



Interview with Árpád Göncz patron of GWP-CEE

Árpád Göncz born 1922 is a well known politician and legendary figure of the Central and Eastern European region. He was engaged in his young age in politics, becoming an active fighter during the 1944 resistance. In the cold war period he did not hide his opinion either and was sentenced to life prison after the 1956 Hungarian revolution. Receiving amnesty after serving six years, he became writer and translator and played an important role in the underground movements of the country leading to the change of the political regime. Following the first free elections he was elected President of Hungary in 1990, re-elected in 1995 from which position he resigned in 2000. After having been informed about the mission of GWP he agreed to act as a regional patron of GWP-CEE and help the region implement the long term water vision and to work for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). He will attend the regional water forum to be held in Prague November 2002 and assist GWP-CEE to raise political will so many times cited as an essential element of IWRM. Below find CEE Water Talk's interview with President Göncz.



◆ *President Göncz, first of all thank you for accepting our invitation. Considering your distinct attention related to water issues my impression was that you have inclination towards water. Could you please speak about your feelings on how you see water as basic element of life and factor of development.*

It was almost by chance, I used to work in the soil conservation service in the 1950s and 1960s. In Hungary it is an important area considering the agricultural character of the country and the role agriculture plays in the economy. On the other hand land use decisions have impacts on water management as it has been recently more and more frequently recognized. It was difficult those days to make people understand why the catchment should be managed as a unit, why drainage channels should be maintained to avoid excess water inundating the land, why contour ploughing is better in conserving water in sloping areas. In other wording the interactions between human activities and the water movement through the landscape must be considered. With the political changes and with the new ownership pattern less attention was paid to these issues and the harmful consequences we have already experienced in the form of undrained runoff.

I liked that job with the land conservation service and when participating at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 I think I better understood the problems and challenges humankind was facing than I would have done without this background. I found Agenda 21 a milestone publication and am looking forward to hearing the results of the forthcoming Johannesburg summit.

On the other hand my elder son is civil engineer working on flood protection from whom I regularly receive information related to the water sector and I follow the developments with special attention. It is evident that water is basic for life; let it be human, animal or plant. Most of the CEE countries face either water

shortage or excess, frequently both, and water pollution is a common concern even in countries with abundant resources. River regulation, which has been carried out for answering the society's demand, now seems to be the reason of floods in certain river stretches and I am happy to learn that new and environmental friendly solutions are under consideration to overcome these difficulties.

◆ *You were among the first heads of state in the region who after the political changes initiated the European Union accession. Now we are at the brink of joining the EU. How do you see the chances of the region?*

To join the EU is vital for our countries. The sound and successful management of a region can be done only if the way of thinking is also regional and visionary at the same time. I fully support the idea of international co-operation for which the EU can provide appropriate framework. Our chances these days are of historical importance. The ability and creativeness of CEE people will help in the transition period I believe. This will not be an easy run, we will have to adapt ourselves to the new conditions, expectations and requirements. We have to learn a different language spoken by Eurocrats, which we like or not, practised in the EU. We have to help each other, learn from each other to grow up to the tasks awaiting us. I think this is what GWP people call East to East dialogue. This should be done also in other sectors. Competition between our countries should be replaced by partnership.

Speaking about regionality I would like to raise the situation of Ukraine. They will not join the EU within a foreseeable time horizon, but the impact of this country on the Tisza and Danube basins is important. I certainly suggest some type of collaboration with Ukraine also for the interest of our countries downstream. I recommend considering this issue in case of an eventual regional expansion of GWP.

◆ *What do you think GWP as a neutral network, free from politics should do in the accession process?*

I do not think such a mission could be done without taking account political tendencies. Even the regional report of GWP-CEE prepared for the Second World Water Forum says "the most important thing is the political will". We can see things from different angles, geographical conditions, ethnography, everything is interwoven by politics. GWP can play an important role in raising the necessary political will, raising awareness among politicians and also among people, their constituency, in helping countries implement the EU Water Framework Directive, learn more about the EU system, assist public participation, so much neglected in the past, spread the ideas of transparency and accountability, practice the principle of subsidiarity and much more.

The water vision and especially the framework for action you presented in The Hague is only a frame as the name suggests. You should fill it with substance and action. People living in the region deserve to reach that long term goal. I hope the Prague regional water forum will be an important contribution to this process. I am looking forward to meeting there many committed water stakeholders, professionals and users who feel responsibility for our common future

◆ *Thank you for the interview.*

Invitation to the Regional Water Forum PRAGUE, November 9-10, 2002

and call for case studies

Dear Water Friends,

It is my pleasure to invite you to the first Regional Water Forum of GWP-CEE to be held on 9-10 November in Prague, the Czech Republic. The Forum will highlight the latest developments in the Central and Eastern European countries and milestones of the water-related activities in the region with special regard to the third World Water Forum (WWF3) to be held in Japan March 2003. The Regional Forum will also enable participants to make their input in determining the future course of the Partnership. I am honoured to announce that Mr. Árpád Göncz the patron of GWP-CEE and former president of Hungary (see separate article) will attend the Forum and address the audience.

The Forum agenda includes the overview of regional programmes and important water issues like:

- dialogue on water, food and environment
- dialogue on water governance
- study on financial flows
- water supply and sanitation situation in the region
- educational pilot programme
- status of public participation in the region
- IWRM ToolBox
- competition for presenting case studies at the WWF3
- film on specific aspects of EU WFD

• reaction from countries including suggestions for the way forward Strategic allies of GWP-CEE*, like GWP-Med, ICID, ICPDR, INBO/CEENBO, IWA, REC, UNDP-GEF, WSSCC, WWF, WWF3 Secretariat are also invited to attend the Forum.

Water directors responsible for the implementation of EU WFD and other ministerial officers are expected to participate and to provide their follow up comments to the Budapest ministerial declaration of March 2001 (see CEE Water Talk 2/2001).

