

Dear Colleagues,

I'm pleased to inform you that the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) is jointly organizing with the Lake Ohrid Watershed Committee and with the support of GEF IW:LEARN Activity D2, the **International Roundtable on Integrated Shared Lake Basin Management in Southeastern Europe**, 12-14 October 2006 in Ohrid, FYR Macedonia.

The Roundtable and the related Study Visit in Lake Ohrid are 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.

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

The International Roundtable (12-13 October 2006) will address issues of integrated management of lake basins and the linkages to connected river basin, groundwater and coastal management; this would build on related ongoing work in the region and would be linked to the GEF supported Lake Basin Management Initiative. A series of Lakes i.e. Ohrid, Prespa and Skhoder and the Drin River, creating an interconnected complex hydrological system in the South Western Balkan Peninsula, will be presented and discussed as case studies.

The overall aim is the promotion of cooperation for the management of the transboundary water bodies of the South Western Balkan Peninsula region. Among the objectives are the exchange of information and the communication of good practices and success stories in different aspects of management of shared Lake Basins, such as stakeholder involvement, exchange of scientific information, institutionalization of cooperation, financing etc. and the establishment of a peer network between persons working in the three shared Lake systems of focus.

The Study Visit (14 October 2006) aims to provide the opportunity for participants to share experiences at the field level. The main objective of such events is to allow for the exchange of practical knowledge on a variety of aspects of joint management including the development and implementation of field based activities.

In this respect, it is my pleasure to invite you to participate in this event. Please find attached an Information Note, the preliminary Agenda of the International Roundtable and Study Visit and related background documents. A Registration Form is also attached.

Looking forward to your positive response and to meeting you soon in Ohrid.

Best wishes,

Prof. Michael Scoullos
Chairman, GWP-Med

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