

Welcome

by Dr. Béla Hajós
under state secretary in charge of water

Dear Participants of the CEE stakeholder meeting,

This issue of CEE Water Talk is out for the CEE regional stakeholder meeting organized by the Global Water Partnership's Central and Eastern European group 22-23 March 2001 in Budapest. On behalf of the Hungarian water sector I would like to welcome you at this meeting of regional importance and perhaps of global significance. The World Water Day, which we mark on the first day of the meeting is an occasion for celebration, as well as for reflection on the tasks ahead. The CEE region is recovering from an era of all the drawbacks of centrally planned economies and facing now the challenge of joining the European Union. In this context the water sector has a delicate role to play. It has to find a delicate balance between competing water uses and solutions to remedy the environmental problems inherited from the past.

As rivers and aquifers respect no national boundaries the river-basin and regional approaches became the only acceptable way to manage our water resources. This requires international co-operation, upstream-downstream empathy, participation in decision-making and among others com-

mitted actors who feel responsibility for our planet's future. The topic of this year's World Water Day: Water and health is oppor-



tune our days in the region where life expectancy is far less than that in the EU member countries. Issues having impact on health and other topics of relevance will be discussed during the two-day regional meeting of the Global Water Partnership.

Hungary having a long tradition in managing waters is proud to host that event. We are always ready to share with others the results of our achievements as well as to learn from foreign experiences. Let me just mention one

example for both cases. The yearly organized international post-graduate course on hydrology as a contribution of Hungary to the International Hydrological Programme of UNESCO, have been attended by almost 500 students from 77 countries. The course has a history of more than three decades and the alumni club of former participants can be regarded as a mini global water partnership. The other example shows an international co-operation in connection with a Hungarian Danube section. As a result of a combined effort of the Dutch and Hungarian authorities a sound planning policy has been developed for the Gemenc floodplain area of outstanding beauty and important natural resources.

Although technology and knowledge will become increasingly important in addressing water problems past experiences show that science can provide only one part of the solution, society should provide the rest. Thus, professionals, NGOs, interest groups and other stakeholders should work together and the resulting dynamic exchange of views would benefit all parties. One of the most important lessons we learnt is that without real participation the best project can fail.

The topics you are going to discuss at this meeting are of paramount importance for the CEE countries. I hope your findings will contribute to achieve our common goal, joining European Union. To this end I wish you a successful meeting and a pleasant stay in Budapest. ■

GWP-CEE FRONTMAN

Interview
with JANUSZ KINDLER

■ You are one of the few professionals recognised equally in the CEE countries and in the rest of the world. You have worked on a lot of projects, published books and on top of all this, taught hundreds of students. How did you achieve this?

First of all, there are quite a few water professionals in the CEE region recognised internationally. Hungary offers several examples and other CEE countries as well. As far as I am concerned, there are few important phases in my professional life, starting with the 12 years long work as the design engineer at "Hydroproject", Consulting Engineers, in Warsaw. I am glad that my university life began after a good while of being involved in several down-to-earth engineering operations at home and abroad. It was also important that relatively early I have learned quite well the English language. My involvement in the UNDP sponsored project "Comprehensive development of the Vistula River System" in Poland and interaction with several international consultants was a great school in all respects. This is when I got really attracted by the early concepts of the IWRM; especially those developed by the Harvard Water Program. When I next joined the Warsaw University of Technology in 1972, I studied hard towards my degrees, and relatively early started publishing in international scientific journals. In the late 70s and early 80s I was leading a water project at the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis, being concerned primarily with water demand management. Once again it was a great place for interdisciplinary work with solid applications of systems analysis principles. Upon returning to my home university there was a series of international assignments concerned with water management in a very different situations, including the Baltic Sea Basin, Lake Chad Basin in Africa, and the Aral Sea Basin in the Central Asia. There are two other important professional periods in my professional life. First, chairing for three years in early 90s the Board of Trustees of the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe in Budapest. This is where I was exposed to the problematic of green NGOs and until now it helps me to understand better their ambitions and initiatives. Second something of an entirely different nature. Four years with the

