly, opening of the economy to international markets and competition, and emerging of the domestic private trade sector. The subsequent stage (from 1993 onwards) was characterized by the total removal of restrictions to export-import, as long as international standards were respected, removal of export taxes and the setting up of a system with import differentiated tariffs, stimulation of raw material imports, especially to produce for export, as well as the import of basic food stuffs. As a result, the private trade sector grew, accounting for 75% of total trade in 1995. The free trade policy brought about a new geographical distribution, with Italy, Greece, Germany and Turkey becoming the most important trading partners. Although Albania has sustained a large trade deficit, equivalent to nearly 20% of GDP in 1995, this has been more than offset by inflows of external assistance and by remittances from abroad.

Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: Albania participates in the Central European Initiative, South East European Initiative, and Black Sea Initiative, among others. As far as concerns the trade agreement with the EU, a special intermediate status (before being associated) is already signed and being elaborated. Albania also won the status of observer in GATT and is currently working to meet the requirements for the full membership in WTO.

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CHAPTER 3: COMBATING POVERTY

Decision-Making: Decision-making for poverty-related issues is undertaken by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Institute of Labour and Social Affairs, and Local Governments. Policy is aimed at rebuilding the rural economy on a free-market basis from the bottom up, with a focus on actively alleviating rural poverty, restoring food security, promoting the small-scale private sector, repairing basic rural infrastructure, strengthening local governments, and rooting rural development policies in local tradition and culture. The Albanian Development Fund and NGOs are also participants.

Programmes and Projects: Among the activities aimed at the poor and linkages to the environment are the following: The Urban Credit Programme, which targets unemployed persons or persons receiving economic assistance and who do not have access to banks; Establishment and start-up of the Rural Development Fund (RDF), by Government Decision in January 1993, as an autonomous, transition institution responsible for implementation of the pilot and full-scale projects, under the general direction of a Board of Trustees chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. Reconstitution of the Rural Development Fund, in September 1994, into the Albanian Development Fund (ADF), in order to allow expansion of activities to urban areas under the IDA-financed Urban Works and Micro-enterprise Pilot project.

Status: Approximately 65% of the population lives in the rural areas. The infrastructure in these areas is a primary target of the national strategy given that roads, irrigation and infrastructure for agricultural marketing, water and sewerage systems, and electricity supplies are still far from being developed. Although environmental degradation is not as extensive as in other countries, environment problems exacerbate poverty in many rural areas and have significant health implications in urban areas. Soil erosion, deforestation, and pollution from fertilizers and pesticide runoff are notable throughout large portions of the countryside and are economically significant since approximately 75% of the country's land resources is devoted to two sectors, agriculture and forestry, which together account for 50% of GDP (1995). While the government has established a basic social safety net of cash benefits and food subsidies targeted at the poorer groups in the rural areas, it has to be emphasized that an element of the resource transfers to these areas should be directed at stimulating the local economy in order to prevent the build-up of long-term dependence on social assistance. Rural Infrastructure Works, which have sought to improve the availability of small contractors to work in Albania's rural areas, especially in the mountainous areas; to date, this has successfully resulted, on average, in higher quality rehabilitation.

Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: Small-scale Credit, which provides a highly effective small-scale credit delivery mechanism for villages. As of 31 December 1995, a total of 100 village credit funds were created in 9 districts, and 5143 sub-loans were disbursed to 4750 families. Funding support is provided by the State Budget, by PHARE (rural poverty alleviation and support to development of local community in rural and urban areas); IDA (rural infrastructure).

Cooperation: Funding is also provided by the Governments of France and Italy.

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CHAPTER 4: CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

Decision-Making: The organizations responsible for this issue include the Ministries of: Agriculture and Food; Energy and Mineral Resources; and, Labor and Social Affairs, as well as the Albanian Institute of Statistics and the Department for Economic Development and Foreign Co-ordination (DEDAC). The Government seeks to promote rational consumption by formulating appropriate policies to control spending by government agencies and enterprises; increasing the transparency of personal incomes and profits so that excessively high profits and incomes can be adjusted through taxation; and developing productive forces to establish an efficient system of production involving low energy consumption and less pollution, so that the quantity, quality, and diversity of resources for sustaining life can be improved.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: At present, agriculture remains the most important activity; industrial activities are in decline; but tertiary activities, such as trade, transport, small-size business, and tourism, seem to offer more prospects for future economic development. In the past, government policy emphasized the exploitation of natural resources to meet physical production targets, with the state directly involved through the state and collective farms and through state-owned enterprises in the mining and minerals processing sectors. With the transition to a market-based economy, the government's role has changed to one of ensuring the conservation and sustainable management of the natural resources base. This new role has focused on developing and enforcing a legal and regulatory framework to manage and promote private sector activity, determining the stock of natural resources, assessing and monitoring the use of natural resources, providing agricultural technical and advisory services, granting licenses for mineral extraction, and monitoring and enforcing environmental standards. The establishment of a market economic system has provided new development opportunities, which include opportunities for optimizing the use of productive elements in poverty struck areas, for the development of natural resources, for industrial restructuring, and for increasing employment opportunities. For the first time (1995) since the transition, Albanians as a whole did not consume as much as they produced. In 1992 consumption and investment were nearly twice (1.9) as high as GDP, with investment accounting for only 4-5% and mainly from the state sector. By 1995, consumption and investment were only 1.2 times as high as GDP, with investment 20-21% of GDP. Indeed, total savings for 1995 were estimated at 24-25% of GDP, compared to 22% for the European Union. While increased individual savings add to a sense of security in case of emergency and promise for future consumption, current consumption has remained high, allowing people to fulfill needs long pent-up as well as wants never dreamed before. With the state accounting for 40% of GDP, government policy has played a crucial role in assuring basic health, education and other social services, in encouraging relatively stable prices and other legal and economic aspects favoring, especially, small and medium enterprises, and in investing in public infrastructure. Government expenses, revenue collection, and deficit spending have increased steadily in real terms, with the deficit remaining a fairly constant 32%- 34% of total government spending, except for the election year of 1996 for which a budget deficit of 37% was expected. From a hidden tax system of forced reduced consumption under the previous regime, Albanians face now an open system of taxation. The income tax for 1996 is planned to increase by 4% with those earnings less than 10,000 lek per month (approximately US\$100) exempted. Revenue from taxes decreased as a percentage of total state revenue from 64% in 1994 to 61% in 1995.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: Current expenditures on salaries, social security, and economic assistance continued to dominate the state budget (nearly 70% of the proposed 1996 budget). Investment expenditure accounted for little more than a quarter of state expenditures, with public investment limited to social sectors and public services.

Cooperation: No information available.

