MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENT IN THE LOCAL STRATEGIES IN CHERNOBYL AFFECTED AREAS PROJECT

Annual Project Report 2012

KYIV 2012
**INDEX**

**CHAPTER 1 – CONTEXT:** .......................................................... 3

1.1. Project Background ........................................................................... 3
1.1.1. Project genesis ........................................................................... 3
1.1.2. Goal and strategy ........................................................................ 3

1.2. Situation Analysis ........................................................................... 4
1.2.1. Legal framework ........................................................................ 4
1.2.2. Project operational context ........................................................... 5
1.2.3. Year baseline analysis ................................................................. 6

**CHAPTER 2 – PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS:** ........................................... 8

2.1. Development results ...................................................................... 8
2.1.1. Environmental assessment of the pilot territories ......................... 8
2.1.2. Capacity development trainings on mainstreaming environment at the local level ............................................................. 9
2.1.3. Pilot projects on raising awareness on local environmental issues ................................................................. 11
2.1.4. Study tour on best environmental practices .................................... 12
2.1.5. “Environmental Forum of Chernobyl affected regions – 2012” .................................................................................. 13

2.2. Management and Effectiveness ....................................................... 14
2.2.1. Project implementation & monitoring activities ........................... 14
2.2.2. International partnership / Knowledge network contribution ............ 15

**CHAPTER 3 – THE OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE** ...................................... 16

**ANNEXURE** .................................................................................. 17

**ANNEXES**

Chapter 1 – Context:

1.1. Project Background

1.1.1. Project genesis

The Chernobyl accident occurred on 26th April 1986 led to the radioactive fallout over a large territory of Ukraine. As of December 2012, over two million people continue to live in 2293 Ukrainian settlements (villages, towns and cities) that have the status of radioactively contaminated “zones” according to the Legal Act of 1991.

National Governments of the three most affected countries as well as the international community, civil society organizations, numerous bilateral and multilateral donors, have contributed to numerous efforts to overcome the consequences of the accident.

However, even 26 years after Chernobyl accident, the population of the affected areas faces a lot of developmental challenges.

In recognition of these challenges, the UN Action plan on Chernobyl to 2016 has been endorsed in 2007 and provides a practical framework for implementation of the Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development for the Affected Regions.

The strategy to overcome the negative legacy of the Chernobyl accident until recently has mainly focused on economic recovery and social development of the affected territories. The environment – third cushion of the sustainable development paradigm - has been addresses mostly in connection with the radioactive contamination.

However, for many settlements, the radiological situation has significantly changed over time. According to the latest radiological monitoring of 2011, over 80% of settlements with the current status of contaminated could get rid of the “radiation polluted zone” status.

At the same time, common environmental issues, such as unauthorized waste dumping, water pollution, inefficient energy usage, etc. are underestimated both by local authorities and general population of the affected territories.

Environmental considerations therefore need to be included (“mainstreamed”) into the local strategies to ensure sound decision-making that drive further development of the Chernobyl affected territories.

1.1.2. Goal and strategy

The local authorities tend to underestimate environmental factors when making decisions about prospective development of settlements or rayons.

Compared to indicators of economic and social aspects, environmental and sustainable development indicators are a relatively new phenomenon. The Rio Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, and other similar environmental milestone activities, recognized the need for better and more knowledge and information about environmental conditions, trends, and impacts.

UNDP Project “Mainstreaming environment in the local strategies in Chernobyl affected areas” is working with three pilot territories affected by Chernobyl disaster: Boguslav rayon (Kyiv region),
Rokytne rayon (Rivne region) and one cluster consisting of a city and rayon (Korosten’ city and rayon of Zhytomyr region) that have a significant potential for improving environmental situation and greening their development.

Project strategy is to help develop a culture of environmental responsibility and accountability in the pilot regions ensuring it is mainstreamed at all levels of decision making.

