



Univerza v Ljubljani



## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Colloquium of the IGU Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems – 2009

# New Challenges for Sustainable Rural Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Maribor, Slovenia, 13<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> July, 2009

Dear colleagues,

The University of Maribor as the Local Organizing Committee of the International Colloquium of the IGU-CSRS is pleased to send you this first invitation as well as the presentation of the colloquium. We kindly invite you to participate in the workshops and round tables planned for the colloquium. We will be honoured if you accept our invitation and confirm your participation.

This international meeting will be held in the Main Building of the University of Maribor and at the Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences **from 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2009**. The organization of the colloquium is coordinated in collaboration with the IGU Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems.



Main Building of the University of Maribor



Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences

The local organizing committee consists of members of Geography Departments at the University of Maribor, the University of Ljubljana and the University of Primorska, as well as colleagues from the Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Maribor.

# **Theme: New Challenges for Sustainable Rural Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Six-day colloquium:** three days of scientific presentations and a two and half day excursion

**Languages:** English, French

## **Registration costs per person and per couple:**

One participant: **750 Euros**

Couple: **1,150 Euros**

This amount covers lodging, food, colloquium documentation, field trip costs and social programme during the colloquium.

Young researchers who wish to participate in the colloquium by giving papers, and do not have the means to cover registration costs should address a request for financial support to the Local Organizing Committee. We will try to find the means for covering registration costs for them, together with the partners.

## **Form of payment:**

The first instalment (50%) is due on **15<sup>th</sup> February 2009**, and the second and final instalment (50%) no later than **30<sup>th</sup> April 2009**.

**After 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009**, a late registration fee of an **additional 100 Euros** applies.

## **Bank details:**

Conference fee (in EUR) should be paid to the following bank account:

Bank: **Bank of Slovenia, Slovenska 35, 1505 Ljubljana**

BIC: **BSLJSI2X**

Bank account number: **SI56 01100-6000020393**

Reference: **IGU 2009 SM 720**

Beneficiary: **University of Maribor, Faculty of Arts, Koroska 160, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia**

Purpose of payment: **IGU CSRS 2009 Conference Fee**

## **Submission of abstracts:**

Please send the abstract of your presentation (maximum 1 page – 40 lines) by e-mail as a Word attachment to Assist. Prof. Lučka Lorber: [IGU2009@uni-mb.si](mailto:IGU2009@uni-mb.si).

Please mention your full name (including academic title), affiliation, postal address, e-mail address, subject area and the title of your presentation.

Due date for the submission of abstracts is **15<sup>th</sup> January 2009**.

E-mail notifications of acceptance will be sent to authors by **31<sup>st</sup> January 2009**.

**Social programme:** A rich social programme will be provided also for persons accompanying the participants of the colloquium.

**Important dates:**

- Registration and submission of abstracts: **15<sup>th</sup> January 2009**
- Notification of acceptance: **31<sup>st</sup> January 2009**
- First instalment: **15<sup>th</sup> February 2009**
- Second (final) instalment: **30<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

**Visa information:**

Participants who need a Visa for visiting Slovenia are kindly asked to send the data, necessary to issue an Invitation Letter (data of birth, citizenship, official name and address of the home institution).

All information regarding the registration and participation at the colloquium is available at the website: <http://events.ff.uni-mb.si/igu2009>. The website will be regularly updated.

**Local Organizing Committee**

Martina BAVEC (Chair of Organic Agriculture, Field Crop, Vegetable and Ornamental Plants, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Maribor).

Borut BELEC (Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor).

Andreja BOREC (Chair of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Maribor).

Vladimir DROZG (Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor).

Anton GOSAR (Department of Geography, Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska).

Marijan M. KLEMENČIČ (Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana).

Ana VOVK KORŽE (Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor).

Lučka LORBER (Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor).

Karmen PAŽEK (Chair of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Maribor).

Please accept our best wishes.

For the Local Organizing Committee:

Lučka LORBER

For the IGU Organizing Committee:

Ana Maria S.M. BICALHO and Lucette LAURENS

# **Presentation of the International Colloquium of the IGU Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems**

## **Colloquium Theme:**

### **New Challenges for Sustainable Rural Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Maribor, Slovenia, 13<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2009**

## **General Framework:**

### **New Challenges for Sustainable Rural Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The social and economic fabric of rural areas and their environment has been shaped over time by agriculture, more than by any other sector, and by associated up- and down- stream activities. In the past, agriculture was viewed as a purely sectoral activity producing primary products, today, however, it is recognised as fulfilling a multiplicity of economic, social and environmental functions, producing, in addition to raw materials for a dynamic quality food production chain, other important environmental services and public goods, which provide a solid foundation for a vital rural space. A sustainable and competitive agri-food sector is therefore important not only as an element of the rural economy, but also, and sometimes more so, due to its contribution to preservation and improvement of the quality of life and the social economic and environmental fabric of rural areas.

