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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

STATE DIRECTORATE FOR THE PROTECTION
OF NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT

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Zagreb, 20 July 1999

The World Bank
Ms. Rita Klees
Environmental Specialist
ENV
Fax No: (001) 202 477 6391

Dear Ms. Klees,

SUBJECT **Application to the Global Environment Facility**
 for a BLOK B funding
 for the Karst Ecosystem Conservation Project

I would like to reiterate our support for the proposed Karst Ecosystem Conservation Project, which will help to promote conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in karst mountain region in Croatia. In the mountainous karst region in Croatia two National Parks already exist: Plitvice and Paklenica, and Velebit Nature Park as well. They represent unique wealth of natural resource of global significance. Protection and sustainable use of the karst ecosystem is a national priority and identified as such in National Strategy and Action Plan for the Biodiversity and Landscape Conservation.

On the behalf of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, I am asking the World Bank to submit a BLOK B funding request to the Global Environmental Facility to complete preparation of the Karst Ecosystem Conservation Project. Project will be prepared by the government implementing agency which is the State Directorate for the Protection of Nature and Environment.

Yours sincerely,

Kornelija Pintaric

Kornelija Pintaric
GEF Focal Point

Anja Kutle, M.D.
Director

State Directorate for the
Protection of Nature and
Environment

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Višnja Jelić-Mück
Zagreb, May 25, 1999

On behalf of the Croatian Water Pollution Control Society (CWPCS) I took part in the recent meeting on GEF biodiversity grants for the NGOs' activities in Croatia that was organized by REC, LO Zagreb. Here are my comments, views and proposals:

1. Prominent experts and scientists acting within the membership of the CWPCS have realized an impressive amount of researches, investigations, surveys, projects and prospects in the karstic areas ranging from hydrogeology to aquatic habitats and wetland ecosystems. The zone of Plitvice Lakes remains in the focus of our both individual and joint works. The Association is able and motivated to present a wide range of possible projects to be developed according to the GEF grant propositions once known.

We are interested both to develop projects of our own and/or to co-operate in more comprehensive tasks.

2. This Society was given the honor to organize the 2nd International Conference on Water in National Parks in 2002 under the auspices of the European Water Pollution Control Association. The Conference itself is focused to our protected karstic areas. Therefore we are highly interested to combine the preparation of the Conference with the grant opportunities.

3. A rather complete list of problems, priorities and challenges that are being or should be addressed in the karstic areas of Croatia was presented to the WB/GEF representative during the meeting, although not all the interested NGOs were able to assist it. I find that the Croatian NGOs are ready and able to meet any requirement of the GEF biodiversity grant without "encouragement training and/or workshop". As the grant conditions, goals and purposes were not presented during the meeting, a complete information on the grant would be a natural next step.

4. I believe that all the participants would welcome a GEF NGO grant administered by a neutral organization like REC, AED etc. rather than by a governmental body.