

Foreword

GOALS OF THE ENERGY POLICY

With this editorial I am continuing the one in the May issue in which the Minister presented his view of the integration of the energy sector into the field of the environment and spatial planning. Let me start by listing the principal goals of the national energy policy:

- a long term reliable and high quality energy supply,
- ecological and spatial acceptability of the extraction, production, transport and use of energy,
- incentives for competitiveness in the area of energy supply,
- incentives for the efficient use of energy and the use of renewable energy sources,
- gradual withdrawal of the state as co-owner of companies in the energy sector and
- integration of Slovenia into European and world energy trends.

These goals represent the foundations for the activities of the Office of the RS for Energy in the current mandate. The preparation of a national energy programme is one of the most important tasks to be realised this year. In the programme we will try to evaluate the goals listed above, and define the most appropriate mechanisms for their implementation. Throughout the world, the energy sector has gone through important changes, but Slovenia has been left behind. Greater support to environment-friendly technologies, distributed energy sources and integration of local energy markets will enable the Slovenian energy sector to contribute to the sustainable development of the country.

The implementation of the Energy Act is a process which will require a lot more time. The electrical energy market has been formally liberalised, but there is still much to be done in this area. On one hand we need a series of regulations and on the other, the finances of the entire energy sector have not yet been consolidated. The issue of failed investments will be one of the more difficult problems, yet without a satisfactory solution to this problem we will not really be able to talk about a successful transformation of the electric energy sector. Next year we shall also start to prepare for the liberalisation of the gas market.

This year the preparation for a gradual withdrawal of the state from the electro-economy has already started. The privatisation of the energy sector involving the introduction of foreign strategic partners requires a precise definition of desirable goals. This year we shall prepare a strategy for establishment of strategic ownership connections in the areas of electrical energy, combustible gas and the supply of oil derivatives.

As a part of the preparation of a strategy for sustainable development for Slovenia, the transfer of Energy from the Ministry of Economy to the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning will contribute to an easier search for a common language between two historically antagonistic branches. Potential synergies are particularly great, from inter-sectoral incentives for the use of renewable energy sources and efficient energy

management, to establishing the optimal location of buildings. It depends entirely on us whether we will be able to enact these synergies.

**Robert Golob, PhD,
Secretary of State**

Feature

ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRIGLAV NATIONAL PARK

This year Slovenia held its third annual celebration of May 24 as European Park Day. At the end of May this year the celebration in our only national park was particularly important - on 23 May 1981 the Triglav National Park Act was adopted as a result of many years of efforts for the protection of nature in Slovenia. In addition, it has been forty years since the proclamation of the original Triglav National Park in the Valley of the Triglav Lakes. Then, the old protection regime from 1924 was renewed; the park received its official name and it was enlarged from 1600 ha to 2000 ha. This year a part of the activities in the Triglav National Park have also been dedicated to the memory of Dr. Albin Belar, natural scientist and seismologist who had been the first initiator of the foundation of the park in the period 1906-1908.

One of the celebrations that were held in Bohinj, Trenta and Zgornja Radovna was a cultural event at the Pocar home estate which was attended by the Minister of the Environment and Spatial Planning Janez Kopač. MA. This is a summary of his introductory speech:

"Twenty years of the modern Triglav National Park is a long period. Our only national park and also the greatest of all our parks at present, it has become a part of our everyday existence in the past two decades, including all of the benefits and problems we have with it and the pride we take in it. The Julian Alps with Triglav have always been an asset to Slovenes, something which has perpetually united us, something which represented a unifying symbol during the most difficult periods of longing for freedom.

At present we have only a modest 8 % of territory protected by parks and half of this is encompassed by the Triglav National Park. Being aware of the fact that, when compared to other states, nature in Slovenia is exceptionally diverse and still of high quality, we have to make sure that we preserve this comparative and recognisable advantage. This is not only about altruism toward future generations, but also about a higher quality existence for the present one. Without clean air, rivers and lakes, green forests, mown meadows and diverse flora and fauna there can be no future.

Nowadays when we are faced with the global decline of our planet, when annually approximately 50,000 plant and animal species disappear forever from its surface, the area of the Triglav mountain chain through its status as a national park has acquired at least the basic requirements for the conservation for posterity of its natural richness and natural assets.

