DIKTAS

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

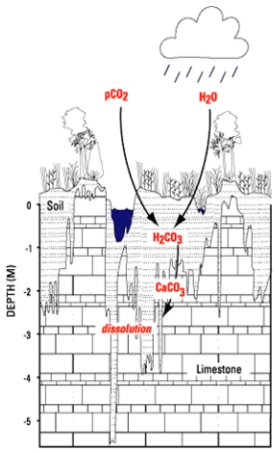
International Hydrological Programme

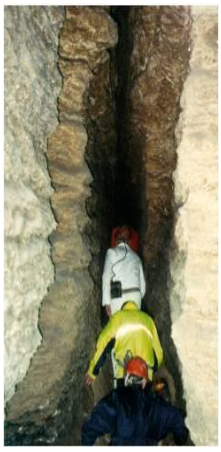
Protection and Sustainable Use of the Dinaric Karst Transboundary Aquifer System

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.

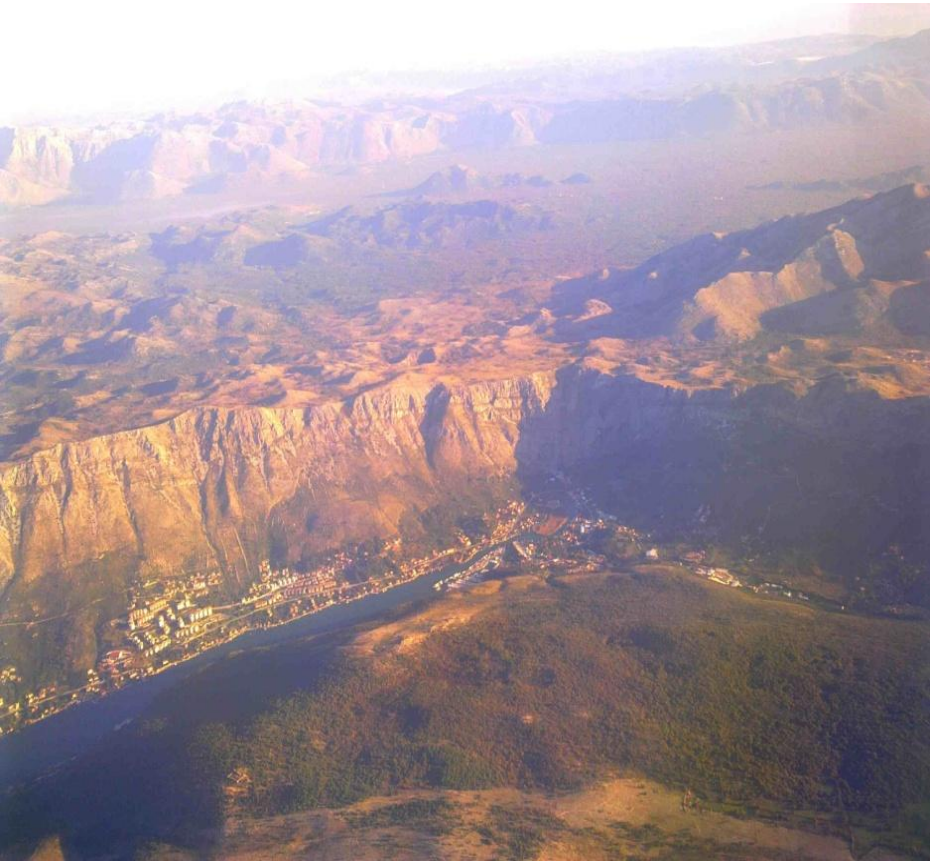
Karst Environment

More than 25 percent of the world's population either lives on or obtains its water from karst aquifers. Karst is a special type of geologic environment that is formed by dissolution and corrosion of soluble rocks, such as limestone and dolomite. Karst hydrogeology is characterized by high fracture controlled permeability, almost total absence of surface water, high infiltration rates and rapid underground flows of groundwater.





Knowledge on complex karst hydrogeological systems and their behaviour need to be extended and consolidated; it should form a solid basis for a sustainable management of these precious and vulnerable water resources.



Partners

DIKTAS is a full-size GEF (www.gef.org) regional project, implemented by UNDP (www.undp.org) and executed by UNESCO-IHP (www.unesco.org/water/ihp). The core DIKTAS project partners are four GEF fund-recipient countries of the Dinaric region, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro. Several other countries (in the Dinaric region and beyond) and international Organizations have also joined this challenging project.

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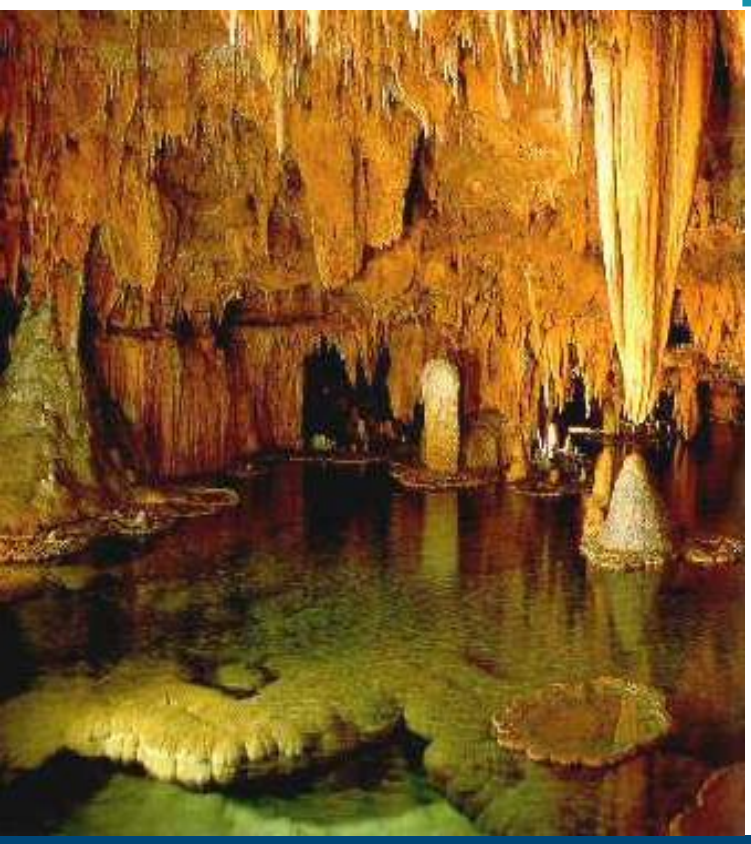
Project objectives

The Dinaric Karst Aquifer System, shared by several countries and one of the world's largest, has been identified as an ideal opportunity for applying new and integrated management approaches to unique karst water resources and ecosystems.

At the global level, the project aims to focus attention of the international community on the huge but vulnerable water resources contained in karst aquifers.

At the regional level the project's objectives are:

- to facilitate the equitable and sustainable utilization of the transboundary water resources of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System, and
- to protect the unique groundwater dependent ecosystems that characterize the Dinaric Karst region of the Balkan peninsula



Project Activities

The project preparation phase was implemented during 2009, including a preliminary transboundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) and understanding of knowledge gaps.

The full-size project execution has started in November 2010 and it will last for 4 years. The project activities include among others an in-depth analysis of various transboundary issues, implementation of environmental status indicators, establishment of national and international cooperation and information exchange mechanisms and the stakeholders participation activities.

More information and the contact: DIKTAS project site: http://diktas.iwlearn.org