GWP-CEE will provide sponsorship for a limited number of Consulting Partners selected in advance on a balanced representation basis. Please indicate your request concerning the sponsorship needs when sending your registration application to GWP-CEE Secretariat by email gwpceetac@vituki.hu or by fax. + 36 1 215 60 47. The sponsorship will include travel ticket (economy class), accommodation and per diem according to our standards for the duration of the meeting.

Call for case studies

During the CEE sub-session of the WWF3 (as part of the Europe Day) three case studies will be presented illustrating the potential for implementation of the Water Framework Directive within the region at the

- (i) **local (community) level,**
- (ii) **national level, relating EU WFD to other EU policies, and**
- (iii) **international level, illustrating application of EU WFD in the transboundary river basin.**

Any other area of application of EU WFD may be considered, but altogether no more than three areas will be selected. All consulting partners of GWP-CEE and other interested parties are cordially invited to propose case studies. After some pre-selection the short-listed cases will be presented at the Regional Water Forum. Each of them should be no more than 20 minutes long and the innovative forms of presentation are encouraged. The Forum will vote for the best three to be shown at WWF3 in Japan. The final selection will be made by the GWP-CEE Council and RTEC. Authors of each selected case study will nominate a person who will present the case in Kyoto during the CEE sub-session (all travel and subsistence expenses of the person will be paid by GWP-CEE).

Deadline for submitting case study proposals in the form of extended abstract of maximum 4 pages is 30 September 2002. The proposals should be sent to GWP-CEE secretariat by email at gwpceetac@vituki.hu

I am looking forward to meeting you in Prague.

Yours sincerely,

József Gayer
GWP-CEE Executive Secretary

* See list of abbreviations on page 4



The 7th Annual Meeting of GWP Consulting Partners

For the first time the annual Consulting Partners (CP) meeting was not held in Stockholm but in Accra, Ghana in West-Africa, one of the GWP's key regions. In 2002 there is a special focus on Africa as the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) takes place on this continent.

Thus it was felt very appropriate to meet in Africa and to focus on the application of IWRM throughout the continent, and particularly in the West African region.

As this CP meeting fell before the WSSD in Johannesburg in August/September, and the 3rd World Water Forum in Japan in March 2003, a special session was devoted to discuss the GWP's involvement in these events. At the CP meeting the status of the GWP Secretariat in Stockholm in its new form (as intergovernmental organization) was also presented. This, however does not effect the status of regional units of GWP.

In the meeting there was a review of the overall GWP work programme and progress on the development of regional/country partnerships.

During the Consultative Partners meeting, totally six working sessions were held. The main goal of the working sessions was to report on progress and to plan next steps and new activities. The following parallel working sessions have been attended altogether by more than 250 participants:

- Capacity building in IWRM
- Water and poverty
- Country water partnerships and local actions
- ToolBox for IWRM
- Effective Water Governance
- Shared rivers.

The highest attention was paid to the Effective Water Governance session led by Alan Hall. The Water Governance was identified as a key issue from the World Water Vision and Framework for Action process in 2000 and all the GWP regions took this issue serious at the top of the agendas. The dialogues organised within GWP activities adds a political dimension to the GWP focus on integrated water resources management. Main objective of the session was to share regional/ national/local experiences from the activities so far undertaken, and to learn from different experiences.

Also, an important meeting the CEE region was the session on ToolBox as the CEE countries are actively involved in the development of the ToolBox case studies and dissemination.

The session on country water partnership and local action led by Frank van Steenberg attracted about 40 participants who discussed successfully the local water issues and GWP actions in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean region, Europe and Latin America. One of the two main presentations on area water partnership was made by Galia Bardarska, Bulgaria who suggested the development of a bottom up policy. Several good examples proved that GWP's mechanisms could promote partnership's way of thinking without inventing something new. Special efforts are needed to contact those who are normally out of sight. It was agreed that GWP can help local action by:

- encouraging area water partnerships that work on the ground;
- communicating in a light and direct way (using local language);
- applying GWP policy mechanisms to bring local water issues to higher level.

The next CP meeting will be held in Stockholm August 2003 and as planned the following one again in one of the regions.



Regional representatives meeting Accra, Ghana, 16 June, 2002

Back to back with the Consulting Partners meeting the regional representatives (chairs, executive secretaries) of GWP held a meeting in Accra to discuss region specific issues. Highlights of the meeting.

New regions:

Central Asia & Caucasus. A new GWP region covering nine countries was born February 2002 at a meeting held in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Four future regions: Caribbean, Central-Africa, East-Africa and the Pacific are under preparation.

Sponsorship:

Per Bertilsson deputy executive secretary of GWP introduced the note on the financial sustainability for GWP partnerships. He located the main argument for a fund raising strategy and action plan on:

- GWP's global expansion in terms of CWPs, RWPs, and an expanding scope of activities.
- continuing increase of funds availability at the centre, but increases not rising as quickly as overall expenditures.

Mr. Bertilsson emphasised the need to diversify funding sources and to move from traditional sources of funding to include non-traditional sources, so as to allow continued growth. He outlined a fund raising action plan which includes:

- mapping out of local donors at the region and country levels,

- informing of potential partners of GWP activities,
- reporting of GWP success stories and
- setting up fund raising task forces.

He suggested that alliance for fund raising should be forged with various multilateral and bilateral donors, the private sector and governments.

Frank van Steenberg, consultant to GWP made a presentation based on an investigation of some of the most frequently asked questions on fund raising for the water partnerships. Regions were strongly encouraged to make use of these results in their fund raising initiatives. In a plenary discussion that ensued, the regions were asked to outline possible fund raising initiatives that they could embark upon as well as suggest actions that they think could come from the centre.

Regional activities:

Recent regional activities were presented at the meeting. Here quotation from the meetings minutes is given related to GWP-CEE. "The regional secretariat has recently produced a detailed progress report which shows very good progress in the region in the implementation of their outputs. It now has 7 CWPs, is collaborating with GWAlliance and is actively involved in testing the IWRM ToolBox with educational institutions in the region. Water governance and WFE dialogues have been scheduled in most countries of the region and an investigation of the financial implications of implementing the EU WFD is at an advanced stage. CEE transformed into a RWP beginning of this year."

