

The GWP CEE celebrated June 29th – Danube Day

DANUBE DAY HAS BEEN INITIATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE DANUBE RIVER (ICPDR), a Vienna-based organization composed of representatives of the countries of the Danube River Basin and represented by their ministries. ICPDR is responsible for Water Management in the Danube Basin.

DANUBE DAY



GWP Hungary started an initiative to unite the boats on the Danube on Danube Day. Boats greeted the Danube at 11 a.m. by sounding their horns in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia. In addition, the GWP CEE organized a series of events for the celebration of the first Danube Day, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Danube River Protection Convention in Sofia, Bulgaria. GWP Bulgaria participated in selecting "The Danube Art Master" competition winner and

cooperated in organizing a photo exhibition for the "Lower Danube Corridor" in the city of Rousse. A special issue of Water Newsletter devoted to Danube Day was printed and distributed. GWP Bulgaria also co-organized a Bulgarian – Romanian meeting about trans-boundary water problems as well as an evening event in Russe.

GWP Romania prepared a workshop on opportunities for stakeholder cooperation during the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. Throughout Danube Day, participants were "literally" close to the Danube because all presentations and discussions took place on a boat in the Iron Gate reservoir. In cooperation with Center of Ecological Consultancy from the city of Galati (a member of the Danube Environmental Forum), GWP Romania arranged and distributed T-shirts to young people who celebrated Danube Day.

GWP Slovakia organized a clean up of the Danube riverbank where art school students celebrated Danube Day by drawing and playing musical instruments. The singing ensemble Usmev contributed to the official program held in the Ministry of the Environment atrium in the heart of Bratislava. GWP Slovakia encouraged schools from all around



Children's ensemble Usmev is singing at opening of the Danube Day at Slovak Ministry of the Environment.

CREDIT: GWP CEE / R. MULLER

Slovakia to send their symbolic greetings on bodies of water flowing through their towns and villages.

GWP Slovenia participated in the selection of "The Danube Art Master" competition winners together with representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy, the Institute of Education and DEF in Ljubljana.

The Danube river basin is the most international river basin in the world, connecting 13 European countries (Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Ukraine) and covers 10 per cent of the European continent. ■

Danube Day in Bulgaria

THE DANUBE RIVER IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR BULGARIA. It forms the northern boundary of the country and a connection with other countries of the continent. The total length of the Bulgarian section of the river is 470 km. Ogosta, Iskar, Vit, Osam, Iantra, Rusenski Lom are some of its larger tributaries. A very small part of the Timok catchment is located on Bulgarian territory. On June 29, 2004, Minister Dolores Arsenova opened the first international campaign celebrating Danube Day in Vidin. It was held under the motto "A Bridge towards the Future". The event was attended by the ambassadors of the Danube countries of Romania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Serbia and Montenegro, the mayors of

the Serbian town of Zaichar and the Romanian town of Kalafat and Members of Parliament. During her address on board the Vidin ship, Minister Arsenova said that Bulgaria together with all of the Danube countries would work for the conservation of this great European river. Martin Donchev and Dr. Ivan Tsenov, the governor and mayor of Vidin, respectively, greeted the participants. Minister Arsenova had a meeting with children from Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia and Montenegro, who acquainted her with the message of the children from the three countries regarding the conservation of the Danube River Basin. The message was handed to Minister Arsenova in the hall of the Vidin Art Gallery. It is to be sent to the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River. The participants in the celebration acquainted themselves with the work of the Bulgarian Children Eco Parliament. The child-ecologists organized

a special session dedicated to Danube Day and river conservation. The First Danube Day was also celebrated in other Bulgarian towns situated along the Danube River. The main events on June 29th were as follows:

- round table on Danube River problems in Rousse;
- 13 colored balloons, corresponding to the number of countries which have signed the Danube convention, were released over the Danube at 12 a.m.;
- an exhibition of the natural resources of the Lower Danube River was opened in Rousse;
- youth competitions on different ecological issues were organized in the village of Kričina on the Yantra River Basin – a tributary of the Danube;
- horn salute of the "Rousse-Regensburg" by 26 boats and ships at 7 p.m.;
- a large "Beautiful Blue Danube" concert. ■

Interview with the Minister of Environment of the Slovak Republic Prof. László Miklós

Water Talk: GWP defines Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximise the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. Mr. Minister, you are well known on the national and international scene as one of the first propagators and implementers of the concept of integrated landscape management. How do your visions correspond or differ from those GWP is trying to implement in the practice?

