

MACEDONIA



1. OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL POLICIES AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN MACEDONIA

The Republic of Macedonia is a democratic country in transition, with market-oriented economy and liberal market relations.

The strategy of the economic development is based on the available resources. The natural resources of the Republic of Macedonia are characterized more with diversification than with abundance. The resources are relatively modest, but they are not a limiting factor for development.

Water as a natural national wealth and a good of common interest is a dominant priority in everyday life. Water represents a factor that to some extent determines and limits the development. The role of the state is to regulate the conditions and methods of water use, protection against harmful influence of waters, protection of waters against pollution and water resources management through the Law on Waters and other legal acts. Maintenance and improvement of water regime and planning of rational use of waters shall be carried out in accordance with the Water Master Plan of the Republic of Macedonia. The interest of the Republic of Macedonia, as a country with international waters, is to regulate the water relations with neighboring countries based upon mutual agreements.

The heterogeneous configuration, climate, soil and other factors of the environment create conditions for the existence of different ecological regions in the Republic of Macedonia from the aspect of extension, assortments of the agricultural crops and intensity in production. The agricultural land of the Republic of Macedonia is around 1.285.000 ha, out of which roughly 50%

is arable land. Private owners own approximately 80% of the arable land, and the rest is in the hands of agricultural combines that are in a process of transformation. The present agricultural policy supports the developing concept of the agriculture in conditions of complete privatization. The global balances between the production and domestic demand show that the production structure of agriculture is oriented toward entire provision of the population with own production of food; at the same time it is oriented to produce surplus for export. The Republic of Macedonia searches its development perspective in agriculture in an emphasized exporting policy. Modernization of the production and its export orientation are those characteristics from where the credit support of the agriculture starts through foreign investments.

The rural development presents one important strategic issue in the concept of the long-term spatial development of the Republic of Macedonia. The planning concept of development of the rural areas through the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Macedonia, presents an integral concept of the Spatial development of the country. An improvement of the living conditions of the rural population through plan oriented regulation of the settlements and improvement of the communal infrastructure is a basic determination of the state.

2. PRESENT STATUS OF WATER

Available water resources :

The total water resources of the Republic of Macedonia are estimated at 6,37 billion m³ in a normal year and 4,80 billion m³ in a dry year, out of which 80% are carried in the Vardar basin. The annual resources potential per capita is of about 3.000 m³, which is on the low side but more than the potential of e.g. Germany and a number of other European countries (European average approx. 1.900 m³/capita). The main problem arising in the field of availability of water resources is the uneven spatial and timely distribution over the country, showing altogether more favorable conditions in the western part, but being characterized over all the national territory by a timely distribution which presents long drought spells and high intensity rainfalls which constitute at the same time a threat for crops and which prone erosion phenomena.

About 85% of the surface water origins in the country, while only 15% of the water is inflowing to the country from the neighboring countries.

The River Vardar catchment area covers an area of 20.661 km², or 80,4% of the total territory of the country. The average annual volume of discharged water on the border with Greece is approximately 4,6 billion m³.

The groundwater does not have an impact on the balance of available water, but it is important because of its quality. One part of this water enriches the underground reservoirs - aquifers, mainly located in the main valleys of the country. There are no sufficient data about the available underground water by its quality and quantity.

There are three large natural lakes in Macedonia: Ohrid, Prespa and Doyran Lake. All of them are shared with the neighboring countries.

Dams and Reservoirs :

The uneven distribution of the surface water in space and time in the Republic of Macedonia, impedes to a great extent the utilization of water resources. Therefore, construction of dams and creation of reservoirs that would improve the water regime is an imperative and a key solution that will enable full and efficient utilization of water both for the needs of the water management and protection of the human environment from their harmful effects.

As to the catchment areas, 13 big dams were built in the Vardar catchment area, and 3 dams in each of the Strumica and Cm Drim catchment areas.

Currently two large dams are under construction: Koziak (114m) and Lisice (66m). Both reservoirs will supply water for several purposes.

The total volume of the water storage accounts to 1.849,55 million m³. The stored water is used for meeting the requirements of water supply for the population and industry, irrigation, production of electric power, flood control, maintaining the biological minimum, sports, recreation and tourism.

In the Republic of Macedonia there are over 120 small dams that provide water for irrigation of smaller areas, water supply of the rural settlements and local industries, and fish breeding in cages. The level of the small dams is from a few meters to 28 meters, while the volume of stored water amounts from 10.000 m³ to 1.000.000 m³.