CAP-NET

Paul Taylor, the Director of Cap-Net (Capacity Building Network for Integrated Water Resources Management) informed the meeting that the establishment phase of Cap-Net is now complete. He informed that Cap-Net will operate on the principles of demand driven, local ownership, integrated training and education support and multidisciplinary in its support. Cap-Net is an open and inclusive GWP associated programme and will work with international programmes, GWP TACs and partnerships, regional capacity building networks, capacity building institutions for IWRM, the Toolbox and other GWP APs. (see www.cap-net.org)

World Summit on Sustainable Development



The United Nations' World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) which will be held from 26 August - 4 September 2002 in Johannesburg is rapidly coming in sight. It will bring together tens of thousands of participants, including heads of state and government, delegates and leaders from non-governmental organisations (NGO's), the business world and major activist groups. The World Summit, also referred to as 'Rio +10', will identify accomplishments since 1992 and areas where further efforts are needed to implement Agenda 21 - the programme of actions designed to establish global, sustainable development in the 21st Century.

The World Summit aims to find practical ways for humanity to two challenges - to better the lives of all human beings, while protecting the environment. The UN has identified five specific areas where concrete results are both essential and achievable. They are: water + sanitation; energy; agricultural productivity; biodiversity; and ecosystem management and health. The Africa Water Taskforce has decided to put water high on the agenda of the World Summit. For this reason the WaterDome will be organised parallel to the summit. The WaterDome will be the place where 'water' really becomes everybody's business.

The main objective of the WaterDome is to create water awareness by organising

a dialogue between stakeholders at the Dome, located in Northgate, Johannesburg - to be temporarily re-named the WaterDome. From 28 August - 3 September 2002, parallel to the World Summit, stakeholders from public and private organisations in the water sector will get the opportunity to launch and exhibit their water-related activities, policies, initiatives, new technologies, products etc. GWP will be present in the WaterDome with regional and country partnership messages. Please find the CEE panel statement presented there in the box aside.



CEE panel statement for GWP pavilion in Johannesburg WaterDome

The problem

The EU has agreed to an enlargement process that will eventually embrace most European countries and has stipulated framework conditions that all such countries must attain in all sectors. In CEE countries, the matter of acceding to the EU is a single most important goal and driving force. In the water resources management sector, the EU Water Framework Directive stipulates the accession requirements. The Directive is very demanding, it will in many cases be difficult to adapt to the local conditions prevailing in CEE countries and also has a high cost of implementation.

The action

CEE countries immediately need to establish regional discussion groups for purposes of developing appropriate water policies in compliance with European Union rules, and to share knowledge and experience in 'east-east dialogues'. They need to redefine existing tools and tech-

niques to bring them in line with the Directive requirements. They also need to join forces in the development of a monitoring and classification system of water quality and the ecological status of rivers and lakes. We need an assessment system which acts as the indicator of the general state of the ecosystem.

The expected outcomes

In the short term, pilot river basin studies generate information that can provide useful insights and indicators on the extent to which the existing ecosystem and management techniques are in harmony with the EU Framework Directive, and hence make it easier to identify the necessary instruments and measures needed to achieve the necessary harmony. The harmonisation of legal, institutional requirements, complex River Basin Management Plans and the integrated programme of measures, provide a sound framework for ensuring the sustainable use and management of water resources.

EUROPE DAY - ON THE BUMPY ROAD TO KYOTO

Dates of the Forum

March 2003



Outline of the Forum

Opening Session



General background

The Third World Water Forum is not behind the horizon any more. It is becoming a reality for thousands of people who understand the importance of water for life on this planet, are aware of water-related issues, believe in the global Water Vision created in the Hague in 2000 year and are willing to make an effort to go for the Action. They will gather in Kyoto, Osaka and Shiga in March 2003 not only because they clearly see a physical discrepancy between world-wide the distribution of water resources and the water needs. Above all they recognise interdependencies between good status of water and our social, economic and environmental well being. This is why those who will participate in the Third World Water Forum are preparing themselves to discuss a number of issues that lie far beyond technical aspects of water management. The overall idea is to enhance the ongoing and trigger new Dialogues concerning global problems that exist at the interface between the water and other domains of our life. The mood of determination to create global water awareness can be frequently sensed when many say, "we cannot lose momentum of the Second WWF".

In fact, the need for global water-related awareness had become a core of the clear-cut scheme designed by the Japanese hosts for the Third World Water Forum. The IT-based *Water Voice* serves as a democratic global platform, which is expected to reveal all complexities in water-related interdependencies between social, economic, environmental and political aspects of our life. *Thematic Sessions* are meant to sort out these complexities and aim towards identification of major constraints, indication and mobilisation of global means and preparation of background documents with the single goal of creating water awareness among politicians.

Finally, *Ministerial Conference* is expected to set a political framework for feasible solutions generated by the Forum.

The original idea of the Japanese hosts was to keep this transparent scheme untouched, but continental differences in water problems appeared to be generically distinct. A number of arguments have been raised in favour of the idea of organising also *Regional Sessions*. The decisive argument was that the interdependencies between water issues and other aspects of peoples' lives show reasonable similarity within each region whereas they can be exotic for other regions. Listening to the voices of the global regions the Organising Committee of the WWF3 has accepted the idea of organising *Regional Sessions* in addition to the *Thematic Sessions*.

The Europe Day

The Europe, like other continents, has its own day envisaged during the Third World Water Forum - the *Europe Day*. The day is to be filled with a programme, which will present the Europe's water-related issues (including the above mentioned interdependencies) in interesting manner and, above all, show the willingness of Europe to participate in solving global water problems.