Prof. Miklós: Basically, they do not differ. It is rather a question of understanding because integrated management is perceived differently on different levels. Some perceive this concept in legislative terms, others as a process, some as layout or scheme and or even as a substance. I think that this needs to be joined; all views have to be followed up with objective aspects. I can explain my perception of the objective aspect of integrated management: integrated management of water has to include not only water but also the vessel into which water is flowing - the whole river basin. The river basin consists of the soil, geological foundation, forests, meadows, cities and other material elements, which need to be taken into consideration. Understanding that IWRM can be implemented merely throughout landscape management in the whole basin, not only in the river itself, has to be followed by overarching legislation. We tried to achieve this in early 1990 during the revision of the Landscape Planning Act, which contains features of LANDEP (landscape planning) and USES (territorial systems of ecological stability). It is of course only a legislative step realised according to the knowledge and resources of specific individuals. The Landscape Planning Act was revised for the second time in 2000 and LANDEP (landscape planning) became an obligatory part of landscape plans, and territorial systems of ecological stability became obligatory regulations. These issues need to be realised in practice. Territorial systems of ecological stability were also included into land alterations, which are the second most important activities in the landscape. Unfortunately, this concept has not been introduced in forest management planning. And this is really "a stumbling block" - because the integrated approach needs to be introduced into legislation and planning pro-

cesses of sectors dealing with landscape exploitation. Another problem is that agricultural land is in the hands of private and other owners and the same is true for forest land. Owners have their own and very different interests as well as governmental departments. Non-governmental organisations are promoting the inclusive approach, e.g. everybody should be included in the process of integrated management. Some understand integration of management in a way that everybody should manage something. Of course, it is acceptable and necessary for everyone to take responsibility for the use of the river basin, but the substance must be of understanding the reality; water in



the landscape needs to be considered as its integral part and then to come up for the legislation, management, participation of the public, etc. I have to admit that many experts at our ministry and those working in the water management sector do not perceive landscape as an integral system but see only "water". However, it is not correct to implement integrated water management exclusively - because only the whole landscape can be managed and used integrally. This approach is also used by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) where the wording "river basin" is used and not only "water". And river basin means not only the river but the entire river basin area. At the moment, we are preparing a systematic solution to the situation through a new Act on Landscape Planning, which will be absolutely interconnected with river basin management plans.

Water Talk: Implementation of EU legislation for the new members which entered the EU in May 2004 means an opportunity for the improvement of the environmental infrastructure with co-financing from EU funds. To which measures in the area of water protection and use is support from the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund from 2004 to 2006 earmarked? Furthermore, who might benefit from that support? How much financial resources are needed for the improvement and development of the environmental water infrastructure in the near future?

Prof. Miklós: Indeed, most support from the EU goes into the water sector the drinking water supply, waste water treatment and flood prevention. Besides one project, the major ISPA and Cohesion Fund infrastructure projects supported the water management sector, which needs the most financial support. Total costs calculated in the EU approximation strategy for the Slovak Republic revealed that in order to comply with EU legislation, the country needs 4.7 billion EUR (188 billion Slovak crowns) for the improvement and development of the water protection and management infrastructure and 5.3 billion EUR for operational costs (212 billion Slovak crowns), out of which 2.25 billion EUR is earmarked for waste waters (90 billion Slovak crowns) until 2015 and 0.475 billion EUR (19 billion Slovak crowns) for the implementation of the Flood Protection Programme until 2010. This is a calculated estimation of costs; however, some experts are estimating even higher costs.

Water Talk: So far, WFD is the most complex set of goals, tools and commitments in the EU water sector. Two main WFD goals are the protection and improvement of water ecosystems quality and sustainable, balanced and equitable water use. This directive, which provides broad opportunities for public participation in river basin management, was fully transposed into Slovak legislation by new Water Act No. 364/2004 in May 2004. How can the participation of the public and NGO's be ensured during the implementation of this directive and especially in preparation of the river basin management plans which have to be completed by 2009?