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GWP-CEE stakeholder meeting

22-23 March 2001, Budapest

Tentative agenda

22 March

- Meeting of delegation leaders to prepare CEE declaration
- Joint Celebration of World Water Day with the Hungarian water sector
- Taking stock a year after The Hague

23 March

- The EU water framework directive and its implications in the accession countries
- Developing and strengthening river basin organisations
- Increasing Public Awareness and Participation; GWP Country Water Clubs
- Signing the CEE Declaration
- GWP's future in the region



World Bank working as a senior water planner mostly in the countries of the former USSR. At the end of my work with the Bank I was proposed to be a member of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Global Water Partnership and as you know, in different capacities I am a member



Prof. JANUSZ KINDLER – Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Engineering at the Warsaw University of Technology. Former member of GWP-TAC and member of GWP-CEETAC.

of the GWP family until now. Now back at the Warsaw University of Technology as a professor of water

and environmental protection systems, temporarily a dean of the Faculty of Environmental Engineering. Your question "how did you achieved that"? I can only say that I had an interesting and very busy, probably too busy, life until now. I had a privilege of working with a number of great individuals who became my close friends and have learned a lot from them. I very much hope that it will continue this way although sometimes it's a bit too much. Difficult, tiring, but a lot of fun!

■ *What is the water management institutional framework like in Poland? It seems to me that Polish institutions have been very effective in getting foreign support and investors. How did they do it? I ask this, because I think the other CEE countries can learn from your achievements.*

We have the river basin organisations for about 10 years, but still there is lot to be done to make them more effective and efficient. If I would like to tell you more about them it would require much more than this short interview. Let me just clarify, however, that in all environmental area (including water management) about 95% of all investments in Poland are financed from the national, public and private, sources. Foreign contributions, very precious, are mostly through the various EU and bilateral aid programs. I think that one of the principal objectives of CEETAC should be that all throughout the region we try to learn one from each other as much as we can. Remembering, however, that institutional arrangements are always very much country-specific.

■ *How do you see the role of GWP in this region?*

I think there is a lot to be done concerning practical introduction of the IWRM principles. We can also do a lot to increase public awareness and participation in the area of water management. We shouldn't be seen as a professional organisation only. We should be open to people coming from all walks of life and representing different views and perspectives of the hydrosphere.

■ *How far do you think GWP is present in the media, and do we have to take action to improve its profile in order to win wider political and public support?*

We are not yet very much seen in the region. Most important that we attract right people to join various GWP structures and initiatives. If we succeed, better coverage in the media will come by itself.

■ *Would you sketch out your vision of water management in our region 10 years from now?*

As you certainly remember, together with László Somlyódy we sketched, based on the contributions of all CEETAC members, the 2025 vision of water management in the CEE region. Isn't it enough? I can only say that in 10 years we shall be roughly half way in implementation of our 25 years long vision. I very much hope, however, that at that time all countries of our region will be members of the EU. This will be quite a different Europe than we have now, including water resources management.

Mónika Jetzin



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Bulgaria stepped over into the Third Millennium with a very important challenge – the country's accession to EU. Economic factors and capacity building are the major problems faced by the country in the period of transition. This applies to the water sector as well. In the past water resources used to be managed predominantly by water engineers, whose project interests diverged considerably from the socio-economic and ecological principles. Implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) by academic staff was impossible. The result is oversized water facilities and big amount of leakage's from the water pipelines. This is typical for all former socialist countries and situation can be changed only with the support of external experts. Why not by the East-East dialogue under the "umbrella" of Global Water Partnership (GWP)?

Two Bulgarian specialists were invited to attend the first GWP Conference in the region, held in Warsaw, November 1998. This marked the start of Bulgarian involvement in the GWP's world-wide efforts for sustainable water resources management.

