YELLOW STONE IS AN IMPRESSIVE AND APPRECIATED PROTECTED AREA, TAKE A LOOK AT THESE FANTASTIC ROYAL MOUNTAINS!
This is from the heart of Amazon, there are several protected areas there...

This is a very well preserved protected area; Nations Unies.
Environment to the East of Europe

Text by Nickolai Denisov, Regional director

The citizens who are drowning are to ensure their own rescue
With international attention these days strongly drawn to Ukraine, the burning political issues to the east of the EU border are overshadowing longer-term yet subtler concerns of unsustainable development. Unfortunately, those are still characteristic of the vast Eurasian spaces, which also make up the lion’s share of the “UNECE region”. To make things more difficult, even though many of these “post-Soviet”, states remain on OECD’s list of developing economies, in the recent years of the global economic slowdown many of the shrinking global flows of technical and financial assistance moved to the more traditional developing countries of the “south”, leaving it for Eurasians to cope with their own problems. Africa and Latin America just seem more huggable…

Environmental problems stay where they were – at best
Meanwhile environmental problems in the region persist. Some of them are inherited from the Soviet past; other have been acquired during the almost twenty-five years of independence. The Aral Sea is long gone, leaving a salt desert in the middle of Central Asia and a hyper-polluted small isolated “northern sea” in Kazakhstan. Valuable fish have vanished from the Sea of Azov between Russia and Ukraine. And the Black Sea is threatened not only by a military presence but also by pipelines, plans for expanded gas extraction, in addition, of course, to the effects of a changing climate. Rivers have become sources of inter-state tensions, and where they are not they have got polluted, and both water and land ecosystems have lost important species of animals and plants. The protection of them is just not a priority, and what used to be a decent system of protected areas is increasingly exploited as hunting grounds by the region’s business and political elites. In the cities, the air quality is deteriorating not only due to the exponential growth of often poorly maintained private cars replacing a virtually defunct public transport, but also due to the lax control over lucrative industrial facilities...

So does environmental governance, though with exceptions
…speaking of which: with state budgets in most places struggling to shed their deficits — and the environment never being a strong priority of the public authorities even in better times — national environmental administrations are struggling to survive on a Spartan diet. If well-meaning public servants and entities have only limited resources to attempt to make a difference, their less scrupulous counterparts use their short-term presence to become just a little bit richer. Buying and selling positions of focal points for international
conventions and processes, or a bottom-up collection of cash according to plans sent from the top, are well-known schemes. And the omnipresent and suffocating bureaucratic oversight, dating back to the nineteenth century Napoleonic Code, is all too familiar. Yet there are a considerable number of public servants in the same eastern countries who want to do a professional job, who are passionate about innovation and eagerly digest fresh ideas. And even in places where civil activism is not particularly welcome, you will find groups dedicated to environmental issues, routinely juggling activism and consultancy work in order to make ends meet.

**Innovation**

“Green economy”, “integrated pollution permits”, “adaptation to climate change”, “integrated basin management”, “environmental indicators” sound like an infinite row of buzzwords. Yet they are concrete concepts with tangible meanings, and potentially able to improve environmental quality and peoples’ lives. Many of the states on Europe’s eastern margin take them seriously, either as a way to genuinely improve efficiency and fulfil formal obligations, or to simply look better, or — and why not? — to attract extras from scarce funds for international assistance. Kazakhstan is very serious about the green economy and is developing environmentally friendly business, not least towards EXPO 2017, where it wants to shine as a modern global power. Belarus is seriously studying, and cautiously adopting, European experience in environmental standards and management. Georgia and Moldova are moving full speed ahead towards “e-governance”, with environmental information soon to be easily accessible to their citizens. And the state-of-the-art municipally financed environmental monitoring in Moscow and Saint Petersburg would make a few European capitals jealous.

