



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SPATIAL PLANNING

MINISTER'S OFFICE



20 July 2007

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are pleased to inform you that the Slovenian Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) jointly organize the **International Roundtable on Integrated Management of Shared Groundwater in Southeastern Europe**, in Slovenia, 14-16 November 2007, with the support of GEF IW:LEARN.

The International Roundtable is part of the activities within the Petersberg Process Phase II / Athens Declaration Process coordinated by the German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Bank, supported by GEF IW:LEARN and GWP Med, aiming to build capacity and share experience on integrated management of shared water bodies in Southeastern Europe (SEE) and assist in drafting and putting into action local IWRM plans.

The activities also contribute to the works of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) as well as to the GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem (GEF SPM).

The International Roundtable aims to promote cooperation for sustainable utilization, management and protection of shared groundwater resources in the SEE region. It will address issues of integrated management of shared groundwater resources. Linkages to the management of connected river basins, coastal areas and ecosystems as well as contribution of groundwater to economic development will be addressed. It would build on related ongoing work in the region carried out by international organizations such as UNECE and UNESCO IHP.

Moreover the International Roundtable aims to:

- Identify the most significant problems, pressing needs and challenges for the SEE region relating to groundwater resources management;
- Promote recognition and awareness of the socio-economic and environmental values of shared aquifers as well as the need for integrating shared groundwater management with river basin management;
- Exchange information and communicate good practices and success stories in different aspects of shared groundwater resources management;
- Identify key areas of action where the involvement of Petersberg Process Phase II / Athens Declaration Process, would result in the enhancement of synergies with on-going and planned activities in the region;
- Identify key steps needed to advance a strategy and action programme for the management of shared groundwater in the SEE region;
- Facilitate the establishment of a peer network between persons working in the shared groundwater management area.

In this respect, it is our pleasure to invite you to participate in this event. Attached you will find an information note and a draft agenda of the International Roundtable. Financial support can be provided for participants from SEE countries.

A confirmation of your participation would be appreciated by 15 September (Fax +30 210 3317 127, email: dimitris@gwpmmed.org).

Looking forward to your positive response and to meeting you in Slovenia.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Janez Podobnik

Minister
Slovenian Ministry of Environment
and Spatial Planning

Prof. Michael Scoullios

Chairman,
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