Envisaged project support to the pilot territories includes transfer of EU (Polish) experience of environmentally-sensitive planning, provision of GIS-prototype equipment and software for data analysis and visualization to support evidence-based decision-making and informing local communities on the most acute environmental issues and ways to resolve them.

Major project focus is on the achievement of two primarily outputs:

**Output 1:** Raising awareness on local environmental challenges and opportunities including results of the latest radiological monitoring (2011-2012).

**Output 2:** Strengthening capacity of target local authorities and local communities to manage and participate in long-term sustainable environmental planning and management process.

**Project activities in 2012 included the following:**

Under Output 1:
- **Activity Result 1.1:** Assessment to identify key environmental problems and the level of awareness on environmental issues.
- **Activity Result 1.2:** Training for specialists from the Department of Socio-Economic/Economic Development in Rayon/Region State Administrations and City councils on sustainable development, European indicators for sustainable development, identification and solutions methods for key environmental problems, basics of environmental and radiation monitoring and EU reporting standards of local authorities.

Under Output 2:
- **Activity Result 2.1:** Explored possibilities at the local level to bridge the difference between EU standards and Ukrainian practice in reporting on environmental issues and incorporating environmental issues in planning and decision making at the local level.
- **Activity Result 2.2:** Study tour to Polish local authorities for experience exchange between specialists and heads of similar local authorities.
- **Activity Result 2.3:** Joint workshops on environmental monitoring for representatives of local authorities and institutions responsible for: conducting monitoring of radiation, water pollution, waste management, atmospheric pollution, communal enterprises of sewage and waste management; NGOs.
- **Activity Result 2.5:** Implementation of pilot projects on incorporating of environmental reporting into decision-making and strategic planning.

**1.2 Situation Analysis**

**1.2.1. Legal framework**

The necessity to increase the efficiency of local authorities’ and executive authorities’ activities in the area of participatory governance and sustainable development is a declared priority of the Government of Ukraine. Since the population of the affected areas is much more sensitive regarding sustainable development issues, compared to the rest of Ukraine, thus it serves as a primarily group for environmental mainstreaming at the local level.
Moreover, the EU-Ukraine Action Plan (p. 60 Environment) sets tasks to develop procedures to ensure strategic planning of environmental issues at the local level, establish communication strategies on the benefits of environmental policy, and support for civil society actors and local authorities.

Activities, planned under the project, meet the provisions of international environmental conventions, such as the Aarhus Convention - Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (ratified by the Law of Ukraine № 832-14 dtd 06.07.99); as well as national priorities for mainstreaming environment and developing local capacities as defined by the recently adopted Ukrainian legislation, namely the Law of Ukraine of 21.12.2010 № 2818-VI "On the Basic Principles (Strategy) of the State Environmental Policy of Ukraine till 2020" (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Strategy’), and Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine № 577-r dated 25 May 2011 "On approval of the National Environmental Action Plan 2011 - 2015" hereinafter referred to as ‘the National Plan’.

Under Goal 7 to “improve regional environmental policy”, the Strategy [discussed above] includes provisions regarding the development and implementation of medium-term regional action plans on environment as a basic instrument of national environmental policies at the regional level; and foresees legislative enforcement of transition from socio-economic planning to environmental-socio-economic development planning of regions and cities.

The National Environmental Action Plan requires the executive authorities to take, inter alia, the following steps to achieve Goal 7 to "improve regional environmental policy":

Action # 262: Develop and approve local environmental action plans involving all stakeholders;
Action # 264: Inform the public about the status of local environmental strategies preparation and implementation;
Action # 265: Compile guidelines on the development of local environmental strategies and action plans to implement them;
Action # 273: Support implementation of environmental initiatives under the "public - government - business" partnership;
Action # 274: Promote regional and international cooperation through joint programs and projects aimed at improving the state of the environment.

Thus, the project is fully in line with the sustainable development policies and programming that intertwine the economic, social, and environmental strands of development and recovery.