Prof. Miklós: In any case you can see a specific individual behind the management who is up and working. To ensure participation of the public we have to first define the legislative responsibilities of the private and corporate entities for water quality and flood prevention. This requirement is embedded in new legislation, which is compatible with WFD. Another

thing is the environmental awareness of the individual who, as an inhabitant of a village, feels personal responsibility for the creation of floods. It is given by legislation; however, here the participation of the general public is needed. I think that the state authority, besides legislation and perhaps some methodologies, has nothing more to say to the citizens. Of course, the state has its responsible institutions such as the State Water Management Enterprise and others, but the public as well as each citizen is a special individual. NGO's can help in issues related to public participation and their assistance is also desired. It is important to be strictly professional. Personally, I do not have anything against cases when NGO's, sometimes not so professionally, come up with a problem because they are pointing it out. We have to take into consideration that not everything is true at first glance and experts have to be invited to express their opinions. We have certain experience with this. Finally, I would like to sum up that three years ago I created the Council for Integrated River Basin Management, at the Ministry of Environment, where all stakeholders: state authorities, state organisations, research organisations, schools, the Slovak Academy of Sciences as well as NGO's are participating.

Water Talk: *How do you see the opportunities for the active involvement of environmental NGO's in the process of WFD implementation as individual organisations or as a part of working groups involved in WFD implementation?*

Prof. Miklós: This question has already been answered. NGO Participation is important; tasks for them will be defined and specified, but basically their assistance will be sought out if the state administration, expert organisations and research institutions can not or do not know how to solve specific problems.

Water Talk: *In 1994, the Slovak Republic signed the Convention on Co-operation for the Protection and Sustainable Use of the River Danube. It was ratified in 1998 and Slovakia is actively participating in the activities of working groups under the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) based in Vienna. How is the valuable experience gained at the international level in solving problems in Slovakia used?*

Prof. Miklós: I think that Slovak experts have been very active all the time, actually in the foundation of the above-mentioned organisations as well as during the formulations of their programs. Interaction must be on a high level. I would like to add that Slovak specialists

are able to transfer their valuable experience to other countries.

Water Talk: *More and more, global climate changes in the form of flash floods are affecting the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe. Which measures must be adopted in order to reduce the results of this threat?*

Prof. Miklós: The same measures that we started with – the integrated management of basins. Integrated management has to be implemented in the field together with changes in landscape management, proper management of agricultural and forest land and a change of approach of owners, which is indeed very difficult. We have formulated certain management principles for basins and floods based on three pillars after the Slovak Water Management Authority became part of our department. The first pillar is to increase the retention capacity of the landscape and the provision of ecological demands of the land through a change of its use. The second pillar is the re-evaluation of developed locations through landscape planning, the re-evaluation of other plans and the introduction of landscape planning in practice. The third pillar is technical-administrative, where we prioritised several new trends which we were used to in the past and were neglected in recent years – the hatching of streams, constructing of dry polders and increasing of the absorbing capacity of river meanders. These measures mean a more natural and integrated approach to basins management. ■

Calendar of Events

International Conference "The politics of multi-stakeholder participation"

30 September – 1 October 2004

Wageningen, The Netherlands

International Conference

"Water: a catalyst for peace"

6–8 October 2004

Zaragoza, Spain

UNESCO's PCCC project (from Potential Conflict to Co-operation Potential) international conference will bring together water managers, decision makers and a broad range of stakeholders to improve their conflict management skills.

Seminar "Tools for public participation, conflict resolution and decision making in water resources management"

13 October 2004

London, UK

The meeting will present and discuss research and work that has examined the use of different tools and methodologies to facilitate public involvement in water management

GWP CEE Council Meeting

22–24 October 2004

Riga, Latvia

ICPDR Ministerial Conference

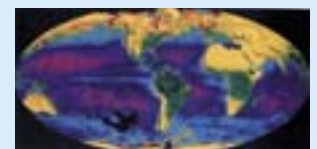
13 December 2004

Vienna, Austria

GWP Bulgaria is participating in the work of the Bulgarian Scientific Coordination Center for Global Change

THE SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION CENTER FOR GLOBAL CHANGE OF THE BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES (SCCGC-BAS)

is a voluntary association of academic research and development institutes, universities and higher educational institutions, agencies, organizations, companies and other entities in Bulgaria which organizes and conducts activities related to global change in the environment and the economic, political, social and spiritual aspects of global change on society. GWP Bulgaria actively participates in the work of SCCGC-BAS, which is an advisory body of the Steering Committee of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences on global change. The major tasks of the center are coordinating and supporting scientific research and scientific, methodological and informational needs related to global change. The center promotes the participation of scientists in national, regional and international global change programs and coordinates the information exchange within their network. SCCGC BAS provides assessments and expertise and develops reviews and position papers as required by governmental institutions, international organizations, business entities, NGO's and other organizations on various aspects of global change. In addition, SCCGC BAS organizes and supports global change-related scientific conferences, courses, training and publications. ■



