

LATVIA

Cooperative Activities under the SPS Programme

Since NATO began offering science cooperation to partners in 1992, Latvian scientists and experts have had leading roles in 47 activities, and more have joined various cooperative activities as participants and key speakers.

Today, NATO science activities enable close collaboration on the two key priorities of **defence against terrorism** and **countering other threats to security** and managed under the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme. SPS activities contribute to NATO's strategic objective of partnership, helping to connect scientists and experts from NATO countries with their counterparts from Partner and Mediterranean Dialogue countries through workshops, training courses, team collaborations and multi-year projects.



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All activities supported by the SPS Programme are approved by NATO nations on the basis of consensus.

Examples of Activities

The Head of the Department of Environmental Engineering and Water Management from the Latvia University of Agriculture has provided his expertise in glacial hazard analysis to a collaborative project with Canada and the Russian Federation on **“Prediction of Glacial Hazards and Disasters in the Central Caucasus, Russia”**. This 3-year project, which started in 2006, aims to generate models and maps of flood routing and slope stability. Since the start of the project, past glacial disasters in the region have been catalogued and maps of glacial lakes and flow hazards have been made. The Kalka Glacier disaster was modeled with DAN-3D model/ software. The maps generated by this study are of particular interest to

Emercom North Ossetia-Alania in Vladikavkaz, Russia and the Sevkavgiprovodkoz Institute, Pyatigorsk, Russia. [ref 982143]



Photo courtesy by Sergey Chernomorets, Damage in the Bulungu village after the catastrophic debris flow of 3 August 2007.

The NATO Advanced Study Institute supported a tutorial training course on **“Crystallography in the Fight against Bio-Terrorism”** that took place in May/June 2008. The trainees, who included students from Latvia, were introduced to techniques to combat biological menace. Topics included understanding the key properties for drugs; therapies for neglected and emerging diseases; and the design of anti-infective drugs.

[ref 983028]

Experts from Latvia participated in the NATO Advanced Research Workshop on **“Motivation for Suicide Bombers”** which provided a forum for concrete cooperation with the aim to increase the understanding of the rational of suicide bombers and develop a concept to significantly reduce the effects. The workshop included sessions on recruitment and training methods of suicide bombers; female participation; and impact on society.

[ref 982921]

“Building Transparency and Integrity in a Nation’s Defence Establishment” was the topic of a NATO Advanced Research Workshop that took place in July 2007 at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom. Key speakers included experts from “Transparency International” located in Riga, Latvia. [ref 982927]

Latvian trainees also participated in the NATO Advanced Study Institute on **“Energy and Environmental Challenges to Security”**, which dealt with topics on post-conflict and trans-boundary environmental challenges; transatlantic energy security; and climate change. At the special session on the “International Community’s

Approach” representatives of the 6 organisations—including UN agencies, the OSCE and NATO—that are coordinating their activities under the Environment and



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Security (ENVSEC) Initiative briefed the audience on their experiences. [ref 982867]

In addition to NATO-funded activities, the SPS Programme facilitates the development of nationally funded activities, such as the series of topical workshops on **“Environment Management Systems (EMS) in the Military Sector”** which brought together experts from Latvia with other NATO and Partner countries. The experts agreed that while fulfilling their military mission, NATO forces should be committed to taking all reasonably achievable measures to protect the environment. Environmental planning is an essential process for ensuring appropriate environmental protection, based on STANAG 7141. Several NATO working groups have emphasized the need for education and an EMS Handbook was published. [ref 982701]