Assuming this general goal formulation for Europe, two sub-regions of Europe, coinciding with two GWP regions, Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean Region have started their preparations for WWF3. They quickly have found common denominator in their preparations - the Water Framework Directive. The proposed title for the Europe Day - "Enlarging the Impact of the Water Framework Directive" - was expected to embrace most relevant water-related issues within the European continent and, at the same time, was formulated to show that Europe is offering to share its experience in implementing

Water Framework Directive globally. Naturally, the two GWP regions' initiative would be in a vacuum if the rest of Europe would not join. Consequently, the suggestion has been passed to the European Commission to organise the Europe Day together as an assembly of *three consecutive sub-sessions* having their common motive - Water Framework Directive. It was suggested that the first sub-session would be organised by the EC and devoted to implementation of the WFD in countries that belong to the European Union. The second sub-session (organised by the GWP-CEE) was planned to show how the WFD is being adopted in the Central and Eastern European countries and recognise their effort of reconstructing their water sectors while undergoing complex social and economic changes at the same time. The working title for the GWP-CEE sub-session was therefore chosen as "Challenges in implementing WFD in Eastern Europe". Finally, the third sub-session was envisaged to show how Mediterranean countries develop their water policy while coexisting with the countries, which do not belong to European Union and do not follow WFD so far. For the two GWP regions it seemed natural and plausible to make these suggestions to the European Commission. But...

Meantime the European Commission has launched the European Water Initiative, (EWI). This new action, that is aimed mainly towards African and Central Asian water problems, clearly supports the European mission of serving other peoples with its water experience globally. Inevitably, the initiative also imprints upon the structure and scope of the Europe Day.

The Europe Day Co-ordination Meeting

As the result, two concepts of setting the Europe Day (the one based on WFD and the other based on EWI) met during the Europe Day Co-ordination Meeting. The meeting was recently (July 10, 2002) organised by the Secretariat of the 3rd World Water Forum in Brussels. About 25 participants representing the EU, two GWP regional TACs, NGOs, ministry representatives, private sector and other organisations attended the meeting together with four staff members from the Secretariat. The Secretariat, in convening this first meeting played the role of a "catalyst". The objectives of the meeting were:

- To present the participants the status of Forum preparatory activities, Thematic and Regional sessions and the concept and objective of "Regional Days";
- To provide an opportunity for the participants to present their respective planned and on-going activities towards the Forum especially the "Water Framework Directive (WFD)", "EU Water Initiative" and GWP-CEE and GWP-Med activities;
- To discuss preparation and coordination of Europe activities towards the Forum namely, "WHO does WHAT by WHEN and HOW?"

From the general outline of the European water policy presented by the European Commission during the Brussels meeting it became clear that at present EWI is the important political concern of the European Commission and will be taking most of the attention of the EC until the summit in Johannesburg. The two GWP regions have consistently presented their original idea to base the Europe Day on the WFD concept. Despite of efforts made by the representatives of GWP to make the approach more pragmatic and technical, a discussion that followed concentrated on rather general issues, like: what is the definition of Europe, which water issue the participants consider as important for Europe, how other issues (e.g. gender) are going to be covered within the Europe Day, etc. Also new proposals of structuring the Europe Day have been put forward. For instance, some discussion has been devoted to the option of making the EWI sub-session parallel or even moving it to the Africa Day. The latter idea has been dropped, still it is not clear whether this sub-session of the Europe Day should be organised before or after the Africa Day. Based on the significant focus on EU WFD and EWI it was proposed that a unified message of the Europe Day would be "Europe for the World" and based on this the programme could be structured to address issues separately focusing on four (4) separate parallel sessions as follows: (1) IWRM following WFD to be lead by EC; (2) & (3) GWP-Med & GWP-CEE sessions on implementation of WFD; and (4) Europe's contribution to the outside world i.e. through the EWI (Africa & Central Asia). There was also a concern voiced with regard to parallel sessions attracting little audience and this should be more carefully thought out. It became obvious that the questions formulated under point 3) of the meeting agenda could not be addressed and hence answered decisively. Details of the structure will be discussed further and will be finalised by the co-ordinating group. The participants of the Brussels meeting have agreed however that these questions must be ultimately answered at the special meeting, which the coordinating group will hold during the summit in Johannesburg. Before the Johannesburg meeting the Danish representative present in Brussels accepted his role as the leading person responsible for the meeting preparations and for bringing the discussion on structuring the Europe Day to its effective conclusion.

We all look forward to the meeting and hope that Europe will be constructive while in Johannesburg.

Marek Nawalany

Latest information:

Agreement reached on EC, GWP-CEE and GWP-Med level that Europe Day will be held on 21 March 2003. (The editor)

CEE Regional Dialogue Meeting on Water, Food and the Environment

Bled, Slovenia



In line with the global process the GWP CEE held a kick-off meeting for the regional Dialogue on Water, Food and the Environment in Bled, Slovenia on 23 April 2002, back to back to the Drought mitigation conference. The agricultural impacts on water status are a major concern across Europe - both in terms of water quantity and quality. There are obvious regional differences, for example between north-west Europe, the Mediterranean and CEE countries. Apart from the impacts on the biodiversity and landscape of Europe, this 'water stress' threatens human health and the long-term sustainability of food production. Direct impacts include over-abstraction of groundwater and pollution of ground and surface waters due to excessive fertiliser application. But there are also ecosystem shifts that have resulted from intensification of agricultural practice during the last 50 years or so. Eutrophication has become widespread across the continent,

causing significant damage to rivers, lakes and wetlands and resulting in economic losses. As a result of drastic physical alteration, such as loss of natural vegetation cover and regulation of river systems, the landscape now has a reduced capacity to store and eliminate nutrients and pesticides. All of the current impacts are likely to be accentuated by climate change. It is important to recognise that not all agricultural activities are detrimental to water quantity and quality. Farming can also have a positive role in shaping Europe's landscapes and in securing valuable wetland habitats. However, true integration of agriculture and environmental objectives requires new approaches and policy instruments such as agri-environment and sustainable rural development to support and strengthen the long-term implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. Therefore the main focus of the Dialogue in

the CEE region is the implementation of WFD in the hope that by achieving good ecological status of waters the objectives of the Dialogue process will be reached as well. The meeting was facilitated by István Ijjas Task Force leader and attended by stakeholders of the region, representatives of ICID, GWP-Med, the water Action unit and GWP global Secretariat. Attendees from the region were delegated by GWP country representatives. They included: Bulgaria (2), Czech Republic (2), Estonia (1), Hungary (2+2 sponsored by Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development) Latvia (1), Lithuania (2), Poland (2), Romania (2+1 sponsored by other sources), Slovakia (2), Slovenia (2), CEE dialogue Task Force (2), GWP CEE secretariat (2).

