

ALBANIA

Cooperative Activities under the SPS Programme

Albania has been involved in NATO science activities since 1994. In total, Albanian scientists and experts have had leading roles in 48 activities, and more 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 are 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

A training course in Tirana, Albania in April 2009 examined “**Analysis and Strategies to Counter the Terrorism Threat**”. The course was designed to assist Albania bring its security training in line with international standards, to improve the sharing of information and to identify problems in Partner countries, particularly in the Balkans, in the field of defence against terrorism. A further objective was to help in defence reform of Albania. [ref 983692]

A large cooperative project in the region focuses on the “**Harmonization of Seismic Hazard Maps in the Western Balkans**”.

Since September 2007, scientists from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* in cooperation with Turkey have worked to standardize seismic hazard data in one of the most seismically active regions on earth. This work will also enable seismic maps and monitoring systems to be upgraded to meet European standards. In July 2008, the six institutions in the Western Balkans that are involved in the project signed a Protocol on Multilateral Cooperation in Seismic Data Exchange, with the aim of improving the existing cooperative professional and scientific relationships in the region. [ref 983054]

*Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Investigators from Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Romania are collaborating to create a modeling system for **“Emergency Response to the Release of Harmful Substances in the Atmosphere”**, as a result of either a terrorist attack or an industrial accident. They set out to develop the capability to make short-term, regional-scale forecasts of how harmful gases would be propagated in the Balkan region and to carry out a more detailed analysis of the longer-term impacts of pollutants on the environment and human health in the region. During the course of the project, various emergency scenarios and demographic data will be recorded in databases, and risk analysis simulations will be conducted at selected “hotspots”. [ref 981393]

In the framework of an ongoing SPS project entitled **“Enhancing Environmental Security through Nitrogen Removal”**, scientists from Albania, Greece and Egypt have cooperated since December 2007 to develop a new process for the removal of nitrogen from municipal wastewater. The main goal is the transfer of technology using Sequencing Batch Reactors (SBRs) from Greece—where they were first developed—to Albania and Egypt. During the study, one pilot-scale SBR unit will be installed in a selected location in each of these two countries, and young researchers trained in Greece will undertake the operation. The up-grading of surface groundwater quality will enhance the environmental security in Albania, where drinking water shortages are often caused by extremely polluted water resources. [ref 982816]

In addition to NATO-funded activities, the SPS Programme facilitates the development of nationally funded activities, such as the series of workshops on **“Environmental Management Systems (EMS) in the Military Sector”**. Following an earlier pilot study on the same topic, it was recognised among participating countries that an EMS is a useful tool to manage the impact of military activities on the environment—for protecting the environ-



Typical burnpit used by military compounds will be better controlled under environmental management. (photo courtesy of the MoD of the Netherlands)

ment today, cleaning up after past activities and for creating an environmentally sound future. Through this activity, Albanian experts connected with their counterparts in NATO and Partner countries to discuss the practical challenges of implementing EMS. Improved environmental practices are expected to foster sustainability, thereby promoting broader peace and security objectives. The final workshop was held in Kyiv, Ukraine in Nov. 2008. Some of the recommendations resulted in international standards that are being implemented in NATO managed compounds. [ref 982701]

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