Bulgarian water stakeholders through two national consultations contributed to the CEE regional report "Water for the 21st Century: Vision to Action" presented at the Second World Water Forum in The Hague March 2000. The Forum which was attended by Bulgaria representatives as well, gave an impetus for a nation-wide awareness raising campaign towards the water sector and as a result four round table conferences have been held where topical water issues were discussed.

One of the proposals of the Third Round Table Discussions was that the Scientific and Technical Union on Water Affairs with its regional branches should host the Bulgarian Water Club. More than 25 GWP member organisations in Bulgaria expect that the Water Club will be a place for stakeholders' meetings, helping the implementation of IWRM and the EC Water Framework Directive and the fulfilment of some tasks under the Associated Programmes.

Several global and regional GWP documents have been translated into Bulgarian such as: executive summary of CEE regional report, Integrated Water Resources Management (background paper no.4 of GWP Technical Advisory Committee), regional GWP flyer, etc. Furthermore a national publication titled "Partnership for Integrated Water Resources Management in Central and Eastern Europe – Bulgaria" has been published dealing with country and region specific IWRM issues.

Generally speaking, in the past two years the GWP's activities in Bulgaria were very intensive and successful. The IWRM concept is attracting an ever-growing number of new partners.

Global news

The nine GWP Regions have developed work plans and the Secretariat and TEC (Technical Committee replacing the Technical Advisory Committee) have also developed the Way Forward document based on comments from both inside and outside of GWP. The GWP has also completed a post-Hague report summarising the issues arising from the 2nd World Water Forum. All these activities have been brought together to form the *Comprehensive Work Programme and Follow up to the FFA*. A meeting was organized with the representatives of all regions from 19 to 21 February in the GWP resource centre in Wallingford UK to launch the comprehensive work programme, that will be carried out over the period January 2001 to December 2003.

News from Central America

GWP started its operations in Central America in March 2000. Central America is a region in transition after the end of a period of civil wars to more democratic societies. GWP-Central America focuses on institutional development and increasing stakeholder participation. Political will is the key to more integrated management of water resources and GWP-Central America tries to link with governments. In its activities, GWP-Central America feels that an interchange of experience with the countries in Central and Eastern Europe would be useful.

The China Stakeholder Meeting

Held in Beijing, 8 – 9 Nov. 2000, it was the first stakeholder meeting under the umbrella of GWP in China. In his welcome address the Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Water Resources of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Zhai appreciated the fruitful work of the GWP, and on behalf of the ministry supported the establishment of the CHINATAC of GWP. He expressed his hope to strengthen the co-operation and communication between China, GWP and the outside world in various ways. The interim CHINATAC (ninth in GWP's network) is chaired by Prof. Riu-Ju Liang vice president of the Chinese Hydraulic Engineering Society.



The country representatives

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Hungary responded to GWP's initiative among the first countries in the region and stakeholders were actively involved in the programmes of the Partnership since November 1998.

The country's water resources management has a long tradition, due to several specific features, which makes the water sector as a whole a delicate and evergreen topic for the public. Professionals, NGO representatives and other stakeholders recognized promptly the significance of GWP's endeavour and contributed through vivid debates to the compilation of the region's water vision and framework for action. The country also hosted several GWP meetings of regional and global importance in the last two years. Hungary was represented at the Second World Water Forum at ministerial level and with a representative group of water professionals. The impetus gained at the Forum has been kept alive and even accelerated and due also to the reputation of

the country's achievements the Water Resources Research Centre (VITUKI) has been selected to serve as regional host institute of GWP. This results in extra responsibility and requirements for the country which we would like to fulfil.

The country having all the drawbacks of lying downstream needs the on the ground implementation of IWRM concept promoted by GWP, including international cooperation on the river basin level. Parallel to publications of GWP's background materials the establishment of the Hungarian country water club is ongoing. This is meant to be an open forum of stakeholders (and who is not stakeholder in water?) fostering public participation so much neglected during the previous era.