Because of the fragility of the natural balance - and in Slovenia this fragility is all the more evident since more than half of its territory has karst characteristics -urbanisation, the development of infrastructure and the associated spatial planning are possible only when all the negative impacts on the environment are taken into consideration in advance. Nature protection, which encompasses everything from genetics and its processes to the protection of large, complex ecosystems, therefore plays an increasingly important role. Parks as an instrument for protection of areas large or small are without doubt one of the most important measures for protection of biological diversity and are places where balanced economic and social development can be carried out. In this context the Triglav National Park with its rich

experience represents one of the pillars of Slovenian nature protection and is a good example for all of our other parks, both those existing and those yet to be created.

I wish particularly to highlight two crucial matters. The first is certainly the cooperation with commercial interests. All of the most important interests which directly influence the efficiency of nature protection, participate actively in the policymaking and the developmental priorities for the Park. From this point of view the Triglav National Park has achieved important progress. The Management of the Park is well aware that effective protection of the Park can only be ensured through cooperation. I am talking about commercial activities such as forestry, agriculture and tourism. Solutions which satisfy the common interests of nature protection and the other sectors gain the most effective support. Other results of such trends include the agriculture-environment programmes which the Government of the RS has recently adopted. In the area of tourism there are still many available and unexploited possibilities for cooperation, and any efforts and initiatives are thus useful and make sense. Recently the Tourist Association of Slovenia has launched a project under the auspices of the President of the State that intends to connect tourism with the protection of natural assets and cultural heritage.

In parallel with the inter-sectoral cooperation, cooperation with the local population is also of exceptional importance since it represents one of the foundations and one of the principal goals of the Park. The Park has significantly changed the lives of the local people, and directly and indirectly contributed to the improvement of their living conditions. Often we are unable to evaluate, let alone appreciate this fact. The cooperation of the six local communities which share the Park territory with the activities of the Park as an institution is a daily practice which we wish to develop and deepen in the future.

The implementation of the fundamentally important Nature Protection Act and the realisation of the National Environmental Action Plan have established the basic conditions for further rational steps and to enable the Triglav National Park to function even more effectively. The experience of twenty years of implementation of the Triglav National Park Act has changed our perceptions. In 1981 this law was of great importance for this territory and it brought about numerous innovations. However, over two decades new needs have been articulated and subsequently also new requirements that need to be followed up.

The Government of the RS has decided to propose to the National Assembly some amendments to this Act. Through these amendments the state will ensure a more contemporary approach to increased protection efficiency, improve the participation of other sectors in the policy of the Park, and ensure support to the lives of the local population. This way Slovenia will consolidate the unarguable international reputation of the Triglav National Park and make the latter comparable to national parks in other European states."

Helena Krivec, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Dunajska 48, Ljubljana, tel.: 478 7389, fax: 478 7424

In brief

CHABASON IN SLOVENIA

On May 29 and 30 the coordinator of the Barcelona Convention (the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean Sea/UNEP - Mediterranean Action Plan) Lucien Chabason paid an official visit to Slovenia. With the assistance of the Navigation Authority of the RS and the Institute for Conservation of Natural and Cultural Heritage Piran he visited the nature protection areas on the Slovenian coast and the secured buoy by which the Maritime Biological Station performs the monitoring of the sea, and was informed on future plans in this area. In discussions with the Minister of the

Environment and Spatial Planning Janez Kopač, MA and the State Secretary Tomaž Kancler, MA he emphasised the importance of spatial planning as a tool for the realisation of sustainable development objectives. This is of particular importance on the coast since all the data show that in the future this is where there will be the highest developmental pressures.

Slovenia actively participates in the Mediterranean Action Plan. We have already managed to "reserve" funding for a Coastal Area Management Plan in Slovenia. The preparation of the plan will start already in 2001. The Plan is based on an explicit inter-sectoral approach that among other issues has to address the contents of all the six protocols of the Barcelona Convention (especially the Protocol on the Protection of the Sea from Pollution from Terrestrial Sources and Activities) and the European Directive on the Implementation of Joint Water Policy.

The Plan will create a pragmatic interconnection of "previously sectoral issues" that need to be coordinated on cartographic foundations, and the latter will have to acquire competent trustees in practice.

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ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE

The Adriatic and Ionian Initiative (All) is the implementation mechanism of the Ancona Convention, signed in June 2000 by the Foreign Ministers of Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro (now again represented by Yugoslavia), Albania, Greece and by the EC President Prodi in person in the name of the EU. On March 16 2001 the Ministers of the Environment of the All member states met in Ancona and defined the environmental priorities in the region. On April 27 the Presidents of the Parliaments of the All member states met in Zadar and confirmed the list of its activities.