**And cooperation**

During the almost quarter century of independence, many of these countries had to learn to cooperate with each other on new grounds. With Soviet rules no longer in force, everything needed to be redefined, including how to manage shared rivers, lakes, forests and mineral resources. The increasing stress from a changing climate makes good dialogue across borders vital. Inside the countries, too, entirely new approaches are needed to avoid confrontation and find compromises — if not consensus — when it comes to sensitive environmental, resource and social issues (such as, for instance, mining in Kyrgyzstan or protection of green urban spaces in Armenia). And it is especially this dimension of work — building bridges among the states and their various groups — that requires continuous international support, resources and expertise. Zoï Environment Network is one of players on that field.
Zoï continues to base its environmental policy on a commitment to operate in an environmentally responsible and resource-efficient manner with a focus on six areas—production, procurement, resources, waste, personnel and travel. The first five areas yield to best green management practices, but travel continues to be a challenge.

In 2013, Zoï staff and associates were accountable for 15 tonnes of CO₂ emissions, mainly attributable to air travel. Zoï offset these emissions by contributing to an international Gold Standard project. We continue to avoid the avoidable by using trains for shorter distances and almost all of us bike to work regularly.
Financial Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Operating Revenues</th>
<th>Operating Expenses</th>
<th>Project Expenses</th>
<th>Project Work in Progress</th>
<th>Personnel Costs</th>
<th>Other Operating Expenses</th>
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</table>

Zoë Environment Funding Sources 2013

- UN 34% (UNEP, ENVSEC, UNECE, UNDP, WCMC)
- EU / EEA 36%
- Norway 7% (GRID-Arendal)
- Finland 7%
- Switzerland 10% (FOEN, SDC, SECO)
- Others 6%

*100%
International Rivers Respond to Climate Change

For a number of years Zoï has cooperated with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to enhance the understanding of climate change in international river basins and to assist managers to develop adaptation measures. In 2013 this work moved towards action, with the strategic frameworks for adaptation coming to life in several of “our” basins. Zoï’s role has varied from a full-scale development of a river adaptation framework for the Dniester basin (Moldova and Ukraine) to strategic advice to local partners in the Neman River basin (Belarus, Lithuania and Russia) to the application of our innovative communication skills to explain the issues and the proposed approaches in the Chu-Talas River system (Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan). All of these strategies will be officially launched in 2014, when concrete work will start to help the basin countries anticipate the change and soften its impact.
Climate Change and Swiss Development Cooperation

What are the results of Swiss climate change cooperation over the past 12 years, and how effectively did Swiss projects reach climate goals? Zoï was tasked, together with its partners Gaia Consulting Oy and Creatura Ltd, to assess the effectiveness of Switzerland’s international cooperation in climate change. Our assessment reviewed more than 500 adaptation and mitigation projects by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs through desk study, field missions to selected countries and interviews. The focus of Zoï’s work was to distil key findings of the assessment into a digestible and visual public report, and to develop other dissemination materials such as videos and a press kit. The report is due to be launched in summer 2014.

Climate Policy in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia

Over the next three years, Zoï will assist the European Union Directorate-General of Climate Action (DG Clima) in analysing national climate policies in the EECCA region, and identifying possible entry points for EU climate policy and climate dialogue in the 12 countries of the region. Zoï will tap into its accumulated climate and environmental intelligence of the eastern region, complemented by further background research, targeted country missions and frequent dialogue with DG Clima and other EU institutions.
Kyrgyzstan Mining Master Class

In cooperation with the University of Eastern Finland and Gaia Consulting Oy, Zoï organized and conducted a master class on socially and environmentally responsible approaches to the development of mineral resources. The class met in February 2014 in Kyrgyzstan, where widespread mining conflicts have contributed to business constraints and local insecurity. In the fall of 2013, the project team developed and distributed a questionnaire for potentially interested participants, and collaborated with the Kyrgyz Mining Association to tailor the topics and interactive sessions of the master class to the needs of participants. More than 30 local participants from the private, public, research and civil society sectors attended the master class and received certificates.