The event was a design meeting to facilitate the implementation of national "Food" dialogues in CEE countries. Some key questions addressed at the meeting related to the:

- the organisational structure of the dialogues,
- dialogue purpose, principles and elements
- action plans for initiating dialogues
- and timetables

The two countries which have already held national dialogues in this respect (Poland and Hungary) presented the outcome of their meetings. Basic findings were:

- people working in the frontline of agricultural water management need more information on EU in general and on the consequence of EU accession in particular
- Continuous information exchange on the implementation of EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) is necessary
- Professional guidelines should be summarised in simplified form for the stakeholders
- Capacity building in the implementation is a key issue (education and training programs)
- The co-ordinated information management structure should be developed

- Immediate output - an agreement was launched between WWF and a Water Management Association in Hungary on a pilot study (implementation of WFD in a large drainage system)

During the discussion the importance of national roundtable events became clear and since then five further countries Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Estonia have started the organisation of national dialogues, while Hungary has organized a second dialogue meeting in the country.

National Dialogue reports will be peer reviewed by the Task Force members. National Dialogue reports should be ready by the 15th September and will be synthesised into a regional report for presentation at:

- the Global meeting on Water, Food and the Environment in Hanoi, October 2002
- CEE's regional water forum in Prague, November 2002
- WWF3 in Japan, March 2003

The meeting set up a Task Force to co-ordinate the implementation of the national dialogues in the remaining CEE countries led by Istvan Ijjas (ijjas@elender.hu), members: Ferenc Ligetvári (ligetvari@wem.date.hu), Janusz Kindler (Janusz.Kindler@is.pw.edu.pl), Charlie Avis (charlie.avis@wwf.hu).



At the initiative of the World Bank Institute a three-day workshop for journalists on water policy issues in Central and Eastern Europe was held between July 11-13 in Budapest, Hungary. Acknowledging the critical role that journalists play in building consensus among policy makers, NGOs and civil society, the workshop was designed to help build an informed society and engender an environment for change. This program was sponsored by the Secretariat of the 3rd World Water Forum, The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Bank Institute. It is two-year global learning initiative for journalists leading up to the 3rd World Water Forum, which takes place in Kyoto, Japan in March 2003. The workshop featured speakers from the public and private sector and leaved plenty of time for discussion and debate. Lectures on the topics below were given:

- The Role of the Media in Reporting on Water Issues
- Water Management Issues in Central and Eastern Europe
- Governance and Regulation of Water
- What Every Journalist Should Know about the EU Water Framework Directive and how to implement it
- How to pay for the EU Water Framework Directive in Central Europe
- Effective Water Service Provision: Price vs. Cost
- Private Investment in Water Projects in Eastern and Central Europe

Water Issues in Central and Eastern Europe discussed with journalists



More than 30 journalists gathered in Budapest between July 11-13 to discuss water issues in the Danube River Basin. According to Jozsef Gayer, regional head of the Global Water Partnership, the water crisis in the region is one of management. He said that the hydrological conditions vary between the countries of central and eastern Europe, but that there are shared institutional and historical causes. "We must learn how to get the public more involved in the decision making process," he said.

Top of the agenda is preparing the region for the EU Water Framework Directive. This wide-ranging legislation must be seen to be in place before any of the countries can join the European Union. However, it requires an estimated annual spending of between 2%-5% of gross domestic product, the likelihood is that much of the work will not get finished.

Accession to the European Union is one of the key drivers for change in the region. But before it can happen, there are still a number of important decisions to be made. For example, Hungary has around six million hectares of farm land. To comply with the terms of EU accession, it must set aside one million of these hectares. "Who will decide that?" asked Gayer. "What will be done with the land?"

Ursula Schmedtje, who works at the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, admitted that the directive makes tedious reading. For Hugh Goldsmith, projects directorate at the European Investment Bank, the Urban Wastewater Directive is even more important for the countries of the Danube region. "This directive is the driving force for higher water rates throughout Europe," he said. "It demands the construction of sewers and sewage treatment plants. The deadline for western European states is 2005, but many countries will miss it. For example, Brussels does not have a sewage treatment plant yet."

Goldsmith said that he thought there would be a number of grants available for countries and that this was the cheapest source of borrowing available. But Danka Thalmeinerova, head of Environmental Policy Program at the Academia Istropolitana Nova in Slovakia, insisted that there are many obstacles to getting hold of EU financing.

"Financial flows are murky," she said. "Nobody can work out what will be the cost of meeting all the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive. Don't believe any of the figures you may hear. But the command and control approach of the EU does not help. It does not let individual countries do the most effective thing."

She says that there is a low absorption rate of foreign assistance. Foreign lenders often like to see the involvement of private companies because that increases the transparency and efficiency of the deal. However, privatisation is not a panacea, particularly if regulatory and legal frameworks are not in place. "If you privatise with a weak legal structure there is a great risk that certain bad things will happen,"

said Professor Janusz Kindler, chairman of Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe.

Ondeo, one of the largest water companies in the world, which is running the water supply in Budapest, reacted to criticism that they are charging for a product that is naturally available in nature. "We do not trade in water," said Zoltan Csorba, managing director of Ondeo Services Hungary. "We do not sell a product. We provide a service. In addition, we have invested heavily in the infrastructure of the Budapest water utility."

For Charlie Avis, a policy officer at the Worldwide Fund for Nature, with a responsibility for the Danube-Carpathian Programme, the big issue is that while the European Union talks a lot about environmental responsibility, it is trying to turn the Danube into Transport Corridor Seven. "The plans for the Danube with national, international and EU nature protection regulations, and contradict recent commitments in the region," he said.



WORLD BANK INSTITUTE

But what did the journalists think of the water problems and the quality of reporting in their countries?

