

Known for its large Transylvania Forest and Medieval castles, Romania is the 12th largest country in Europe and it sits halfway between the North Pole and the Equator.

The country is divided geographically and culturally into three sections by the Carpathian Mountains and the Transylvanian Alps: Moldavia in the northeast, Wallachia in the south and Transylvania in the middle.

The Carpathians span over 600 miles and include a number of different ecosystems, from volcanic to glacial. The Danube River also ends in Romania at the Black Sea, but not before splitting into three branches to form the Danube Delta.

Today, the country's economy is known for grain and oil production, as well as tourism along its Black Sea coast. However, under communist rule, Romanian petroleum and agricultural products flowed out of the country while imports were limited, electricity was meted out sparingly and shop shelves were sparsely stocked.

A revolution in 1988 led to the removal and eventual execution of President Nicolae Ceausescu. Romania's economy has struggled in the post-communism years, mostly due to a large foreign debt.

Air and water pollution caused by industry are significant environmental issues in Romania. The country's manufacturing facilities, chemical plants, and power plants rely heavily on burning fossil fuels, resulting in high levels of greenhouse gas and acid rain-producing sulfur dioxide. In addition to causing air quality problems, industrial runoff often ends up in the Danube river system, which makes the water there unsafe for drinking and damages river ecosystems.

In the 1980s large areas of marshland lining the Danube were drained and modified into cropland. Today, about 50 percent of Romanians subsist on agriculture and inadequate farming practices have led to serious soil deterioration and erosion.

According to Naturvernforbundet, the Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, Romania is currently dealing with the local impacts of climate change in the form of more common floods, desertification and more powerful tornadoes.

Since joining the European Union in January 2007, Romania has taken a more aggressive stance on environmental protection law.

Government resolution 152/2005 focuses on pollution deterrence and control by establishing the necessary steps for preventing or decreasing air, water and soil pollution caused by activities with a considerable effect on the environment, including waste management.

For an entity to conduct activities with an environmental impact, such as the construction of a waste management plant, authorization from the government must be obtained. This

authorization involves meeting emission limits for air pollution, taking steps to mitigate waste management and tracking the effectiveness of these measures.

To limit soil pollution, Romanian organizations carrying out agriculture, mining or other activities must take measures to prevent damage to geological environment and maintain lands that are indirectly subjected to the operation, such as shipping routes. Additionally, individuals or entities are responsible for covering the costs for any environmental damage they cause, fixing any associated damages and remediation to the original state.

Romania, the first country to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, has also taken an aggressive approach to combating global climate change. Critics point out that the country has not played an overly-active role in the building of global environmental-protection programs. Thus far, the growth of clean technology in Romania has happened in fits and starts.

In 2013, the country installed more than 1 gigawatts of solar capacity, placing them on the same level as global players such as the United Kingdom and Italy. However, the Romanian government severely cut back its solar incentives and the industry subsequently convulsed. In 2015, Romania's Energy Minister told Bloomberg Business the government was in talks with both renewable energy companies and regulators regarding a solution to make investments in renewable energy "profitable again".

Clean technology innovation, along with technology innovation in general, has largely floundered in Romania. While the country has a robust network of universities and technical schools, well-trained Romanian students aren't making the jump to impactful innovators. Observers point to the country's lack of private investment capital, uncertain regulatory structure and a cultural distaste to risk as the primary reasons technology innovation hasn't taken off in Romania.

The Romanian government has identified priority zones for fostering technology businesses in and around its major cities. However, the most talented people seem to be going abroad for better opportunities.

Romania appears to still be feeling the effects of a communist hangover and until the government establishes and enforces robust environmental and clean technology policies, a clean future for the country is very much in doubt.

Romania has embraced more progressive environmental policies in recent years. However, it will take decades for the positive effect of these policies, if any, to be seen.

Source: gearsofbiz.com