Tool Box experience has been successfully transferred from GWP CEE to the GWP CACENA region

IN 2003, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GWP CACENA REGION (CENTRAL ASIA AND CAUCASUS) INITIATED AN INTRODUCTION OF TOOL BOX ACTIVITIES TO CACENA BASED ON TWO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE CEE REGION. Vadim I. Sokolov, Regional Coordinator of GWP CACENA, supported the introduction of approaches of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) through Tool Box and a training series for water experts in the CACENA region. During the past 2 years in the



CREDIT: DANKA THALMEINEROVA

Blue water experts pose for press release photo

CEE region, Tool Box has been used in education and training activities tailored to address the EU accession process in water resource management. Sokolov, together with Danka Thalmeinerova, the Tool Box Focal Point Representative in the CEE region agreed on a concerted 2004 work plan on how to transfer knowledge and experience to the CACENA region. In addition to the basic Tool Box concepts, training packages also address common water problems. These two regions, despite their geographical distance, share a similar past. Both regions consist of young democratic countries established after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of their centrally planned economies. Also, there is an obvious influence of turbulent economic development complemented with old environmental debts.

The first mission to the CACENA region was accomplished in May 2004, when Thalmeinerova presented the Tool Box at the international scientific-applied conference held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, where more than 120 participants represented 8 countries of the CACENA region.

During the summer, the Tool Box Focal Point for CEE prepared a training package to conduct a two day workshop in the CACENA region. The workshop took place in a beautiful resort on the shore of the Issyk-Kul Lake, the world's second largest high altitude lake. It is one of the most ancient lakes on earth and is estimated to be approximately 25 million years old. Its economic significance dates back to about 500 BC when the Great Silk Road passed nearby. Slightly salty, the lake never freezes, which contributes to its importance as a stopover for migratory birds. The workshop was prepared for a broad group of stakeholders in the water sector interested in gaining knowledge on integrated approaches in water resource management. In order to encourage interaction between trainers and participants, the group was limited to 15 participants comprising all of the CACENA countries and both governmental and non-governmental institutions. Participants ranged from decision-makers to water researchers, environmental and water experts from

the private sector and water practitioners from NGO's. It was anticipated that the participants would be able to disseminate IWRM approaches shown in the Tool Box throughout the water community in their respective countries. It was also expected that they would bring their ideas and experience to generate future case studies for the Tool Box web page. The training package was translated into Russian by Teimuraz Mtiblashvili, who has two years of experience in Tool Box testing in the CEE region and who is well acquainted with the specific state of affairs in the region because he comes from one of the CACENA countries (Georgia). The main objective of the training was to show participants how to utilize the instruments (tools) for IWRM and how they are applied in the water sector. Furthermore, the training brought into focus the illustration of different aspects of water management, such as public participation, conflict negotiation and water project development.

All sessions were received with gratitude, especially with respect to the tremendous effort devoted to the Tool Box case study design. The participants shared information about the results of the website search. They received a comprehensive overview of the structure, types of information and options of the Tool Box. In some cases, it was unclear if or how particular case studies could be useful for replication or if they could be used as a "cook-book" for identical problems to be solved in other parts of the world. There was a special exercise on formatting case studies from the existing sources, which the participants received from different journals, books and conference proceedings. This point highlighted the fact that there were many examples and stories published that could be included in the Tool Box database. The participants were instructed on how to fit case studies into the required format, how to shorten them, how to outline the main IWRM principles and how to select appropriate keywords and numbers of tools. The participants stated that despite the long water management history in their countries, there were not so many examples demonstrating the principles of the IWRM. They further reported that it required experience and training to develop

a case study suitable for Tool Box publication. The important issue was that the preparation of the case study requires teamwork – the involvement of experts from different water and other sectors. The main expectation of the workshop was to train participants in using the Tool Box and to transfer experience from the regional Focal Point to the

local (country) level. Another goal was to prepare nuclei for searching for potential authors in individual countries of the CACENA region. As a result, an essential friendship and potential for further cooperation between CACENA and the CEE region was established. The main conclusions are as follows:

- the Tool Box is a useful tool for the dissemination of IWRM ideas and approaches,
- the Tool Box is user friendly because it contains a comprehensive set of tools, definitions, and case studies. However, it has limitations with respect to language barriers and limited use for highly specialized water experts in the CACENA region,
- it is recommended that similar training activities be conducted on a "country" level. ■

