

**Welcoming speech of the Minister  
of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment,  
Mr. PHOTIS PHOTIOU**

**for the EMWIS<sup>2nd</sup> Promotion Seminar  
on Thursday, 10 May 2007, at 9.30 at the Cleopatra Hotel**

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Greetings,

The Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment Mr. Photis Photiou apologises for not been able to be here with us today for reasons beyond his control. He has authorized me to deliver the following address on his behalf.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all today in Nicosia for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Water Information System (EMWIS) Promotion Seminar, which is organized jointly by the EMWIS Technical Unit (T.U.) and the Water Development Department (WDD) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment.

Cyprus has always advocated the pursuit of international and regional cooperation in all fields of knowledge, including matters relating to water. With regards to water, EMWIS has become a unique system, continually improving exchange of information locally, regionally and on the Euro-Mediterranean level.

Currently, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is counting 37 countries with Cyprus being one of the EU partner states. Cyprus commitment is very strong as we consider the availability and the sharing of quality water information, of utmost importance.

The WDD of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, is the national focal point (NFP) for EMWIS for Cyprus. The purpose of the Cyprus NFP,

as well as that of every NFP in any country, is to make available information about water through the internet, for all those who are interested.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, will continue to support all the efforts that are made, to achieve the goals and purposes of EMWIS in a national and international level, thus helping also to built a strong cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean countries.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment through the WDD is looking also for a close and harmonious cooperation with the different stakeholders like other government departments, the local authorities, etc, who have a direct or indirect relationship with water to exchange useful information through the EMWIS Website for the benefit of everyone who is interested in using this information.

For this reason, I urge you all to visit the website of the Cyprus NFP and to collaborate with the WDD to improve it. Similar websites exist today in another 16 countries members of EMWIS, representing a valuable source of information and know-how.

It is the duty of all of us to aid the achievement of the goals and purposes of EMWIS in the Cyprus society, but also to understand how we make the best use of it for our local development. I appreciate your today's presence and I am sure that you will be able to help in consolidating this information system, either as users or as providers.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the EMWIS Technical Unit and the NFPs for their efforts in creating the EMWIS Website and also the supporting WDD staff. Special thanks are also addressed to the Ambassadors and the EU Representative for attending the seminar.

It is my great pleasure to open today the 2<sup>nd</sup> Promotion Seminar of EMWIS. I am sure that this will be very useful and it will contribute significantly to the information sharing for water, to all members and interested parties.

I wish the representatives of EMWIS to have a pleasant stay in Cyprus and every success to the seminar works.

Photis Photiou  
Minister