For Eugeniusz Pudlis, a senior reporter at *Echa Lesne*, the main problem in Poland is a lack of water. It has the third lowest amount of water in Europe after Malta and Belgium. There are also problems with flooding and droughts. In addition, journalists are not particularly interested in water or the environment. "People want cars and fridges and a higher standard of living first," he says. "I think we are destined to make the same environmental mistakes as western countries."

Jana Olivova, a reporter for Czech Radio, noted that the water quality had improved since the water companies had been privatised. For her, one of the big issues is coverage of the environment. "There is still much scepticism of the work of environmental agencies such as Greenpeace," she said. "In particular, people do not like their aggressive manner."

Richard Stahel, a journalist for *Hospodarske Noviny*, an economic magazine, pointed out that the key issues in Slovakia are the quality of drinking water and the need for sewage treatment. He said that there are problems for people paying for water, but that money is needed to help clean up many areas, particularly in those areas where there have been mines for centuries. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of the Environment have just resolved a 10-year dispute over a new water law, which was passed in July 2002. "The Ministry of the Environment has a long list of programmes that it want so do, but there is simply not enough money."

Alexandru Savulescu, who writes for the *Romanian Journal Perspective*, said privatisation in his country was a controversial issue. "Any project that involves a large amount of money is bound to be controversial," he said. Other important issues in Romania include the water supply, especially in rural areas, many cities lack proper sewerage, and alternate floods and droughts hit the country.

"For journalists wanting to report on the sector it is very difficult to get information," he said. "Organisations with the information do not want to give it to you: they either want to use it themselves or sell it!"

Slovenian journalist Danica Petrovic who writes for *Jana*, a magazine, said that there is very little reporting on the water sector in her country, because everybody believes that there will be clean water forever. She said that at the moment there are few problems with water supply, except in long, dry summers when every village uses volunteer firemen to supply freshwater from tankers. "The water supply problems are in the east of the country where the bulk of the agriculture takes place," she said. "This is also where there is the greatest pollution."

In Ukraine the three biggest problems are the quality of water, dirty rivers and the pollution in the Black Sea and Azov Sea. In Lviv, the hometown of journalist Zoya Skropadenko when she is not travelling round the world, water is available only three hours per day. "All the politicians promise us more water," she says. "But nothing changes. There is a plan on the table for a \$40 million loan from the World Bank. If the Ukrainians receive this money they will steal half of it."

She says that it is not hard to get information on the water sector, but it can take a lot of time, sometimes up to a month. "Reporting on the quality of water is not very popular," she said. "Even when we have outbreaks of cholera every year."

For Bulgaria's Ivan Bedrov, a newcomer to water issues but one of the country's leading television news political reporters, the conflict between the environment and development issues is the most critical. "I think the environment does not stand a chance," he said. "I think everybody will vote for jobs."

What can journalists do to cover the sector in a better fashion?

Reporting on the water sector is more exciting than it sounds. It covers every aspect of life and involves everyone. It is economic, political and social. It can be both dangerous and difficult. So where to start?



"Europe has the highest tariffs for water in the world," said Hugh Goldsmith. "Higher water prices are coming. Journalists should check for increases in efficiency." As well as focusing on the efficiency of their local utilities, journalists should also look at cost and prices; the impact on people; the quality of water; whether people have access to it; whether politicians keep their promises; water and agriculture; the effect that economic development might have on the environment; and ensure their reports are well researched, lively and balanced.

Rupert Wright
Tracey Osborne

Regional WSSCC meeting in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, 10-14 July

The meeting was attended by about 20 participants from WSSCC Secretariat, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Lithuania, Armenia, Japan, UK, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Russia and represented by NGOs, ministries and private sector. The agenda consisted of two days presentations of attendees and a one day field trip. Thematic coverage of the meeting was rather wide: from the national water supply and sanitation issues, company/institutional profiles/programmes and activities to information/discussions on future events (e.g. WSSCC initiatives before Johannesburg, WWF3 in Kyoto, WSSCC Global Forum in Dakar, 2003, etc.). Almost all presentations were followed by active discussions. The press conference was attended by local journalists.

Two presentations have been given on behalf of GWP CEE:

- a, Water supply situation in Lithuania
- b, GWP-CEE in action.

A need for more close collaboration between GWP and WSSCC was mentioned several times during the presentations and discussions.

Based on the results of that quite interesting meeting and discussions with Diana Iskrevia (Regional Coordinator, CEE&NIS) and Darren Saywell (Programme Manager, WSSCC Secretariat) concrete steps for future co-operation between GWP-CEE and WSSCC have been outlined including:

- WSSCC contribution to GWP-CEE Financial Flows study
- WSSCC Secretariat will sponsor participation of one speaker to WFD-Groundwater workshop in Vilnius, October 2002
- WSSCC attendance at GWP-CEE Regional Water Forum in November 2002, Prague
- Joint WSSCC (CEE/NIS) - GWP-CEE regional meeting on Rural water supply in CEE&NIS to be held in October 2003 in Sofia

Bernardas Paukstys

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CEENBO | Central and Eastern Europe Network of Basin Organisations |
| CWP | Country Water Partnership |
| GWAlliance | Gender and Water Alliance |
| GWP-CEE | Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe |
| GWP-Med | Global Water Partnership Mediterranean Region |
| ICID | International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage |
| ICPDR | International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River |
| INBO | International Network of Basin Organisations |
| IWA | International Water Association |
| NIS | Newly Independent States |
| REC | Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe |
| RTEC | Regional Technical Committee (of GWP) |
| RWP | Regional Water Partnership |
| UNDP-GEF | United Nations Development Programme - Global Environmental Facility |
| WFD | Water Framework Directive |
| WFE | Water Food and Environment |
| WSSCC | Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council |
| WWF | Worldwide Fund for Nature |
| WWF3 | 3rd World Water Forum |

JOINT DANUBE SURVEY



History

As an important contribution to improve the comparability of water quality data the Monitoring, Laboratory and Information Management (MLIM) Expert Group of the ICPDR proposed a Joint Danube Survey focused on chemical and biological determinands. The intention was to use Danube country sampling and laboratory expertise and resources that have the necessary level of analytical instrumentation, operating with proven acceptable Analytical Quality Control procedures. The use of common sampling platform and sampling methodologies throughout the whole length of the Danube and application of only one laboratory (at least per determinand) eliminates the interlaboratory variance that is inherently present when merging data sets from a multi-institution approach.