Today, new challenges are faced and new solutions must be found in order to assure sustainable rural development in the future.

**Proposals for papers are invited in the following subject areas (main themes and sub-themes):**

### **Main theme 1: Environmental Challenges**

The environmental challenges which governments are facing throughout the world are numerous and complex. Most governments and companies are now fully aware that environmental issues are intertwined with economic and social issues. Promoting economic growth via environmental, human and animal health seems to be the path forward not only for the policy makers, but for all the inhabitants of the planet. Decades of environmental mismanagement have created severe legacy issues across the globe. At the crux of these challenges, three main tasks come forward: to restore natural resources and achieve human and animal health protection, to model appropriate future energy policy, and to design strategies which permit future growth, while protecting the environment, maintaining the biodiversity, safeguarding human and animal health and preserving cultural and social values.

The general increase of world-wide temperatures causes prolongation of growth periods and changes in phenophases. The changes in quantity and patterns of rainfall have an impact on the water balance, which is of great importance for plants. Due to climate changes, agriculture, which is dependent on weather conditions, is facing new challenges. Changes in temperature, growth periods and phenophases on the one hand, and change in water balance caused by shifting annual rainfall patterns on the other hand, in the future will change traditional forms of agriculture in numerous regions. Changing water balance in some areas will cause scarcity of drinking and irrigation water, which will encourage the search for ways to protect surface and underground water. Intensive agriculture with huge areas of

monocultures is a more efficient food production from the economic view point, but it reduces the biodiversity of ecosystems and increases their fragility. The efficient use of energy in agriculture will result in reduced energy demand, reduced burdening of agro-ecosystems, and last but not least, a more favourable ratio between inputs and outputs in agro-ecosystems.

### **Subthemes:**

1. Climatic change impact and sustainable rural areas.
2. Natural resource management and rural development in protected areas.
3. Effects of biomass production on land use changes.
4. Energy worldwide.

### **Main theme 2: Human Resources and Social Capital**

Social conditions in rural areas are at the same time the origin and the goal of sustainable development. Due to differentiated economic development, socioeconomic heterogeneity in rural areas is increasing, at the same time that it also varies greatly between countries and continents. Differentiation of social structures is grounded on the different levels of economic development, the different cultural environments, the gap between tradition and modernity, and the measures of regional policies. At the colloquium, we would like to embrace the different socio-economic conditions in different countries of the world, and the social practices and strategies for achieving the goals of sustainable development.

### **Subthemes:**

1. Gender roles in rural development.
2. Social structure change and rural poverty reduction.
3. Education and participatory approaches to community development.
4. Governance and networks in sustainable rural development.

### **Main theme 3: Global Economic and Policy Impacts on Rural Areas**

The global economy is increasingly characterized by the strong presence of the emerging market economies, with the continued expansion of trade and investment accompanying globalization on the one hand and on the other hand by growing uncertainty concerning violent fluctuation of petroleum prices and turbulence in financial markets. Countries depend of the resources which form the basis of their economies and securing a stable supply of resources in a sustainable way in the midst of dwindling global energy, mineral and agricultural resources, among others, is an issue of critical importance from the perspective of economic security.

Harnessing the potential of rural areas for economic diversification and development, improving policy delivery, local governance and networking, and finding the right balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches are also very important in this respect.

### **Subthemes:**

1. World trade globalization and international rural development policy.
2. Environmental policies, economic valuation of ecosystems and rural land use.
3. The impact of global food demand and markets on agricultural land use and rural development.
4. Policy and development programmes for rural areas.

### **Main theme 4: New Products and Services in the Changing Countryside**

With rapid economic growth in certain regions of the world, the function, appearance and identity of rural areas are changing. A gap is emerging between tradition, in terms of lifestyle as well as methods of production, and modernity which places quality of life at the top of value systems.

Consumer demand for quality food is growing steadily. There is an increasing awareness of health and environmental issues, and higher disposable incomes in developed countries enable people to make 'lifestyle choices', such as paying more for the food which is better for them and less damaging to the environment. Alongside this, alternative production methods and services are developing, such as sustainable tourism in countryside. Today, rural areas are no longer remote and undeveloped regions but are opening up to the wider society by offering a variety of products and services.