Latvia

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Latvia has been involved in GWP activities since 1999 with the preparation of the national report on water management mapping and vision. Since water resources management problems are one of the priority tasks in the Environmental Protection Policy Plan for Latvia (1995), water experts showed interest in water problem solutions in other countries, especially in Central and Eastern Europe because of similar historical, political, economical and climatic conditions. Representative of Latvia's Environmental Protection and Regional Development Ministry Mr. Indrikis Barkāns (the first co-ordinator from Latvia) and scientists dealing with water problems participated in the regional GWP meeting in Budapest, June 1999. After this meeting Latvia became active member of the GWP-CEE region. The national stakeholder meetings were organised in the last two years with the aim to disseminate GWP-CEETAC ideas in Latvia.

The first consultation was organised in October 1999. The main task of this meeting was to discuss the CEE Vision to Action report prepared for the Second World Water Forum.

The second national event as a post Hague meeting took place in December 2000, where the main Second World Water Forum documents were disseminated and the tasks of vision implementation for 2025 year were discussed.

The executive summary of CEE Water Vision Report and GWP-CEE-TAC leaflet were translated and disseminated due to growing stakeholders interest of water problems.

The stakeholder and society interests enlarged after the Second World Water Forum in Hague in Latvia. The actions of this World Forum were widely reflected in TV and newspapers. Now Latvia's water policy and GWP-CEETAC network "go in one direction" to resolve water problems and to implement the principles of integrated water resources management, river basin management and fulfil other EU directive requirements.

Estonia

In Estonia the total number of registered environmental NGOs is about 200, from these about 20 have mentioned water protection as one of their priorities. Among the latter the Estonian Water Association (EWA), that was established 10 years ago, is uniting decision makers, professional practitioners and researchers in the field of water management. The main goal of EWA is promotion of sustainable water management in Estonia. The association has a permanent page in the well known journal "Environmental Engineering". The traditions of the EWA include awarding a Water Price for the most sustainable water manager of the year.

Information exchange is maintained through news bulletin, which is prepared and distributed by the secretary of the Association. About one third of the EWA members has internet access.

As one of the priority tasks of GWP is establishment of the so called National Water Clubs for better change of ideas, these activities started from informing EWA on the GWP programme. The future Water Club is open for new members, especially from the academic circles, healthcare institutions, private businesses etc. and in the future it should not be the same circle than EWA is today. Last year the triangle of EWA, Ministry of the Environment and a business oriented NGO called Union of Estonian Waterwork Entrepreneurs proved to be a strong companion promoting the holistic views of environmental engineering and sustainable management of water resources in Estonia. For the better integration of the environmental ideas into other sectors of economy, specialists and decision makers from Agriculture, Transport, Energy, Tourism etc could be invited to the Water Club.

Thanks to the grant from the GWP last year, it was possible to establish and maintain a two language internet site (see: <http://www.veeyhing.ee>) and to publish Estonian language information materials on introducing main ideas and programs of GWP. This work should be continued in the future too.

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During the year 2000, several post Hague activities in GWP context were organized:

- 22 March Estonian Water Day with more than 160 participants (72 participants from EWA and 92 persons from outside),
- 19 May Seminar on the results of the Hague conference and about GWP activities (3 presentations);
- 25 May A seminar in the framework of the Month of Nature Protection was held in the protected wetland Matsalu presentations on GWP were heard.
- 16 -17 August – Annual Summer Days for EWA were held, this time in West Estonia, Haapsalu and Island Vormsi.

Also several articles in national newsletters and journals about GWP framework on action were published.

It can be seen that Estonian water specialists have more relations with their colleagues in the so called Western and Nordic countries that with those in the East and South. At the same time the contacts with the Central and Eastern European Countries are very important as we are going to join the EU in a few years and should practice co-operation and better information exchange already now.

In the future the common working groups could present their joint views and channel the opinions from grass root level to decision makers up to those in the EU Commission. The proposals and ideas of the countries of similar economic and political background could probably be similar and supporting each other.

