

Minutes from the Constitutive Meeting of the Joint Working Group,
Held on the 19-10-2006
from 14.00h
apartment in Dalmatinska 117

Present: Olivera Grozdic, Valentina Mileusnic (WD), Christian Ebel, Claus Heuberger,
Jürgen Domröse, Peter Kessler, Milica Nadezdic (Hydromet), Arpad Varga (Srbijavode),
Ivana Ivkovic, Jovana Nastasijevic

First of all, Claus asked the participants to introduce themselves, i.e. activities of their institutions which are related to the project.

Arpad Varga – Assist.Dir. For technical issues in „Srbijavode“ Water Management Company. For 15 years he has been employed in „Jaroslav Cerni“ Institute. In the 1990, he was appointed by the Parliament to establish the first Serbian water management company.

Olivera Grozdic (WD) – Civil Engineer, spec. in technology/master degree in environmental protection. Employed in the Ministry for 20 years. Involved mostly in drinking and waste water treatment issues, also in water assessment laboratory assigning and supervision for the whole Serbia.

Milica Nadezdic (Hydromet) – Civil Engineer, spec. in technology; for 22 years by now employed at the HM; has been involved in the preparation of the water pollutants registry; also in the issuing water management opinions and agreements within licencing procedure for waste water facilities. At the moment, at post of the Chief of WQ Dept. (systematic WQ assessment) within Environmental Protection Section of the Hydromet.

Valentina Mileusnic – appointed by the WD as counterpart of RTA Claus Heuberger for institutional and legal matters of the Contract; she is an environmental economist. Also has worked at the Ministry for Environmental Protection as only economist. For 2 years, she has been employed at the WD.

Peter Kessler – Lawyer by training; worked in Hessen for many years at the Ministry for Environment (last 10 years also as director of the Water Directorate). From 2003, he is retired and working as consultant only, mostly on Twinning projects (this one is his 5th).

Jürgen Domröse – employee at the Ministry for Urban Development and Environment of Hamburg, specially for the implementation of the WFD for groundwater. He is a colleague of Christian Ebel, and in this project he is assigned as a key expert for GW monitoring issues. Studied at the Technological University of Dresden. Has a huge experience by working in the Eastern Europe (Russia) – again, involved in water monitoring strategy issues.

Claus' and Christians backgrounds are rather well known to all participants from before.

Claus introduced the tasks of the joint working group, which are foreseen by the Contract:

- a) formulation of the training principles program for those „first-hand“ Serbian experts who are to train other colleagues later in time; it is therefore their role to pass on the acquisition they obtained;

- b) helping STEs with necessary information, so their joint tasks are performed as efficient as possible.

Even though it might seem as overloading the Serbian partners with additional work, it is also to point out that they should see some advantages for themselves and their institutions in it:

- a) they will receive all information from German colleagues as first persons in Serbia;
- b) they will be able to influence the processes in the Project – for instance include any activities/ideas of interest for their institutions and their work.

Everyone should also feel free to comment or put remarks on the activities of the working group itself, propose new ideas etc. Claus also said he was very satisfied to have participants from various institutions related to the project all in one place, so he expects also from everyone to freely include their own specialities and skills, their expertise if necessary, or if they find it helpful for the project.

Valentina added that there should be a spirit of partnership noticeable in the joint work. We are all here to provide the German experts with reliable information in order to save time for everyone and to use this German help for the benefit of the whole water management of Serbia.

The colleagues from the WD provided the participants with the EU Directive for Water, issued and financed by the WD and translated by various experts, including Biljana Ljujic and Ljiljana Sunac from WD. It contains also parts of the WFD and some other European directives.

Arpad Varga asked if this version of this document is valid legally, since there are some other versions (and it is a common problem with official documents translated in Serbian – every institution has its own terminology). Since Serbia is not a member of the EU, we can't obtain the official (and therefore also high quality and valid) translation of the EU documents. Since WD is a governmental body, it is logical that their translated version should be valid; but it can also be put as a task of the project – to determine the valid vocabulary, i.e. establish terminology related to water and Water Law.

Peter pointed out that that is a problem everywhere in Europe, by transitional countries especially (instanced Poland). In this group, most definitely there is the need for a subgroup of people who should deal only with terminology issues, since the Water Law is surely going to be adopted before Serbia becomes the member of the EU.

Milica Nadezdic pointed out that not only the wording itself is a problem (translation, linguistic issue), but also the fact that the WFD represents one totally different approach and philosophy behind the water law. In Serbia, the WL is rather rigid, and represents mainly user's point of view, so it is rather hard to *understand* and catch the sense of the WFD, to begin with. Every institution (concerning their professional background), has their own interpretation of the same subject.

Peter added, it is needed to actually *implement* the EU directives within the own law (in 3 years), not just to copy-paste it (like Italians have done). If the procedure is not fulfilled in right manner, the country can be charged by European Court.

He also said the working group should discuss about the workshop scheduled for November, concerning training needs which should be assessed.

Claus said that the activity 1.1.1 (*a propos* Peters remark) should be completed by the end of this year. The Contract obliges us to make that assessment workshop, so the training program is proposed thereby. First step: assessment of the needs – it is a base for creating the training; second step: cooperation of the Serbian colleagues, the feedback from them is also expected on this occasion. The workshop is foreseen for the time span between 20th and 24th of November this year. The results should be evaluated in December.

Arpad wanted to have a written document concerning his membership in the WG, as well as the tasks and activities foreseen for the working group. Representing an outside cooperating institution (since the WD is a real beneficiary by Contract), he also wondered if the partners involved needed his personal opinion or the position of his institution (i.e. official or personal involvement).

Claus answered that the only thing which makes Arpad the member of the WG is his expertise itself, no matter if it is personal or official (and Claus said that he is also not the one to judge it), as long as it is valid. He also said that all members are going to be regularly updated on the activities of the Twinning team, so they should feel free to make remarks, comments etc., and to provide the team with any ideas they find necessary.

Valentina said it is rather urgent for them to have the clear expectations of this group stated, because there is really a lot to do, many people are involved and therefore an agenda for every next meeting is also very important. She said that everyone should read the document they submitted (EU Directive for Water) and make remarks on it, or simply raise issues, because all of the members are in the business of water for a long time and they can say by heart if there is anything missing or to be revised (also concerning training needs).

Arpad added that it is of highest priority to make a good organization of the project activities, so all the different opinions can be compiled in a constructive manner, and not end up unfinished due to the lack of synchronized working.

The next meeting of the joint working group is scheduled for the 13th November 2006, Monday, in the meeting room of the WMC „Srbijavode“.