



FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DES GÉOLOGUES
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF GEOLOGISTS
FEDERACIÓN EUROPEA DE GEÓLOGOS



ASSOCIATION OF GREEK GEOLOGISTS (AGG)
ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΩΝ ΓΕΩΛΟΓΩΝ (ΣΕΓ)
member of EFG

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Ministry of Development Conference Hall
119 Messogion Avenue, 101 92 Athens**

Press release

European Geologists warn over future water supply problems in Europe

The reduction of fresh water resources is of great concern all over the world. In Europe the Mediterranean region is especially affected by climatic changes, resulting from desertification, erosion and floods, leading to scarcity of available fresh water resources.

The severity of the problem has been recognized by the European Commission and guidelines have been developed to work towards sustainable use of fresh water resources. At the moment, the European Commission is working on a Groundwater Management Directive, such that the complex groundwater systems are managed in a proper way.

To manage the groundwater system, it is important to fully understand all factors that control the water cycle. These include rainfall, rock properties (e.g. porosity) and impact of human activities, like industrial and agricultural activities.

Improper use of fertilizers and excessive use of water for irrigation purposes are of particular concern in relation to pollution and reduction of groundwater levels.

The European Federation of Geologists (EFG) and the Association of Greek Geologists (AGG) recognize the need to bring together policy-makers and experts all over the world to discuss these problems in more detail and look for solutions to improve the sustainable use of our fresh water resources. Therefore, the EFG and the AGG organized the international conference on Geology and Water Management in Athens, 30th May 2008.

The conference was attended by about 200 people. Representatives of the parties of the Greek Parliament, eminent personalities of NGOs, representatives of Ministries of Development, the secretary of the Water Authority of the Greek Ministry of Environment and Public Works and the President and General Director of the Geological Survey attended and addressed the conference.

In the plenary session of the symposium the views and recommendations of the European Commission (DG Environment) on the Groundwater Management Directive were presented. In addition, the conference included presentations of technical contributions covering all ranges of fresh water management, focusing especially on Greece and the Mediterranean region. These included papers on management and risks of floods in areas that were destroyed by wildfires, on recharge of groundwater reservoirs, on monitoring of fresh water quality and pollution mitigation and on surface and artificial subsurface storage of fresh water.

The conclusions of the conference were that there is a strong need to improve communication between policy-makers and experts. Especially important is the incorporation of expert knowledge on groundwater systems in directives on groundwater management and on the sustainable use of fresh water resources.

The European Federation of Geologists will continue its successful discussions with the European Commission to improve the Groundwater Management Directive.

The Association of Greek Geologists will take this forward at national level. Furthermore, it is very important to raise general awareness of the strong decline in fresh water resources, especially to policy-makers and society.

The combination of careful use of fresh water by industry, agriculture and individuals, together with the implementation of good groundwater management should lead to stability and preservation of our fresh water resources in Europe.

The President of EFG

The President of AGG

Manuel Regueiro

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