ToolBox

Integrated Water Resources Management

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Danube Regional Project supports policies for the control of agricultural pollution



THE OVERALL AIM OF THE DANUBE REGIONAL PROJECT (DRP) is to support the activities of the International Commission for Protection

of the Danube River (ICPDR) in implementing a regional, basin-wide approach in 11 countries of the Danube River Basin (DRB) to solving the trans-boundary problems associated with the protection of the Danube River – including the sustainable management of surface and ground waters, the reduction of water pollution and the protection of water related ecosystems. Objective 1 of the DRP is the creation of sustainable ecological conditions for land use and water management. Under this objective there are two key outputs relating to agriculture:

- **Output 1.2** – reduction of nutrients and other harmful substances from agricultural point source and non-point sources through agricultural policy changes.
- **Output 1.3** – development of pilot projects on reduction of nutrients and other harmful substances from agricultural point source and non-point sources.

Phase I of Output 1.2 and 1.3 was undertaken by GFA Terra Systems (Germany) in co-operation with Avalon (Netherlands). The GFA Terra Systems/Avalon consultancy team consisted of 6 international consultants and a network of 35 national experts in the 11 central and lower DRB countries eligible for UNDP/GEF assistance. This article brings main conclusions of the project supported by Danube Regional Project.

The beginning of the 1990s was a political and economic milestone for all of the DRB countries. The ensuing decade was accompanied by substantial socio-economic changes that affected agriculture particularly severely. Major changes in farming during the first years of transition led to substantial reductions in both agricultural production and in the input of agrochemicals. This was linked to an extensification of land use, changes in farm structures and farm management practices. These developments have profoundly – if maybe only temporarily – changed the relationship between agriculture and the environment in the region

As far as water pollution is concerned the resultant changes have largely been positive – reductions in fertiliser and pesticide, as well

as the significant reduction in livestock numbers and production of animal wastes, has contributed greatly to enhanced water quality. The future relationship between agriculture and the environment in the central and lower DRB is however now uncertain – further enlargement of the EU into the DRB will inevitably bring environmental and socio-economic benefits to many rural areas, but there is also the risk of increasing agricultural intensification as economic conditions and access to markets improve, as well as the continuation of existing bad practice where farmers have no knowledge or incentive to adopt alternative, more environmentally-friendly practices.

The second phase of the DRP will help to address these issues by supporting the improvement and harmonisation of policy objectives and instruments for agricultural pollution control in the central and lower DRB countries. However, even the best, most well-conceived and funded policy instruments will only work as well as they are understood, absorbed and adopted by the farming community. This is an important issue and major challenge for the DRP/ICPDR in promoting the concept of Best Agriculture Practices (BAP) in the region.

In this respect, a number of key points must be noted:

- The huge diversity of the 11 central and lower DRB countries must be taken into account when developing and promoting the concept of BAP in the region. Promotion of the concept of BAP by the DRP/ICPDR must therefore be flexible, adaptable and above all – pragmatic!

- Due to land privatisation and restitution policies, the 1990s witnessed a huge increase in the number of farm holdings in the DRB region creating an extremely diverse set of actors with contrasting farm sizes, degrees of specialisation and levels of education. This represents a major challenge to both agricultural extension/advisory services and to environmental enforcement agencies. Local capacity-building of these services and agencies remains a major challenge and demands the commitment of substantial resources at a national level – political commitment to the provision of these resources must be encouraged and supported.

- Farmers are economically-motivated and it is important to link the promotion of BAP to economic benefits such as improvements in yield and savings in the cost of agrochemical inputs – the development of appropriate ag-

ricultural advisory messages is therefore essential, including well written and appropriate advisory materials, demonstration plots/farms, training for advisors and other capacity building of agricultural extension services.

- There should be more emphasis upon a “farming systems” approach to agricultural pollution control rather than the “input reduction” approach encouraged by the methodology advocated in the terms of reference for this project. It is necessary to promote not only the reduced use of agrochemicals etc., but also the re-design of farming systems (e.g. using an ecological systems approach) to make them more environmentally sustainable. A good example of this approach is the promotion of organic farming which involves significant changes in crop rotation, soil management, the storage and management of manure, management of field margins and non-crop habitats etc. as well as prohibiting the use of pesticides and mineral fertilisers.