So far the existing working group in the frame of the EWA such as Education, Legislation, Water management and Sludge have been not too active and some refreshment would be very wel-



comed in their work.

The new topics for the new working groups could be Healthcare and Sanitation as well as River Basin Management Experiences. Estonian water specialists would be happy to exchange ideas and learn from the other countries' experiences.

Promoting public participation in decision making on water issues cannot be built from top to the bottom. So the existing NGO initiatives should be better used and supported to achieve the necessary communication between main actors in water resources management on each level of administration. There has been proposed an idea that the county level water clubs could take over several tasks from the environmental authorities, like providing information and guidance to the public on combating major problems with water use and pollution. The role of the Water Clubs as clearinghouse on new technological solutions and providers of complementary training or just providing the people with some entertainment mixed with awareness rising seems most suitable for the Estonian conditions. Plus the role of channelling the information from the authorities to grass root level and the comments back from grassroot to the decision makers. Sometime it may appear that new ideas received from the NGO experts have been not realised effectively enough in practice. The Estonian Water Club will be happy to share our positive experience in this field in the GWP East - East communication soon. Further information about this issue will be available from Maret Merisaar at: roheline@online.ee, focal point of our Water Club.

Slovenia

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Toolbox, Framework for Action and Framework for Action for Slovenia have been discussed and commented.

Vision for the future of water resources management in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) Region and a Framework for Action for realising the goals of the vision over the coming twenty-five years have been commented.

In the 2WWF, Central and Eastern Europe Day, Slovenian UNICEF Ambassador Milena Zupanè in co-operation with youth presented UNICEF project Drop of Water as a process that arises in children and young people the development of attitudes and values such as human rights, solidarity, peace, tolerance and environmental awareness as well.

The GWP activities in Slovenia were initiated in the first Central and Eastern Europe Regional Meeting in Warsaw in November 1998. The short report on water management in Slovenia was prepared for GWP. The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of the Republic of Slovenia was informed about the GWP activities.

The main follow up actions had been oriented towards the preparation of the documents for the 2nd World Water Forum (2WWF), Den Haag, March 2000.

Vision report on water management of the Republic of Slovenia was prepared after consultation of the main stakeholders in Slovenia during first half of the year 1999. The report was presented during the second Central and Eastern Europe Regional Meeting held in Budapest in June 1999.

In the second round of national consultation in October 1999 The World Water Vision draft report, Slovenian and CEE Countries Vision draft report, FFA



Poster Water resources protection in Slovenia was prepared as well.

After WWF the executive summary of Our Vision for Water in the 21st Century was translated, printed and sent out with the invitations to the after post-Hague consultation, which will be held in Ljubljana on 26 October 2000. The flyer and GWP/IWRM book (TAC background paper Nr.4) will be printed in Slovenian language in November 2000.

Correction:

In the previous issue of Water Talk the e-mail address of Mr. Petr Dolejs – GWP Country representative in Czech Republic – was incorrect. The correct address is: petr.dolejs@gmail.cz We apologise for the mistake.

Approach to address the problem of contaminated ground water and soils in Slovakia

(from foreign assistance through extensive stakeholders consultations to legal initiative of the responsible body)

Slovakia, like the rest of the industrialized world, has enjoyed an industrial base that provided employment and income, as well as goods and services. Unfortunately, as the industry was established and operated, there was neither the information, nor the inclination to protect the environment from the consequences of uncontrolled discharges on the ground. The unfortunate legacy of these practices is contaminated water and soil. The impacts of these situations are well known, ranging from human health problems to resources problems, such as poisoning of fish, wildlife or vegetation.

The legacy is inherently unfair, as it leaves a problem that affects society generally, not just those who caused the contamination. The impact on society is significant, in terms of environmental and health costs and the costs of remediation. Whereas in the western countries, the problem was caused by individual privately owned companies, which in many cases are no longer in existence, in Slovakia, the industry was owned by the state. In either case, the original owners do not have the resources, on their own, to rectify the problem.