Themes included Finnish and international experience in social impact assessment, stakeholder participation and mining standards, discussion of five local case studies and numerous situations of mining conflicts and solutions. In addition to the mining class, a parallel one-day cartoon master class attracted more than 15 local artists, youth activists and interested miners. Three trainers (Swedish, French and Kyrgyz) with different art styles, specializations, cultural backgrounds and experience provided instruction. The master class was successfully carried out, and the project team received numerous requests to continue support to the Kyrgyzstan mining and development community through capacity-building, training and experience exchange.
Mining Legacies

In the Balkans, where mining is also a high profile economic activity with environmental impacts, Zoï supported UNEP and the ENVSEC Initiative in assessing the transboundary risks associated with mining and mining legacies and in minimizing the impacts on the environment. In 2013, Zoï published an executive and visual summary on mining legacies in the Balkans. Current work focuses on active mining and advice to the countries of the region for further remediation work.
Flood Management

What is better: too little water or too much?

The flood communication workshop organized and facilitated by Zoï (May 2013, Lviv, Ukraine) considered this question in depth. For two days hydrometeorological, water, emergency and environmental agencies at the national, basin, oblast and local levels, as well as oblast and local authorities from Ukraine and Moldova, discussed information exchange on flood risks and the potential for timely warnings to the population in the Dniester basin. International experts from Great Britain, the Netherlands and Poland and from other transboundary river basins of Ukraine shared their experience and provided recommendations.

Climate change may create the conditions where either a lack of water or flooding may occur, both of which carry negative consequences for livelihoods and economies in a region where agriculture plays a dominant role. While officials cannot manage the climate or the weather, they can work to prevent or mitigate negative climate and weather impacts by managing water resources to avoid floods and desertification. The transboundary context requires the riparian countries to consider each other’s challenges, interests and benefits while planning common steps for water and flood management.
Environment Under Siege and Occupation

Often below the radar of international attention are the environmental problems related to conflicts that if not addressed can have implications for regional security. In Palestine, the priority issues are water scarcity (exacerbated by inadequate access), access to the sea and, more recently, the addition of the “Wall” preventing access to land resources. The Ministry of Environment Affairs of Palestine and Zoï Environment Network launched the report Environment and security in the occupied Palestinian territory in Ramallah on March 13, 2013.

Is Climate Change Bad for Security?

In light of our long experience with environmental impacts on security, it is no wonder that Zoï became part of a new analysis of how security is connected to climate change. The study for the Environment and Security Initiative is financed by the EU Instrument for Stability, and covers most of the former Soviet Union. In 2013 Zoï started analytical work for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (while the situation in the Southern Caucasus is being reviewed by GRID-Arendal in Norway). In 2014 these studies will be discussed within the countries and regions, and will be published as visually attractive reports.
More environmental information wanted!

Zoï leads an international consortium assisting the European Environment Agency with the implementation of the ENPI-SEIS East 2013-2014 work plan in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. A series of SEIS national workshops, organized and co-facilitated by Zoï, took place in the EECCA region to help countries with the preparation and implementation of data flows for selected indicators and datasets.

This second phase of the ENPI-SEIS project targeted practical sharing of environmental information that could be used in the near term for the preparation of reports and outlooks on the state of the environment within the “Environment for Europe” process, and in the long run, for the establishment of a platform for a shared Pan-European environmental information system.
Moving Environmental Information in Central Asia Closer to Europe

The EU-funded project with the romantic name FLERMONECA* helps Central Asian countries modernize their systems for managing forests, natural resources and environmental monitoring. To develop the information component of environmental monitoring, Zoï cooperates with the Environment Agency Austria and the Regional Environment Centre for Central Asia to transfer Europe’s SEIS experience to the countries of the region. Following up on a well-attended series of meetings in 2013, Zoï will promote and support the development and regional exchange of environmental data, indicators and spatial information, not least to help Central Asian countries meaningfully participate in the next Environment for Europe ministerial conference in 2016.