Information in this article was taken from the Final Report for Danube Regional Project Outputs 1.2 & 1.3. ■

GWP Bulgaria Helps to Save the Botanical Garden

GWP-BULGARIA SUPPORTED THE PROPOSAL OF MRS DOLORES ARSENOVA, THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATER, to change the status of the Botanical Garden in the town of Balchik. The establishment of a protected area will save many plant species and improve the quality of the water in this tourist area. Many GWP partners are members of the Public Committee for Saving the Balchik Botanical Garden. ■

Botanical garden in Balchik, Bulgaria



The GWP CEE Participated in the GWP Consulting Partners Meeting and the 1st Malaysian Water Week

THE ANNUAL GWP CONSULTING PARTNERS MEETING WAS ORGANIZED IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA ON JUNE 11-12, 2004 in conjunction with the 1st Malaysian Water Week, an event organized by the Malaysian Water Partnership (MyWP). The integration of these events enabled the participants from Malaysia to interact with a broad range of stakeholders from other parts of the world and vice-versa. Through this forum both audiences shared valuable experience and knowledge on common problems.



Malaysian Water Partnership organized Water Resources Exhibition with the latest technology, equipment and solutions for IWRM

CREDIT: GWP/CEE/R. MULLER

The GWP Consulting Partners (CP) Meeting is the annual general meeting of the GWP Partners. It reviews the GWP network work program activities from year to year as well as plans for the future. This year the CP Meeting focused on the state of water resource management in Southeast Asia and in other regions and countries in the GWP network. It facilitated the sharing of information and experience among countries on their progress towards the World Summit on Sustainable Development target of preparing integrated water resource management plans by 2005.

The meeting focused on the processes of preparing these plans, and the challenges experienced by countries in this respect. Some of these chal-

lenges included such difficult issues as the role of the GWP country water partnerships, public participation, reaching out and receiving input from other sectors, the requisite water governance structures, techniques of fostering political will, financing water infrastructure, and building capacity for the implementation processes of improved water management. Based on these experiences, the meeting also added to the GWP guidelines document on "how to" in terms of good practices, while taking into account the specifics of individual countries and regions.

During the period before the CP meeting, there was a series of GWP meetings including the Technical Committee, the Regional Chairs and Secretariats, Tool Box and various side meetings. The GWP Central and Eastern Europe region contributed to the meetings with valuable experience in the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in countries that for more than a decade have been undergoing the difficult transition from centrally planned economies to market economies.

A series of technical visits was organized as a part of the Malaysian Water Week. These visits featured projects and activities by government and corporate sectors as well as NGO's in an effort to achieve a balance between the environmental, development and individual needs of the population, particularly in the Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory and the State of Selangor. These visits offered good opportunities for the participants to experience real-life examples of improved water resources management processes. Additionally, these visits enabled participants to gain insight into a range of problems and approaches concerning IWRM which include flood management, water supply development, freshwater wetland construction and stakeholder cooperation.

As part of the 1st Malaysian Water Week, the Water Resources Exhibition and several competitions were organized to create more opportunities for the general public to participate while enhancing their understanding of the need for better water management. Starting in early May 2004, competitions included photography and coloring competitions for school children. ■

GWP CEE Task Force on Public Participation in Baltic Sea Basin

THE GWP CEE COUNCIL DECIDED ON ITS MEETING IN JANUARY 2004 TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

The new Task Force aims to contribute to increased public participation in river basin management planning in the CEE region. Through its public participation efforts, the GWP CEE is addressing new opportunities posed by the European Union Water Framework Directive for the new EU member states as well as for accession countries. Margit Säre, from the Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation, leads the public participation task force activities in the Eastern Baltic Sea region: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. One of the first activities of the task force was to establish a web site containing training materials and methodology on different methods of public involvement, information on river basin management projects in Estonia, Latvia,

Lithuania, Poland and the latest news on IWRM issues. The web page also has links to NGO's, public institutions and pilot projects that are related to water management and public participation issues. You are welcome to visit www.riverdialogue.org/participation. In addition, an e-mail address list was created for those interested in public participation issues in water management in the eastern Baltic Sea states. During the spring of 2004, five water management seminars were organized for local government officials in the Lake Peipsi basin. As the background study showed, only a few municipalities were well informed about the Lake Peipsi water management planning process. The seminars were well timed, as the development of the plan had reached its halfway point, thus there were plenty of subjects to discuss and lots of information to convey to local stakeholders.