CHAPTER 4: CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS - ENERGY

Decision-Making: The new energy policies, including the introduction or increased use of alternative energies (gas, kerosene, electricity) for heating and cooking are expected to reduce the need for fuel wood, and thus contribute to a reduction of deforestation.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: Much of Albania's economic activity is dependent on the utilization of water resources. Over 90% of energy production is from hydropower plants.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 4: CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS - TRANSPORT

Decision-Making: No information available.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: During the period of transition to a market economy, major industrial activities have been shut down because they could not operate on a cost-efficient basis. Consequently, their contribution to air pollution has notably decreased. At the same time, the contribution of the transport sector to air pollution has rapidly increased, mainly in the big cities, due to the high number of old vehicles imported from Western Europe. Since these vehicles are old and have been much used, they do not include any emission control devices. Moreover, leaded gasoline is the fuel of choice because of its relatively low price.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 5: DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Decision-Making: No specific decision-making structure exists to tackle this issue. Different institutions deal with the topic according to their mandates. Among those institutions are the Ministry of: Health and Environment; Agriculture; Education; Energy and Mineral Resources; and, the Albanian Institute of Statistics. Non-governmental organizations dealing with family planning, as well as women's organizations and youth organizations are also active in this area.

Programmes and Projects: Despite the lack of an official policy and strategy regarding the population development, the state has always supported a sort of ideological pronatalist attitude. This has rendered almost impossible the implementation of programmes and policies related to family planning. Emigration abroad was forbidden, and the population movement from the rural to the urban regions was under state control and very much restricted. Following the postwar period up to 1990, the population of Albania has increased at a rate of more than 2% annually. The increase has been incompatible with both the natural resources and the economic development of the country. Based on the data from the general population census in 1989, Albania was populated by 3,182,416 people, whereas in 1995 the registered number was 3,248,836 people. Albania is the only European country with a positive population growth rate. The actual growth rate for the time period 1990-1995 has been estimated around 0.8%. At the same time, the population of Albania is relatively young. Almost one-third of the population is under 14 years of age. The average life expectancy of the population is 71.4 years. Half of the female population of the country is at reproduction age (15-49 years), and few than 10% use contraceptives. On the average, an Albanian woman gives birth to 2.7 children. The number has constantly decreased from 6 in 1960, to 3 in 1990, and to 2.7 in 1995. However, Albania still holds the record of births per woman throughout Europe. The number of abortions in the country is also very high, and many mothers lose their lives following complications from the abortions or during birth. Motherhood mortality continues to be the highest throughout Europe: 37 out of 100,000 of pregnant women die at birth. Infant mortality proceeds at an alarming rate: 23 babies out of 1000 die before reaching the first year of life, and 35 out of 1000 die before the fifth year of age. Migration constitutes another crucial point for Albania. Before 1990, the Government allowed no emigration and only a very reduced migration within the country. For instance, the number of people living in the cities during a 30 years period (1960-1989) increased by only 5% (from 30-35%). Migration abroad became a reality only in 1990 following the reduction of the control on the population's movement. A large scale emigration started, particularly to the neighbouring countries of Greece and Italy. It has been estimated that, in 1992, almost 200,000 people left the country, although many of these people are thought to have returned after short periods. Emigration has mainly affected the southern regions of Albania. Actually no accurate data regarding migration are available, but the massive "exodus" from the rural areas is virtually a certainty. Migration is particularly high in the mountainous northern regions of the country, where the pressure on arable land is particularly high. People from these areas reach mainly the coastal regions and overpopulate the big cities like Tirana.

Status: No information available.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 6: PROTECTING AND PROMOTING HUMAN HEALTH

Decision-Making: The Ministry of Environment and Health is responsible for decision-making in this area. Through the Directorate of the Primary Health Care and a Network of Local Primary Health Care Departments distributed in 37 districts of Albania, the Ministry supervises the implementation of the human health policy. The Ministry of Higher Education and Research and the Ministry of Defense also have authority over certain aspects of the health programme. The Policy of Human Health protection in Albania has been based on the prevention of the outbreaks of infectious diseases through general and specific prophylactic measures as well as on educational programs for the prevention of the so-called "civilization" health problems, through, for example, campaigns against smoking, alcohol, and narcotics, and information about AIDS and family programming. Specific objectives of the primary curative service include the following: To increase the coverage of curative services from 95% to 100% by the year 2005 for urban areas and from 70% to 90% in the year 2005 for rural areas; and to improve the quality of curative services through the use of standardized protocols for diagnosis and treatment. The standardized protocols will be correctly used for 95% of the patients by the year 2005. Specific objectives related to the health status of the population are the following: To contribute to the reduction of the incidence of disease in children (i.e reduce the infant mortality rate to under 25 per 1000 live births in the year 2000; infant mortality in the year 1995 was 30 per 1000); To contribute to the reduction of the maternal mortality ratio to 25 per 100,000 live births by the year 2000 (the maternal mortality ratio was 28.5 per 100,000 live births in the year 1995); To contribute to the reduction of the prevalence of malnutrition to less than 10% for children under five years of age.

Programmes and Projects: Special programmes organized by WHO are dealing with the effects of smoking and alcohol and the ways of preventing and controlling them. A special programme is being implemented on family planning.

Status: During the transition period the Health Care System inherited considerable deficiencies from the former system and initially relied almost completely on medical supplies from humanitarian aid. To increase the efficiency of health care treatment centres, the Government allowed the creation of the private health care system, parallel to the existing state-owned one. In some areas, such as dental care and the network of drug stores and pharmacies, private services thoroughly dominated the existing state structures. The health insurance system underwent a complete restructuring through the creation of the Institute of Public Health Insurance. Insurance for basic health problems is mandatory. A centralized state policy is followed regarding the prevention and control of the outbreaks of transmissible diseases. In the last three years the Public Health Service in Albania was faced with cholera outbreaks and the epidemic of poliomyelitis. The respective campaigns for the control and the eradication of these infections were organized by the Ministry of Health and Environment Protection through the Institute of Public Health and the technical assistance of the World Health Organization. The opening of the country was associated with the free movement of people, and Albania began for the first time to experience the onset of AIDS in its population. According to the official data the number of AIDS-infected people is about 30. Serological AIDS diagnostic tests are regularly performed at the Institute of Public Health and at the Blood Collection and Preservation Centre. The test is confidential and free of charge. There is a reported increase in the use of narcotics, especially from the younger generation. This has led to the creation of a narcotics treatment and rehabilitation unit.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 7: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Decision-Making: The Ministry of Public Works, Territory Adjustment and Tourism is responsible for decision-making in this area.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: Marked differences already exist in human settlements all over the country. On a horizontal approach, which considers settlements from the administrative point of view, it is estimated that one-quarter of the population as a whole has been settled in the coastal regions, which constitute only one-tenth of the surface of the country, while another one-fifth of the population is sprawled across more than one-third of the territory. For the urban population the horizontal differentiation of the settlements is more striking. Thus, within the coastal regions, one-third of the population is urban, but only ten percent of the sparsely populated one-third of the country is urbanized. The population settlements distribution amongst geographic zones reflects major differences. The Albanian Alps, which constitute more than 7% of the entire territory, offer living spaces only for 2% of the population, whereas Myzeqeja, which constitutes 5% of the entire territory of the country, contains almost 12% of the population. As a whole the western flatland side of the country, which constitutes 21% of the territory, holds 53% of the entire population of Albania. On the other hand the central mountainous region of the country which constitutes 48% of the entire territory holds almost 26% of the population as a whole. From a vertical point of view, it has been estimated that 27.6% of the population lives in the administrative units situated at an altitude of 300 m above sea level; 52%, in areas at 301 to 1000 meters above sea level; and 20.4% in the areas above 1000 meters. The majority of the Albanian population (more than 2/3) has been settled in the Western flatland side of the country, the field of Korca and Delvina and along the river's valleys. Most of the remaining one-third of the population has settled along the hilly zones and the river's valleys at the Western flatland side, while the mountainous zones hold only 2% of the population.

