



ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING IN ESTONIA ENHANCING THE RELIABILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL DATA



Switzerland is equipping Estonian laboratories and monitoring stations with modern devices and financing the training of personnel. This should ensure that in future Estonia has comprehensive, reliable environmental data on water, air, radioactivity and natural disasters.

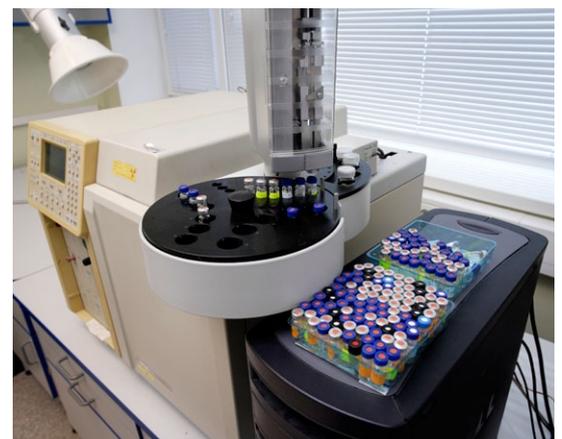
Estonia is sparsely populated and has vast regions in which nature is virtually untouched. The country is marked by its proximity to water: Estonia has more than 1500 islands and 1000 lakes and its coast is 3,800 kilometres in length. Numerous marshes, upland moors and forests shape its landscape.

The collection of reliable environmental data is crucial to the preservation of this unique natural landscape. Only then will the Estonian authorities be in a position to take well-founded decisions to protect the environment. For Estonia, high air and water quality, radiation protection and the prevention of natural disasters are especially important. For this reason, environmental monitoring needs to be improved in these areas in particular.

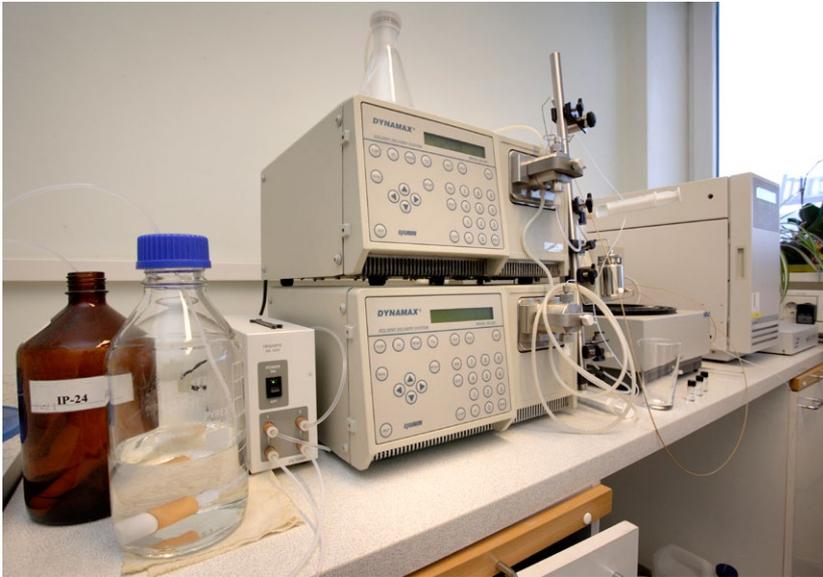
MODERN EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING

Switzerland is participating in the purchase of modern measuring and analysis devices. Appropriate personnel training is also necessary. Switzerland is contributing to a total of eleven environmental monitoring projects. Among them are:

- The Estonian air quality network will be improved. New methods and analytic devices enable better measurements of harmful substances and fine particulates, and this in turn enables the development of action plans to deal with air pollution in urban areas. Swiss and Estonian experts are conducting a measurement campaign together so that Estonia can profit from experiences already gathered in Switzerland.
- Thanks to training and new equipment, the specialists at the Estonian environmental research centre will in future be able to analyse 33 harmful substances in Estonia's waters. Among other things, the aim is to prevent harmful substances from getting into the food chain.



- Estonia's radiation monitoring system will be modernised. Older monitoring stations and the communication system will be updated so that Estonian environmental authorities can issue prompt, reliable warnings in the event of cross-border emergencies.



RELIABLE, COMPREHENSIVE, RAPIDLY AVAILABLE ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

Thanks to these eleven projects, Estonia will be able to improve its implementation of EU regulations on environmental monitoring. The aim is to gather data which is as comprehensive and reliable as possible. The speed of data collection and transfer is to be increased by 60% and the costs of data collection reduced by 40%.



High-quality environment monitoring is essential for obtaining a comprehensive picture of the status of the environment. The main priorities of this programme are to increase the monitoring capacity in Estonia and obtain information about the status of the environment that is of higher quality, and is also reliable and accurate. In this way it will be possible to secure an appropriate decision-making process for defining measures to protect the environment.

Keit Pentus, Minister of the Environment

THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

SUBJECT

Environmental monitoring

COUNTRY

Estonia

STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Estonia's laboratories are not as well equipped as those of other EU countries. Chemical analyses often have to be purchased abroad at great cost.

PURPOSE

The Estonian environmental monitoring system will become more reliable and efficient and cover more areas. In future, Estonia will be able to rely on comprehensive, reliable environmental data. The country needs this data not only to implement various EU regulations, but also to enable Estonian authorities to take well-founded, effective decisions to protect the environment

ACTIVITIES

Estonian laboratories and monitoring stations are being equipped with modern devices and computer software, and personnel training is being provided.

TARGET GROUPS

Eight state agencies and research institutes are benefiting from the installation of modern equipment and from training. The Estonian government and the entire population benefit from sound environmental data.

COSTS

Total project budget:

CHF 10 million

Swiss contribution:

CHF 8.5 million

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Estonian Ministry of the Environment

DURATION

2011 – 2015

