



MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC



**STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT
SLOVAK REPUBLIC 2006**





FOREWORD

Basic rights of each individual living in the Slovak Republic include the **right to a favourable environment**.

The Slovak Government in its **programme declaration** considers environmental care and protection to be a decisive instrument in securing the sustainable development based on the integration of three interdependent equal pillars - economic, social, and environmental, in line with the European environmental legislation and international agreements.

This **State of the Environment Report in the Slovak Republic in 2006** document lends itself to the primary goal of environmental assessment in Slovakia in 2006. The Report also focuses on assessing long-range development trends, identifying the causes leading to the present situation, quantifying their impact, as well as on monitoring the state of environment and international cooperation. The document presents before the public, both professional and lay, available **information on the environment** in line with the provisions of **Act 17/1992 Coll. on the environment**, and **Act 205/2004 Coll. on gathering, storing, and spreading of environment-related information**.

Over the last decade of the 20th century, Slovakia experienced **critical changes** in the society, major restructurization to its economy, adoption and implementation of new legislation and strategic documents focusing on environmental protection. All this resulted in a significant improvement in environmental indicators. Current potential for radical improvements in the area of environment has been reached. Maintaining the achieved level and carrying on with potential improvements calls for a consistent adoption of legislation, implementation of other forms of environmental protection, as well as sufficient funding. Therefore, from the perspective of long-term environmental assessment, the changes are no longer so dramatic as those taking place in the **last** years of the 20th century. More significant future development may be the result of intensive building of environmental infrastructure.

Positive outcomes resulting from the trend in environment include a permanent, slight reduction in emissions of basic pollutants with the exception of particulate matter emissions. The latter was increased,

same as last year, due to an increased consumption of wood for household heating. Over the recent years; however, changes to total emissions have been minimal. Limit values for human health protection for the following pollutants – sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide were not exceeded beyond the limit defined by current legislation. Also, the level of benzene at all monitoring stations stayed below the limit value. Target value for heavy metals was exceeded only at one station.

There has been a continuing trend in reduction of aggregated anthropogenic emissions of green house gasses. However; just like in case of particulate matter emissions, these changes in total volumes have not been significant since 2000.

Trend in the Slovak economy related to the environment has continued to show a reduction in energy demands, calculated per unit of gross domestic product. Electricity production from renewable energy resources has been on the rise. Compared to 2004, there was an increase in 2005 by 0.5 %, reaching 4.4 % of total gross domestic energy consumption.

There is also a permanent growth in the population supplied with drinking water from public water supply, as well as a growing connectedness to sewerage systems and WWTPs. As an EU member country, Slovakia has the obligation to install municipal sewerage systems and waste water treatment plants. We consider this to be one of the most challenging commitments in the area of environmental protection. There is a positive trend in the volumes of discharged waste water and its contamination, resulting in a slight improvement to selected surface water quality indicators.

The biggest **problem** in the area of air pollution is particulate matter PM₁₀ pollution, which significantly exceeds the limits of air pollution generally valid as of January 2005. Adverse situation has remained in ground ozone air pollution with exceeded limit values for human health protection and vegetation. This problem; however, is a typical example of the fact that environmental protection cannot become the prerogative of only some countries. Rather; it calls for a focused, international initiative and coordinated steps. Ground ozone in the SR territory shows mainly trans-boundary character. Significant reduction in national emissions of ozone precursors over the last 15 years did not bring reduction in detected ground ozone concentrations. Outcomes of model calculations point to a very small contribution of Slovakia to the middle-European level of ground ozone concentrations. Reaching the target concentration values in 2010, as set forth by the EU legislation, is not possible today, given the existing national measures.

Endangerment of flora and fauna is still a direct reflection of environmental conditions. For example, there are 100 % taxonomic units of amphibians, 92 % taxonomic units of reptiles, and 76 % taxonomic units of mammals known in the Slovak Republic classified under the IUCN endangerment category.

We identified adverse phenomena also in a number of waste management indicators. Compared to 2005, there was about 33 % increase in waste volumes located on the market. When calculated per capita and compared to equal time periods, there was an increase in municipal waste production by 12 kg.

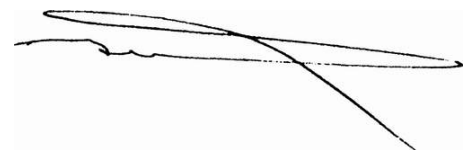
Environmentally inappropriate road passenger and cargo transport still shows a decisive impact. Notwithstanding a slight growth of passenger and cargo railway transport, percentage of carried

passengers is still only about 12 % of all passengers transported by road transport.

The mentioned examples only illustrate the changing nature of the environmental situation in Slovakia. For more detailed information, please go to individual chapters of this document. Demanding environmental obligations posed to Slovakia as an EU member, together with an attempt to create and preserve healthy living conditions for the population, will require a coordinated effort from all affected groups of the society and the general public. There must be a committed attempt to implement the set priorities for environmental protection as reflected in the draft of the Operation programme. The Programme will make it possible to apply for EU funding in the area of environmental protection by 2013.

Besides coercive instruments, it is also the application of voluntary instruments including cleaner production, EMAS, or environmental assessment and product labeling that play a big role in environmental protection. Implementation of these instruments goes hand in hand with environmental promotion and education with the goal to raise public environmental awareness and public involvement on decision making in the area of environmental protection.

Environmental awareness is to be raised also through **regular information on the state of environment**, which forms the basis for political decisions to achieve the objectives of the National strategy for sustainable development, control and evaluation of outcomes of the national environmental policy and sectoral integration strategies. State of the Environment Report in the Slovak Republic in 2006 is only one of the forms of publishing this type of information. The Report informs the general public of the environmental situation in Slovakia and also makes comparisons to other EU member states.



Ing. arch. Jaroslav Izák

Minister of the Environment of the Slovak Republic