Albania is a country of a high density population. Tirana, its capital, is one of the most densely populated cities in Europe (5,000 inhabitants/km²) with a high land use intensity. Built up areas represent over 70% of the total municipal area with one of the lowest ratios of green space per inhabitant. Housing space per capita is the lowest in Europe (7,5 m²). In 1989, 43.4% of flats had only one-room and 35.9% had two rooms. Illegal constructions due to migration from the North-Eastern parts of the country became very common in the years of transition to the market economy. They are typical for the big cities, especially Tirana. Although electrification of the whole country has been completed since 1970, power shortages are very frequent. Energy and heating supplies have become an acute problem. The drinking water infrastructure is old and insufficient to cover the needs. Most of the population uses drinking water from the tap. Telephones are still missing in most of the Albanian families, though efforts are underway with the support of the European Union and IFIs to build new telephone infrastructure, especially in the big cities. Road infrastructure is still very poor, old and not well maintained. The railway system, though old, is still functioning. The only international airport is located in Tirana.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: Albania engages in bilateral cooperation with Turkey, Malaysia, and Israel for housing issues. The PHARE Programme has covered some of the feasibility studies and detailed design in the field of drinking and waste water as well as solid domestic waste.

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CHAPTER 8: INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

Decision-Making: In Albania, environmental management is as new as many other areas of government activity. No institutional structures yet exist for sustainable development and multi-sectoral decisions-making on development priorities. However, in the current sectoral ministries, a division does exist which addresses issues related to environment protection and environmental management. This structure could well be utilized in creating a network of decisions-makers from across the traditional line ministries, including, in particular, the following: the Department for Economic Development and Foreign Co-ordination (DEDAC); the Committee of Environment Protection in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food; the State Secretary of Local Government; the Ministry of Public Affairs, Territory Regulation and Tourism; the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Education and Sports; and the Ministry of Health and Environment. There has been some recent experience with respect to environmental management in Albania. In 1991, a Committee of Environment Protection (CEP) was established. The Committee is attached to the Ministry of Health and is housed by that Ministry, although it operates independently of it. During 1993, the Government of Albania extended the structure of the CEP to include three directories and a legal office. In 1993, the Committee of Environment Protection produced the Environmental Strategy Study in co-operation with the World Bank. One of the main recommendations of this study regards the institutional position of CEP and its relationship with the Government. More concretely, it was suggested that CEP become an independent committee depending on and relating directly to the Prime Minister, or in the best cases, a Ministry of Environment. Four years later, this objective has still not been met. Until 1994, no institutional infrastructure existed to address environmental management at the local level. Recognizing the need for monitoring and policy development capability at the local level, the Government established Regional Environmental Agencies (REAs) in each of 12 prefectures in Albania. These structures at the local level are being developed by CEP. In addition, the Secretariat for Local Government under a State Secretary provides an additional network that can pose a significant potential for reaching municipalities. The first Law on Environmental Protection (nr.7664) was approved in 21.01.1993. In the meantime a draft by-law that deals with the Environmental Impact Assessment is under consideration. Its application into practice is expected to give an impetus to the integration of development and environmental issues in the decision-making in the future. Other draft laws and by-laws are being prepared integrating both environment and development issues. The Environmental Strategy formulated in 1993 constituted the basis for the simultaneous preparation of the first Report on the Environmental Situation in Albania and the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP). These documents made the first efforts in bringing together development and environment in Albania. The impact of all economic activities on the natural environment was considered, and the most seriously affected zones were defined according to the economic activity origin of the environmental damage. The NEAP provided the basis for future actions of the different institutions and organizations, which are obliged to take environmental considerations into account in their development plans. The NEAP of 1993 is actually being updated in order to better fit to the new situation and circumstances. The first environmental NGOs was set up in 1991. NGOs often have taken the lead to point to trade and consumption patterns, which are not sustainable in the longer-term and suggested short-term policy and behavioral changes. Other entities such as institutes and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also play a role in environmental management in Albania. At least ten to fifteen NGOs are active in areas related to Agenda 21 (i.e., trade, economic development and environment), and their activity is based on a 1956 Law on Associations and a 1993 Law on Foundations.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: No information available.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: The Faculty of Natural Sciences in the University of Tirana performs studies in the field of threats to biodiversity, chemical analytical aspects of pollution and physical, chemical and technological aspects of waste water treatment. The studies for degradation of land and soil erosion are performed by the Geography Department in the Faculty of History and Philology. The Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology supervises and manages the studies about the level of toxic substances in the air and water in urban areas, controlling of drinking water supplies and the system of urban waste discharges. The Research Institute of Chemical Technology carries out studies about the inventory of liquid industrial and urban discharges.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: Among the research institutions involved in environmental management are the Institute of Hydro-meteorology of the Academy of Sciences, which deals with the monitoring of air and water pollution. It has a national network of stations for taking water samples, especially in the main rivers to measure the level of pollution. There exist no fixed stations in lakes, and samples are taken only on the spot. The Committee of Sciences and Technology, through its network of research institutes, also carries out studies related to environment in the field of agriculture, mines, geology and construction.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 9: PROTECTION OF THE ATMOSPHERE

Decision-Making: The responsible organizations for this issue in Albania are the Ministry of Health and Environment Protection and the Committee of Environmental Protection.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: During the period of transition to a market economy, major industrial activities have been shut down because they could not operate on a cost-efficient basis. Consequently, their contribution to air pollution has notably decreased. At the same time, the contribution of the transport sector to air pollution has rapidly increased, mainly in the big cities, due to the high number of old vehicles imported from Western Europe. Since these vehicles are old and have been much used, they do not include any emission control devices. Moreover, leaded gasoline is the fuel of choice because of its relatively low price. Albania is the only country in Europe without an air pollution monitoring system in place. Financial support from the PHARE project, Environment Albania 1997, is expected for the carrying out of the study which will anticipate an eventual future strategy for air pollution monitoring all over the country.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: Albania ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1994. It has not signed the Montreal Protocol or its Amendments.