1.2.2. Project operational context

The State Agency of Ukraine for Managing the Exclusion Zone is the institution designated by the Government of Ukraine as the National Implementing Agency for this nationally managed project. The Ministry for Emergencies of Ukraine is a project Beneficiary. UNDP CO in Ukraine is a responsible party for the project.

Project stakeholders include the following project partners and beneficiaries:
- Boguslav rayon state administration;
- Rokytne rayon state administration;
- Korosten’ rayon state administration;
- Korosten’ municipality.

Other stakeholders are the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine and oblast state administration of respective rayons, but they are not directly involved into the project implementation or take part in the decision-making process.
1.2.3. Year baseline analysis

Since the time of the Third-party cost-sharing agreement signature in October 2011 between the Ministry of foreign affairs of the Republic of Poland (the Donor) and the UNDP, some minor changes were made to the project idea “Improvement of decision making and planning process in Chernobyl affected areas through environmental mainstreaming in local administration” and further reflected in the Project Document signed between the National Implementing Agency and UNDP CO in Ukraine in January 2012. All changes introduced do not alter the project duration, budget, objectives, key activities, outputs and results indicators and are summarized in the table here below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Change made</th>
<th>Project idea</th>
<th>Project Document</th>
<th>Reason for a change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Project title</td>
<td>Improvement of decision making and planning process in Chernobyl affected areas through environmental mainstreaming in local administrations</td>
<td>Mainstreaming environment in the local strategies in Chernobyl affected areas</td>
<td>Shorter title allows correct entering the project into UNDP global management system (Atlas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Project Stakeholders – pilot territories</td>
<td>1) Ivankiv rayon (Kyiv region); 2) Ripky rayon (Chernigiv region); 3) Korosten’ city (Zhytomyr region); 4) Slavutych city (Kyiv region)</td>
<td>1) Boguslav rayon (Kyiv region); 2) Rokytne rayon (Rivne region); 3) Korosten’ city (Zhytomyr region); 4) Korosten’ rayon (Zhytomyr region)</td>
<td>Changing 3 of 4 pilot territories was made after the consultations with the National Implementing Agency. Selection of territories reflects significant potential of the rayons for improving environmental situation, different developmental status and needs, as well as active cooperation of local authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Activities:</td>
<td>2. Draft of National legislation with the requirement to mainstream environmental at the local level will be developed.</td>
<td>Not included.</td>
<td>This activity was excluded from the Project Document as it is being addressed separately within Rio+20 agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Seed grants to ensure technical capability (soft programs and equipment) of local</td>
<td>2.4 Improve technical capacity (GIS software and equipment) of local</td>
<td>This activity envisages provision of GIS-prototype</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>equipment) of local authorities to analyse data will be provided.</td>
<td>authorities to analyse environmental data.</td>
<td>software and hardware for pilot territories. “Seed grants” wording has been changed as this technical assistance is not a seed grant per se, as no funds is to be transferred directly to local partners.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Results of the project will be incorporated into the education process of environmental specialists and public servants.</td>
<td>1.6 Establish depository of materials on environmental mainstreaming for local governance in one of the pilot sites.</td>
<td>This activity envisages dissemination of project results in the form of a case study to ensure sustainability of the developed approach.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above changes were discussed and agreed during the joint meeting of UNDP Ukraine, National Implementing Agency and the Donor representatives held in CO within the framework of the project’s 1st monitoring exercise conducted in April 22-26, 2012.
Chapter 2 – Project Achievements:

2.1. Development results

2.1.1. Environmental assessment of the pilot territories

As a part of the initial awareness raising activity, Environmental assessments has been envisaged to review, evaluate, analyze and present state of the environment, local environmental issues, challenges and opportunities of three pilot project’s territories.

