

## Europe's Major Water Challenges Being Addressed in Scotland

With climate change playing havoc with water supplies, some areas of Europe are facing shortages of drinking water, drought, or inconsistent supplies of water for agriculture and industry. Still other areas are facing floods and severe rainfall. The impact is being felt on the groundwater supplies which provide most of Europe's drinking water, with both the quality and quantity of groundwater decreasing significantly.

A Group of International water experts are meeting in Edinburgh next week to jointly develop new means to resolve these key issues.

IRRI Chief Executive Nick Lyth points out that "The European Union has recognised the importance of groundwater supplies to Europe's residents, farmers and industries and has supported this project to ensure that we can overcome the problems that climate change is causing to our water supplies. We are looking at ways of recharging groundwater supplies and developing drinking water safety plans to ensure that groundwater supplies in Scotland and throughout Europe can meet the required quality standards with balanced and reliable quantities of water available to all".

Groundwater is one of our most important natural resources. Only 1% of all the water on Earth is available for human use and over 98% of this is groundwater. Groundwater is also a crucial source of drinking water, supplying three out of four EU citizens. European economies also tap into groundwater for industrial cooling and agricultural irrigation. Protecting our groundwater is essential to ensure a safe clean water supply across Europe in the future.

Dr Diarmad Campbell, Chief Geologist, Scotland and Project Manager of the *Clyde-Urban Super-project (CUSP)* said: "The British Geological Survey has been developing detailed 3D models of the subsurface in Glasgow which are an ideal basis for understanding and managing groundwater – the key aim of the SHARP programme. We are delighted therefore to have the opportunity to share our Glasgow experience to benefit others involved in SHARP across Europe, and to see how our methods and models can be applied more widely."

The International Resources and Recycling Institute (IRRI) and the British Geological Survey (BGS) are hosting the meeting of the European Interreg funded SHARP Project in Edinburgh on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> of October. The experts will come from the world of science, water companies, local authorities and research bodies from Austria, Germany, Malta, Italy, Poland and Greece. The project which is being led by the Austrian Water Research body, Waterpool, has received over €2million to overcome the problems associated with climate change and water supplies.

The event takes place at the BGS offices in Scotland and is the second in a series of events between the international partners.

Further Information:

Steve Taylor

IRRI, 07887 630693