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CHAPTER 10: INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

Decision-Making: The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and its other institutions (e.g, the Land Institution) are responsible for decision-making in this area. Several pieces of legislation were passed in 1995 to facilitate the establishment of a functioning land market, including the law for registration of immovable property, land lease and sale and establishment of full property rights to former state farms. There has been significant technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to help it formulate land legislation and policies. A unit for formulating and analyzing policies for European integration is set up under the Agricultural Projects Office (APO) with EU/PHARE assistance. Studies have been carried out on various land policy issues (including policies to promote optimal land use). National priorities for land management include the following: to establish an efficient market in the sale, purchase and leasing of agriculture land; to create an appropriate institutional framework to promote the efficient use of agricultural land; and to elaborate sustainable land and natural resource managing policies.

Programmes and Projects: A programme to consolidate land ownership, promote effective land management, and develop an efficient land market is underway with the assistance of EU/PHARE, USAID and World Bank.

Status: Seventy-five percent of the country's land resources are devoted to agriculture and forestry activities. Agriculture and associated rural economic activities presently account for over 50% of GDP and employment in Albania. Privatization and liberalization of markets and prices have been particularly rapid in this sector of the economy, which has been a main contributor to the resumption of GDP growth in 1993, 1994 and 1995. However, agricultural production remains mainly subsistence oriented.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: Implementation of the component for registration and cadastral services began in 1994. As of December 1995 land surveying and mapping was completed on 286,000 ha (40% of total land area). The work is underway for setting up a GIS.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 11: COMBATING DEFORESTATION

Decision-Making: The Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the General Directorate of Forests and Pastures and other institutions are responsible for decision-making with respect to forests. Research Institutions and NGOs for forestry conservation and management also participate. In order to improve the situation, enforcement of the Law on forests and forest service police and improved methods of exploitation are indispensable. It is also necessary that work foreseen in the relevant programmes for sanitary cutting, regeneration and reforestation be done. Among other measures, study of the grazing areas and the legal definition of the areas where grazing is and is not allowed, as well as better implementation of the regulations for grazing of animals in the forests are expected to be efficient measures for combating deforestation. These could be complemented by the application of economic instruments (e.g., a tax system) to encourage the raising of animals that do not destroy the forest. The new energy policies, including the introduction or increased use of alternative energies (gas, kerosene, electricity) for heating and cooking are expected to reduce the need for fuel wood, and the use of synthetic materials has already decreased the demand for wood for furniture. In fact, in 1994, the official exploitation of forest resources decreased, while illegal cutting for firewood and construction continued.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: Albania is a country where forests cover 10,447 million ha (about 36% of the total land resources of the country). Approximately 80% of the forests are located in the eastern mountainous area on land with slopes of 20-50%, and thus, highly susceptible to erosion. In this regard, forests play a very important role in the protection of soil throughout the country. About 95% of the forests are State-owned. Deforestation is a major environmental problem in Albania. It is a serious problem in peri-urban and rural areas of the country and one of the most visible pieces of evidence of poor resource management. It is especially pronounced in the more accessible forest areas and less in the less accessible mountainous areas. Though measures have been taken in the last 50 years to protect the forest areas, the reforested area is estimated at only 150,000 ha. It has consisted mainly in species with rapid growth such as pine, robinia, poplar, willows and chestnut. Over the last 20 years, the country is estimated to have lost 20% of its forests, and, in 31% of what remains, the density is only 0.5-0.6 (tree crown).

The main problems related to forests, which were evidenced during the former political and economic regime and/or in the last years can be listed as follows: forest cut for opening of new agricultural lands; forest cut for terracing; forest cut for heating and cooking. Fuel wood used to provide 90-100% of the demand for heating and cooking in all rural and urban areas; forest cut for construction, mining, and wood processing; illegal harvesting 5000 ha were cut down from 1991 to 1992; overgrazing by goats. During the last decade 300,000 ha of forest were transformed into cultivated and pasture lands. This problem is more evident in the Southern part of the country, where the goat population is more densely distributed per each ha of forest. The most endangered plants are especially the re-pruned oak forests and those reproduced on seeds and the ones that have undergone the first phase of exploitation; and fire. Despite the measures taken, about 560 fires were caused during 1993. Fires have covered an area of about 4,000,000 ha and have burned 250 ha. Five hundred nine fire cases were reported in 1994, and these burned an area of about 400 ha.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 12: MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

Decision-Making: Decision-making in this area is the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Committee of Environmental Protection.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: In Albania, there are no areas affected by desertification and drought.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: The International Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification Particularly in Africa has not been ratified.

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CHAPTER 13: MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT

Decision-Making: Decision-making is undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Committee of Environmental Protection. Not much has been planned for the sustainable mountain development in the National Environmental Action Plan and the Environment Strategy Study. This issue has, however, been indirectly dealt with in discussion and plans for Forest development, since most of the forests occur in the areas high above sea level. (Please refer to the section on "Forests" for more information.)

Programmes and Projects: A Pilot Project on Dajti mountain national park, is being financed under PHARE 1993 Programme.