In the project context, an environmental assessment is a study report required to establish a baseline for existing environmental situation (including monitoring & statistical data, key environmental issues, challenges and opportunities), provide rapid assessment of institutional & capacity needs, formulate recommendations on the primary required environmental measures.

Four Environmental Assessment reports of the 4 pilot territories (a separate report for each territory) in Ukrainian language were developed by the national expert involved during July-September 2012, distributed among all project partners and presented at the Joint Partner’s Meeting (11.10.2012) and “Environmental Forum of Chernobyl affected regions - 2012” (19.11.2012).

The Environmental Assessment Reports have:

- established baseline for rayons’ environmental situation and served as a tool to promote environmental planning and help further integrate environmental and related social concerns into local strategies and programs;

- adapted DPSIR (drivers-pressure-state-impact-response) methodology of environmental assessment reports (used by Eurostat and European Environmental Agency);

- provided recommendations on the primary required environmental measures at the pilot territories.

Key recommendations and required response measures resulted from the Environmental assessment reports of the pilot territories (Boguslav, Korosten’, Rokytny rayons) are summarized here below.

1. Policy tools and institutional arrangements for mainstreaming environment at the local (rayon) level:
   1.1. Regular state of the environment (SOE) monitoring in rayons that should include quantitative and qualitative impact analysis of the (response) measures foreseen and realized under the Annual programmes of economic and social development.
   1.2. The results of SOE monitoring should be reflected in the annual "State of the environment report", starting from 2013.
   1.3. Annual rayon environmental programme should be developed and harmonized with the annual rayon Programme of economic & social development.
   1.4. An Environmental subdivision (focal point) within the rayon state administration should be established to support strategic planning, monitoring and reporting of environmental (incl. analytical papers).
2. Public participation and awareness
2.1. It can be practical to establish a public council under Rayon state administration to ensure public participation in environmental decision-making.
2.2. It is advisable to create a “State of Environment” web-page informing wide public on the environmental situation in rayon and violations of environmental regulations.

3. Water resources management
3.1. A priority should be given to secure the necessary amount of safe drinking water supply. Local authorities should ensure public access to water-quality information.
3.2. Ensure proper treatment of industrial and municipal wastewater and establish strict control over the discharge of domestic and industrial wastewater into storm sewers and directly into the water.
3.3. Liquidate dumps of household and construction waste on rivers’ banks.
3.4. Perform general maintenance and repair of domestic water intake and supply systems.

4. Air Protection
4.1. Initiate environmental audit of major enterprises responsible for air pollution in the area in order to determine emissions reduction potential.
4.2. The "polluter pays" principle should be applied systematically and without exception to all emissions sources, stationary or mobile, equally to individuals and businesses.

5. Waste management
5.1. Establish control over unauthorized DSW, construction and industrial waste (dumping outside the settlements).
5.2. Improve the system of solid waste management, which includes, in particular, separate collection of solid waste and the use of best available technology for processing.

6. Land use and protection
6.1. Facilitate conservation of degraded and unproductive lands through afforestation and regressing.
6.2. Develop land use- and land protection schemes.
6.3. Increase the soil fertility by liming acid soils to adjust pH to the levels needed by the crop to be grown.

7. Biodiversity protection
7.1. Create wildlife reserves and other categories of protected areas on the territories of natural growth of animals or plants.

The Environmental assessment reports will be further used to provide guidelines for environmental planning, policy setting, and provide options that can be undertaken to offset any negative environmental trends.

2.1.2. Capacity development trainings on mainstreaming environment at the local level

A series of capacity development trainings (3 trainings during August 2012) on mainstreaming environment at the local level was held for 64 representatives of local administrations /municipality (at the project pilot territories): Korosten’ (2-3 August 2012), Rokytne (7-8 August 2012), Boguslav (14-15 August 2012).
The objective of the training was to provide basic knowledge on conceptual and practical aspects of environmental planning, monitoring, decision-making and communication for the local authorities of pilot regions dealing with environmental/economic issues at all levels of decision making. The training was also aimed to contribute to the development of a culture of environmental system analysis and responsibility.

