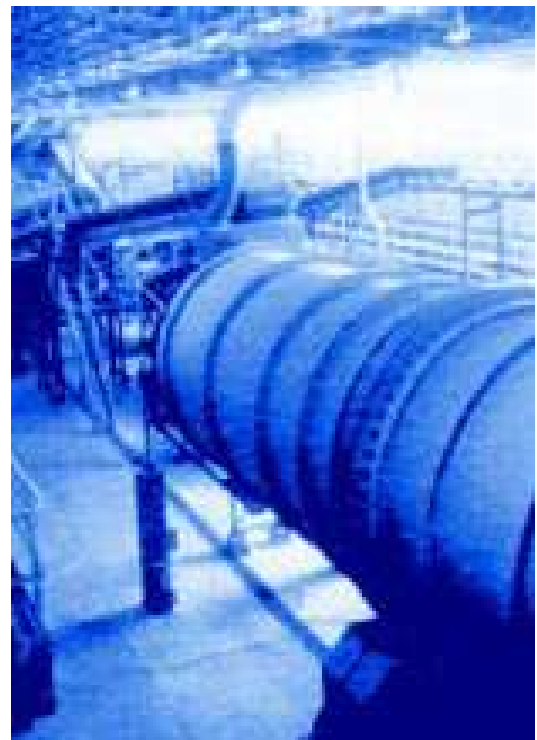


**ELEGKTIKO SYNEDRIO**  
**(Hellenic Court of Audit)**



**WASTE MANAGEMENT IN GREECE**  
**A GENERAL OVERVIEW ON THE PROBLEM OF SOLID**  
**WASTES**



**Athens, September 2005**  
**Theologia Gnardelli**  
**Second rank judge**

This paper has been based on the official data compiled in the Report “Country profile of Greece” that the Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works (YPEHODE) has presented during the Twelfth Session of the COMMISSION on SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT of the UNITED NATIONS (UN CSD 12).

## **1. Decision-Making**

Greece, within the framework of the European Union (EU) policy for waste management, is planning its policy regarding solid waste aiming at the protection of human health and the preservation of natural environment.

Specifically, Greece has developed a comprehensive legislative system harmonized with the European legal framework and various actions and measures have already been put in place for the integrated management of waste, based on three principles: waste prevention; recycling and reuse; and improving final disposal and monitoring.

In 1986, Law 1650 for the Environment established a framework of sanctions and liabilities for the protection of the environment. This Law set the waste management issue under the jurisdiction of Local Authorities. In 1990, two Joint Ministerial Decisions: JMD 69269/5387/90 (Official Journal of the Government - OJG 678B/1990) and JMD 73508/5512/90 (OJG 691B/1990) introduced environmental impact assessments for certain projects and activities. Recently, the environmental impact assessment framework in Greece set by Law 1650/1986 has been amended by Law 3010/2002 in order to fully harmonize national legislation with EU Directives 96/61/EC and 97/11/EC. In accordance with this Law, three new Joint Ministerial Decisions (JMDs 15393/2332/2002, 11014/703/104 and 37111/2021/2003) introduce new provisions for categorization of projects, environmental permitting and public participation.

Determination and in-detail specification of the competent bodies for waste management in Greece, i.e. the Local Boards, the Administration of each Prefecture and, in specific cases, the Regional Administration, is provided under JMD 69728/824/96. In 1996, Local Authorities started the elaboration of Prefectural solid waste management schemes, in accordance with JMD 69728/824/96. For the achievement of an integrated approach to the waste management issues and for the homogeneity and delineation of the waste management schemes developed by Local Authorities, JMD 114218/1997 was issued, which sets the framework of technical specifications and general programmes for the management of solid wastes. Together with the latter, JDM 113944/101/97 was also issued for the specification of

general guidelines of the solid waste management policy and for setting out the bases for National Planning.

