

DIKTAS Newsletter

Protection and Sustainable Use of the Dinaric Karst Transboundary Aquifer System

● issue 1

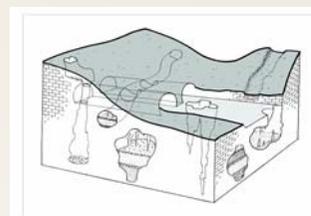
December 2011

DIKTAS is a project initiated by the aquifer-sharing states and supported by Global Environment Facility (GEF) to improve understanding of transboundary groundwater resources of the Dinaric region and to facilitate their equitable and sustainable utilisation, including the protection of unique karst groundwater dependent ecosystems.



The DIKTAS project has reached full implementation speed

The DIKTAS Project is a full-size GEF regional project, implemented by UNDP and executed by UNESCO. The activities of the project started in 2010 and focus on Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro. Several other countries and international organizations have also joined this challenging project and provide valuable contribution to realisation of its objectives. The Project activities are structured in four components: 1) Improving the understanding of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System and its environmental status; 2) Establishing cooperation mechanisms among the participating countries 3) Facilitating the harmonization of policies and priority reforms; 4) Communication, dissemination and replication of the project activities. During the first project year, the Project Coordination Unit has been set up, along with the Project Team, the Governing Board and the Scientific Advisory Panel. The DIKTAS Project Team consists of about twenty national and international experts, split in four Working Groups (WG). The activities of the WG are primarily related to the components 1 and 4 and the WG progress is briefly outlined below.



The **Hydrogeology Working Group** has worked on two parallel activities: a) making topographical map, the base for GIS hydrogeological map, which includes collecting and georeferencing topographic maps and digitalization of the main topographic elements (state borders, main settlements, main roads, railways and project areas in all countries) and b) creating a GIS database with feature classes of hydrogeological map (hydrogeological units, geological boundaries, tectonics, main springs). The basic shapes of the topographic map and of the hydrogeological map will be completed by the end of the year and the complete basic hydrogeological map will be finished by mid 2012.

The **Environment and Socio-Economics Working Group** is collecting existing data on environmental and socio-economic issues in participating countries. Accommodated in the DIKTAS project's regional database and GIS by the end of 2011, these data, along with hydrogeological data collected by other working group, will provide the basis for the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis, i.e. the identification of issues of transboundary concern. The WG will further gather and analyse environmental and socioeconomic impacts and consequences of each transboundary issue by March 2012, and contribute to the causal chain analysis, aiming at identifying underlying causes (root causes) of environmental degradation. The data structure and formats for the collection process have been defined and national experts from the four project countries are currently collecting and compiling data according to 16 categories (including among others demography, sources of income, water use, land use, tourism, waste water treatment, waste disposal and protected areas).

The **Working Group Legal and Institutional Framework and Policy** has three important objectives for 2012: 1) to update the baseline information on national legal and policy framework and outline main national approaches regarding management, use and protection of water, particularly groundwater 2) to carry out regional assessment of the potential measures at DIKTAS level taking into account international regulatory documents and successful measures implementation worldwide experience and knowledge 3) to propose criteria and measures relevant for harmonization of water management policies in Dinaric karst region. The national experts are currently completing their I reports on legal and policy framework in participating countries. In order to obtain more detailed insight into the implementation of the groundwater management issues into national legal and policy framework a questionnaire has been prepared. The results will point out the current status of the implementation of EU directives into national legislations, including the measures for protection of quantitative and qualitative status of groundwater, particularly in transboundary aquifers. Based on that, the national experts will carry out the national SWOT analysis (Nov 2011) as a preparation for the regional SWOT analysis to be conducted at the project level (Jan 2012).

The **Stakeholders' Participation and Communication Working Group** has developed the project visual identity, including the project logo, templates and the brochure, and has been working on update of the DIKTAS portal. At the moment, the national experts are compiling stakeholders' lists for each country in preparation of the Stakeholders and Public Participation Strategy.

Herewith we offered you the first issue of the DIKTAS Newsletter, providing an overview of the project developments in the most concise form. For additional information or the contact with the Project Coordination Unit please visit our portal at <http://diktas.iwlearn.org/>

Participation of the DIKTAS project at the IWC6

The DIKTAS project was presented at 6th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference in the session for the Adriatic/Mediterranean Host Region. http://iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events/iwc6. The project was promoted (with flyers, brochures, poster, films) at the UNESCO booth in the Innovation Marketplace, an exhibit opportunity during the 6th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference.

IWC6

The 6th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference, hosted by the Government of Croatia, took place in Dubrovnik from 17-20 October, 2011. The conference was a signature learning event for the GEF IW focal area. For more information on the conference conclusions and reflections visit : http://iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events/iwc6

20 years of GEF

The GEF celebrates 20 years of interventions in the global environment. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) unites 182 member governments – in partnership with international institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector – to address global environmental issues (visit <http://www.thegef.org>)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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News bits

Technical site visit

The technical site visit "*The Lost River and Transboundary Interactions: The Trebišnjica River Basin*" was organised on the second day of the 6th GEF Biennial International Waters Conference, in October 2011. The site visit was one of four excursions to GEF-funded projects underway in the area near the Dubrovnik conference.



DIKTAS publications

The *Waters of the Trebišnjica River* publication of the DIKTAS project was distributed during the technical site visit of the Trebišnjica River Basin, and at the UNESCO booth in the Conference Innovation Marketplace.

Quiz

How much do you know about karst aquifers?

Karst is a special type of geologic environment that is formed when soluble rocks are corroded and dissolved by percolating water. What kind of rocks are these?

limestone and dolomite

