

ECOLOGY CORNER

Resolving environmental issues in Montenegro



Mojkovac, Montenegro - To deal with the country's environmental problems, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has launched various activities in the region. The UNDP has established the Tailing Mine Impoundment (TMI) in the region between the right riverbank of Tara and the western side of the urban zones of Mojkovac, which has a metal mining complex located in the northern part of Montenegro.

From 1976 to 1991, the lead and zinc mine 'Broskovo' was actively disposing hazardous metal materials, which could pollute the waters of the nearby Tara River. So a TMI was constructed surrounding the disposed tailing impounded materials. "From the beginning to the end of the technological processes in the mine, all flotation tailings have been impounded into this

area," according to the Western Balkans Environment Programme's (WBEP) website.

The project, called "Remediation and Re-cultivation of the Mojkovac Lead and Zinc Tailings Mine Impoundment," is funded by the Government of Montenegro and other bilateral donors that will help finish the project in two different phases. "The TMI was constructed in a manner that should prevent the migration of impounded masses underground and the Tara River. The internal surface of TMI was covered with plastic foil in order to prevent the migration of impounded masses underground and in the Tara River," said WBEP. Based on an initial assessment by WBEP, approximately \$15 million will be spent on the overall programme "to achieve improvement of the environmental situation and the quality of life for citizens liv-

ing in and around polluted areas."

According to WBEP, the project will be implemented over the period of 30 months and will cover different areas including clean up activities, demonstration activities, information sharing, capacity building, the implementation of pilot projects, and strengthening the supply of professional consultancy services.

UNDP intervention in the municipality and on the regional level will include the capacity for building for local and national stakeholders in the area of the affective environmental management. One of the local level initiatives by UNDP in Montenegro would be the agriculture sector, especially in the area of Mojkovac, that's largely based on traditional methods with low fertilizer and pesticides.

According to experts, the local community can

create successful examples of organic agriculture, which could be beneficial for the country as it is in the process of EU accession. Under the EU bloc, the member states have to follow IPA and Agricultural policy funds that focus on organic agricultural activities. "This creates a significant opportunity to introduce organic agriculture in combination with the development of agri-tourism and an increasing demand for high quality/organic food in the tourism sector and by Montenegrin consumers." UNDP said in a statement. The international agency also noted that the basic preconditions for organic agriculture in Montenegro have already been mentioned in the legislation and through the establishment of the national certifying body Montecorganic.