Status: Most of the country is mountainous and hilly. Nevertheless, "mountain areas" are not a specific focus for sustainable development. Part of these regions, especially in the northeastern districts, are targeted as remote areas, and for poverty alleviation and rural development. Terracing for opening new agricultural land has been detrimental to the environment. The problem is regarded to be not only the fault of improper terracing, but also inadequate resources available to farmers for maintenance of hill side terraces. Besides, in areas where hill side terraces are near the grazing lands, there is further pressure on the land that results in erosion. Typical erosion problems are reported to have occurred in the districts of Diber, Elbasan, Pogradec, Korce, Tirane, Shkoder, Berat, Tropoje, and Fier where extensive orchards are grown on terraced steep land.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 14: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Decision-Making: Responsible for this issue are the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, its institutions, Local Government, and, for especially focused issues, other Ministries such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Construction. The major aim of policy in the agriculture sector is to create an environment conducive to private investments to take place. For such an environment to be established, appropriate policy incentives, regulatory and legal framework, working infrastructure, an efficient land market and financial system are required.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: Following a sharp decline in agricultural production after the collapse of the centralized system, Albania become dependant on food aid imports. Nevertheless, especially in the last two years, the country has achieved enormous progress towards reforming the agricultural sector. Already, practically all of the land previously controlled by state-run co-operatives and state farms has been fully privatized and major reforms in price and trade liberalization have been achieved. As a result, for the last year agriculture has been growing at an annual rate of more than fourteen percent. Prior to the privatization of arable land, state farms held twenty-five percent of the agricultural land, usually of higher quality, and the remainder was held by co-operatives. It is estimated that the privatization of state farm and co-operatives has resulted in about 500,000 farms of an average size of 1,4 ha. About fifty percent of the labor force is employed in agriculture and forestry (705,000 people in primary production and an additional 100,000 in related sectors), and two thirds of the population live in rural areas. The Government has initiated a rapid campaign of privatization of the agricultural marketing and processing sector as well. The entire system was in a very distressing situation, and factories were working at five to twenty percent of their 1989 capacity. During 1996 some very positive signs of recovery within that system were registered. Presently, the rural credit system cannot service the needs of the emerging private sector. The Rural Commercial bank, created to take over the deposits, capital, and performing assets of the former Bank for agricultural development, has been set up as a joint stock company and has been placed under banking law. Irrigation is crucial for the development of agriculture. Since 1991, maintenance of irrigation infrastructure and drainage systems has been reduced considerably, and construction work on new or improvement schemes stopped. Under central planning the irrigation network was supervised and maintained by district-based Water enterprises and by specialized state-owned construction companies controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Water enterprises must now make deliveries to about 500,000 individual farmers and collect charges from them as well as maintain the network of channels. Agricultural activities could have a serious impact on environment through soil erosion and degradation through deforestation. The steady increase in livestock over the past two years could lead to overgrazing that, in turn, could exacerbate soil erosion. Hillside terracing has been widely practiced over the past 30 years and has lead to soil erosion. Past excessive use of state subsidized pesticides and fertilizers, has lead in some areas to excessive concentration of chemicals in the soil. It amounted to an average of 468 kg fertilizer/ha and of 9 kg of pesticide and herbicide/ha in 1990. Nevertheless, the fertilizer and pesticide consumption has decreased considerably recently.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: The programme for improving agricultural vocational education, which is the joint responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture, is included in the programme for vocational education under the education sector. Further training support will be required to support the programme to develop institutional capacities at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: See under "Cooperation."

Cooperation: Finance is provided by the Albanian Government, the World Bank, FAO, IFAD, EU/PHARE, the Islamic Development Bank, and the Governments of Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Austria, France.

CHAPTER 15: CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Decision-Making: Decision-making in this area is the responsibility of the Committee on Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: Considering the small size of the country, Albania is rich in biodiversity. It still houses species which are endangered at the European level. The loggerhead turtle has been found along Ionian coasts where the narrow virgin beaches are suitable sites for laying eggs. The Dalmatian Pelican is a threatened species which has its only nesting site in the Karavasta Lagoon. The population is actually estimated at 200 couples. The monk seal, which is practically extinct in the Mediterranean, except for the isolated parts of the Aegean and Adriatic, is found in Albania. Sixty-three mammals, two hundred fifteen birds, thirty-one reptiles and thirteen amphibian species are reported. Many of them are endangered or threatened species. Dynamite fishing and the use of drift nets are still used in the territorial waters of Albania. The mountain alpine forest ecosystems are also rich in biodiversity. The higher areas are dominated by beech and pine forests and preserve a large number of endemic and sub-endemic plant species.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: The Convention on Biological Diversity was signed in 1994. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora has not been signed.

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CHAPTERS 16 AND 34: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY AND TRANSFER OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND TECHNOLOGY, COOPERATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

Decision-Making:

Technologies: No information available.

Biotechnologies: The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Ministry of Health and Environment are the Governmental authorities responsible for biotechnology. Also involved, particularly in implementation, are the Institute of Public Health (former Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology), Institute of Veterinary Research, Institute of Animal Breeding Research, Antibiotic Enterprise, Institute of Potatoes and Vegetables Research, Biomass Station, and Faculty of Natural Sciences, among others.

Programmes and Projects:

Technologies: No information available.

Biotechnologies: No information available.

Status:

Technologies: No information available.

Biotechnologies: During the Communist regime in the country the totalitarian state pursued a policy of producing everything relying on "own efforts". Within the framework of this policy, particular attention was given to the production of bioproducts, which were considered by the former regime as "strategic goods". Therefore, many research institutions were involved in bio-research and developed production lines for bioproducts, including vaccines, antigens, serums and antibiotics. The technology adopted for this purpose was Chinese, and most of bio-production lines were installed and began to function during the years of Albanian-Chinese friendship. There was little interest shown by the state to improve the biotechnological lines, especially in view of their possible impacts on the environment. In many cases the by-products of the bio-lines underwent no special treatment and were discharged into the municipal sewage or dump sites. Generally, units within the production units themselves performed the control of the bioproducts for their harmlessness, sterility and other safety parameters, and no objective evaluation of the final product was allowed. Therefore, in some cases, the bioproduct turned out to be a contaminant at the final destination. Considering that there was no proper market request for bioproducts, their production and distribution were performed in a centralized way and in many cases the delivered aliquots were not used at all, and, after expiring, were not always returned to the delivery center for proper waste treatment. Following the fall of the Communist regime and the onset of the free market society, most of the state-controlled biotechnology lines underwent a deep crisis. Due to their obsolete technologies, final products were of low quality and safety and very costly, and thus unable to compete with imported bioproducts. Therefore, some of the biotechnology lines were forced to close down their activities. In some cases, the State was unable to properly manage the biotechnology production lines, and so initiated their privatization, such as the case of the Antibiotic Enterprise in Tirana. In some other cases the state-owned biotechnology lines (especially vaccine production lines) reduced their own production activities and became distributors of imported bioproducts by keeping a certain commission for the performed activity.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising:

Technologies: No information available.

Biotechnologies: No information available.

Information:

Technologies: No information available.

Biotechnologies: No information available.

Research and Technologies:

Technologies: See under "Status."

Biotechnologies: No information available.

Financing:

Technologies: No information available.

Biotechnologies: No information available.

Cooperation:

Technologies: No information available.

Biotechnologies: No information available.

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CHAPTER 17: PROTECTION OF THE OCEANS, ALL KINDS OF SEAS, INCLUDING ENCLOSED AND SEMI-ENCLOSED SEAS, AND COASTAL AREAS AND THE PROTECTION, RATIONAL USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR LIVING RESOURCES

Decision-Making: The Committee of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Public Works, Territory Adjustment and tourism are Responsible for this area.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: No information available.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea has not been ratified.