In order to implement the existing legal framework and to develop a sound action plan for waste management at the national level, the 1st “National Planning for the Integrated and Alternative Management of Solid Waste” was elaborated during 1997-1999, so as to ensure the sound use of natural resources, the protection of environmental quality and thus the sustainable development in Greece. The establishment of such an approach was an obligation deriving not only from the Greek Constitution and Law 1650/86 for the “protection of the Environment” but also from the obligations of Greece as a European Union Member State. The National Planning took into account all the existing management schemes on Regional and Prefectural level as well as the works that have already been implemented in the framework of national and European funding. The Planning of a uniform national strategy for waste management was based on the following main principles, as set by JMD 113944/101/97:

- Prevention or minimization of waste production (quantitative minimization) as well as the minimization of the waste content in hazardous substances (qualitative minimization);
- Utilization of waste (recycling and energy recovering);
- Safe final disposal of residues;
- Proximity of disposal sites to the sites/sources of waste generation;
- Rehabilitation of disposal sites so that they could easily be incorporated, after the termination of their use, into the surrounding natural environment;
- The ‘polluter pays’ principle.

The subsequent JMD 14312/1302/2000 (OJG 723B/2000) provided an explicit determination and interpretation of JMD 113944/1016/97 and outlined the National Waste Management Strategy (for both solid and hazardous wastes), which constituted the National Waste Management Planning.

In 2002, YPEHODE initiated the update of the National Planning, with the aim to:

- Review the Prefectural Schemes according to the Regional Schemes that were elaborated for promoting integrated solid waste management plans at regional level and the clustering of programmes;
- Elaborate integrated solid waste management systems for the 13 Administrative Regions of Greece;
- Control the operation of non-engineered dump sites and take action for their gradual elimination;
- Develop modern sanitary landfills, covering the whole country by the end of 2008.

During 2001-2003, YPEHODE has focused in the transposition of the community legislation on the waste management, into the national legal system. Based on the recent institutional framework and the review process of the 1st National Planning, YPEHODE issued in 2003 JMD 50910/2727/2003 (OJG 1909/2003), on measures and terms for solid waste management, comprising of the following basic axes:

- Adaptation and approval of the National Solid Waste Management Planning so as to incorporate the major principles, goals, policies and actions for the rational management of urban wastes, according to the community legal framework and arising national obligations;
- Establishment of the Regional Solid Waste Management Schemes as the executive action plans in the area of solid waste management, with specifications and goals in consistency with those of the National Planning.

In the future, the Hellenic national legislation will continue to be harmonized with the EU Regulations and Directives on waste management, sharing the ambition for a significant cut in the amount of the generated wastes, through new waste prevention initiatives, better use of resources, and through encouraging a shift to more sustainable consumption patterns.

The management of non-hazardous wastes falls under the provisions of JMD 69728/824/96 on “Measures and conditions for solid waste management”. This JMD defines the relevant

withdrawal procedures for the end-of-life vehicles, which constitute the 0,6-0,8% of the total number of vehicles in use. The following legislative framework for solid wastes determines the general lines on which the municipal solid waste management policy is based, the framework of technical specifications and programmes for their management, as well as certain provisions concerning their disposal sites or their reuse:

- JMD 31784/954/1990 (OJG 251B/1990) for packaging materials;
- JMD 82805/2224/1993 (OJG 699B/1993) for the incineration of municipal solid wastes;
- JMD 58751/2370/1993 (OJG 264B/1993) and JMD 76802/1033/1996 (OJG 596B/1996) for incineration plants;
- JMD 113944/1016/97, for defining and specifying the main policy guidelines for the National Waste Management Planning;
- JMD 114218/1016/97 on .Elaboration of a specifications framework and of the general programmes for the management of solid wastes.;
- JMD 14312/1302/2000 (OJG 723B/2000), for providing an explicit interpretation of JMD 113944/1016/97 and for setting out the National Waste Management Strategy (for both solid and hazardous wastes), which constitutes the National Waste Management Planning;
- Law 2939/2001 (OJG 179A/2001), for ‘Packages and the Alternative Management of Packaging and other Materials - Establishment of the National Organization for Alternative Management of Packaging and other Materials (NOAMPOM). This law (harmonization with the EU Directive 94/62/EEC), constitutes the general legal framework for the alternative management of packaging waste, with priorities on the prevention, reuse, recycling and energy recovery without polluting;
- JMD 29407/3508/2002 (OJG 1572B/2002) on measures and terms for sanitary disposal (harmonization with the EU Directive 99/31/EC);
- JMD 50910/2727/2003 (OJG 1909/2003) providing measures and terms for solid waste management - National and Regional Planning Management, in complete compliance with the European Waste Framework Directive 91/156/EEC.