The initiative is based on an organised cooperation in the following areas: security and cooperation with the purpose of prevention of illegal activities, the environment and sustainable development, transport, economy and culture and education. The activities are organised by the presiding country as facilitated round tables.

Slovenia co-presided over the round table Environment and Sustainable Development already held in Ancona at the invitation of Italy, and then again on May 24 and 25 in Split following a Croatian invitation. Our active role was above all in emphasising the position of the permanent Slovenian-Italian-Croatian Commission for the Protection of the Adriatic Sea and the Coastal Areas from Pollution. Its main view points are: the preparation of a regional action plan in case of accidents and maritime pollution, the programme and implementation of monitoring the sea, and the preparation of the Coastal Area Management Plan.

Slovenia also consistently insisted on the implementation of the principal activities of the Mediterranean Action Plan on the basis of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols, as well as those required by the EU Directive on the Implementation of Joint Water Policy. We have constantly fought against the duplication of bodies and issues defined by other documents which have already been adopted. Our position was completely accepted and was used as the grounds for the so-called "Joint Statement of the Round Table on Environment Protection and Sustainable Development in the Adriatic Ionian Area", adopted at the ministerial meeting on May 25 in Split. This document among other things mentions the project entitled "Network of Observing Systems in the Adriatic Sea (NIB, Maritime Biological Station Piran) that would connect the stationary Slovenian buoy for the monitoring

of the sea with those from Italy and Croatia, and offer to users up-to-date online data on the quality of the sea in the Bay of Trieste.

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SLOVENIAN-BAVARIAN SEMINAR ON WATER POLICY

On May 10 and 11 a Slovenian-Bavarian seminar was held at the Agency of the RS for the Environment as part of the 16th meeting of the Slovenian-Bavarian Commission for Water Management. The purpose of the seminar was to present Directive 2000/60EC of the European Parliament and the European Council which defines the basis for the activities of the Community in the area of water policy. The Directive came into force in the EU in December 2000.

The implementation of the so-called Water Directive is based on an explicitly integrated concept defined by the prescribed methodology. In order to attain the objectives the member states are committed to carrying out organisational reforms and adapting their institutions to the assignments listed in the adopted document.

The eminent Bavarian experts (J. Jedlitschka for water management issues, G. M. Knopp for legal matters and U. Schmedtje for the biological classification of water streams) described their experiences with the use of the prescribed method. The Slovenian experts presented the first results of the project to determine the "Eco Regions in Slovenia". A special discussion was dedicated to underground water bodies, owing to the exceptional size and importance of the karst world in Slovenia.

Of great educational importance was also an intensive and rich discussion whose principal message was: "Use the pragmatic approach!"

By organising the seminar the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning ensured a quality presentation of the Water Directive to the concerned expert public. The project collaborators of the projects "Eco Regions of Slovenia" and "Underground Water Bodies" were, in accordance with the Annex II, invited to verify their project results with the Bavarian colleagues in October.

The seminar was attended by representatives of the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning and its bodies, experts from the University and various research institutions, the inspectorates and the concerned water management companies.

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Programmes

JUBILEE MEETING OF THE PERMANENT SLOVENIAN-AUSTRIAN DRAVA COMMISSION

On May 14 and 15 this year's jubilee meeting of the Permanent Slovenian-Austrian Drava Commission was held in St. Georg am Langsee in Carinthia.

In accordance with its rules of procedure the Commission analysed the reports of the working groups "water management" and "energy management".

The principal conclusions were as follows:

- the quality of the Drava at the Austrian - Slovenian border is in quality class II,
- the bilateral project "Karst Water Sources on Both Sides of the State Border" that determines the drinking water reserves in the Karavanke is in its final phase,
- the Austrian power plants are satisfied with the sustainable measures which they have implemented at their water accumulations,
- in the upper Drava area they are satisfied with the implementation of the Natura 2000 project that integrates water meadows into the integrated management of the Drava river,
- in the year 2000 the Golica power plant operated in compliance with the water management regulations,
- the through-flows of the Lavamund power plant were in compliance with the bilateral agreement,
- the Drava Power Plants Company reported on the maintenance of accumulation lakes and the renovation of the Slovenian power plants on the Drava river.

In September the Slovenian side has been officially invited to carry out an expert verification of the water management regulations on the Drava river in Austrian Carinthia. That visit will enable last year's presentations of the Upper Drava project (the transfer of expert knowledge to water managers, planners and ecologists) to continue in its lower part as well, which is in compliance with the EU Directive on the Implementation of Joint Water Policy. The implementation of this Directive in future will also practically require an extension of the remit of the Commission (for example, to include the implementation of the results of the project "Karavanke Water Sources" and to developmental planning).

