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**Stowarzyszenie Gmin Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej Euroregion Bałtyk**

**NOTE FROM THE MEETING**

**Subject:** First meeting - seminar and workshop of the Association of Polish Communes Task Force Water Group focused on activation and closer cooperation between local government entities and institutions from the region in the field of care for the state of freshwater and marine.

A group of representatives of the municipalities and institutions, enterprises form cities: Gdańsk, Sopot, Gdynia, Elblag, Slupsk, Kętrzyn, Malbork, Mikolajki Pomorskie, Braniewo, Sepopol, Bartoszyce, Bisztynek, Młynary, Braunsberg, Malbork, Pszczółki

**Date of action:** 29.09.2016 r.

**Place:** Association of Municipalities Street. Stary Rynek 25 82-300 Elblag

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The seminar take place in addition with representatives of the employees of local governments, institutions and water companies interested in cooperation, including international cooperation and project work, was also attended by representatives of municipalities of non-Member States of STG from the region of Kobylnica and Dobre Miasto, who wanted to become familiar with actions arising under the Association Water Task Group.

The meeting have seminar character - the first part concerned on presentations, including presentation of the Association of Polish Communes made by the Director of the Secretariat Margaret Samusjew and Sebastian Magier Head of the Permanent International Secretariat of the ERB which provided basic information about the international activities of the Euroregion and a group of water ERB. In this part of the meeting take place presentations: organizations acting as the substantive expert group – GIWK (Gdańskiej Infrastruktury Wodociągowo-Kanalizacyjnej Sp. z o.o. - One of the Co-organizer of the meetings) led by President of the Company Mr. Jacek Skarbek and Jack Kaszubowski Head of Planning Department, and a representative of several Association member municipalities - Ms. Barbara Mulik – safety and water quality advisor. The second part of the meeting took the form of workshops and was based on free discussion participants: their mutual self-presentation and a brief description of the sphere of activity in the expectations of the other members of the group and the Association, the identification of needs collected and areas of interest for future work of the group, common challenges and initiatives that can be implemented together and how to solve problems at the local and international level.

Statements in the first part of the meeting aimed to familiarize all present members in the subject of future group's activities and concerning at present issues connected with water. It was presented from two perspectives: both challenges, tasks, experiences and problems that faced by entities and institutions in large cities, and other institutions and personnel from small towns and the rural village of the region of Warmia-Mazury and Pomerania.

During the meeting, representatives of the Gdansk Water and Sanitary Infrastructure presented the scope of its activities, shared their experiences and presented information on participation in two projects NonHazCity (Non Hazardous City) and Iwama (Interactive Water Management) with the possibility of participation of entities forming the group.

The aim of the project NonHazCity - is to find innovative solutions for the management in order to minimize the emission of harmful substances from urban areas to the Baltic Sea. GIWK intends to provide a broad educational campaign for residents of small and medium-sized enterprises and municipal institutions about the chemical substances in everyday life and how these substances can be replaced

The aim of the project Iwama - to improve wastewater management in the Baltic Sea Region (reduction of nutrient inputs to the sea) through the development of the potential operators of sewage treatment plants and implementation of pilot investment in energy efficiency and dealing with deposits.

In this part of the meeting were also presented the benefits of the wider cooperation in joint projects entities forming the group including the effects of hard: access to technologies and solutions, testing new technologies and solutions, investment, and the effects of soft as new international contacts, exchange of experience, the development of knowledge, skills and abilities of employees.

During the meeting the Water Expert - Mrs. Barbara Mulik talk about a number of topics related to water supply in small communities, especially the problems and challenges faced by these entities including:

challenges:
- Assessment of risks referred to in the amendment of Directive 98/83 / EC (DWD);

- Minimizing the risk from catchment to tap - cooperation of all stakeholders;

- The risk of the presence of chemicals other than those specified in DWD;

- Risks associated with climate change (floods and droughts);

- Technical condition of the infrastructure (water supply);

- Availability of water at a price acceptable to the consumer

barriers:
- Water quality;

- Ease of purification of water;

- The distribution of water in the problems of unrecognized technical condition of underground infrastructure;

- Problems and challenges associated with climate change;

- Problems with the supervision of ownership, including the lack of appropriate regulations, guidelines, procedures, specialist staff and financial resources for the purchase of the relevant services;

- Problems associated with consumer information;

In the workshop part, were discussed the following issues and expectations collected on the current and future activities of the group and implementation of joint projects:

- The issue of zoning indirect protection of water intakes for drinking,

- Modernization of water treatment plants and related problems especially in small rural communities in the field of own contribution, knowledge on raising funds, writing projects, rationalization of systems, consolidation of small water supply systems, off unprofitable SUW,

- Inventory, modernization of the distribution network, the introduction of intelligent management systems supply water-based hydraulic models, water flows and sells.

Other areas of interest were:

- How to minimalize water losses;

- Broadly understood sludge management;

- Consolidation of the knowledge and experience of water supply,

- Area of hydrological monitoring;

- Education in the field of water;

- Introduction of modern management methods and tools;

- Education in the field of water, including the presence in social media - the use of modern information channels;

- Rainwater management methods including methods, and tools associated with the purification of water flowing;

- Land improvement and modernization of water;

- Education municipal, regional, central and development of cooperation in the field of water at all levels of the entities involved.

Important area identified by participants was also close cooperation entities concerning in particular the mutual information and undertake joint, the most appropriate for a given situation, decisions and widely understood cooperation of all stakeholders and decision-makers (from local, regional, central and international) involved and responsible for water supply (municipalities), water suppliers, water quality regulators, owners and administrators of buildings.

During the discussion in the workshop it was mentioned possibility of a joint project that could be implemented in a foreign partnership - project in the field of groundwater monitoring as an area of ​​greatest interest. It is compatible with the idea of ​​the project implemented by GIWK called: "Assessment of the dynamics and quality of groundwater in Gdansk, Sopot and Gdansk Pruszcz Commune", which is an inspiration to the members of the group. The area of ​​the future project work could become an area in the evaluation and diagnosis of the state of exploitable resources and their quality, inventory, modernization of the distribution network, the introduction of intelligent management systems supply water-based hydraulic models, water flow and sales. This will minimize water losses, water and energy saving, rationalization of costs and prices and improving water security (availability, pressure, water quality)

All present representatives expressed interest in the area of ​​project activities in the field of geomonitoring (monitoring qualitative and quantitative) - systems for monitoring groundwater status serving the collective water supply and monitor the impact of the risks identified in the selected area, which has been devoted a significant part of the workshop, which was conducted by representatives GIWK, presenting information on monitoring of groundwater in Gdansk, Sopot and Gdansk Pruszcz Commune.

Another result of the meeting is unanimous declaration by all present and the and the decision to the appointment of a representative of the Gdansk Water and Sanitary Infrastructure as a representative of the Association of Municipalities Polish ERB Water Task Force at the cooperation in the framework of the ERB Group which exists in the international structure focusing all regions States ERB.

It is very important, because the Association currently don’t have a permanent representative in the of ERB water group.

Current support group activities, including administrative issues will be conducted by Association of Polish Communes. Participation in the group is free of charge - a condition of membership in the Association of local government. Costs associated with communication, coordination representatives, service content and financial created joint projects will be financed from the resources of the Association (eg. The organization of work groups, internal communication, mediation group leader and his participation in the work of the International Group on. Water at ERB) and with the participation of local authorities (eg. conferences in the unit, study visits of representatives, the cost of transport representatives and their participation in international trade fairs, conferences, transport representatives to the meetings of the group.

The next group meeting is scheduled for early 2017.