The training, tailored to primarily meet the needs of local authorities in the three pilot communities, aimed at mobilizing the collective efforts of both officials and the public by raising an environmental awareness across a variety of fields of local economy and wellbeing of the community in place.

As immediate outputs the training was able to achieve the following goals:
- extended knowledge on sustainable development basics (history, key principles, the international environmental policy framework);
- reviewed current national environmental legislation (in particular, the Law of Ukraine “On the Basic Principles (strategy) of the State Environmental Policy of Ukraine for the period up to 2020” dtd 21.12.2010, the National action plan on the Environment for the period 2011-2015), oblasts/rayon and local environmental programmes);
- presented conceptual and practical aspects of environmental monitoring;
- explained typology of EU environmental indicators (a DPSIR based model) and basics of the state of environmental analysis using the indicators;
- conducted a review of available communication instruments;
- presented the logic for selection of certain communication tools and instruments;
- demonstrated advantages and drawbacks of some instruments vs. the others
- offered a short review of the currently available instruments exploited by the authorities among and outside the local communities, and
- presented good practices of using various strategies and communication instruments while offering suggestion to further develop current practices and/or introduce new ideas.

The training participant also practiced in identification of key environmental issues of their rayon, and utilization communication tools for raising public awareness of the existing issues and presenting environmental information for different target groups (decision-makers of oblast level, donors/business, media, NGOs).

Sessions on communicating environmental information/raising awareness of environmental issues applied a custom-based approach where preliminary research of existing practices was conducted and major findings, supported with specific recommendations, presented to the audience, which included other stakeholders among the local communities.

The level of engagement and immediate feedback demonstrated a fair amount of interest on behalf of the target audience while demonstrating resolute intentions by the parties concerned to
incorporate the suggested improvements into their daily practices. Overall, the training enjoyed positive feedback, showed participants’ engagement, and revealed prospective commitments to raise environmental awareness while improving the cooperation with the local CSOs and communities.

It is planned that with the UNDP-project support the trained specialist from pilot rayons will be able to develop the comprehensive local environmental strategies and include them into the existing socio-economic programmes in 2013, thus strengthening local potential for improving environmental situation and greening their development.

2.1.3. Pilot projects on raising awareness on local environmental issues

To raise public awareness of existing environmental issues, the "CLEAN COUNTRY" campaign was organized at the project pilot territories (Boguslav and Korosten’) on June 8th and 9th 2012 on the occasion of World Environment Day.

Specifically, it called to reduce pollution of recreational areas and improve domestic solid waste management in order to enhance the quality of urban and nature reserved fund facilities as well as protect human health.

As a result, 190 youth volunteers gathered in the municipal park in Korosten' and got it free from trash, and 350 adult volunteers cleaned the beautiful banks of Ros' river in Boguslav.
Simultaneously the campaign was supported by other partners and held in Kyiv (Golosiyevskiy National Nature Park), Vinnytska oblast (“Karmeliukove Podillia” National Nature park), and Rivne (Rivne Natural Reserve).

Thus, the clean up action in Ukraine perfectly supported the celebration of the 40th anniversary of World Environment Day and the global objective to make a cleaner, and greener planet by our joint endeavours.

The Photostory of the Clean Country campaign 2012 is attached hereto as Annex 1.

2.1.4. Study tour on best environmental practices

Study tour to Polish local authorities (Krakow and Malopolsky district) for experience exchange and study of the Polish “good environmental practices” – in planning, managing, local decision making, attraction of funds, awareness raising was conducted on 10-17 November 2012 (as was envisaged by the Project Document under Output 2).