At the meeting the Carinthian Regional Government awarded a high decoration to Slavko Polak, the Slovenian official interpreter of many years, for his exceptional expert contribution to the work of the Commission.

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Projects

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES

In the autumn it is planned that the new Research and Development Centre for Environmental Technologies will open in the building next to the communal waste disposal site in Bukovžlak.

This institute will integrate all the potentials of the scientific research institutions, industrial producers and users of such technologies. These potentials are defined by the need to solve our increasing environmental problems as quickly as possible, whilst harmonising Slovenian environmental standards with those of the EU. The Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, which supports such an approach and actively participates in resolving all environmental matters, is one of the strategic project partners.

The existing Strategy for the Treatment of Waste in the RS is an open document that clearly states fundamental objectives and proposes implementation mechanisms. It represents the

start of a long-term process that will involve all partners concerned by the issues of the treatment of waste. They will need to discuss particular measures on a short-term basis, verify them from the technical and the practical aspects and then only implement them in a particular area after also taking the local specifics into consideration. The Strategy is therefore an excellent foundation for the functioning of the Research and Development Centre for Environmental Technologies which has to use its organisational, applicative and demonstrational capacities to provide straightforward technical answers and optimal solutions to potential users.

The following project partners are the founders of the Centre that will be responsible for the launching phase and the functioning of the Centre: the Faculty of Engineering Maribor, the Institute for Energy, Processing and Environmental Engineering, Public Facilities Ltd., the KIV Engineering Vranksko Ltd., PUV Celje Ltd., and MOLLIER Ltd.

- The Institute for Energy, Processing and Environmental Engineering is the principal developer of technological processes in the area of energy, processing and environmental engineering at the University of Maribor. By using its scientific and technical potential it participates in the solving of waste issues in Maribor and other Slovenian regions.
- Since at present the most difficult environmental problem is waste, the first phase of the functioning of the Centre will include the participation of the public company Public Facilities Ltd. that deals with the issues of the treatment of waste in general and treats waste in twelve local communities in the Celje region.
- KIV Engineering Vranksko Ltd. has a long tradition in the area of construction of energy and environmental systems. One of its principal activities is also the development, planning and construction of facilities for thermal processing of communal and industrial waste. In recent years the company has completed numerous projects in this area at home and abroad and proved the environmental suitability of its technology.
- PUV Celje Ltd. is the largest water management company in Slovenia, founded 40 years ago by the Government of the RS with the purpose of management and maintenance of the Savinja and Sotla water systems. It is involved in wastewater drainage and recycling of waste construction materials.
- MOLLIER Ltd. is a company with a long tradition in medical engineering, disinfecting of infected waste, draining of floods, draining and heating in the area of construction and air conditioning. MOLLIER Ltd. regularly participates actively in the solving of waste issues, organises and carries out numerous technical meetings, seminars and projects related to the treatment of waste.

One of the assignments of the Centre is to establish technical or project cooperation with all concerned experts and organisations apart from its founders who could carry out developmental or applicative tasks.

The project partners actively participate in the solving of various waste issues. The Strategy of Treatment of Waste in the RS will be the primary guide for the Centre's activities, as well as legal documents and recommendations issued by the EU and those activities already implemented within the Bukovžlak waste treatment project.

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Calendar

June 12-16 Palermo (Italy): meeting of national coordinators of the Mediterranean Action Plan

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June 14-15 Ispra (Italy): Workshop on maritime indicators co-organised by the Maritime Conventions and the European Environment Agency.

Valentina Turk, Ph.D., NIB - Maritime Biological Station Piran, Fornače 41, 6330 Piran

June 19 Falun (Sweden): plenary meeting of the EU Impel and AC Impel Networks

Ivan Štefelj, IRSOP, Vilharjeva 33, Ljubljana, tel.: 232 1858, fax: 231 6640

September 18 International Day of Protection of the Ozone Layer

September 22 European Car Free Day

October 4 World Animal Protection Day

October 6-10 Thun (Switzerland): working conference on the development of environmental internet services, organised by the European Environment Agency, the European Topic Centre on Catalogue on data Sources and the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape

Albert Kolar, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Dunajska 48, Ljubljana, tel.: 478 7375, fax: 478 7423

October 11-12 Bratislava (Slovakia): annual workshop organised by the EIONET and European Topic Centre on Waste and Material Flow

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