

The 1st Festival WEP EFFECT 2020 with the theme „Water Education - Sustainable communication with the public“ was held online with the participation of representatives of utility companies, organizations and institutions from 7 countries.

In the new changed conditions, almost in a completely new reality, everyone, for whom live communication and meetings with people are an essential need and part of the job, tries to find new solutions and models of behavior. It is the same with the Water agency Association from Slovenia. COVID 19 crisis first led us, in the Water agency, to a change in the way we work, to create new project activities. Our Water station workshops in schoolyards last school year were postponed until further notice. It is not yet possible to find adequate dates. We are preparing more and more seriously for the online education of teachers and then the continuation of the online education of children. Also, we are starting a new project of intergenerational cooperation "Hand washing protects your health" intended to connect children from schools with the residents of nursing homes.

When we successfully realized the 5th International Conference "Water for Tomorrow" last year, we had no idea what awaited us in the realization of the new event that we were planning at the time. Wanting to make a change and make a step forward, after five conferences, we started planning the international festival WEP EFFECT 2020. Planned for May, as part of the European Development Sustainable Week, it was postponed to September together with the ESDW program. Hoping that we will meet the participants live in Rogaška Slatina, we were still forced to hold the 1st WEP EFFECT Festival in the online version on September 25th and 26th, 2020. The 1st International WEP EFFECT 2020 Festival was organized under the honorary patronage of the President of the Republic of Slovenia Borut Pahor.

Despite all the circumstances, the response of participants and applicants of educational materials was satisfactory. The main theme of the Festival „Water Education - sustainable communication with the public“, attracted utility companies for water supply, sewerage and wastewater treatment to the competitive part of the program. An international jury of six members evaluated the works in four categories - printed materials, videos, educational application or website, stage display or object. During the first day, six works were presented at the Festival. The first awarded educational material of the Festival is the brochure of Ržanski vodovod from Koper. Based on the announced criteria, the brochure with which Ržanski vodovod from Koper competed satisfied as a quality material with a clear message for both adults and children. It is equally applicable for informing the population as well as for educating children in schools. Aesthetic criteria and design with linguistic correctness are also met. In addition to being designed for corporate representation, it also has a general educational character and thus attracts the target group of all categories. There were the most applications in the video category. The animated film by Komunala ltd. Sevnice was awarded, "Olje nekoli drugače" (Oil in some other way) which was created as part of the EU project of the same name, in which, in addition to Komunala from Sevnica, Komunala from Krško, Radeče and Brežice, as well as the municipalities of Sevnica and U3 participated. The film aimed to point out the correct attitude towards waste edible oil and thus emphasize the effect on water conservation. Wastewater polluted with edible oil is much more demanding for purification and 1 liter of waste oil pollutes 1 mil. liters of water. For the best communication with the local population in its

distribution network shown in the documentary film "Rijeka's Water", the award went to KD Vodovod i kanalizacija Rijeka. The best corporate film was presented by Komunalna d.o.o. Kranj while Kostak d.d. Krško received recognition for the best material intended for the target group of school children, the film „Varujmovo“ (Take care for water) made in the form of a quiz. In addition to the award of the 1st WEP EFFECT 2020 Festival for the brochure, Ržanski vodovod Koper took recognition for the film made in response to the current situation with the COVID 19 virus, with the mascot Kapko in the lead role. Everyone had the opportunity to present their materials during the first day of the Festival. Regardless of the fact that they did not directly participate in the Festival, we were supported by PWU Hrvatske vode and IAWD.

Introductory speeches and conclusions of both days were given by prof. Ph.D. Jože Lipnik, President of the Organizing Committee of the WEP EFFECT Festival, while on the first day the participants were greeted via video link by the Mayor of Rogaška Slatina, mg. Branko Kidrič. In addition to the presentations of the representatives of the utility companies, there were also expert presentations. Ljudmila Novak, Member of the Republic of Slovenia in the EU Parliament for the Environment, Health and Food Safety, spoke on the topic of water and the EU Water Directive. Ph.D. Mitja Bricelj, from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Slovenia spoke about the role of youth and youth projects on water in Slovenia and the region with special reference to the Sava region, given that the Sava springs in Slovenia and connects 4 countries Balkans. Prof. Ph.D. Samuel Appelbaum from Ben Gurion University in Israel spoke about the importance of educating young people from the earliest age on the topic of water from the aspect of proper water resources management and the fact that man is the main cause of reducing the amount of clean drinking water. Prof. Ph.D. Michal Jožef Toman warned of the dangers of water pollution that we cause with our daily habits and which are difficult to eliminate. He drew attention to the need for children's education programs and that this must be addressed systematically at the state level. The afternoon session was dedicated to EU projects focusing on water and educating children and youth. Tanja Bordon from Slovenia presented the recently completed Erasmus + Water School project, Mihaela Hanzlova from the Czech Republic presented a workbook from the Water Agent V003 project funded by the Visegrad Fund and Aniko Horvath from Hungary spoke about the Wat.Edu project that is currently being implemented from the Erasmus + program and in which the Water Agency is one of the 8 partners.

On the second day of the WEP EFFECT 2020 Festival, we presented the Water Agent project with presentations by the expert associate of the Water Agency, Ph.D. Tatjana Kikec, with special reference to the importance of the Water Agent project in the situation of the COVID 19 crisis. The Water Agent project basically aims to bring children as close as possible to the tap and drinking water, so that regular hand washing and hydration, which are imperative in the fight against the COVID 19 virus, are already guaranteed by the project itself. Teacher Mojca Gerželj Štemberger from the Elementary School Srečko Kosovel from Sežana presented her activities in the school in a very picturesque and colorful way. Teacher Sanja Mojić from the Elementary School Žarko Zrenjanin from Novi Sad showed a very wide range of activities on the topic of water in all school subjects that she conducted with students in the Water Agent project and illustrated everything with very interesting videos. Once again, the Water School project was presented by Tanja Bordon, now from the aspect of application in schools. At the end, the pilot project "Washing hands to your protects health" was presented, that the Water Agency Association started in cooperation with Kostak d.d. from Krško in the home for the elderly in Krško, which Špela Arh Marinčič spoke about. The recapitulation of both

days of the Festival was given by the presentation Water Agent - educational program as a means of communication by the project manager Majda Adlešić.

The 1st online Festival WEP EFFECT 2020 also ended with the conclusion that the attitude towards water is a key element in the education of children and youth. Access to education must be systematically regulated and must be implemented by everyone, state, schools and parents through public utilities and companies to higher education institutions. Aware of the moment in which the Festival was realized, we are pleased to announce the II Festival WEP EFFECT 2021, believing in changing the behavior of people towards nature and water as a necessary prerequisite for the survival of civilization.

Majda Adlešić, Program manager Water agency Association