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CHAPTER 18: PROTECTION OF THE QUALITY AND SUPPLY OF FRESHWATER RESOURCES: APPLICATION OF INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND USE OF WATER RESOURCES

Decision-Making: Responsibility for developing water policies and strategies is vested with the autonomous National Water Committee. The administration and implementation of water strategies is undertaken by the Ministry of Public Works, and Territory Adjustment, in conjunction with the Ministry of Mineral and Energy Resources. The government has begun the preparation of a National Water Strategy with funding by the EU to set out policies concerning the efficient management and protection of water resources and to specify an appropriate legal framework for the management of water resources. The government's role in the management of water resources has been to develop and implement policies and strategies that promote conservation and the efficient use of water. The government is committed to commercializing both water supply and sewerage services. This would require the introduction of an appropriate regulation framework to regulate the operations of privatized water companies.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: Albania has abundant water resources, composed of rivers, lakes, underground waters and springs and coastal waters. The basin of the Albanian hydrographical network is settled in the South Western part of the Balkan Peninsula. The rivers of Albania are short in length with small hydrographical basins because of the meridional position of the country. Lakes are important components of the Albanian hydrographical network. In Albania there are 247 natural lakes of various types and dimensions. The general water area of the Albanian lakes is 461 km². Much of Albania's economic activity is dependent on the utilization of water resources. Over 90% of energy production is from hydropower plants, while agriculture is critically dependent on irrigation. However, inadequate and poorly maintained infrastructure in each of the water-using sectors and an absence of institutional co-ordination has resulted in the lack of water supplies becoming a key constraint to many economic activities and to satisfying basic social needs. Additional resources will be required to rehabilitate water supply systems in areas other than Tirana and Durrës, and to improve sewerage systems throughout the country.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: See under "Cooperation."

Cooperation: The EU provides financial assistance.

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CHAPTER 19: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF TOXIC CHEMICALS, INCLUDING PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC IN TOXIC AND DANGEROUS PRODUCTS

Decision-Making: Decision-making for toxic chemicals is the responsibility of the Committee of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: During the former regime, agriculture in particular made considerable use of toxic chemicals mainly as fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides. While fertilizers were mainly produced in the country, herbicides and insecticides were generally imported. Since there was the tendency of referring to the cheapest offers for importing such goods, the pesticides that dominated the agricultural activities were organochlorine pesticides, known for their low biodegradability and long persistence as residues in the environment. There were seventy different kinds of pesticides, many of which were highly toxic. There was no law that could impose restrictions on the type of the chemical allowed to enter and get used in the country. However, in 1993, a law on Plant Protection Service was passed, which dealt with pest management. Since that time a decrease in the use of pesticides has been reported. Apart from agricultural activities which played the major role in the release of toxic chemicals in the environment, industrial activities making use of obsolete technologies contributed with their discharges of toxic chemicals into the environment as by-products. These included, for example, the Caustic Soda Enterprise in Vlora, the Metallurgic Combine Complex in Elbasan, The Battery and Accumulators Enterprise in Berati, and the Cooper Smelter Enterprise in Rubik. The onset of a free-market oriented economy in the country brought about a considerable decrease of fertilizer use in Agriculture and led to the reduction of their accumulation in soil and plants. Hence soil contamination and its contribution to the contamination of water resources (surface and ground waters) was reduced as well. Another factor that has contributed to the lessening of pollution from agricultural activities is the rather low level of pesticide use in the last years, mainly due to the little concern shown by the farmers and the generally restricted possibilities for elimination of agricultural crop damages. Thus a reduction of soil contamination levels from pesticide tracks has been observed. However a critical environmental issue is the presence of inherited pesticides which are located and deposited all over the country. By the end of 1993, there were about 2700 tonnes of used pesticides either derived from the fund of the ex-agricultural cooperatives and enterprises or not used before their expiration date. Out of this amount, a stock of 465 tonnes of pesticides, which were about to expire, were sent during 1991-1992 under the disguise of aid from the former German Democratic Republic and were deposited mainly in Bajza station (Shkoder) and Milot. At the continuous insistence of the Committee of Environmental Protection and at the support of the NGO Green Peace, the Ministry of Environment in the Federal Republic of Germany took the responsibility to allocate funds for repackaging the pesticides and returning them to Germany, in cooperation with the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Thus by the end of October 1994, these pesticides were taken away from Albania, avoiding a danger to the whole country. Still, at the end of 1994, about 1500 tonnes of pesticides were in the country, not including another 600 tonnes from the Chemical Enterprise in Durres (wastes from lindan production). Taking all of this into consideration, it is important that privatization of the pesticide warehouses not be allowed, in order to ensure that the pesticides not be misused or diverted.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTERS 20 TO 22: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF HAZARDOUS, SOLID AND RADIOACTIVE WASTES

Decision-Making:

Hazardous wastes: No information available.

Solid wastes: Decision-making in this area is the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Works, Territory Adjustment and Tourism and the Committee of Environmental Protection. Urban solid waste management in Albania is the duty of the municipalities. With assistance from PHARE Environment 1993, a National Waste Management Plan and a National Water Strategy have been developed.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

Programmes and Projects:

Hazardous wastes: No information available.

Solid wastes: No information available.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

Status:

Hazardous wastes: No information available.

Solid wastes: Urban waste management has become a critical issue and an environmental priority in Albania. The situation with urban waste is worsening as time goes. It is of a crucial importance to start acting immediately in order to avoid further complications. Not a single waste water treatment plant exists in the country. Urban waste has always and is still being collected in unprotected containers all over Albania. After the change of the political and economic regime, the load of domestic waste has been increased drastically due to the increased and changed consumption patterns. The average of waste generated per capita per day is reported to be 0,4 kg. No waste treatment technologies are applied in the country. Dump sites are often located by the sea or the rivers, constituting a continuous threat to the quality of the water. Problems rise with the transportation of waste and withdrawal from the containers which are placed close to the apartment blocks. They not only damage the aesthetic values of the urban areas but also open the door to a number of infectious diseases and epidemics. The important changes which have taken place in the country as a consequence of the political changes of the last years have made indispensable the change of the whole management system adopted by the past regime.

A new problem which has recently arisen is construction waste, which is left in place after the completion of buildings. No regulation requires that the construction companies withdraw the wastes that they generate. No separate disposal is foreseen for industrial waste. Both urban and industrial wastes are discharged untreated in any manner. The closing down of almost all of the industrial activities in the last years makes impossible the quantification of the waste generated by them. From a qualitative point of view, it is possible to state that the use of backward technologies in the past has resulted in an uncontrolled stock of industrial waste. For the time being and as long as the industries will be closed, the more urgent problem is to clean-up sites that have already been contaminated. At the same time, with the anticipation that the economy will grow and industrial activities will flourish, it is essential that rules and standards be adopted in the short term to limit the production of industrial waste. Sewage waters are discharged directly to the sea or rivers, posing a threat to the environmental quality of waters and tourism development. Old sewage pipes are often placed over the drinking water pipes. Their leakages (which often occur due to the old and bad quality of the pipes) pollute the drinking water. Water related epidemics such as cholera and poliomyelitis have occurred. Untreated sewage water is used for irrigation leading not only to health problems but also adversely affecting the soil quality, vegetation and aquatic resources.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising:

Hazardous wastes: No information available.