The transboundary transportation of non-hazardous wastes is based on the European Regulation 259/93/EEC. The competent authority for control and monitoring of these transportations is YPEHODE.

## **2. Programmes and Projects**

The Operational Environmental Programme (OEP) of Greece aims at resolving one of the major environmental problems of Greece, namely the management (collection, treatment and disposal) of solid and hazardous wastes. The Programme promotes the required actions for the implementation of the new directive for landfills, and gives considerable weight to the cleaning of coastal areas and swimming sites. Specific actions under the Programme include: development of an integrated National programme for waste management and restoration of abandoned landfill sites and construction of new landfills. Also it aims at the development of extended recycling programmes; construction of composting plants; implementation of innovative techniques for the collection, treatment, and disposal of wastes; elaboration of studies on the implementation of the packaging directive; and coastal zone cleaning with emphasis on tourist sites.

The municipal solid wastes management in Greece presents different features compared to that of most EU countries. The quantity of waste continues to be somehow lower than in other European countries, reflecting a less intense consumption pattern. Their composition is also different, having as principal characteristics the high content in fermentative materials and the relatively low content in packaging materials. These positive characteristics are counter-balanced by certain delays in the waste management sector. The high number of open dumping sites constitutes the most negative element, while the percentages of useful material recovery are also low. With regard to the final disposal data, 40% of the disposed waste is dumped in non-engineered sites, whereas 51% is disposed in sanitary landfills.

Dealing with the solid waste management issue, the main policy orientations are the following:

- The rapid implementation of the National Waste Management Planning, emphasizing on the construction and operation of new sanitary landfills, upgrading of the existing ones so

as to ensure their safe discharge, restoration of old landfills, recycling programmes, equipment, coastal zone cleaning programmes, and construction of sites for the disposal and treatment of agricultural products, hazardous wastes, and hospital wastes;

- The maximization of material recovery through the extension of collection systems at the source in all the big municipalities of the country, in addition to the construction of modern plants for mechanical separation.

For the implementation of the National Waste Management Planning, funds of approximately 322,8 million € were invested up to 1999, at Regional and Prefectural level and for the two larger urban cities of Greece, namely Athens and Thessaloniki. These funds derived from both national and community funds (Cohesion Fund, Structural Funds etc.). Early studies estimated that for the implementation of the National Planning for the period 2000-2006 funds of around 1.115 billion € would be required. The goals of the National Waste Management Planning, as well as the specific actions and measures to be taken include:

- The termination of all non-engineered landfill sites / uncontrolled land filling as well as the launching of projects for their quick rehabilitation;
- The establishment of innovative, modern and integrated plants for the final disposal of municipal solid waste, coupled with material recovery facilities and sanitary landfill sites;
- The promotion of Waste Transfer Station networks for the environmentally and economically sound transportation of municipal solid waste;
- The promotion of programmes for waste separation at the source;
- The creation of separate sites for the exclusive disposal of toxic waste;
- The promotion of an integrated communication strategy that will supplement and assist the addressing of the problem of municipal solid waste management;
- The continuous and scientifically based information and awareness raising of the citizens, which consists a highly essential requirement for the effective implementation of any planning scheme.