The study tour programme was tailored to cover the following aspects of environmental mainstreaming at the local level:

- Experience in solving local environmental issues, including but not limiting to the: environmental planning; accounting for environmental considerations when taking decision about local development; examples of cooperation of local authorities with environmental NGOs; examples of environmental awareness campaigns and educational initiatives (meetings with the organizers/leaders).
- Practices in environmental monitoring and presenting environment-related information to the public;
- Local green tourism strategy and its implementation;
- Examples of successful environmental-related projects;
- Local waste management system;
- Visit to local industrial park(s);
- Experience of raising funds for local environmental initiatives.

The study visit was conducted in line with the Programme and participated by 5 representatives of the project local partners (2 – from Korosten’ municipality and by one from Boguslav, Korosten’ and Rokyn’ rayons), project manager and project driver: Mr. Volodymyr Vyshivsky, First deputy mayor of Korosten’, Ms. Iryna Pasichnyk-Prokopenko, Head of the Department of Inner Policy, Organizational work and Control of the Executive Committee of Korosten’ city Council, Mr. Viktor Pidoprygora, Head of Emergency Department of Boguslav rayon state administration, Mr. Podolskyi Mykola, Head of Economic Department of Korosten’ rayon state administration, Mr. Hryhoriy Tarhonsky, First deputy head of Rokyn’ rayon state administration, Ms. Natalia Olshanska, UNDP Project Manager and Mr. Vadim Yachnik, UNDP Driver.
The following results of the study visit should be mentioned:

- Learned principles of local environmental planning as a result of the meetings with directorate of the Regional Fund for Environmental Protection and Water in Krakow and Marshal office of the Malopolsky district.

- Learned modern practices of the state of environment monitoring and provision of public information at the Regional Environmental Inspectorate in Krakow.

- “Revolutionary” approach to wastewater and DSW management studied during site visits to wastewater processing and landfill plants in Krakow.

- Local governance experience transferred during study visits to municipality of Niepolomice and Trzebinia.

- Funds raising strategies learned during meetings with the mayor’s office in Trzebinia.

### 2.1.5. “Environmental Forum of Chernobyl affected regions – 2012”

Being on the lookout for new ideas and instruments that can drive environmental mainstreaming, the project initiated, developed a concept and organized “Environmental Forum of Chernobyl affected regions”.

The Forum aimed to be a noticeable venue for awareness, and gathered authorities, experts and civil society leaders from different regions of Ukraine to discuss issues that impact the environment, nationally and locally, and approaches, common and indigenous, that helped solve those issues and support environmental decision-making.

The objective of “Environmental Forum of Chernobyl affected regions - 2012” held in Boguslav on 19-20 November 2012, was to serve as a platform for exchanging ideas, defining and discussing effective approaches for mainstreaming environmental sustainability into local plans, strategies and practices.

Within the “Environmental Forum of Chernobyl affected regions - 2012” framework, plenary session as well as 4 topical panel discussions were held focusing on the next topics:

- Potential of regional environmental policy and environmental management;
- Education and communication towards sustainable development;
- Public participation in environmental decision-making;
- Development of environmental partnership for approval and realization of strategic decisions.

The Environmental Forum was participated by Ms. Elena Panova, UNDP Ukraine deputy country director, Ms. Svitlana Sova, National Project Director, Mr. Jerzy Osiatynski, Advisor to the President of Poland, as well as the panelists – leading Ukrainian environmental experts and civil society
leaders – Ms. Tetiana Tymochko, Ms. Olga Marushevska, Mr. Sviatoslav Kurulenko, Ms. Gennadiy Marushevskyi and over 35 participants from the pilot and other regions of Ukraine.

The plenary session was devoted to the Potential of mainstreaming environment at the local level: prospects and challenges. The panelists presented an overview of the current situation with the local environmental planning & management, focused on the challenges and planning (programming) gaps, pointed out the institutional needs for mainstreaming environmental considerations into local development policies and practices.

