

## **SOROPA - CONCERNS FOR THE ATMOSPHERIC PROTECTION**

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**Abstract.** *This paper presents the characteristics and main activities of The Soil Protection Agency (SOROPA), an Romanian Agency that concern atmospheric protection.*

**Keywords:** SOROPA, atmospheric protection.

### **1. Introduction**

The Soil Protection Agency (SOROPA), established in 1991, has consistently militated for the achievement of its main purpose, enshrined in Art. 3 of the Statute, namely: *mobilization and increase the contribution of specialists in the knowledge of the polluting processes, the methods and the means of combating them, in order to protect the atmosphere and ensure the air necessary for life.*

Created from the initiative of 25 founding members, academics from the Technical University of Civil Engineering in Bucharest (UTCB), research specialists and large industrial design institutes, SOROPA has numbered 307 members and 52 honorary members in 2000.

The quality of honorary members of SOROPA was awarded to specialists from the Romanian Parliament, the Ministry of Environment (with subsequent names), the Ministry of Public Works and Territorial Planning, the County Environmental Protection Agencies, university centers in the country, as well and personalities or prestigious foreign specialists who participated in the activities of our society or supported our work from countries like France, Moldova, Austria, Belgium, Greece.

### **2. The Soil Protection Agency (SOROPA)**

Since its foundation in 1991, SOROPA has organized annually a National Colloquium with international participation, usually in November. The theme of the National Colloquiums, adopted on the basis of the participants' proposals, was broad and generous enough:

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- sources and mechanisms of pollutant formation;
- models and methods for calculating pollutant capture;
- Noise retention and neutralization technologies;
- propagation and dispersion of pollutants;
- legislation on atmospheric protection;
- problems of air-water-soil interface;
- Strategies and policies for the protection of the atmosphere.

It is emphasized that at the Annual Colloquiums:

- about 90% of the communications referred to the first four directions;
  - the number of papers included in the colloquia ranged from 24 to 74 communications;
  - the maximum number of participants exceeded 250 people;
  - among the participants, starting with the second colloquy from 1992 to the 9<sup>th</sup> (1999), there were also prestigious specialists from other countries, such as: France, Moldova, Austria, Greece and Bulgaria.

The vast majority of communications (over 95%) were supported by one of the authors, generating a lively dialogue and opportunity to share experiences with the participants. As long as SOROPA had the necessary financial means, the international presentation system was used, using mobile microphones and simultaneous translation.

It is worth mentioning that all the communications held and handed over to the secretariat of the colloquiums were published in the Atmosphere Protection Magazine - SOROPA, with the help of sponsors, who presented their units in the pages of the magazine.

It is worth noting that for several years, the honorary president of the Romanian Society for Atmospheric Protection was the British Lord D. L. NEWALL - ex-President of the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment.

Without attempting a detailed treatment of the issues presented, we mention by way of example some communications that have been of major interest from the audience, presented by:

- *Pollution of industrial areas in the Transylvanian cities*, Prof. dr. Cornelia Elena BERINDAN, head of the SOROPA branch of Cluj-Napoca Technical University (over 70 posters, of which 3 commented) awarded work;
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- *French policy in the field of atmospheric protection*, by Olivier HERZ - Director ADEME France;
  - *Industrial risk study with numerical simulation and tests in aerodynamic tunnels* by Prof. Dr. Eng. HODIN - France;
  - *Some aerodynamic characteristics of the pollutant dispersion basket (exemplifying Baia Mare city)* by prof. Ph. Eng. Puiu Stoenescu, Technical University of Civil Engineering, Bucharest;
  - *Atmospheric protection management*, by architect Gheorghe Ionascu, expert and director of environmental issues in the Ministry of Public Works and Spatial Planning;
  - *Evaluation and control of pollutant emissions in the atmosphere of Iași County* by Dionisie Simionescu, Nicolae Peiu and Ionel Gherghina, Environmental Protection Agency, Iași County;
  - *Burning of domestic waste with pre-drying with combustion gases*, by prof. Dr. Nicolae Antonescu, from the University of Constructions, Bucharest;
  - *Incidence of acid rain in Romania, study for Bucharest* by physicist Rodica Serban, from the Institute of Environmental Research and Engineering - Bucharest;
  - *Theoretical and experimental results regarding the local ventilation in thermal treatment sections*, by Prof. Dr. Eng. Miron Popescu and Prof. Dr. Maria Popescu, from UTCB;
  - *Pollution protection policies in urban agglomerations*, conf. dr. Anton Anton - UTCB;
  - *Calculation programs for the estimation of pollution from low and high sources*, dr. Ing. Iolanda Colda, UTCB;
  - *Problems of the use of wind energy in Romania*, by Prof. Dr. Radu-Mircea Damian, ex-pro-rector of UTCB, ex- Dean of the Faculty of Plant Engineering - UTCB, ex- Secretary of State at the Ministry of Education and Research (Founding member SOROPA), member of SASR;
  - *Aspects of Physical Modeling on Air Pollution*, Prof. Univ. Prof. Eng. Constantin Iamandi, UTCB;
  - *Issues related to the reduction of stratospheric ozone etc.*

During the peak period of his activity, SOROPA, through the department of foreign relations, led by the vice-president Prof. Univ. Prof. Eng. Miron Popescu, participated in logistic or financial support, in support of some international, inter-university or university - industrial cooperation actions such as COPIRTECH, COCOP, TEMPUS, EUREKA, etc.

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It is also worth noting the important contribution made in the organization and sponsorship of the annual activity and colloquium of some members of the Board of Directors, Mr. Gheorghe Pașca (former director of F. P. S.) and the late Mr. Paul Lizac, ex-Director of the Bucharest Environmental Protection Agency, disappeared prematurely.