The Greek coastline of 16000 km receives all kinds of waste. For the protection and cleaning of coasts, a number of programs, co-funded by national and EU funds are implemented by YPEHODE, in cooperation with Local Authorities. The implementation of integrated recycling programmes is one of the main strategic aims of YPEHODE. A paper recycling programme (segregation at source) is being implemented in the Athens region since 1994, in which 52 municipalities and communities participate today, encompassing a population of 2 million inhabitants. In the area of Thessaloniki a similar programme involves 18 municipalities and 55 communities of a total population 1 million inhabitants. The new recycle-at-the-source programme, as specified according to Law 2939/2001, sets out the following quantitative goals to be implemented by the end of 2005: Utilisation of 50-65% per weight of the package wastes; recycle of 25-45% per weight of the package wastes; and recycle of at least 15% per package material. For the implementation of these goals by 2005, new material recovery facilities and composting facilities are constructed in various municipalities all over the country.

YPEHODE has promoted and funded through the OEP several other projects on recycling, such as:

- Elaboration of public awareness programs in the framework of environmental education, since 1989. During this time more that 2500 schools have participated in these projects;
- Construction of Material Recovery Facilities using hand-sorting methods in the island of Zakynthos, the Region of Attica (Maroussi, and Ano Liosia) and the cities of Larissa and Patra.

Within the framework of the municipal solid waste management policy implementation, a large number of Sanitary Landfills are under construction, some of the works at the bidding phase or at the phase of approval of environmental terms. The main goal is the gradual phasing out of the non-engineered and uncontrolled dumping sites until the end of 2007. Today, 12 projects have been completed for the restoration of non-engineered disposal sites, as well as 5 projects for the rehabilitation of large-capacity disposal sites that served big

urban centres (Schisto, Ano Liosia, Thessaloniki, Irakleio and Serres). Already approved and under construction/implementation are the following projects:

- Construction of 5 new Waste Transfer Stations in the Region of Attica;
- Construction of Material Recovery Facilities using both mechanical separation and hand-sorting methods in several municipalities of the country (East Attica, Thessaloniki, Patra, Chania);
- Rehabilitation of 5 central non-engineered dumping sites (in East and West Samos, Thessaloniki, Ileia and West Kerkyra);
- Programmes for the separation of materials at the source in many municipalities that correspond to the 30% of the total Greek population.

### **3. Status**

Greece encompasses more than 3500 islands, has particular geomorphology (rough vertical relief) and intense tourism development. These characteristics create a complex waste management problem, linked to the creation of numerous non-engineered landfill sites. Thus, priority has been given to the abatement of such “uncontrolled” landfills and to the establishment of soundly designed and wholly engineered/integrated sanitary landfill sites. Having achieved to a great extent these first two goals, Greece is now proceeding to the Planning of an integrated infrastructure for the effective management of solid waste, through the establishment of improved waste collection systems, the effective transportation and temporary storage of waste, the establishment of material recovery facilities and the introduction of new recycling systems and techniques.

In Greece, land disposal is the predominant method for municipal waste management. From the total amount of municipal solid wastes, approximately 8% is recycled at the source and the remaining 92% is disposed of without prior treatment in Sanitary Landfills or in non-engineered dumping sites. With regard to the final disposal data 40% of the amount of disposed waste is dumped in non-engineered sites, whereas the rest 51% is disposed in sanitary landfills. Organized collection and transportation of municipal waste is applied for

the 85% per weight of the generated waste, while the rest 15% corresponds to low-populated rural and mountainous areas.

