

**Welcoming speech of the Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources
and the Environment, Mr. Timis Efthimiou
for the EMWIS Promotion Seminar on Friday, 29 OCT 2004 at the Amphitheatre of
the Cyprus International Conference Centre, Nicosia.**

Honorable Ambassadors,
Honorable MP's,
Honorable President of the Steering Committee of EMWIS
Representatives of the National Focal Point of EMWIS,
Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all today in Nicosia for this promotion Seminar, which is organized by the EMWIS T.U. and the Water Development Department (WDD). The purpose of this seminar is to present EMWIS, its goals and progress in order to best contribute and benefits from this unique cooperation tool.

Cyprus has always advocated the pursuit of international and regional cooperation in all fields of knowledge, including water. We have therefore been keen on sustaining strong presence in the regional and international domains, and maintaining an active role, in the Euro-Mediterranean information sharing and exchange, of which EMWIS is one of the very significant co-operation effort and the most unique tool to improve information exchange locally, regionally and on the Euro-Mediterranean levels.

In November 2001, Cyprus has be designated as vice-president of EMWIS Steering Committee by the Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors General. At that time the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was counting 27 countries and Cyprus was among the so-called 12 Med Partner Countries. Today, the Partnership is 35 Countries and Cyprus is one of the 25 EU member states. But our commitment is still 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 for EMWIS for Cyprus. The purpose of the Cyprus NFP, as well as that of every NFP of each country that is a member of EMWIS is to make available and to share information about water through the internet, for all those who are interested.

EMWIS is an information sharing tool that helps in the water management in a national and international level. The Government of Cyprus, recognizing the great importance of sharing information about water and the need for an increased cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean countries, as well as that of the public and private sector, is supporting EMWIS in every way.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, whose responsibility 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 in the growth of the cooperation between the Euro-Mediterranean counties.

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

The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment through the WDD is looking for a close and harmonious relationship with the different shareholders (government departments, local authorities), who have a direct or indirect relationship with water, to provide information and will always try to develop this cooperation for the benefit of everyone who is interested in using this information through the EMWIS Website.

For this reason, I call all of you who are interested to visit often the website of the Cyprus NFP and to collaborate with the WDD to improve it. , Similar websites exists today in 15 countries members of EMWIS, representing a valuable source of information and know-how..

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the EMWIS T.U. and the NFPs for their efforts in creating the EMWIS Website. Special thanks also for the EU, the Italian, French and Spanish governments for their continued support for this initiative.

Honorable Ambassadors,
Honorable MP's,
Honorable President of the Steering Committee of EMWIS
Representatives of the National Focal Point of EMWIS,
Dear Friends,

It is my great pleasure to open the Promotion Seminar of EMWIS. I wish for this seminar to be effective. I am sure it will contribute significantly to the information sharing for water, to all interested parties, in our country and the other Euro-Mediterranean countries.

I welcome the representatives of EMWIS and I wish them a pleasant stay in Cyprus.

Finally I would like to wish you every success.

29th October 2004

**Ministry of Agriculture
Natural Resources and Environment**