

Industrial installations handling hazardous substances can cause considerable levels of water contamination in the event of a major accident, which very quickly assume international dimensions due to the fast flow of the contaminated water. These hazards can be dealt with only by assuming joint responsibility for the river catchment area and through international cooperation in the prevention of major accidents.

Financed by the Consultancy Assistance Programme of the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, the project was designed to provide early warning to the river's users along the Neman River (RUS/BLR: Neman; LTU: Nemunas) in the event of major industrial accidents whose influence could spread across borders. The following results were achieved in the period from 10/2003 to 02/2006:

- An International Warning and Alarm Plan for the Neman/Nemunas catchment area drawn up
- Main International Warning Centres for transboundary communication implemented
- A model-like record of industrial activities in the Neman/Nemunas catchment area which pose a potential hazard drawn up and
- Know-how transferred with a view to implementing international experience, directives and laws (SEVESO II, UNECE, HELCOM, EU regulations)

The Warning and Alarm Plan lays down criteria and a mechanism for transboundary cooperation between Belarus, Lithuania and Russia (the countries situated along the Neman) in the event of industrial accidents. Standard operating procedures for transmitting alarms, forms and alarm criteria for emissions and immission have been drawn up.

The International Warning and Alarm Centres set up in Minsk, Vilnius and Kaliningrad are the centrepiece of the warning system. The functionality and effectiveness of the system is based on a clear definition of responsibilities and procedures for the professional assessment of possible major accidents and for the transmission of the associated information to the countries concerned.

Industrial safety measures at installations are a condition for the effective prevention of major accidents. A model-like record of relevant industrial activities in the Neman/Nemunas catchment area was drawn up to obtain a general picture of the existing risk potential. A rough evaluation of the accident potential of the enterprises examined was made by means of the Water Risk Index Method.

Other important results have been the sharing of experience of the International River Commissions for the Protection of the Rhine, Elbe and Danube Rivers, the networking with related projects through seminars held in conjunction with the project and a fact-finding trip made in connection with the project. The International Warning and Alarm Plan also promotes mutual trust among the three countries concerned. It constitutes an important basis for the ongoing efforts to set up an International Commission for the Protection of the Neman.

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Development of a Transboundary Warning and Alarm Scheme for the Neman/Nemunas Catchment Area



Scientific Steering:

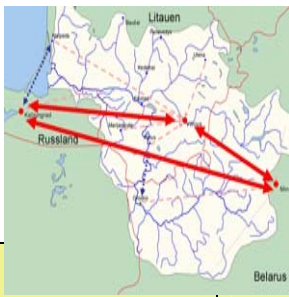
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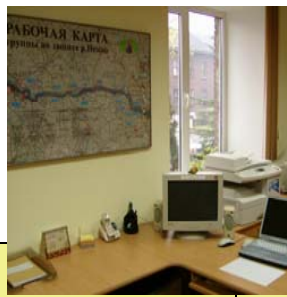


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**Warning and Alarm
Plan for the Neman**

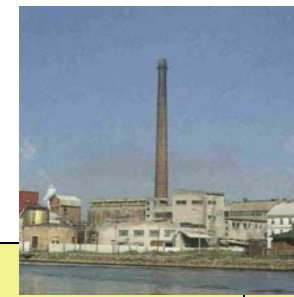
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**Implementation of
International Warning
Centres**



3

**Record of Industrial
Activities**



4

**Transfer
of Know-how**



Results for the countries concerned:

- ☑ **Joint International Warning and Alarm Plan for the Neman (IWAN) worked out**
- ☑ **Main International Warning Centres operational in Minsk, Vilnius and Kaliningrad**
- ☑ **Accident potential identified and risk enterprises assessed**
- ☑ **Technology and information transfer in the field of installation and safety technology and accident management**
- ☑ **Diminished hazard of water contamination resulting from accidents in the catchment area**
- ☑ **Improved transboundary cooperation**