Climate and Rainfall :

The territory of the Republic of Macedonia is under the influence of a modified Mediterranean type of climate resulting from its exposure to the Continental, Middle European and dry Easter climate influences, the influence of the mountain climate, as well as the secondary factors - relief and height (going up to 2.600m).

As a result of the climate corridors, the relief in the inland area and its high latitude, there is a great spatial variability of different climatic parameters: rainfall, temperature, atmospheric pressure, winds, shortage of moisture and other factors significant for the water regime.

The distribution of the rainfall is very unfavorable in space and time and modest in quantity as a result of the Continental climate and the Mediterranean influence. The uneven distribution in time and space results in long dry periods (summer-autumn and shorter winter period). On the other hand, the abundant rainfall appears during the period of October-December, and smaller in quantity during the period of March-May. Such a distribution of the precipitation, together with the other meteorological phenomena categorizes Macedonia as a semi-arid country. The average sum of annual precipitation in the entire Republic accounts for approximately 733 mm, with extremes varying from 500 to 1250 mm.

Water demands :

Listed demands are according to the data from 1996 :	mill m ³ /year	%
- water supply of municipalities:	214	11,6
- water supply of industry:	274	14,8
- irrigation	1.155	62,6
- fish ponds	202	11,0
Total :	1.846	100

The major use-sector of the water is irrigation. The arable agricultural area in the Republic of Macedonia accounts for approximately 665.000 hectares, whilst the potential for irrigation is estimated at approximately 400.000 hectares, i.e. 60% of the total arable land.

Until now about 160 smaller and larger irrigation schemes have been built covering an area of 163.700 hectares of fertile arable land, i.e. 41 % of the area that may be irrigated.

Out of the total area under irrigation - 163.700 hectares, about 100.000 hectares (61%) are irrigated by sprinkling, and 63.700 hectares (39%) with other types of surface irrigation. Taking into consideration that the period of exploitation of the existing schemes is rather long (25-30 years), as well as that they have not yet been fully constructed, that their infrastructure has not been regularly maintained, unequally managed, out of the areas designed by the project, only 77.35%, or 126.617 hectares are actually irrigated.

Irrigation serves as a basis to reclaim agricultural potentials of the country. In order to maximize the economic effects in the future, priority is given to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the existing old infrastructure (126,617 hectares).

Presently a Project on Irrigation Rehabilitation and Restructuring is under implementation at three large irrigation schemes in Macedonia, covering an area of 47.000 ha. Beside the physical rehabilitation of the irrigation facilities (canals, irrigation network, etc), policy reforms regarding the transformation process of operation and maintenance including overall organizational structures of the irrigation sector is being examined and will be implemented shortly. The process of participatory management is realized through the gradual establishment of water user associations.

Water is also used for energy production. Hydro power accounts for only 10% of the total energy production in the country. The hydro potential is not sufficiently developed, so the future activities should include the construction of new hydro plants.

Water quality

The water quality condition in the Republic of Macedonia indicates that the natural balance of the rivers is already largely disturbed due to the pollution which is extremely high downstream of towns, where the industries are located, and the discharging of their wastewater has significant contribution. There is a somewhat lower pollution in those sections that are passing through not so densely populated areas, but even there the pollution is higher than the admitted levels.

As annually some 550 million m³ of water are repeatedly recycled in the receiving water body, the amount of concentration of pollutants it carries increases substantially. In relation to the location, the quality of the water resources varies largely between satisfactory and poor, and at many locations the water is highly polluted. It is evident that there is a need to undertake urgent measures for improving the water quality in the country.

According to the water balance for the current condition there is sufficient water in all regions, except in Strumica catchment area (southeast part), where there is a shortage of water of about 40% in the average dry year. The only sustainable solution in order to meet the demands is construction of dams on the rivers and streams.

This sector is in the process of transformation with some unresolved issues and problems, and time will be needed to establish a system which will respect water as an economic dimension.

Drainage Systems

The need to build drainage systems been present for a long time in the regions of Skopje, Pelagonija, Struga, Strumitsa, Kochani, Ovche Pole, Prespa.

The first works were started in the area of Skopje back in 1929 and with more or less intensity have been pursued until present days in most larger valleys in Macedonia.

The drainage systems cover a total area of 82.195 hectares. The situation of the drainage systems is not fully satisfactory.