In the Slovak Republic, the remedial actions of polluted soil and groundwater have been started from the beginning of 1990s. Remedial measures were connected with extensive program of investigation and clean-up projects in localities of former Soviet army military camps. Expenses were covered by state budget; however, the program has not been finished yet.

There is no complex inventory of contaminated localities. Although, there exist partial inventories, such as:

- the Ministry of Environment registered about 5 000 landfills that do not meet technical and environmental requirements and are recognized as polluted sites that must be remediated

- the Ministry of Environment registered an existence of several thousand sites with mining activities (from very minor to extremely extensive, from historical to ongoing mining) representing mostly potential sources of contamination

- the Slovak Association of Petroleum Industry and Trade keeps a record of former petrol stations in Slovakia that represent potentially contaminated sites.

In addition, there are contaminated sites in the areas of former socialist factories and farms (cooperatives) caused by improper maintenance and storage of many chemicals. Most of them were closed after 1989; the problem is that most of them have not been monitored.

By analyzing the situation in Slovakia regarding the management of contaminated sites, several key problems have been identified:

- Missing legislation (definition of contaminated sites, who is responsible for investigation and remediations of contaminated sites, who will order remediation, when, under which conditions, etc.)
- Financial sources (who and in which

proportion will contribute to clean-up activities, what should be covered by the State budget and other state funds, etc.)

- Database development
- Management systems (administration of clean-up activities, enforcement, etc.)
- Implementation programs (only few sector programs in place, no implementation strategy, no systematic risk assessment applied, no coordination and prioritization of remedial activities)

The Department of Water Protection of the Ministry of Environment, has initiated several projects to address the issue of contamination of soil and ground water. It was realized that legal framework (currently missing) would be the most fundamental for the addressing the issue of the contamination of land and ground waters. The essential support was found from the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (DEPA) and the Canadian International Development Agency (Manitoba Environment).

The DEPA partners brought the experience from the Danish government's 10-point plan for protecting groundwater and drinking water. It sets out the measures for old contaminated sites within the designated drinking water areas. The annual report of the Danish Contaminated Sites Council in 1969 estimated that there were 10,000 contaminated sites in Denmark. The important tool was established - the database system GEOENVIRON that keeps the information on potential sources of pollution. The project of NIRAS held in Slovakia in 2000 supported the preparation of "Strategy and Action Plan for remediation of polluted soil and groundwater" that set up the plan of activities and tasks including the proposal to adopt the GEOENVIRON database. The database is currently tested in Slovakia.

The Slovak Ministry of Environment also benefited from the technical assistance of the Canadian partners that have progressed in the development of legal framework for the resolution of the problem of contaminated soil and waters. Canadian experience brought to Slovakia pointed out the necessity to involve all stakeholders into the legislation process. This is not an easy task for Slovakia; by today, almost all legal documents are "cooked in one kitchen" and only the final proposal is discussed and then in rush passed by the Government or Parliament - there is no history to develop the legislation via consultation process. The Ministry of Environment realized that the mission of the Global Water Partnership could provide the platform for independent, transparent and clear environment for experts representing different sectors and different interests. It would be the best opportunity to challenge the stakeholder discussions. A proposal was made to organize series of consultations and seminars where different topics with respect to the integrated approach to address the contamination of soils and waters would be discussed. The participants of these consultations get an understanding that process of "exchange of

experience, opinions, positions and interest" would bring mutual benefits and the future legislation would have a solid basis. Also, the Ministry of Environment learnt that a proper enforcement of the legislation is feasible if allowing contribution of legislative process of all interested parties.

One of the "milestone" conferences supported and organized by the Global Water Partnership was held on December 6-7, 2000. The conference was divided into two parts:

- presentation of Danish, Canadian and Slovak experience on addressing the problem of contaminated localities (soil and ground water)

- working group discussions on the legal, institutional and technical themes.