The first-level Local Authorities, i.e. Municipalities, are responsible for the collection, the temporary storage, and the treatment/recycling/reuse as well as for the final disposal of the municipal solid wastes. For the improvement of the transportation and final disposal of waste, 15 Waste Transfer Stations, covering 23.4% of the generated municipal wastes, have been constructed up today, as well as 5 Material Recovery Facilities and 1 Mechanical Separation and Composting Facility. Several uncontrolled dumping sites have been reclaimed and 43 Sanitary Landfills have been constructed, serving 55 % of the Greek population (35 already in operation today). 19 Sanitary Landfills are in the implementation phase today, estimated to serve another 19% of the Greek population combined with the expansion of 3 existing facilities (in Larissa, in the island of Kefallonia and in West Attica). Proposals for the construction of 32 new Sanitary Landfills have been submitted and some of them have already been approved for co-funding from national funds and the Cohesion Fund II, in the Administrative Regions of South Aegean, Crete and Thessaly. The implementation of the proposed facilities could serve an additional 21% of the Greek population. Today, the quantity of the municipal solid wastes generated at national level is approximately 4.6 million tons (mainly from domestic and partly from commercial activities), increased by 50% in comparison to the quantity levels in 1990. Despite the rapid increase of the municipal solid waste quantity in Greece, this quantity is still significantly below the average EU quantity. The Region of Attica contributes to 39% of the annual municipal waste production at national level, followed by the Region of Central Macedonia (16%) and the County of Thessaloniki (9%). The average qualitative content of the produced municipal solid wastes is calculated to be 47% fermentable, 20% paper, 8,5% plastic, 4,5% metal, 4,5% glass and 15,5% other wastes. The high percentage of biodegradable wastes impedes the application of incineration and mechanical sorting methods.

The quantity of recyclable materials is estimated to be 1.5 million tons, corresponding to 37.5% per weight of the municipal solid wastes. The percentage of plastic material recycled is estimated to be 5%, 0,5-1% of which comes from domestic households. Packaging

material corresponds to approximately 21% of the annual produced quantity of municipal solid wastes, or, in absolute terms, around 974500 tons.

Beaches are cleaned by special machinery acquired by municipalities in coastal areas.

#### **4. Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising**

Since 1993, YPEHODE has worked extensively on the acquisition of the necessary knowledge of environmental affairs. A team of experts was created in order to help citizens understand this difficult subject. Dozens of executives travelled around Greece to spread information on how to protect the Environment and diminish pollution, focusing most of their efforts on the youth and students. Funds were made available to school units, classrooms or groups of teachers and students, in order to set up and complete environmental programmes: recycling programmes, programmes that protect Greece's natural wealth, programmes for the creation of awareness among students and general public, programmes that transcend the school's premises or even the country's borders. This led to the founding of more than 200 "registered" Non-Governmental Environmental and Ecological Organizations in Greece, whose members are often either teachers or former students who had the chance to participate in one of the Environmental Education programmes during their schooling years.

During the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, Johannesburg, August-September 2002), a TYPE II initiative was launched called MEDIES (Mediterranean Education Initiative for Environment and Sustainability), with emphasis on water and waste, led by the Hellenic Government, UNESCO, UNEP/MAP and MIO-ECSDE. This initiative/partnership facilitates the educational community and students, through the successful application of innovative Educational Programmes in countries around the Mediterranean basin. These Programmes are based on cross-cutting themes such as water and wastes and in this framework:

- The education package on household wastes, entitled "Wastes in our lives" has been produced.

- MEDIES interactive webpage was launched at the beginning of 2003 and it is already fully operational serving as an interactive point of sharing information on issues relevant to Education for Environment and Sustainability.
- Regional and national Educational Seminars, Conferences and other meetings are being organised for capacity building and assisting the educators' work.

Schools in Greece are involved in recycling programmes. Encouragement is given to initiatives by local government organizations of specific autonomous geographic units (for example islands) to collaborate in the collection, disposal, and recycling of waste. The “curriculum” of the school projects is diverse. However the most common and most developed programmes and projects are related either to “management of natural resources” or to critical environmental issues, such as water pollution, water management, recycle of materials, etc.