Flood Control

One of the basic water management activities of special importance for the economic and social development is the river training. Water current arrangement means undertaking such measures in the river basin and in the riverbed that would improve the flow regime of the watercourse, the situation of the riverbeds and their immediate surrounding.

Large systems for flood control have been built for the regions of Skopje, Pelagonija, Strumica and Struga. Actually one major dam is under construction which will allow a decisively improved flood control of Skopje region, namely the dam Kozjak on Treska River with a retention volume of 100 million M3 for flood control only, out of a total retention volume of 550 million m3.

Erosion and Torrent Control

Erosion and torrents are the cause for destruction and degradation of large areas of productive soil, damage and devastation of industrial facilities, irrigation schemes, hydro power systems, water supply facilities and systems etc. The destructive effect of the erosion that are manifested in losses of the bio genetic nature, soil productivity, results in low yields per unit area, as well as in unproductive and degraded soil layers.

As a result of the soil erosion, there is average annual erosion of the arable soil layer (productive land) 20 cm deep, covering an area of 8.500 ha, or 0,33% of the total area of the Republic.

The erosion also has a negative impact on the areas covered by reservoirs by filling them with erosive sediments. According to the research, the annual sedimentation of erosive sediments in the reservoirs is approximately 3.000.000 m3, which means loss of the same amount of space for water.

Taking into consideration the harmful effect of erosion, numerous protective and melioration measures have been undertaken, As a result, erosion on mountain slopes and in torrents have been reduced considerably; efforts in the field of erosion control, reforestation and torrent control have nevertheless to be continuously pursued as has been demonstrated by the dramatic effects of the rains and the floods of July-August 1995.

3. PRESENT STATUS OF FOOD

The agricultural population in the period immediately after the World War 11 accounted for 72% of the total population. In the subsequent period migration from the villages into the towns escalated, so that the percentage of the agricultural population dropped to 22% in 1981, and in 1991 it dropped further to 14,7%. According to the last census of 1994, the agricultural population accounted for 11,79% of the total population.

Around 40% of the agricultural population in 1994 fall into the category of active population and can be considered as a work force organized in agricultural family units.

The total agricultural land surface amounts to 1.285.000 ha (average 1985 - 94). Arable land accounts for 647.000 ha, and is almost entirely in the valley basins. Pastureland accounts for 649.000 ha (average 1985-94), 36,5% of which is mountain and highland pasture and approximately 63,5% on rolling hilly terrain in the valley basins.

The arable land is almost completely in the sub-mediterranean and continental agro-climatic regions, whereas pastures dominate in the mountain regions. The sub-mediterranean and continental regions are characterized by drought, which is the principal limiting factor in utilization of the potential for a wider assortment and production intensity. The irrigation systems built so far cover a total area of around 164.000 ha, out of which around 127.000 ha can be effectively irrigated for the reasons explained in Chapter 2. In the period from 1988 to 1994 on average only

50-70% of this surface was annually used for irrigated production. There exist plans for the completion of the physical infrastructure of irrigation schemes in order to allow production on some 170.000 ha. According to the Spatial Plan of RM, the total irrigation potential of the country would amount to 370.000 ha, or more than half of the arable surface.

The degradation of the soil is a serious issue, since the erosion caused by water - in a stronger or milder form is to be encountered in 37% of the territory of Macedonia. In 1993, prior to the privatization of the agricultural sector, public farms production (companies and cooperatives) accounted for 23,4%, and private farm units for 76,6% of the GNP. The public sectors share in the value of the total agricultural market surpluses (intended for export) is 67%, which is double that of private farms. The private sector owned approx. 70% of the arable land and more than 90% of the tractors in Macedonia.

In contrast to the decrease in the number of the active agricultural population, there has been an increase in the number of private farms; as a result, the average size of the land property has been decreasing: 3,14 ha in 1960, 2,04 ha in 1980 and 1,29 ha in 1994 per family farm. The properties are split into many separate plots per household (7,7 on average), each with an average size of 0,14 ha. This land tenure structure largely limits the profitability and competitiveness of the private farming units. The detailed land use is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Land use in 1997

Land Use	Status 1997 '000 ha	Share in %
Agricultural land, total	1285	100
Cultivated area	647	50,3 (100)
Arable land and gardens	546	42,5 (84,3)
Orchards	18	1,4 (2,8)
Vineyards	29	2,3 (4,5)
Meadows	54	4,2 (8,3)
Pastures	636	49,7
Ponds, reed beds and fishponds	2	/

Self Sufficiency

In general, Macedonia has self sufficiency in food production. The demand is covered by import of agricultural products, and the excess production is exported. Traditional markets for the Macedonian products have, however, changed recently due to political and economic developments in the region and due to market protection measures of EU and other countries.

