
SERBIA GRANTED UN FUNDING TO BETTER IMPLEMENT CHEMICALS CONVENTIONS

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The UN Environment Programme has granted Serbia \$250,000 in funds to improve its implementation of four UN conventions related to chemicals and waste.

The project, which will run for two years, will enable the Ministry of Environmental Protection to create policy documents to implement the conventions and subsequent reporting systems. It will also increase capacity and cooperation within the government, according to Unep's press release.

Serbia is a party to three of the four UN conventions on chemicals and waste. It ratified the Basel Convention on exporting hazardous waste in 2000 and, in 2009, it ratified the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and Rotterdam Convention on importing hazardous chemicals. It signed the Minamata Convention on Mercury in 2014 but has not yet ratified it.

The funding provided by Unep, announced earlier this month, will:

- "strengthen the synergies between the four chemicals and waste-related conventions" in the national government;
- create a national coordination mechanism to monitor implementation;
- work on raising awareness between industry and civil society, with particular focus on how to separate hazardous POPs in the recycling process; and
- establish a data collection system for national reporting to the conventions' secretariat.

The funding is part of Unep's Special Programme, which provides money for "institutional capacity building" on chemicals and waste management around the world. The programme is currently funding projects in 42 countries.

The Serbian project is also part of a larger effort within the country to focus on chemicals and waste management. The countrys capital city, Belgrade, has been overhauling its chemicals legislation as part of its efforts to join the EU, ongoing since 2014.

It has lined up its national legislation to match the EU's REACH Regulation and waste framework Directive, as well as its laws on prior informed consent, POPs and mercury.

The EU's strategy for the Western Balkans, published last year, proposed 2025 as a potential year for Serbia and neighbouring Montenegro to join the trade bloc.

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conventions

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