The potential of Danube surveys has been proven by similar monitoring cruise projects in the 1990s. The Study of the Equipe Cousteau (1993) was focussed on chemical analysis of sediment samples and indicator organisms from the Danube River for a total of over 100 parameters.

A shorter reach of the Danube was investigated during the research trip of M.S. Burgund on the Main, Main-Danube Canal and Danube. The study was carried out in 1998. It started at the Rhine-Main confluence in Mainz (Germany), proceeded up to the Main-Donaukanal and then down the Danube ending at the Croatian border. A total of 978.8 km of the Danube River was covered.

In 1999, in accordance with the agreement between UNEP/Habitat Balkans Task Force and the ICPDR, an international expert team conducted a sampling campaign in the Yugoslavian reach of the Danube in the vicinity of the war-damaged sites.

Considering the outputs of these monitoring surveys the necessity of a thorough survey for the whole Danube, reflecting also the newly introduced water policy in the Danube River Basin (Danube River Protection Convention, EU Water Framework Directive), has become apparent.

Objectives

The Joint Danube Survey had the following general objectives:

- To produce a homogenous data set for the Danube River based on a single laboratory analysis of selected determinands;
- To identify and confirm specific pollution sources;
- To screen the pollutants as specified in the proposed EU Water Framework Directive;
- To provide a forum for riparian/river basin country participation for sam-

pling and intercomparison exercises;

- To facilitate specific training needs and improve in-country experience;
- To promote public awareness.

Approach and Programme

Joint Danube Survey provided a homogeneous data set describing the water and sediment quality throughout the whole length of the Danube River. A special attention was given to the analysis of persistent organic and inorganic micropollutants in sediment, biota and



suspended solids. Simultaneous analysis of the collected samples by the best laboratories in the Danube River Basin and by the national laboratories in Danube countries was considered as an analytical intercomparison exercise contributing to the overall improvement of the analytical quality in the basin. In addition, the joint research project was seen as an excellent opportunity for experts from all Danube River Basin countries to exchange their experience and to harmonize the different sampling procedures and methods of laboratory analysis used in their respective countries. Last but not least, the press conferences held in all Danube countries to inform the public about the objectives of the Survey helped to raise public awareness about pollution reduction and protection of natural ecosystems.

Sampling Cruise

The survey was carried out by an international team of experts using two ships from Germany and Hungary. The cruise started on 14 August 2001 from Regensburg in Germany and made its way through Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine until 20 September. The team of experts was responsible for sampling and on-board analyses during the whole survey. The station list included 74 stations on the main river and 24 stations on major tributaries and arms of the Danube.

Sample types of the Joint Danube Survey

Sampling at each of 98 stations included five different sample types (water, sediment, biology, suspended solids and mussels). Each sample type had a specific determinand list and it was taken at different sampling points (left, middle, right) at the station cross sections.

- Water samples were taken in the middle of the Danube and its tributaries for on-board measurements of temperature, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and analyses of alkalinity, ammonium, nitrate, nitrite, ortho-phosphate, pH, suspended solids, chlorophyll-a and microbiological parameters. Chlorophyll-a samples were sampled at the middle, right and left bank of the river.
- Sediment samples were taken from left and right banks of the river. This was followed by on-board grain size fractionation to receive fraction less than 63 µm, which was used for later analysis of organic nitrogen, total phosphorus, organic micropollutants and heavy metals.
- Suspended solids were collected at the middle part of the river by on-board pumping and centrifugation of water. Due to the long time required for collection of a sufficient amount of sample, the centrifugation was usually carried out during the cruise between two adjacent sampling sites. The same parameters as for sediments were analyzed.

- Mussel samples were collected from the left and right bank of the river, prepared and stored for later analyses of heavy metals, PAHs, PCBs and organochlorinated compounds.

- Biological samples were taken from the left and right banks of the river. Macrozoobenthos and phytobenthos were sampled by a grab sampler on the Argus, the JDS laboratory ship, as well as using small boats. The small boats were used also for sampling of macrophytes on the shores of the river. Phytoplankton and zooplankton samples were filtered out of the water taken from the middle of the river.

Laboratory analyses

The samples were usually divided into two groups to be analysed simultaneously in the laboratory selected by the tendering procedure (JDS Reference Laboratory) as well as by the National Reference Laboratories in Danube countries. The local experts were working together with the JDS Team on board of the Argus ship during the collection of the samples in their country. The samples collected during the survey were regularly transported to the laboratories.

Public awareness

During the survey the press conferences were organised in Germany (Regensburg), Austria (Vienna), Slovakia

(Bratislava), Hungary (Budapest), Croatia (Osijek), Yugoslavia (Belgrade), Bulgaria (Silistra), Romania (Tulcea) and Ukraine (Reni).

Results

The draft of the final report of the JDS was finalised by the end of May 2002 and was commented by the ICPDR. The JDS Report will be officially presented at the JDS Press Conference to be held in Munich, Germany, on 29 August 2002.



The Danube experts involved in the Survey have agreed that a set of specific publications with more detailed evaluation of data should follow the JDS Report. This should support the general focus of the ICPDR towards the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.

Finances

The JDS was financed by Germany and Austria. Activities of the JDS National Teams, including the analytical work, were offered as an in-kind contribution by all Danube countries.