Trade balance in the agricultural sector is negative, the imports usually outweigh exports. It should be noted that Macedonian economy as a small and relatively closed market is heavily influenced by external trade and political developments. Macedonia is not yet a member of the WTO, but the strategic efforts of the Government are directed toward membership in this and other international organizations.

There are national stock reserves of main strategic agricultural products. They are used also as a buffer to amortize the market price fluctuations in the sector.

Land Tenure Policy

The enlargement of family farms is possible through several ways: land purchase, leasing, concessions (namely, inclusion in the processes of privatization), through association of farmers for particular production and especially through land consolidation.

Forestry

In 1979, in the Republic of Macedonia the forests occupied a surface of 905.600 ha, or 35,2% of the total territory of the country. In the mean time, until 1996, another 110.000 ha were reforested, but the results were not always successful, and they were not analyzed and assessed since.

The situation in forestry is not completely satisfactory in regard to reserves and the utilization of the estate and the wood products and equipment.

4. PRESENT STATUS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

In the Republic of Macedonia there are 1604 villages (census 1994) with a total number of 818.300 inhabitants. Favorable geo-morphological conditions exist in 38% of the rural settlements placed in the flat areas and in 40% of the villages located in hilly areas. Around 22% of the rural settlements are placed in complex geo-morphological conditions in the mountains. According to the available area, in the western part of the country 46%, in the eastern part 27% and in the central part along River Vardar 27% of the rural settlements are located.

The total agricultural area in Macedonia has decreased by about 250.000 ha over the last 30 years from 1,54 to 1,28 million hectares. There is also a constant decrease in the number of active agricultural population.

In a large number of the villages in Macedonia the main infrastructural problems have been resolved. Many rural settlements have connections with nearby town centers by an asphalt road (7.500 km of local roads). Large proportion of the villages have electricity, they either have own water supply or are connected to a regional water supply system; there is regular post service, access to health care etc. At the same time, the State (Government), according to its development policy, is actively engaged in provision of the rural population with all the necessary services (general infrastructure, electricity, water supply, health care, education and others). However, a great disparity between different regions and locations is notable. In most regions of the country the process of urbanization of rural settlements takes place, in other locations there is an apparent absence of a coherent development policy so that the productive and social infrastructure still shows considerable deficiencies with the consequence that people will abandon their villages and migrate to urban centers.

Concerning the education of the rural population, the number of illiterate is small. The majority has completed secondary school, and there are also a significant number of people with a university degree (further information in the statistical yearbooks of RM). However, the professional profile often does not comply with the actual needs of healthy and sustainable agricultural production, which would be necessary for sound rural development.

Commercial activities in rural areas are not very well developed, and are limited to a certain number of agricultural products, which may be sold on the local markets.

High agricultural production risks due to climate and market conditions make the economic situation of farmers rather insecure. Nevertheless, in the contrary to people who are active in the public sector and in the other parts of the economy, farmers have the possibility of subsistence production.

Present trends of social and economic development, in spite of achieved results in the agriculture and the rural areas, has allowed migration from village to urban areas to be uncontrolled and irregular. That has lead to depopulation of many rural settlements and significant increase in urban population. This was on one hand, a result of industrialization and urbanization in the towns and rationalization through mechanization of the individual farm sector on the other hand. A number of people could not commute daily, due to bad conditions of roads and means of transportation, and decided to move altogether to the nearby urban centers. Since some of them

were permanently settled in the towns, they had to quit their agricultural activities, and could no longer utilize their land potential. As a result of this development, around 150.000 ha of arable land is not being used, and there is a significant decrease of heads of livestock. All these elements led to a significant decrease of agricultural production.

Industrial employment opportunities are mainly concentrated in urban centers, and only few jobs exist in food processing and other industries in rural areas. This leads to a particularly precarious situation in hilly or mountainous regions where the production risks are even higher than in the valley bottoms and where the farms can hardly provide the food necessary for the family. Rural areas are large consumers of agricultural machines and equipment, fertilizers, plant protection chemicals, industrially processed food etc. Agricultural production permits the development of food processing industry and increases the scope and varieties of secondary agricultural products. Agriculture, interacting with food processing industry may constitute a significant economic factor in the region. In this context, a number of governmental institutions together with international non-governmental organizations presently work on the preparation of projects in agriculture and food processing industry, with the objective to provide new working places in the rural areas. The aim of these projects is "to integrate the production, from the traditional one to new cooperation with the modern industry".

