

## CROATIA

### 3. LAND

The concept of sustainable development has been integrated and elaborated within the framework of all the policies and plans of the Republic of Croatia. Since becoming independent in 1991 the Republic of Croatia has been creating sectoral policies and legislation based on AGENDA 21. Moreover, the intensive harmonization of national legislation within the process of adjustment for the accession to the European Union, which is currently in progress, has brought the obligation of additional amendments and harmonization.

Respecting the central topic of the Convention, the most important strategies and plans, the indicators of a national policy which framework includes the key guidelines for the establishment and implementation of the measures of sustainable development, are the following:

**1. Draft – Strategic framework for the development of Croatia 2006 -2013** – The document of the Croatian Government which determines the main guidelines for the development of Croatia in the next seven years:

- achieving an intensive real GDP and employment growth, as well as a better standard of living in comparison with rich European regions;
- achieving higher competitiveness of national economy in comparison with developed European regions;
- reduction of regional inequalities within the country by creating better conditions for socio-economic development in least developed regions.

1. **Physical Planning Strategy (1997)** is the basic document of physical planning and represents a basis for decision making considering interventions in the environment and physical planning of smaller units and plans at local levels. **The Physical Planning Programme (1999)** was passed for the purpose of the implementation of the Strategy. It provided a basis for the organization, protection, use and purpose of space, the system of central places and the system of national infrastructure development and guidelines and measure for environmental protection and promotion.

**3. National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) and National Strategy for Environmental Protection (2002)** – The Environmental Strategy is completely based on the principles of sustainable development and the document on the principles of the integration of the environmental protection policy in sectoral policies; partnership and shared responsibility; subsidiarity; changes in production patterns; the use of a larger number of instrument, mostly economic.

**4. National Strategy for Regional Development (2006) NSRD** – represents a framework for regional development management that is characterized by establishing a unique system and defining a clear strategic orientation.

**5. Agriculture and Fishery Strategy (2002), Strategy for State-Owned Agricultural Land Management (2001), Rural Development Strategy (2003), Agriculture and Rural Zone Programme (2003)** are the documents in which the established priorities of the agriculture policy are elaborated through the intensification of changes of the structural policies such as: agriculture policy, rural development, the growing of family farms, the diversification of activities on family farms, the development of manufacturing organizations etc. The measures of the agriculture policy primarily refer to: the allocation of the right to use and sell state-owned agricultural land; the promotion of agricultural land management and its protection from contaminants.

The other important documents which cover sustainable land management and drought mitigation, are the following: National Island Development Programme (1997), National Strategy and Action Plan for the Protection of Biological and Landscape Diversity (1997), Energetic Sector Development Strategy (2002), National Ecological Agriculture Strategy (2005 – 2010), National Forest Policy and Strategy (2003), National Water Protection Plan (1999) and Water Management Basis Draft.

In the last year the process of harmonization of the National legislation with the legislation of the EU has put the obligation of amendments of various measures for natural resources conservation, promotion of their sustainable

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use and the improvement of the economy in the hands of the National legislation and politics. The process is especially evident in agriculture and rural development through the additional integration of measures such as the enactment of the Rules on Good Agricultural Practice, measures for additional support of ecological and traditional production in agriculture, ecotourism etc.

Within the framework of changes in agriculture policy, it is necessary to single out the launched reform of the cadastre and land registry system. The arrangement of the cadastre and land registry is a comprehensive project of the Croatian Government initiated for the establishment of an efficient land registry and cadastre system. The implementation of the project which is intended to stimulate the growing and increasing of agricultural land in the possession of family farms, started in the beginning of 2003.

According to the Forest Policy and Strategy one of the primary measures is the introduction of Government support for the measures of fire precautions and civil protection. The Croatian Government has implemented the Programme for the Rehabilitation of Wood- and Farmlands on Islands and Coastal Area. Significant means have been provided from the National Budget and budgets of units of regional and local self-government for the purpose of the modernization of fire escape routes and fire-prevention partitions.

The Croatian Government initiated the "National Project of Irrigation and Land and Water Management" by its decision from the year 2004. The project is intended to organize irrigation and the growing of agricultural land. Replacements in agricultural production structure connected with the introduction of new profitable crops, should enable the prerequisites for the application of new methods in the irrigation technology, which, on the other hand, should result in efficient use of natural resources and finally in rural development. According to the NPILWM the irrigated area shall be expanded from current 7,200 ha to at least 30,000 ha within the next four years. A team of Croatian experts assisted by international consultants is in charge of the implementation of the project.

Furthermore, within the framework of the project "National Capacity Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management" (Project GEF NCSA GF/2740-03 GF3010-03) the following priorities and measures for the implementation of the convention have been proposed:

- necessity of an inventory of soil and land condition
- establishing legislation for soil/land protection
- formulating a strategy for sustainable soil and land management
- implementing the information soil and land system
- preparing plans and programmes for additional irrigation
- sustainable use of soil and water
- drought programme, condition monitoring and changes in relevant environmental components
- increasing efficiency to prevent and combat fires
- promoting and introducing environmentally acceptable technologies in agriculture and forestry
- strengthening of public awareness on real land degradation and negative drought effects
- jačanje svijesti javnosti o stvarnim problemima oštećenja tla i zemljišta, te negativnim posljedicama suše