* Forest and Biodiversity Governance Including Environmental Monitoring (FLERMONECA)
SERVICES

- Process!
- Facilitation
- Communication
- Know!
- Visuals
- Information for decision-making concepts, architecture, and design.
PRODUCTS

- Plans
- Books
- Maps & Graphics
- Animations
- Train!

USERS

- International Organisations
- Politicians/Governments
- General Public
- Media
Minamata Convention on Mercury

The advent of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in October 2013 has provided another incentive for Kyrgyzstan to unify diverging inter-agency views, to discuss the future of primary mercury mining and to consider the role of international support in environmental risk reduction, raising awareness and a transition to alternative activities. The start of a UNEP-GEF project was delayed from summer 2012 to summer 2013, but Zoï has worked in Kyrgyzstan to develop a detailed implementation plan, improve awareness about the Minamata Convention and prepare for field activities, which are now scheduled to start in spring or summer 2014.

Global Waste Management Outlook

What is simply called “waste” is a multifaceted global environmental challenge asking for innovative responses. Zoï is working with UNEP and the International Solid Waste Association on the Global Waste Management Outlook, aiming to summarize the global headline issues for decision makers. The outlook will be launched in early 2015.
Kyrgyzstan Still Mining Mercury

Zoï activities in 2013 were constrained by the confusing and rather complicated situation in the mercury mining sector in Kyrgyzstan, and most support activities had to be done remotely. This included work on mercury awareness materials, a comprehensive literature review, compilation of local, regional and international practices in mercury risk management and a visual synthesis of the current state of knowledge and solutions. In 2014, Zoï anticipates more work on the ground, including pilot measures on risk reduction in land and water use, inputs to remediation planning and exchange of experience, trainings on mercury monitoring and lab practices, and awareness-raising activities.
Watersheds: Integrated Work on the Neman, Dniester, Chu and Talas, Tajikistan-Afghanistan

Competition or cooperation?

Zoï has long history of working in the area of water resources management in transboundary river basins promoting the principles of integrated water and flood management and explaining UNECE Water Convention goals to the stakeholders. The projects in the basins of Neman, Dniester, Chu and Talas focused on how current challenges such as climate change can affect water availability in the rivers now and in the future, and considered the capability and readiness of the countries to cooperate on adapting to changes.

Zoï has prepared overviews of climate change trends and vulnerability in all basins, and has developed draft adaptation strategies for the Dniester and the Neman basins. Practical actions for improving the monitoring and information exchange in the basins were included the installation of two automated stations for water flows in the Dniester River basin.
Mapping Water

Visual communication of complex environmental issues is one of Zoï’s core competencies. We are working with a number of organizations – SDC, IUCN, UNECE and Forest Trends – to support the international water agenda with unique maps and graphics. As part of an effort to mainstream visual thinking in larger organizations, Zoï presented master classes on mapping water to the staff of the Global Water Initiative at SDC. And at our annual retreat in the Jura we discussed what the next generation maps and graphics might look like.

Handbook of Forest Restoration

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is well known for its highly innovative tools for valuing and preserving ecosystems. Zoï has supported the IUCN with graphics and layout for a handbook, “Assessing potential for forest landscape restoration”.
Zoï year 2013

Outputs & Events

January
- Fifth session of the International Negotiating Committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury (INC5); Geneva, Switzerland
- OSCE meeting on water cooperation between Tajikistan and Afghanistan; Dushanbe, Tajikistan

February
- Meeting of UNECE projects on climate adaptation in transboundary water basins; Geneva, Switzerland
- Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure; Vienna, Austria

March
- 3rd meeting of ENP South Working Group on Environmental Indicators; Dublin, Ireland
- Launch of the Environment and Security in the Occupied Palestinian Territory - report; Ramallah, Palestine
- Launch of Visual Atlas of Cooperation and facilitation of the bilateral Afghan-Tajik environment and hydrology cooperation meeting; Dushanbe, Tajikistan
- Consultations on adaptation to climate change in the Neman river basin; Minsk, Belarus
- High-level meeting on national drought policy and WOCAT side event; Geneva, Switzerland
- Western Balkans Capacity Building Workshop on Indicators as part of NBSAP updating; Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

