

Vice President for Western and Central Europe

Annual Report for 2013

With the largest regional IAH membership, the community of Western and Central Europe, including National Chapters and individual members, was very active in conference organization, education, and promoting the science of hydrogeology in general. I am glad the Italian National Chapter received the approval of Council to host the IAH Congress in Rome in 2015 and I fully support the willingness of the Croatian National Chapter to organize an IAH Congress in the coming years. I can report my personal experiences about the following events of the last year.

In order to strengthen the links between European National Chapters while at the same time establishing a new forum in the region, an important step was the organization by the Hungarian National Chapter of the first IAH Central European Groundwater Conference held in Mórahalom, Hungary in May 2013. This conference was both scientifically and socially successful, with more than 80 participants from ten countries (Croatia, Italy, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Germany, Russia, Ireland, Canada and Hungary). Seven National Chapters presented their activities, and cooperation between the Hungarian-Serbian and Italian-Hungarian members was initiated as a result of the Mórahalom Conference.

Budapest hosted another significant scientific conference, the International Symposium on Hierarchical Flow Systems in Karst Regions organised by the Regional Groundwater Flow Commission of IAH, the Karst Commission of IAH, and the Karst Hydrogeology and Speleogenesis Commission of the International Union of Speleology. The Symposium also honoured Professor József Tóth in celebration of his 80th birthday, a pioneer in the theory of groundwater flow patterns, and a leading figure in launching the Hungarian National Chapter of IAH. Based on the recommendation of the Hungarian IAH scientific community Professor Tóth was awarded the Order of Merit of the Republic of Hungary Commander Cross.

As part of my work with the members of the Executive and Council I was pleased to attend the IAH Council meetings in Reading and Perth. As last year was my first in the council, these meetings provided an excellent opportunity to get better introduced to the work of the Council and of IAH.

I had the opportunity to represent both IAH and the Geological and Geophysical Institute of Hungary in The Hague at the Groundwater Governance Fifth Regional Consultation: UNECE Region in March 2013 and to give a presentation on the Groundwater Governance in Hungary in the context of a regional overview.

Additionally I represented IAH at the World Water Council meeting held in Budapest in October 2013. It was a unique opportunity to take part in the Budapest Water Summit in October, which was organized around the topic “The Role of Water and Sanitation in the Global Sustainable Development Agenda”, with contributions from internationally famous experts. Having IAH Secretary General Shaminder Puri as chair of the Scientific Forum meant that the “groundwater message” was clearly understood by attendees at the Summit.

In addition to these international meetings, I also attended the meetings of the Hungarian National Chapter of IAH. Since the Perth IAH Congress was relatively expensive no other Hungarians attended that meeting, so I presented a short summary of the congress at the Autumn chapter meeting, also encouraging young hydrogeologists to join IAH’s Early Career Hydrogeologist’s Network.

One of my key aims for 2014 will be to ensure that the organization of the Central European Groundwater Conference will develop into a series of conferences. The International Conference and Field Seminar “Karst Without Boundaries” being organized in Trebinje & Dubrovnik June 2014 in the framework of the DIKTAS project and sponsored by DIKTAS partners, with special support of UNESCO-IHP, the IAH Karst Commission and the IGRAC centre will be a first step in this direction. This conference will also foster cooperation between IAH, UNESCO-IHP and IGRAC.

I look forward to working together with the different National Chapters in the region and to assisting in their activities. I hope I can meet many of our members in Marrakesh at the IAH Congress in September 2014.



Emphasising the necessity of the conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water, and the importance of the incorporation of groundwater in water management and governance, at the Scientific Forum of the Budapest Water Forum (October 2013)

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