Solid wastes: No information available.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

Information:

Hazardous wastes: No information available.

Solid wastes: No information available.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

Research and Technologies:

Hazardous wastes: No information available.

Solid wastes: No information available.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

Financing:

Hazardous wastes: No information available.

Solid wastes: No information available.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

Cooperation:

Hazardous wastes: Albania has signed but not yet ratified the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

Solid wastes: Cooperation exists primarily through the EU PHARE programme, including assistance to the development of a National Waste Management Plan and a National Water Strategy, and the design and construction of a Waste water Treatment Plant for the cities of Vlora and Pogradec as well as waste water treatment plants and drinking water supply for Saranda.

Radioactive wastes: No information available.

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CHAPTERS 24 TO 32: STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF MAJOR GROUPS

Women: Status: The involvement of Albanian women in decision-making in both politics and management is generally low, although 1995 saw a slight improvement in some indicators, including the fact that three women began to hold high ministerial positions. Although there is no adverse attitude towards women serving in high governmental and political positions, little has been done concretely at national level to promote women into decision-making positions. Out of the 580 directors of directorates in ministries and state institutions, only 80 are women (1996). No women serve as mayors or heads of local government. A parliamentary women's group was created in 1995 to focus on women rights. This group played an important role in preparing the participation of Albanian women at the Fourth Global Conference on Women in Beijing. Out of the twenty women's NGOs and groups currently existing in the country, five are affiliated with political parties, two have a religious basis and four are business-oriented. Not all of them are well organized or capable of carrying out sophisticated projects. Shortcomings within these organizations do exist, including the concentration of most activities in the capital, Tirana, an emphasis on urban women, weak participation of young women, and the lack of sufficient publicity about their activities. Cooperation: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was ratified on 11 May 1994.

Children and youth: Status: A number of youth organizations are based on political party affiliation. There is a tendency among youth to come together in various cultural, sports, ecological, and other youth clubs, i.e. from the Boy Scouts to Youth Idealists, from the Student Association for Propagation of Sex Education to the Youth Ecologists "Pearl." Unemployment among youth, under the age of 20, has declined from 44,820 in 1993 to 20,701 in 1995; among the age group, 21 to 34, the figures for the same time period have also declined, from 147,190 to 78,069. Regarding participation in society and political life, Albanian youth has swung from enthusiastic initial participation to withdrawal and apathy, and then back again to active participation in public political life. In a country with a high percentage of youth, 20% of the current population is 15-24 years old. Participation of youth in public life is an important indicator of public participation in general. According to some surveys, 15-24 year-olds appear to be half as interested in politics as the 25-35 year-old groups and four times less interested than those 35-39 years old. The number of young people in important posts and in the administration is still small.

Indigenous people: No information available.

Non-governmental organizations: Status: The flourishing of a large number of NGOs and civil institutions is indicative of an active environment and of involvement in socio-political and economic issues. However, not all of them are currently active. The Government and Civil Society have devoted more attention to the participation of women in politics. Political parties have attempted to increase the number of women candidates, and NGOs are offering training to women both as candidates and as voters. These activities include job creation for women, access to opportunities for obtaining financial support, and the collection and analysis of data specific to women. Public awareness campaigns are also being promoted. NGOs often have taken the lead to point to trade and consumption patterns which are not sustainable in the longer-term and suggested short-term policy and behavioural changes. In Albania, approximately 300 NGOs are registered, but only 50 or so are active. In the area related to concerns of Agenda 21 i.e. trade, economic development and environment, at least 10-15 NGOs are active.

Local authorities: Decision-Making: Until 1994, no institutional infrastructure existed to address environmental management at the local level. Recognising the need for monitoring and policy development capability at the local level, the Government established Regional Environmental Agencies (REAs) in each of twelve prefectures in Albania. Most REAs are staffed by one to two professionals. It is expected that operationalization of REAs in all prefectures will take additional time as some prefectures have not responded to the legal requirements posed by the central government. In addition to these structures at the local level that are being developed by the Committee of Environment Protection, the Secretariat for Local Government under a State Secretary provides an additional network which can pose a significant potential for reaching municipalities. The secretariat is responsible for preparing legislation for structures and functioning of the local government, for determining relations with national government and for advocating the interest of municipalities at the national level.

Workers and trade unions: No information available.

Business and industry: No information available.

Scientific and technological community: Status: Among the research institutions involved in environmental management are the Institute of Hydro-meteorology of the Academy of Sciences which deals with the monitoring of air and water pollution. It has a national network of stations for taking water samples, especially in the main rivers to measure the level of pollution. There exist no fixed stations in lakes, and samples are taken only on the spot. The Committee of Sciences and Technology, through its network of research institutes, also carries out studies related to environment in the field of agriculture, mines, geology and construction. The Faculty of Natural Sciences in the University of Tirana performs studies in the field of threats of biodiversity, chemical analytical aspects of pollution, as well as physical, chemical and technological aspects of waste water treatment. The studies for degradation of land and soil erosion are performed by the Geography Department in the Faculty of History and Philology. The Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology supervises and manages the studies about the level of toxic substances in the air and water in urban areas, controlling of drinking water supplies and the system of urban waste discharges. The Research Institute of Chemical Technology carries out studies about the inventory of liquid industrial and urban discharges.

Farmers: Programmes and Projects: One of the government's main priorities in the agriculture sector is to promote better management and sustainable use of natural resources. To this end, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food has initiated a programme to promote private sector agricultural activity through the development of farm and agribusiness management advisory services. The programme is being supported by Germany, USAID, FAO, Italy and the Netherlands, and involves the establishment of business advisory services and farm services. In addition, the Government has prepared a new programme designed specifically to assist with the restructuring of the agro-processing sector. It would provide business advice and credit lines to entrepreneurs in agro-processing and would strengthen the capacity of local institutions to provide technical services to entrepreneurs. The programme for facilitating farmers' and agro-processing entrepreneurs' access to credit started in 1993 with a series of measures intended to develop the institutional capacity of the Rural Commercial Bank. Cooperation: Several credit lines have been made available for agriculture, agro-industry, mechanization and agro-services, for supporting the development of farmers' associations to overcome constraints caused by land fragmentation. These have been co-financed by the World Bank, EU/PHARE, Italy and Germany.

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CHAPTER 33: FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS

Decision-Making: Among the new economic instruments that have been adopted are external sector policies: sustaining the market-determined exchange rate, maintaining liberal trade and exchange systems, normalizing external financial relations, following the agreement on debt restructuring with foreign commercial banks, and strengthening institutional capacities in the services sector for handling foreign transactions. International trade will also be facilitated by Albania's accession to membership of the WTO, and private sector development. This will require further refinements to the legal framework for the market economy and more rapid progress in the creation of the modern commercial banking system. This will be backed up by the completion of the enterprise privatization programme and the seeking of strategic investors in the mining and petroleum sectors and in some public utility operations. Key changes in the national budget to address sustainable development include: credit policy: The strict limits on credit expansion. The domestic budget deficit will be covered by non-inflationary financing through the issuing of treasury bills; and fiscal management: A strong fiscal policy stance will be maintained aimed at reducing the budget deficit to sustainable levels. This involves measures to broaden the tax system, improvements in tax administration, elimination of the remaining price subsidies, and rationalization of social services, public administration reform and utilization of external support. This in turn will require strengthening of institutional capacities for budgetary planning, accounting, reporting and expenditure control.