April
- Launch of the on post-project analysis project and the meeting of Belarusian-Ukrainian working group for transboundary monitoring; Brest, Belarus

May
- Workshop on flood-related communication in the Dniester basin; Lviv, Ukraine
- Launch of Waste and Chemicals in Central Asia visual report at the Conference of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions; Geneva, Switzerland
- Consultations on adaptation to climate change in the Neman river basin; Vilnius, Lithuania
- Expert meeting on climate change in the Chu and Talas river basins; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- Chu and Talas basin convention meeting; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- GEF Constituency meeting - Central Asia and Azerbaijan; Bern, Switzerland
- Katoomba XVIII: Forests, Water, and People conference; Beijing, China
- UN Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction; Geneva, Switzerland

June
- Meetings on shared environmental information in Central Asia; Almaty-Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- Meeting of the Belarusian-Ukrainian working group for transboundary monitoring; Kyiv, Ukraine
- UNECE Workshop on water and adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins; Geneva, Switzerland
- Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Industry, Energy, Transport and Infrastructure; Vienna, Austria
July

- FLERMONECA inception meeting; Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
* Consultations and meeting of the Moldo-Ukrainian working group on floods and climate change in the Dniester river basin; Chisinau, Moldova

August

* Field study of transboundary environmental impacts on the Belarussian-Ukrainian border
* Field studies of the Dniester river channel and flood protection dykes

September

* Master class in ‘Mapping Water’ to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC); Bern, Switzerland
* Meeting on shared environmental information; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
- FLERMONECA project technical advisory committee; Astana, Kazakhstan
- Meeting of the River Basin Commissions and other Joint Bodies for Transboundary Water Cooperation: Legal and Institutional Aspects; Geneva, Switzerland
- ENPI-SEIS steering committee meeting; Copenhagen, Denmark
- Dniester river basin Council meeting; Mohyliv-Podilsky, Ukraine

October

* Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) side-event on SEIS; Geneva, Switzerland
* Round-table on Climate change in the Carpathians; Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine
* National stakeholder meeting and training on UNEP-GEF mercury project; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
* Meeting of the Belarusian-Ukrainian working group for transboundary monitoring; Minsk, Belarus
- Minamata Convention on Mercury; Minamata, Japan
- FLERMONECA project planning meeting; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

November

* Zoï retreat; Les Moussières, France
* ENPI-SEIS national workshop; Kiev, Ukraine
* Effectiveness evaluation of Swiss international cooperation interventions in climate change mitigation and adaptation – Field mission to Serbia
- Working Group on Environmental Monitoring (WGEMA); Geneva, Switzerland
- UNFCCC COP-19; Warsaw, Poland
- ENVSEC partners meeting and 10 year anniversary of the initiative; Brussels, Belgium

December

* ENPI-SEIS national workshop; Tbilisi, Georgia
* ENPI-East regional training on water quality (WISE) reporting; Tbilisi, Georgia
* Exploratory workshop and meeting of the Moldo-Ukrainian working group on floods and climate change in the Dniester river basin; Kyiv, Ukraine
* Effectiveness evaluation of Swiss international cooperation interventions in climate change mitigation and adaptation – Field mission to Albania
Most recent publications produced by Zoï Environment Network.
Available on [www.zoinet.org](http://www.zoinet.org)

**WEST BALKANS**
A visual synthesis of Climate Change
80 p. English
ENVSEC, UNEP, Zoï

**EASTERN EUROPE**
A visual synthesis of Climate Change
60 p. English & Russian
ENVSEC, Zoï

**CAUCASUS**
A visual synthesis of Climate Change
60 p. English
Zoï, ENVSEC

**OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY**
Environment & Security
54 p. English
Zoï Report

**EGYPT**
Environment & Security
24 p. English
Zoï Report

**JORDAN**
Environment & Security
24 p. English
Zoï Report

**MINING LEGACIES**
In South East Europe
52 p. English
ENVSEC, UNEP, Zoï

**DNIESTER WITHOUT BORDERS**
Report & Executive summary
176 p. / 32p. English & Russian
ENVSEC, UNECE, OSCE, UNEP, Zoï

**UNEP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN EUROPE**
16 p. English
UNEP, Zoï
Zoï & friends

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@minizoï
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Loïc (Valérie), Léonard (Viktor) and Loris (Carolyne)

