



Fact sheet 2

Thursday, 8 June 2006

EIONET – Environmental Information and Observation Network

Basis for environmental policy in Europe

Information on the state of the environment in Europe prepared by the European Environment Agency (EEA, see fact sheet 1) comes mainly from the European Environmental Information and Observation Network (EIONET). This was established in 1994 and is supposed to deliver high-quality data and information on the state of the environment and on environmental pollution and its causes. This information enables political decision-makers to choose appropriate measures for the protection of the environment at the national and European levels and to check on the effectiveness of the policies and measures that have been implemented.

European network of experts and authorities

EIONET is the largest European network, consisting of the EEA itself and a network of about 900 experts from 37 countries in over 300 national environmental agencies and other institutions that deal with environmental information. EIONET currently has five topic centres, dealing with the areas of climate change, water, the terrestrial environment, the management of resources and of waste, and biological diversity.

National Focal Points

In each EEA member state, a national focal point deals with contacts with the EEA. In Switzerland, this is done by the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN). For instance the FOEN has to validate the data from the national network for the observation of air pollutants (NABEL), to convert these into the format required by the EEA and to send them to the EEA, so that these data can be further used, for instance in comparative reports on the state of the environment in Europe.

Information

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- EEA information booklet on EIONET:
http://org.eea.europa.eu/documents/eionet_connects/eionet_web-en.pdf