More than 60 participants took place and the following issues were discussed:

- which principles should guide and be incorporated into the contaminated sites remediation legislation
- which parties should be the responsible parties against whom orders for remediation of a contaminated site can be issued
- should remediation legislation contain exemptions and limitations of liability, and if so, what should be the specifics of these
- should liability require the existence of fault or negligence, or merely the existence of damage
- what guidelines, if any, should be in place to control the Government's discretion to declare a site to be contaminated
- what procedures must be contained in the "process" for the issuance of a remediation order, and what requirements may be contained in the order
- should specific site remediation standards be established by legislation, or should legislation allow the government to determine the clean up standards on a case-by-case basis
- should the legislation provide for the creation of a "clean-up" fund and/or other incentive, to encourage the remediation of priority sites for which there are no viable responsible parties

The participants felt that their active contribution in the process might result in a comprehensive and decent legislation. Now, more experts are willing to contribute to legal initiative of the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Environment benefited from opinions, statements, better understanding of all stakeholders' positions and interests that will lead to a better cooperation and communication from the top to the bottom. It is strongly recommended to continue the series of consultations for all legal initiatives. This message is very important in the time of preparation of new water legislation in Slovakia. To implement the integrated water resource management system, broad consultations, negotiations are needed and overall consensus must be reached. The GWP activities in Slovakia clearly support this process.

Danka Jassikova Thalmeinerova

The Fifth Global WSSCC Forum



The Fifth Global Forum of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) was held on 24-29 November, 2000 in Foz do Iguacu, Brazil.

Five hundred participants from 70 countries ended the six days of plenary sessions, thematic and regional meetings and informal discussions by endorsing the Iguacu Action programme which defines collective activities in seven regions covering the whole of the developing world. Better hygiene, more sanitation facilities and safe water supplies are among the goals of programme planned over the next five years.

The forum was organised in a form of plenary sessions, thematic and regional sessions and side meetings. The following topics were discussed in the thematic sessions:

- people centered approach
- sanitation and hygiene promotion
- serving the urban poor
- water supply and sanitation in a broader context
- institutional frameworks
- resource mobilisation and sustainability and
- targets, indicators and monitoring

Seven regional sessions covering Africa, South Asia, South East Asia, Latin America, CEE&NIS, Small Island Developing states and Middle East and North Africa have discussed their achievements before the Forum and recommended future activities, later incorporated into the Iguacu Action Programme. The main activities under the Iguacu Action Programme are:

1. Advocacy promotion and support;
2. Monitoring the implementation of Vision 21 principles and targets;
3. Supporting the establishment of effective regional, country and thematic networks;
4. Dissemination of knowledge and best practice.

On 27th November the CEE&NIS region representatives disputed important water issues of the region. It was decided to establish Water houses in selected countries - vehicles for implementation of regional vision. The overall goal of Water House is to empower people in communities and local organisations in water supply and sanitation sector to plan and execute programmes, activities and projects. Water house will cooperate with GWP Water clubs and will be focused on national water supply and sanitation issues. Regional coordinator Mr. Helmut Weidel (Austria) stepped down and Ms. Diana Iskrevia from Bulgaria was elected as new CEE&NIS regional coordinator.

The WSSCC called for closer links with other organisations such as Global Water Partnership. In her address to the forum, the Chair of the GWP, Ms. Margaret Catley-Carlson expressed solid support for WSSCC: "I see the Collaborative Council as the water supply and sanitation part of the GWP's Framework for Action, and there is a high level of complementarity between our two organisations", she said.

The fifth forum coincided with the 10th anniversary of the WSSCC. All this time functions of Executive secretary were carried out by Mr. Ranjith Wirasinha who has a nickname of "Handsom Prince". The warm farewell party was organized to thank Ranjith for his outstanding work in development of the Council and welcome the incoming Executive Secretary Mr. Gourishankar Gosh who took the helm of the organisation in January 2001.

Bernardas Paukstys (Lithuania) and Harry Liiv (Estonia)

Translations

IWRM Paper Region Flyer

Available at the country representatives