@summerworker
aman.berdyev

@zoiboard
susan.boos, Editor, WOZ Die Wochenzeitung, Zürich (President)
alex.kirby, Journalist, Climate news network, Lewes
yvan.rochat, Mayor of the municipality of Vernier, Geneva
Abas Torez, mining conflicts, Bishkek
Alban Kakulya, photography, Geneva
Aleh Cherpu, sustainability and energy, Lund
Alexei Ischuk, geo-information systems, Kyiv
Alina Bushmovich, environmental information, Minsk
Anvar Homidov, Afghan-Tajik environment and hydrology cooperation, Dushanbe
Ari Mäkelä, water quality, Helsinki
Azizullah Omar, Afghan-Tajik environment and hydrology cooperation, Kabul/Geneva
Dmitry Averin, environmental information, Donetsk
Firuza Illarionova, Afghan-Tajik environment and hydrology cooperation, Riga/Dushanbe
Gennady Syrodoev, geo-information systems, Chisinau
Gherman Bejenaru, GIS expert, Moldova
Gustaf Öhrnell, photography, Stockholm
Hanna Hopko, environment and health journalism, Kyiv
Harry Forster, technical and commercial translations, Grenoble
Ihab Mohamed Shaalan, environmental assessment, Cairo
Ilia Domashev, biodiversity and energy, Bishkek
Irena Melnikova, mining, climate, translation, Donetsk
Ira Vanda, environmental information, Lviv, Ukraine
Iskander Beglov, water communication, Tashkent
Ivan Ignatiev, environment and health, Bender
Ivan Ivanovic, transport expert, Belgrade
Jessica Jewell, nuclear energy, Laxenburg
John Bennett, environmental journalism, New York
John Cole-Baker, miner, Trient
Kanybek Isabaev, environmental information, Osh
Karen Landmark, environmental communication, Tromøya
Karybek Ibraev, mining transparency, Bishkek
Karl Kast, dam engineering, Karlsruhe
Ken Davis, geology and mercury, Washington DC
Marija Secularac, sustainable tourism, Belgrade
Mark Zhelezniak, environmental modelling, Kyiv
Martin Mergili, glaciers and photography, Vienna
Michail Illushenko, mercury expert, Almaty
Mila Teshaieva, photography, Berlin
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Petru Cocirta, environmental information, Chisinau
Philip Peck, mining and industrial engineering, Lund
Rauno Sairinen, socially responsible mining, Fiskars
Roman Corobov, climate change and vulnerability, Chisinau
Ruslan Valitov, cartoonist, Bishkek
Svein Tveitdal, environmental diplomacy, Arendal-Froland
Steward Williams, mining, Podgorica
Talaibek Makeyev, environmental cooperation and information, Almaty
Tamar Bakuradze, environmental information systems, Tbilisi
Vadim Vinichenko, sustainability and translation, Moscow / Budapest
Vahagn Tonoyan, water management, Yerevan
Valentin Bogdetsky, mining geology, Bishkek
Vicken Cheterian, research and journalism, Geneva
Vladimir Korneev, hydrology and flow modelling, Minsk

@grida.no
We remain closely associated with friends and colleagues at our mother institution GRID-Arendal.
• Zoïstory

Retreat 2013, Jura, France

Water Master Class, Bern

COP Warsaw

Galapagos
The Geneva-based Zoï Environment Network is a new answer to some stubborn old questions. An international non-profit organisation, Zoï’s mission is to reveal, explain and communicate connections between the environment and society.