Holding local meetings was very useful for the water management planning coordinators; they received feedback, and established steady contacts on the spot.

As a result of the seminars, the local stakeholders also have a broader picture of the status of surface and groundwater in their county, GIS systems; water management planning economic issues and the principles of designing the plan of measures, which will be the basis of the implementation of the water management planning. The presentation on the public water supply and sewerage (PWSS) development plan was also highly appreciated, as only around one third of the local municipalities have the plan at the moment. From 2004, the PWSS development plan is a required document for applying for national and international co-funding for local water infrastructure investments; thus the compilation of the plans has

GWP CEE Regional Coordinator Visits Slovenia

MILAN MATUSKA, THE GWP CEE REGIONAL COORDINATOR, VISITED GWP SLOVENIA AND ITS PARTNERS ON MAY 20 – 22, 2004. The first visit was arranged at the Water Research Institute (WRI) in Ljubljana which is mainly responsible for the technical duties related to the Water Framework Directive (WFD) implementation. The ultimate goal of the institute is the elaboration of the River Basin Management Plans on the territory of Slovenia; these plans will be consulted with the public before their final adjustment and approval. The institute is accountable to the Ministry of the Environment, which is responsible for WFD implementation on the national level. At present, the WRI is concentrating on the technical aspects of WFD implementation; however, it is willing to co-operate with a partner organization that will organize public participation according to the WFD. This is an opportunity for GWP Slovenia to initiate a discussion with its partners on how to assist WRI to comply with WFD requirements in the field of public participation.

Mr. Matuska was warmly welcomed by the director of the Slovenian Environmental Agency. This was followed by a discussion of the mission of the GWP in the CEE region. The Slovenia. Flood Forecast and Groundwater Departments of the Environmental Agency were visited as well. The Flood Forecast Department is taking part in the GWP Associated Program for Flood Management, and Slovenian experts were interested in the scope of reports, the individual phases of the project and, of course, the deadlines. During the visit to the Groundwater Department comprehensive information on groundwater in Slovenia was presented including its incident-

ce linked with the country's hydro-geological conditions, its importance from the point of view of drinking water supply, the observation network, the quantitative and qualitative characteristics and their implications for the operation of the observation network. A discussion



GWP Slovenia organised seminar for teachers in Rodica, Slovenia

CREDIT: MARTINA ZUPAN

was then held on EU legislation in this field partially covered already by the WFD but specifically under development, the importance of groundwater in the region and possible bilateral cooperation of the neighboring countries sharing groundwater bodies.

Another meeting was held with the State Under-secretary for Water at the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning. She was informed about the recent activities of the GWP CEE and Work Plans 2004 and 2004-2008. They discussed the possible participation of GWP Slovenia in the implementation of the WFD in the field of public participation and other aspects of sustainable water protection and use. Mr. Matuska also visited Limnos, a host institute of GWP Slovenia, actively engaged in the field of environmental protection and especially in eco-remediation. The philosophy of the company is based on the approach of using the

"natural processes" of protection/remediation of the environment and the water. LIMNOS has developed 4 types of eco-remediation methods applied in specific locations in the country where the interest of the local municipality is supported with relatively small finances.

According to LIMNOS, it has become evident that the main hindrance to its wider use is the limited knowledge of the problem and sometimes even total absence of information on the existence of the method, its applicability and advantages to water environment. In order to raise the awareness of various target groups - municipal companies, municipal and government services, regional development agencies, educational institutions and others, it is vital that relevant information materials be prepared.

The Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning pays close attention to awareness rising through the education of young people. Therefore, regular seminars for primary school teachers are organized with interesting topics related to the educational process. Lecturers from universities, the ministry, the paint industry, schools and GWP Slovenia were invited to introduce topics for further discussion. Afterwards an excursion was organized along the "educational path" related to "water today" and the history of centuries of Rodica. It was an extraordinary opportunity to participate in such an "educational path" of high professional repute and the interconnection of history, culture, water and involving local teachers. Finally, the GWP CEE Regional Secretariat would like to thank Ms. Martina Zupan from GWP Slovenia who made this very interesting visit possible. ■

become an urgent question to be solved for many municipalities. Hopefully the training will help the municipalities to speed up the process of compiling the local PWSS development plans. This will guarantee a steady flow of investments into local water supply and sewerage systems, and eventually decrease the amount of wastewater channeled into Lake Peipsi.