5. FUTURE SCENARIOS AND AIMS

In principle, the water resources in Republic of Macedonia are sufficient, but in their spatial and timely distribution, not all the needs can be met. In all our considerations we have to think of the sustainability of the measures we implement.

The Water Resources Management Information System is one of the most important strategic national documents, the preparation of which is based on a modern dynamic approach and which will allow managing, developing and planning of the water resources. The project just started and it is planned to complete the basic version up to the end of 2003, while the updating of the data will be in regular time intervals.

One of the future priority activities, directly linked to the WMP is the establishing and renovation of the water resources monitoring, especially for the main surface water, cross-boundary rivers, lakes, reservoirs and underground water. The lack of underground water data should be overcome in the future, performing comprehensive investigations and researches all over the country.

The actual situation of the water management sector would be analyzed in order to define the priorities for the technical projects. First of all, the existing schemes and systems should be rehabilitated in order to achieve the designed parameters, if in the actual economic and market situation these parameters seem to be valid. Simultaneously, reforms in the management, maintenance and operation process should take place. Irrigation as the highest water user should be examined with care in order to reduce the water losses in the schemes. The priority should be rehabilitation and modernization of the existing schemes, completion of the schemes, provision of modern irrigation equipment, installation of measuring devices for consumed water and development and application of transparent pricing policies. Regarding the construction of new structures and systems, the priority should be given to multi purpose projects, which meet the demands of wider regions.

According to the opinion of some local experts, the future solutions are to be sought in the transfer of waters from one into another catchment area. Whether this is the best solution for Macedonia, or the development of the economy and populations in this region is to be downgraded, must be a subject of an extensive technical, economic, sociological and financial analysis and eventually be part of a political process. The nature does not forget the mistakes made in the global water resource planning, and the future generation would have to pay a very high price.

Since the availability of water resources is very limited, the water quality and preservation of a clean and healthy environment constitutes an important goal of the water management. High priority should be given to the measures and activities regarding the water quality protection, including relevant measures for the protection of catchment areas and against soil erosion.

They should be economically justified and be implemented in a sustainable organizational setup in order to achieve required goals.

The development of the water management in the Republic of Macedonia should follow the positive examples of the developed countries in order to rise up this sector from the margins of the economy currents. Whereas so far the engineering capacity of our staff is very well developed, the management capacity does not keep pace with the requirements. The management professionalism has a high need for upgrading.

Public awareness that water has an economic value and that everyone should pay for the consumed water, still is very low. Public campaigns or other appropriate measures are to be carried out in order to strengthen the public awareness of the importance of water.

In the period of accession of the Republic of Macedonia to the European Union, the harmonization of the Macedonian legislation with the one in the EU, concerning water quality and environmental protection, has to be achieved. The long term objective of the water sector for the year 2025 will be the full implementation of the set standards.

Production and demand of agricultural products now and in the year 2025

The present growth rate of the population in Macedonia is estimated by the Republic Statistical Institute to be 1,0065 annually. If this trend continues in the future, the total population in Macedonia in 2025 will be around 2.350.000. The forecasts for the food (agricultural products) demand for the future period are based on this assumed growth rate.

The future orientation of the agricultural production will be toward meeting the domestic demand, and also toward export products. The second development alternative gives better results in this respect. The export surplus of apples, grapes and vegetables will be 2/3 of the production, as well as 90% of the vine produced. The production and export level of lamb and eggs will remain more or less the same, and the production of beef and milk will be balanced with the demand, thus achieving 100% self-sufficiency. Increase of tobacco production and export is also foreseen.

The Republic of Macedonia has a relatively dry climate and the existence of irrigation systems in number of regions will ensure stability of water supply for the agriculture. This is very important since agriculture is an important sector of the economy of the country. Particularly, if the projections of the global warming are correct the possible effect on Macedonia as a temperate region will be an increase of the hydrological and climatic extremes. Having already a large spatial and seasonal variation in the water resources availability, proper water resources policy in irrigation systems development is a must.