## **5. Information**

An important structural intervention is the establishment of the Environmental Inspectorate of YPEHODE (harmonization with the EU Directive 2001/331/EC) thus providing a new data pool of measurements regarding inspected activities. The National Centre for the Environment and Sustainable Development (EKPAA) has already produced a number of assessments and reports, such as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development for the Johannesburg Summit and recently a Signals Report based on up to 2000 updated data. The National Environment Information Network has been an important dynamic source of environmental information in Greece.

The MEDIES Network, which is the basis of the Initiative (see also Chapter 4. “Capacity-Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising”) consists of individual educators from the Mediterranean, engaged in Education for Environment and Sustainability. The partners-members supply the network with all relevant information regarding the educational

and/or environmental issues in their country, and undertake the dissemination of the supplied information and the promotion of education for environment and sustainability in their schools or NGOs.

In terms of waste data, registration of the municipal waste production and management has started and is under development. Moreover, two studies are being implemented to update the national planning for the dangerous and non-dangerous wastes. These studies will also produce primary data about quantities and methods of waste management. Another study on the management of solid wastes not deposited to landfills is under way.

A specialized structure has been established since 2002 in YPEHODE, under the title “Office for Alternative Management of Packaging and Other Materials (OAMPOM)”, in order to collect data and manage the operating systems for packaging and other materials in Greece. The objective of OAMPOM is to promote the maximization of recycled materials in compliance with various relevant EU Directives. Up to now several systems have been evaluated and approved (packaging, end-of-life-vehicles, waste tyres, waste oils, batteries). Within this framework, relevant databases will be developed containing information about the current situation for each waste stream (quantities, activities/companies producing relevant materials/waste sources, recycling rates etc). In this context, the following studies will be assigned by OAMPOM in the near future, to ensure a close monitoring and an assessment of the current situation:

- “Inventory of packaging and packaging waste - Establishment of a data Bank”;
- “Inventory of electrical and electronic equipment and their waste - Establishment of a data Bank”;
- “Collection of waste data from construction, demolition and excavation works and their destinations - Establishment of a data Bank”.

The OAMPOM’s web page on the alternative waste management is under construction. Moreover, every year, the alternative management systems submit a report for assessment of the last year activities (including the recycled quantities) as well as for planning the system development and expansion.

## **6. Research and Technologies**

The General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT) of the Ministry of Development, through the Operational Programme “Competitiveness” (OPCOM) 2000-2006, supports the research activities of both the country’s scientific research institutes and those of its productive industry, focusing on areas that are important for the national economy and for the improvement of the quality of life. Furthermore, it promotes the transfer and dissemination of advanced technologies throughout the country’s productive sector and encourages activities aimed at raising awareness of the general public about research and technology issues. In this context, GSRT has completed a study on “Environmentally Sound Technologies in Greece: Progress of Research and Technology, Economic and Social Impacts”.

The promotion of schemes such as EMAS (EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme), ISO 14000, Integrated Product Policy and Integrated Pollution and Prevention Control (EU Directive 96/61/EC incorporated in the national legislation with Law 3010/2002, OJG 91A/2002) in the business sector, assists efforts for waste reduction, reuse and recycling. Such activities are promoted, inter alia, under the Priority Axis 2 “Support and Encouragement of Business Initiatives” of OPCOM 2000-2006:

- Measure 2.5 “Technological and Organizational Modernization of Business” gives special emphasis on the introduction of ecologically friendly production methods and clean technologies in small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) as well as on covering gaps in infrastructure for the recycling and recovery and utilization of waste products in Greece.
- Measure 2.9 “Support for Business Initiatives in the Environmental Sector” also supports the collaboration among businesses with other bodies for improved management and utilization of industrial wastes or other special material flows (e.g. electronic equipment, vehicle catalysers, used tyres, scrap vehicles hospital waste etc). Under this Measure, particular emphasis is also given on materials’ recovering and recycling, on processing and disposal of hazardous wastes and on supportive actions (e.g. training, registers’

creation, promotion of voluntary agreements) for the adaptation of industry to the new environmental institutional and legislative framework.