The seminar: "Water Management Planning in the Eastern Baltic Sea States: Integrated Approaches" - the largest international event of the task force - takes place on 20-22 September, in Taagepera, South Estonia. It will bring together water management specialists from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and northwest Russia. The general topic of the seminar is the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in the eastern Baltic Sea region - its problems and challenges in different countries. The seminar topics include: water body classification and monitoring issues; mitigation of the impact of agriculture on water quality and water ecosystems, economic issues in water management planning and public involvement in the process of water management. The seminar will also promote the establishment of a network and the exchange of experiences of water managers in the region. ■

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Tool Box User Survey now on line!

THE GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP, JAPAN WATER FORUM, NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LAND AND INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT (NILIM) AND JAPAN WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION (JAWA) HAVE JOINED EFFORTS TO CARRY OUT A TOOL BOX USER SURVEY. The purpose of this survey is to ensure that the present and future Tool Box developments are based on user needs and preferences. Join the online survey at www.gwp-forum.org now!

The Tool Box is a comprehensive source of knowledge, experience and guidance for sustainable water resources development and management including service provision. The Tool Box aims to help decision makers and practitioners to put together policy packages for sustainable water resources management. The ToolBox draws together experience and shares knowledge in implementing IWRM, worldwide. The Tool Box contains some 50 Tools and shows how, by combining tools and policies, you can find solutions to a wide range of water management problems - through building strong institutions in a clear policy and legal framework, and adopting concrete management options. Lessons learned in using the Tools are described in Cases. Case studies are practical descriptions of actual experience, submitted by Tool Box users from all over the world and offering realistic lessons for others. Case studies are peer reviewed through the GWP network. In addition, the Tool Box contains references. All the Tools and Cases are linked to reference materials - websites, references and organisations. ■

New GWP CEE regional reports

NEW REGIONAL REPORTS ARE RESULTS OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS DIALOGUES HELD IN 10 COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE. Based on the dialogues, GWP CEE Task Force leaders and national experts prepared reports on "Financial Flows:

affordability in water management in the CEE region", "Water, Food and Environment: second phase of dialogue on the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in agricultural water management in the CEE region" and "Gender: evaluation of questionnaire on the involvement of women and men in GWP CEE". Please contact GWP CEE Regional Secretariat, if you wish to get a free copy. ■



Contact our Country Water Partnerships!

IN THIS ISSUE OF WATER TALK WE WILL PRESENT WATER PARTNERSHIPS IN ANOTHER THREE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE – HUNGARY, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA.

GWP Hungary Water Partnership

The two main rivers - the Danube and the Tisza - and Lake Balaton, together with thermal springs ensure safe water supplies for the country. However, water may also cause serious problems: authorities, associations and other stakeholders in the water sector are facing challenges relating to quality, quantity, and floods, and need to address institutional issues. The Hungary Water Partnership promotes cooperation between those interested in IWRM, with special regard to the protection of the aquatic environment, flood and excess water protection, in addition to water management in shared river or lake basins and the EU Water Framework Directive.



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GWP Latvia Water Partnership

Latvia has approximately 34 km³ of surface water and 4.7 km³ of groundwater resources available annually. Generally it does not have a water shortage problem as annual precipitation exceeds evaporation by 250 mm, and in wet years even by 500 to 600 mm. There are more than 12,400 rivers and 2,256 lakes, which together with water reservoirs cover 3.7% of the state territory. Wetland ecosystems, which have been destroyed in most of Europe, make up to 10% of the territory of Latvia. The Latvia Water Partnership is fully consolidated and was registered as non-governmental organization in 2004. There is a well-structured network in place for informal exchanges of ideas, information and good practices. The network consists of water management professionals and experts as well as representatives of municipal and state administration. Activities include the implementation of the IWRM at the river basin level.



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GWP Lithuania Water Partnership

In Lithuania there are plentiful surface and groundwater resources. Surface water availability is 7.043 m³ per capita per year, and close to 1000 liters per day of groundwater could be extracted without any damage to the environment. Currently the Lithuania Water Partnership has 80 members. The membership is comprised mainly of individual persons. The annual work program is prepared in association with the GWP Central and Eastern European Council. The principal activities of the Lithuania Water Partnership include awareness raising through seminars involving mass media on important water issues related to EU accession, the IWRM, public participation, the Water Framework Directive and other water related EU directives. The Partnership interacts with local decision makers and the public, involving them in regional and national activities. By translating and distributing GWP literature, the Partnership has advocated and advanced GWP water initiatives throughout the country. ■



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