Impacts of the JDS on the water quality policy in the Danube River Basin

- The final results will provide extended information on the water quality status in the Danube River Basin
- Outputs of the survey will enable improving current monitoring practices in the Danube River Basin including the introduction of new water quality indicators
- Conclusions of interlaboratory exercises performed during the survey will strengthen the analytical quality control of Danube laboratories
- Specific sources of pollution will be identified based on the data collected during the JDS giving a special attention to pollutants included in the List of Priority Substances of the EU Water Framework Directive
- Implementation of the tasks of the ICPDR Joint Action Programme will be facilitated

Igor Liska, Liviu Popescu



Call for candidates

The Global Water Partnership is seeking candidates for its Technical Committee (TEC)

TEC is composed of 12 internationally recognised professionals with knowledge, experience and backgrounds in different aspects relating to water resources management. The members serve in their personal capacity and are expected to be able to go beyond their respective disciplinary/sectoral background.

TEC is the "think tank" of GWP. It oversees the conceptual development of IWRM and guides and participates in the implementation of GWP's Work Programme to support stakeholders in implementing IWRM. TEC does so through regular and ad hoc meetings, participation in GWP Task Forces and actions, and through development of conceptual material to guide IWRM in practice. An example of the latter is the TEC publication

"Integrated Water Resources Management" which has been translated into some 20 languages and serves as the basis for the development of the GWP ToolBox on IWRM. The continuous guidance of the ToolBox development, including practical case studies of IWRM, is one of the most important activities of TEC.

Some members of the TEC are due to step down. This call for candidates is to fill such resulting vacancies.

TEC members are appointed by the Steering Committee for a period of three years, and may normally be appointed for a maximum of two periods. TEC members are expected to provide an input of approximately 4-6 weeks per year, including two annual TEC meetings of 3-4 days in different

parts of the world. TEC members are paid at a daily rate set by the GWP Steering Committee. All travel, per diem, and accommodation costs are covered at standard terms. The working language of the TEC is English.

In order to ensure a broad and representative composition of the TEC, the following considerations will be taken into account when appointing members:

- balance of disciplines (natural/technical/social/legal/economic)
- geographical balance (good regional coverage, no more than one member per country)
- gender balance
- balance between members from developed and developing countries
- balance between scientists and practitioners
- balance of organisational background and practical experience

The search and selection process is handled by a Search Committee constituted by the GWP Steering Committee. Decision on

appointments will be made by the Steering Committee in December 2002.

Applications received now will remain active for three years, so that suitable candidates, who for reasons of various balances can not be selected this year but will be considered again next year when more of the current TEC members retire. Kindly keep us updated on your personal information so that it remains current.

Curriculum Vitae of proposed candidates should be submitted to the GWP Secretariat **no later than 15 September 2002**

GWP Secretariat, c/o Sida
Call for candidates/TEC
SE-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel No: +46 8 698 5000
Fax No: +46 8 698 5627
E-mail: regina.hahlin@sida.se

General information about GWP is available on GWP web-site <http://www.gwpforum.org>, or can be requested directly from the Secretariat via phone, fax or e-mail.

Tentative programme of the Workshop of groundwater experts from CEE countries and EU member states

"GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT – CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE"

Venue of the workshop: Vilnius, Lithuania
Time: 10-13 October, 2002

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

Due to deterioration of surface water quality more attention world-wide is being paid to groundwater as a drinking water source. Several EU directives regulating water quality and quantity have been adopted by the European Commission, most important of them is Directive 2000/60/EC on establishing a framework for community action in the field of water policy the so called Water Framework Directive (WFD).

WFD establishes equal requirements both for economically developed EU members and candidate countries that are still in transition to market economy. Many articles of the Directive, particularly concerning groundwater management issues, still need clarification.

As WFD sets strict time schedules for implementation of the directive, there is an urgent need for information and experience exchange between the EU member states

and candidate countries on groundwater management issues. For that reason a workshop of groundwater experts from the EU member states and candidate countries is organized in Vilnius, Lithuania on 10-13 October, 2002.

Participants of the workshop are requested to share information on the following (one or several) groundwater management issues:

- Criteria for identification of groundwater bodies;
- Number and explanation of groundwater bodies in the country;
- Compliance of GW bodies with River basin districts (RBD);
- Water management plans for RBD, including ground water (GW) bodies;
- Challenges of reaching good quantitative and chemical status of GW bodies;
- Management of transboundary GW bodies;

- Point/non-point pollution and groundwater monitoring;
- Financial aspects of implementation of WFD;
- Institutional changes for implementation of the directive

The following organizations and countries are expected to send their speakers:

EC, World Bank (WB), Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern European TEC (GWP-CEE), CEE countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Interested EU countries (e.g. Denmark). Depending on the financial possibilities participants from Byelorussia and Russia will be also considered.

Applications for registration should be sent to Bernardas Paukstys (bernardas@iti.lt), Lithuanian Water Partnership before 15 September 2002.



Risk and Integrated Water Resources Management

By Judith Rees

Judith Rees Deputy Director and Professor of Environmental and Resources management at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences published GWP TEC Background Paper no 6. Please find below the abstract of the paper available at the Stockholm Secretariat.

Managing risks has long played a role in the development of the water sector. Such risks can be divided into two broad groups: resource risks that include natural or human induced hazards which water managers seek to regulate, and enterprise risks faced by any water management enterprise in the execution of its functions.

Although risk management must be based on good physical practice and technology, they alone cannot be the main basis for decision making. A more holistic

approach, embraced by the Dublin principles, is needed since it is evident that water related risks are currently handled by sectoral and highly segmented management systems – leading to major inefficiencies and inequities in the allocation of risk, risk mitigation costs, and increased security benefits.

Although it is easy to identify free provision of water as a major contributor to the problem, employing market forces to determine the level of safety provision and the distribution of hazards and risk mitigation costs is, itself, problematic. In addressing this problem several sources of market failure must be taken into account.

Designing institutions capable of taking a more holistic and public preference based approach to water related risks will never be easy and certainly there is no design recipe

that is readily available and applicable for use everywhere. What is important however, is that institutional designs should focus on both the physical nature of the hazards and on the economic characteristics of the risk.

It is suggested that thinking from an economic efficiency perspective can inform risk policy choices and help in the development of a more demand driven approach to management. The economic approach is not the only or best way forward, but economic thinking could help leaven the current physical science/technology bias within the water sector.