For the implementation of these Measures, various actions and research projects are being promoted through public – private partnerships, aiming at exploring innovative approaches and application of advanced technological methods for waste management.

Greece, through the GSRT is participating in the 6th Framework Programme of the Directorate-General for Research of the European Commission with research and applied activities for industry as well as with research and training activities in the field of nuclear energy and nuclear waste management.

## **7. Financing**

According to official data given by the YPEHODE, till April 2004, Greece had invested on waste management the total amount of 542 million €, comprising of national funds and various financing schemes (Cohesion Fund, Operational Environmental Programmes, Regional Operational Programmes, etc). In particular, for the elaboration of waste management studies, the construction of sanitary landfills, waste transfer stations and treatment plants, the restoration and rehabilitation of disposal sites and the collection equipment and recycling equipment programmes, approximately 322,8 million € were invested during 1993-1999. In the funding period 2000-2003, 233 million € have been allocated, including the approved and in progress studies and projects. For addressing the remaining needs, YPEHODE had also bound from national and community resources, the total amount of 293 million € for additional waste management projects.

With a view to achieving sustainable development, the Operational Environmental Programme of Greece for the period 2000-2006 (OEP 2000-2006), focuses on investments in infrastructure needed to guarantee rational management of environmental resources, for example in the waste management sectors. Among its priorities is the improvement of the quality of life, that encompasses specific action programmes for the protection of the environment, namely in the domains of water, and solid and hazardous wastes.

OEP 2000-2006 includes projects on solid waste management with an overall budget of approximately 8,5 million € (Measure 2.1, of Priority Axis 2). Other Operational Programmes, such as OPCOM 2000-2006 also include relative Measures (see Chapters 2.“Programmes and Projects” and 6.“Research and Technology”) with respective budget lines related to waste management. At Regional level, financial support for waste management is provided by the Regional Operational Programmes, for each Administrative Region of Greece, under the framework of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Support Framework (CSF).

## **8. Cooperation**

International cooperation related to sanitation and waste management issues is an important concern for Greece. Since 1999 and in the framework of OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Greece has funded the implementation of several projects on sanitation in partner countries. Through the Bilateral Programme of Development Assistance and Cooperation in the field of Environment and Sustainable Development of YPEHODE, sanitation and waste management related projects funded in 1999 were 3 with a total budget of around 234952 €, whereas in 2000 they were 12 of total budget of around 1,45 million €. These projects were implemented through Universities, Research Institutes and NGOs in Greece. The recipient countries were countries from South East Europe, the Mediterranean and East Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA).

Projects laid emphasis on waste water and solid waste management and capacity building issues. In 2001, the implementation of a project for the construction of a wastewater treatment plant in the city of Strumica in FYROM was initiated.

In the context of the National Bilateral Programme of Development Assistance and Cooperation “Hellenic Aid” for the year 2000-2001, the total budgets allocated to the implementation of sanitation and waste management/disposal in partner countries were around 0,24 million USD and 0,47 million USD, correspondingly. For the year 2002 the total budgets allocated to the implementation of sanitation and waste management/disposal in partner countries were around 0,195 and 0,13 million USD, correspondingly. The

implementation of these aid projects contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and WSSD targets for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Greece has signed and ratified the Protocol of the Barcelona Convention on the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land Based Sources, including its latest amendments of 1996 (Law 3022/2002, OJG 144A/2002). Greece has also signed and ratified a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)/collaboration Protocol with Turkey (Law 2902/2001, OJG 77A/2001), as well as a MoU with Cyprus (Law 2424/1996, OJG 147A/1996), both covering issues of possible bilateral cooperation on waste disposal and other related issues. Furthermore Greece has signed MoUs with Georgia, FYROM and Albania and an Agreement of Understanding with Bulgaria, all of them covering issues closely related to waste management and disposal.