It is also worth noting that the main objective of SOROPA was to develop the spirit of accountability of specialists and authorities empowered to maintain the quality of air necessary for life, aiming to improve the expertise provided by specialists and to promote a vivid and fruitful exchange of ideas.

Besides, SOROPA is presently involved, being requested by its specialists, in the debates related to the elaboration of the normative-legislative framework, organized by the Ministry of Environment.

Another important concern was the stimulation of the young researchers, who formed in this field. The stimulation of young researchers, students, was achieved through the annual award of the Heads of Promotion from each year of study of the University of Applied Atmospheric Protection Installations and Equipment (IEPA) study program at the UTCB Facility Engineering Facility which prepares specialists in the field of Engineering of installations studies with specific knowledge for the protection of the atmosphere.

Moreover, among the four categories of prizes distributed annually, one or two of the best communication presented was distributed to participants nominated by a committee of specialists from the SOROPA Steering Board.

Some graduates of this section have earned scholarships in Germany and France on merit, and some of them, who have had brilliant results, have been hired by foreign firms from those countries where they are still working.

In this way, within the Society, the work of university and research training, the production and the debate of the most important special issues, is favorably combined, with a certain collaboration and integration at European level.

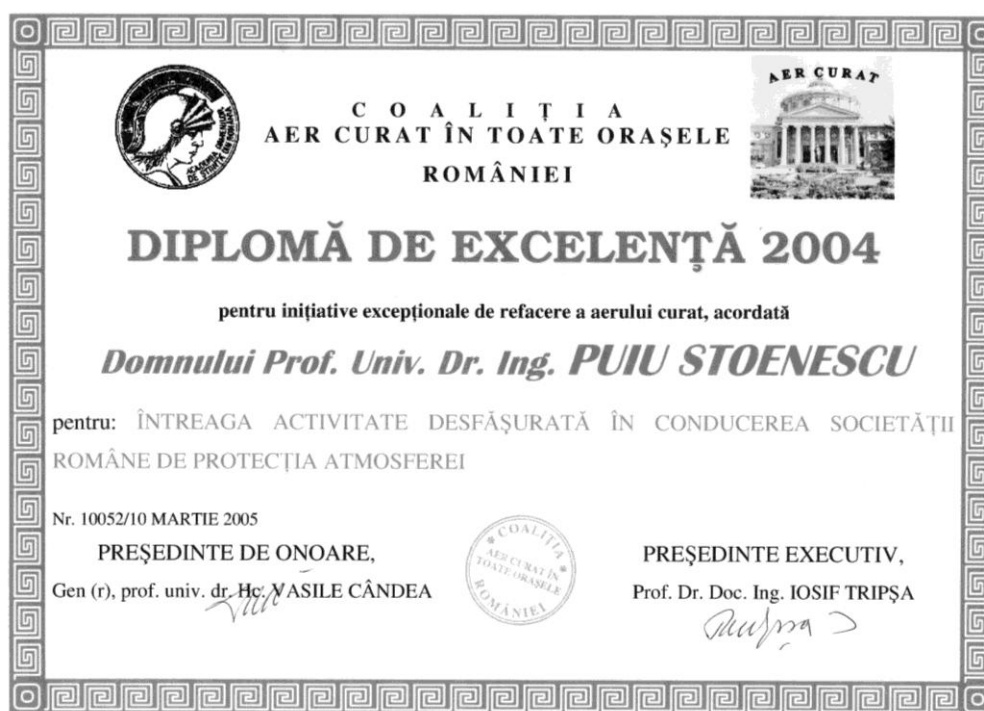
It is also noteworthy and multidisciplinary nature of the debate, involving usually engineers of several specialties, chemists, physicists, geographers, biologists, architects, urbanists, hydrotechnicians, etc., which causes a more lively exchange of ideas, the synergy of the multidisciplinary group being, as is known, more creative.

Taking into account the participation of more than 25 representatives of the Environmental Territorial Agencies or of the environmental laboratories, SOROPA organized, in colloquies, round tables "targeted" with the presentation of the basic ideas, in order to guide the discussions specialists in the field.

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We mention in this regard the meeting of Environmental NGOs in 1995, which took place in Bușteni, in the presence of foreign experts and to which, as delegates from the SOROPA Steering Committee, participated the undersigned Conf. Dr. Gheorghe Ionascu together with Prof. Miron Popescu. Official ranking, conducted by a European consultancy and survey organization, with foreign, English and Danish experts, on the basis of objective criteria, of these non-governmental environmental protection organizations in Romania.

The result was that **SOROPA took the first place**, the next five places being free, after which the 7th place was occupied by the next environmental protection organization. For her tireless scientific work and for the mobilization of the creative energies for the protection of the atmosphere, which took place over a decade (1991-2002), **SOROPA received, in 2003, by its president Prof. Univ. PhD Eng. Puiu STOENESCU, Diploma of Excellence of the Academy of Scientists from Romania.**



**Fig. 1.** Diploma of excellence of the Academy of Scientists from Romania.

Also, SOROPA Directorate is open for any widening of the participation, for the registration of new members and even for the formation of branches in the cities - university centers in the country, such as the SOROPA branches in Cluj-Napoca, Timisoara and Iasi.

**Conclusions**

We express our hope that, despite the current difficulties, SOROPA will find ways and resources to return to the place it has had among non-governmental organizations in the field of environmental protection.

**R E F E R E N C E S**

- [1] National Colloquiums of the Romanian Society for Atmospheric Protection.
  - [2] [www.aosr.ro](http://www.aosr.ro).
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