The panelists also agreed on the leading role of the civil society organizations in pursuing the national environmental legislation, in particular the National environmental strategy, Action plan and other legal documents advocating for sustainable development principles. Based on the topical discussions the Joint Resolution of the Forum was prepared and endorsed by the participants.

Among the important outputs of the Forum – discussion and agreement on viable territory-specific approaches for integrating environment into development planning, greater understanding among decision-takers, specialists, as well as general public about the links between ecosystem health, human development and economic growth.

2.2. Management and Effectiveness

2.2.1. Project implementation & monitoring activities

Officially, the project started on the 1st of January 2012 and planned for 24 month till 31th of December 2013. However, the actual implementation has started with a slight delay related to UNDP recruiting procedures. The project manager has assumed her duties since 26th of March, the project associate – since 24th of April.

1st project monitoring mission was conducted on April 22-26, 2012 and participated by Mr. Jerzy Osiatynski, Advisor to the President of Poland on Economic Affairs, and the representative of the Polish Embassy in Kyiv Mr. Dariusz Staniszewski, 1st Secretary in the Political Department of the Embassy, participated in the monitoring exercise.

The overall purpose of the first monitoring exercise was to check progress during the project start-up in relation to the stated objectives endorsed by the Donor, including any agreed changes in the outputs and/or implementation arrangements during project inception phase and any other.

At the time of the monitoring exercise the project was fully operational, project office equipped and implementation arrangements agreed. Project partners – National Implementing Agency and local authorities of the pilot territories (Rokytne RSA, Korosten’ RSA and municipality, Boguslav RSA) – were aware of the project priorities, agreed with the project strategy and eager to cooperate.

Project action plan for 2012 was discussed and agreed during the 1st monitoring exercise.
2nd project monitoring exercise was conducted on November 19-22, 2012 and aimed to evaluate the progress towards the achievement of intended outputs and the attainment of the stated objectives endorsed by the Donor, to capture lessons learned and suggest recommendations as well as to agree upon the strategy and action plan for 2013.

Main findings and conclusions of the second monitoring exercise confirmed that project strategy 2012 was fulfilled in line with the agreed annual work plan. Project implementation in 2012 was rated as “good” by the Project Board. Project was officially registered at the Ministry of economy and trade of Ukraine (State registration card # 2735).

Project partners – National Implementing Agency and local authorities of the pilot territories – has confirmed their willingness to mainstream environmental considerations into developmental plans, and willing to proceed with the project follow-up activities to strengthen the environmental monitoring component.

Project strategy for 2013 was discussed and Annual Work Plan 2013 agreed during the Project Board Meeting held on 19 November 2012.

2.2.2. International partnership / Knowledge network contribution

The project was presented to the UN Task-force on Chernobyl high level panel during the video-conference devoted to the 26th anniversary of Chernobyl accident on April 26th 2012. The project is viewed as a very efficient initiative that tackle environmental issues as a part of the sustainable development efforts (together with social and economic development) at Chernobyl territories.

Cooperation with Arcadia University (US)

The lecture on the recovery and development work at Chernobyl affected territories and the project activities was delivered by the Project Manager Ms. Natalia Olshanska for 17 students of Arcadia University (US) visiting Ukraine during practice exercise on May 23, 2012.
Chapter 3 – The Outlook for the Future

3.1. Support to local authorities in environmental strategies formulation and capacity development

The agreed Project strategy for 2013 (developed according to the Project Document) envisages the following tasks:

- Support to prioritization of environmental factors in 1 municipal and 3 rayon development plans.
- Improvement of technical capacity (through GIS software and equipment) of local authorities to visualize and analyse environmental data.
- Strengthening environmental communication of targeted partners (web-pages, media campaigns & trainings).
- Producing recommendations on environmental mainstreaming at the local level for the territories affected by Chernobyl disaster.

3.2. Third project monitoring exercise to evaluate project implementation progress during 2013 and agree for the phase-out strategy is planned for May 2013.
ANNEXTURE