Another important issue of the water resources development in the agricultural sector and the country in general is the protection of the environment. Therefore the further development should take under scrutiny all projects in order to safeguard the environment and the water resources and provide sustainability.

Sustainability has to be obtained not only in an environmental sense. There is also technical, economical, political and financial sustainability of development projects and it has to be preserved. One of the issues that has to receive utmost attention in the future is changing of the attitude of the general public and the agricultural producers that the water is a common good free of charge. The water is an economic good and the costs for providing it have to be recovered.

Therefore, the full cost recovery principle must be implemented in the future to secure sustainability of both the water infrastructure and involved institutions on one hand, and the environment and the future generations on the other hand.

The development strategy in the forestry sector is to increase the intensity of utilization by improvement of the forest structure and increase in the forest areas. This development strategy will also have positive effects in reducing erosion. In the timber industry modernization of the existing capacities is expected.

6. CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE

One of the most important goals of the Republic of Macedonia is the preparation for integration into the EU. This political option creates a number of problems that result from the differences in policies, in the legislation for water management, environmental protection and regional development which all have to be aligned to EU standards and regulations.

The short and mid term vision of development in the water management sector will be precisely described in the new digitized Water Master Plan which is under preparation. It can be expected that this tool will allow to solve the most important questions of water allocation, development of agriculture and rural development.

In anticipation of the increase in water demands by all sectors it is of prime importance to reduce the losses in the water supply networks and think about possibilities to transfer water from the western parts to the eastern parts of the country.

Irrigation is a key factor for the Republic of Macedonia to utilize its resources and, thus, gain comparative advantages in agricultural production. In the Public Investment Program (PIP), prepared by the Government of Macedonia and water management as a whole and irrigation particularly are treated as priorities in directing the investments.

In regard to the use of water, public awareness as to quantitative and qualitative aspects has to be created or raised by means of public campaigns or other appropriate measures. People must understand and accept that water is an economic and public good which has a price; whoever consumes water has to bear the full costs including the operation and maintenance costs for the delivery system, as well as the external and opportunity costs. In the same spirit whoever contributes to its deterioration has to bear the full costs for re-establishing the previous quality.

Macedonia is a small and relatively closed market, and as such it depends strongly on external trade relationships. In order to intensify international trade relationships, the Government follows the strategy to tie links to international organizations and is actually negotiating membership in WTO (World Trade Organization).

Presently the country is facing important problems relating to the ownership and utilization of the land. Processes have been initiated to introduce private farm management into state-owned agricultural combines by means of concessions and privatization; it is expected that these measures will lead to a more rational and sustainable utilization of the land, of the machinery and labor and that overall efficiency will be increased. These processes stand at their beginning and are far from being achieved. The reform in the agricultural sector cannot be successfully done without an improvement (qualitative and quantitative) of non-agricultural segments of the rural economy.

Presently the Government of Macedonia, supported by different research institutes is reflecting on a strategy for sustainable development of the rural society and the steps to be taken in order to implement it.

The following issues will be in the center of interest of Macedonia in the coming 25 years :

- Reconstruction and rehabilitation of the existing water supply systems which will allow a reduction of the losses to 15-20 %;
- Extension of the existing local and regional water supply systems and construction of new ones;
- Completion, reconstruction and rehabilitation of large parts of the existing irrigation schemes with a particular emphasis on the increase of the water efficiency;
- Establishment of sustainable procedures for operation and management of irrigation schemes and water supply systems;
- Construction of new irrigation schemes in reference to the evolution of the internal and external market for irrigated crops;
- Construction of sewerage systems and waste water treatment plants for the major cities, rural settlements and industry accompanied by the introduction of the "polluter pays principle";
- Improvement of solid waste management in economical and ecological terms;
- Safeguard of surface and groundwater quality by the establishment of protection zones and monitoring networks;
- Identification and implementation of an efficient balance between public and private management in agricultural production;
- Identification and implementation of organizational structures in the water management sector which are able to react in an appropriate manner to internal and external modifications of the framework conditions;
- Giving the uncultivated arable land on private farm management by means of concessions, leases and other forms;
- Strengthen the agricultural production so as to cope with domestic demands and allow for an increase of export and obtain a positive trade balance for agricultural products;
- Implementation of a land consolidation program, thus providing the agricultural producers with a more stable and favorable economic status;
- Improvement of public and private services in all sectors of rural life;
- Creation of favorable conditions for diversification of activities in the rural areas (agro and food processing industry, tourism, hunting, fishing etc.).