

World Wetlands Celebration 2013- Serbia

On Friday, 1st February 2013, in the Provincial Institute for Nature Protection in Novi Sad a celebration was held to mark the World Wetlands Day (the Ramsar Convention, Iran, 1971). Apart from the Provincial Institute many other institutions were involved in the organization of this manifestation: Ministry of Natural Resources, Mining and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection, Provincial Secretariat for Urban Planning, Construction and Environmental Protection and the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia. The gathering was welcomed by Mr. Srđan Belij, PhD, State Secretary (Ministry of Natural Resources, Mining and Spatial Planning), Mr. Slobodan Puzović, PhD, Provincial Secretary for Urban Planning, Construction and Environmental Protection, Mr. Nenad Stavretović, Director of the Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia and Ms. Biljana Panjković, Director of the Provincial Institute.

A wise use of our wetlands is an inseparable part of the process of sustainable water resources management, in which each sector is facing numerous challenges. Various presentations given during the working part of the program showed what sectors in Serbia did at the regional and local level to ensure that wetlands and the water within brought benefit to both people and wildlife. The following presentations were given during the event: Mr. Nikola Stojnić (Provincial Institute for Nature Conservation) and Jelena Dučić (Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection): Conservation of wetlands in Serbia in the light of new Ramsar guidelines and initiatives, Stefano Conte (Delegation of the European Union in Serbia): Living with floods: results and implementation of the project of mapping of flooded areas in Serbia, Ivan Mitrović (Directorate for Inland Waterways): Cross-sectoral cooperation to improve conditions for navigation on the Danube benefits the nature as well, Ms. Duska Dimović (WWF - World Wide Fund for Nature): Restoration of wetlands in the transboundary biosphere reserve "Mura-Drava-Danube" and Mr. Rastko Ajtić (Institute for Nature Conservation of Serbia): Sustainable management of amphibian populations in Serbia. A new exhibition piece, a Model of the floodplain with an interactive presentation, prepared by the Institute associates Tanja Bošnjak and Laszlo Galambos, was open for viewing.

All participants of the meeting agreed that the inter-sectoral cooperation in the protection of wetlands was crucial for the conservation and sustainable use of these resources. Moreover, great satisfaction was expressed concerning the attendance of representatives of many ministries, expert houses, managers of protected resources and non-governmental environmental organizations involved in wetland conservation.

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