Programmes and Projects: The reform programme aims to maintain high rates of economic growth while holding inflation to below a certain reasonable level (under 10%), maintaining an adequate level of foreign reserves and making progress towards balance of payments viability. The strategy for achieving these objectives involves the following: removing barriers to private sector development; increased public saving and investment; control of credit expansion; control of public expenditure, and especially the public sector wage bill; strengthening market-oriented structural reforms; and continuing mobilization of external support as far as possible on concessional terms. The economic reform programme, which has been supported by substantial external financial assistance, achieved considerable success. Targets for economic growth, inflation and external adjustment were met. The key macro-economic measures which have contributed to this success were the implementation of a strong monetary policy based on reductions in the domestic financing requirements of the budget and strict limitations on credit to state enterprises. This has been backed up by policies to strengthen revenue performance and fiscal management, the implementation of an incomes policy and further liberalization of the trading system including the simplifying of tariff structures. Recently, these considerable successes have been interrupted by the sudden collapse of the "pyramid-scheme" based companies.

Status: Public sector investment has increased from about 7.1% of the GDP of 1993, to about 8.6% of 1995 GDP. This increase was accompanied by an increase of public investment. The foreign public investment finance reached over 50% of the total public investment in 1995. In the private sector, it is expected that more will be done in light manufacturing and other productive sectors. According to approximate calculations, foreign investments to the end of 1995 were estimated to have reached US\$210 million, excluding investment in oil exploration. estimated about US\$200 million. Foreign investors accounted for a growing percentage of private investment, with the major share coming from Italian investors (53%) and Greek investors (27%). Most private investments are concentrated in light industry and food processing as well as the fuel and other mineral industries.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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CHAPTER 35: SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Decision-Making: The Albanian Government, through the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, has initiated the process of integration of Education and Research and the enhancement of scientific understanding. The final aim of this process will be the strengthening of the leading role of the Universities as centers of education and research, through the inclusion of research Institutes as functional parts of the Universities. Apart from strengthening of scientific understanding, this will ensure a rationale and better use of the scientific staff and of the available financial sources. Applied research has been and continues to be a priority in the scientific policy of Albania. In general, it follows the economic priorities of the country such as agriculture, extraction and processing ores industry, environmental protection etc.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: No information available.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: A Network of Educational and Research Institutions all over the country divulges scientific knowledge in almost every branch of science. Education is the main responsibility of Universities, whereas research is mainly carried out by Research Institutes. The two act as independent administrative structures.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: Currently, research needs focus on: updating the scientific information; installation of new equipment; and development of appropriate technical and practical skills by research staff.

Financing: Research costs are partly subsidized by the state budget and to a larger extent by international funds.

Cooperation: The present organizational structure does not offer the necessary backgrounds for scientific integration and co-operation.

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CHAPTER 36: PROMOTING EDUCATION, PUBLIC AWARENESS AND TRAINING

Decision-Making: The Ministry of Education is responsible for policy development, sector programme planning and management capacities in this area, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection supports job training and the development of small enterprises. The policies and strategies for education aim at: improving the facilities for delivering education through a programme of rehabilitation, reconstruction, and re-equipping facilities; updating the education curriculum at all levels; developing skilled teaching staff; establishing an effective system of education management to ensure quality assessment and control; and ensuring a more efficient utilization of facilities and staff and reduce the demands on the state budget. Because of their social benefits, services in these sectors are generally unsuited for privatization. The government policies emphasize the "protection" of services and the implementation of reform measures aimed at making services more efficient and better targeted. The Ministry of Education's objectives for the sector are to ensure the provision of a basic education for all Albanians and to meet the professional and technical skills required in a market economy. Among the Major Groups involved are the Pedagogical Institute, which is developing its role in instigating and advising the Government on key issues in the sector such as school governance, curriculum development, and quality assurance. The Institute of Labor and Social Affairs is engaged in studying the relationships between labor market and vocational and technical training. And some NGOs, notably SOROS Foundation For Open Society and different Italian NGOs, such as Don Bosco, among others, are providing financial support for the realization of education research projects at different levels.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: In general, indicators of quality and access within the education sector have deteriorated during the early 1990s as the result of the poor conditions of education (including inadequate facilities, poorly motivated staff due to poor salaries and working conditions, outdated curricula, untrained teachers, shortages of equipment and books). This has been the result of critically inadequate funding for the education sector, which averaged only 9% of the total budget. In 1996, the percentage had grown to 11%. Education is being reoriented also to integrate information on the environment into the curricula and to improve the quality of all levels of education in order to ensure that an educated adult population and work force is being prepared: to rehabilitate and rationalize existing education facilities to suit the changing demographic structure; and to support the restructuring of secondary education, emphasizing a general education and a more broadly based vocational education system.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: A separate fund, entitled the Training, Employment, and Enterprise Fund (TEEF), administered by a unit within the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, has been set up to fund organizations that provide job training and support the development of small enterprises.

Cooperation: A range of different international and bilateral donors are active in this field. At present, foreign donors are providing significant amounts to help improve both the physical infrastructure and the know-how of the education and training system. The most important donors in this area are UNICEF, UNESCO, the World Bank, EU/PHARE, and SOROS, in addition to Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States.

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CHAPTER 37: NATIONAL MECHANISMS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

This issue has been covered under the heading Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising in the various chapters of this Profile.

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CHAPTER 38: INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

This issue deals mainly with activities undertaken by the UN System.

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CHAPTER 39: INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AND MECHANISMS

This issue has been covered under **Cooperation** in the various chapters of this Profile.

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CHAPTER 40: INFORMATION FOR DECISION-MAKING

This issue has been covered either under Chapter 8 or under the heading **Decision-Making** in the various chapters of this Profile.

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INDUSTRY

Decision-Making: No information available.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: No information available.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available .

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Decision-Making: No information available.

Programmes and Projects: No information available.

Status: Domestic resources have been particularly limited for natural resource management. Consequently, foreign cooperation is considered important in financing the public programmes in order to facilitate the utilization of the country's natural resources on a sustainable basis and to develop them in such a way as to ensure their lasting contribution to overall development, including, and especially, eco-tourism.

Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising: No information available.

Information: No information available.

Research and Technologies: No information available.

Financing: No information available.

Cooperation: No information available.

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