### **Subthemes:**

1. New food preferences, nutrition labelling and food quality.
2. Organic agriculture and alternative crops.
3. Non-agricultural products, services and pluriactivity in rural areas.
4. Cultural landscape change and rural identity.

Note: In the event there are an insufficient number of contributions for any of the proposed themes or subthemes, the organizer reserves the right to combine some of the themes or subthemes.

## **Fieldwork**

**First day of excursion: Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> July**

### **Eastern Slovenia - Posotelje and Kozjansko**

On the first day of the excursion, we will visit the areas of Eastern Slovenia called Posotelje and Kozjansko. This is a border Pannonian, mostly a hilly region characterised by its peripheral position on the border with Croatia. The dispersed pattern of farms, the location on the border and poor transport facilities in the past resulted in low economic development of this area and the prevalence of traditional agrarian society and lifestyle. Until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, this area was densely populated, however, due to lack of jobs, the inhabitants gradually moved out in great numbers. Out-migration peaked after World War II, which caused the general depopulation of the area. This unfavourable demographic development brought about consequences, such as the aging of the population (the farm population in particular), the emigration of younger and better educated people and the abandoning of farming, which resulted in an increased greening of landscape with large-scale forest overgrowth taking place. After an earthquake in 1974, the area was gradually renewed and the economy started to develop, but this was limited to major central settlements (community centres) and the areas along the main road, while in the more remote parts of the region the depopulation continues. This area is also marked by intense daily commuting to work by local people to neighbouring regions.

Agriculture is losing its importance in the region (only market livestock farming, fruit cultivation and viticulture remain). Beside the glass industry in Rogaška Slatina (which began 80 years ago), the development of the region was greatly influenced by the rise of small business and tourism. Rogaška Slatina has one of the oldest and most important health resorts in Slovenia, which dates from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its development is based on the unique mineral water (with a high content of magnesium) and modern medical-therapeutic treatments. The Podčetrtek health resort (Olimia Spa) is newer and focused mainly on holiday and recreation tourism and wellness services. This health resort has encouraged the development of a tourist region in the surrounding area. Farm tourism is also developing intensively. Tourist offerings include among other things several baroque churches, a monastery with the third oldest pharmacy in Europe and the landscape park of Kozjansko. The research and management of natural and cultural heritage are elements of 'soft' social and economic development as the strategic goals in the protected area of the Kozjansko Park. Key projects at the Kozjansko Park are the revitalization of fruit cultivation in meadows, an education centre for nature preservation, rural development and regional development, preservation of dry meadows, and cataloguing the heritage of rural buildings.

Itinerary: Maribor – Rogaška Slatina – Podčetrtek – Olimje – Podsreda – Čatež – Ljubljana

More information is available at:

<http://www.slovenia.info>

<http://www.maribor-pohorje.si>

<http://www.slovenia.info/en/Health-Resorts.htm?zdraviliscaSLO=0&lng=2>

<http://www.terme-rogaska.si>

<http://www.steklarna-rogaska.si>

<http://www.terme-olimja.com>

<http://www.olimje.net/slo/index.php>

<http://www.kozjanski-park.si>

<http://www.terme-catez.si>

## **Second day of excursion: Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> July**

### **Primorska – Koprška brda**

On the second day of the excursion, we will visit an area in the Primorska region called Koprška brda (Koper hills), situated in the extreme south-western part of Slovenia. It is considered as a distinct area due to its position along the Adriatic Sea and its general characteristics as a Mediterranean region. The Slovene coast, stretching between Italy and Croatia, measures 46.6 km. At the coastline, recess from the original coastline can be observed in drainage, construction of salt pans and ports and expansion of agricultural land. This was once a traditional agrarian landscape with developed urban areas and today is an economically developed area characterised by port activity and tourism. Varied tourist offering is encountered in picturesque, cultural and historical towns such as Koper, Izola, Piran and Portorož. One of the main characteristics of the demographic structure of the Primorska region is ethnic diversity marked by rapid change over the last decades. It needs to be stressed that the coastal area has a native Italian population with its own cultural traditions living alongside Slovenes.

Low hills rise above the narrow coastal plain, reaching 500 meters altitude. Old terraces dating several thousands years have preserved their fertile soil on the slopes where horticulture, fruit cultivation and viticulture are undertaken. Mild winters and hot summers allow for almost year-round cropping. Villages are located on top of the ridges and the terraces of the southern slopes. To the north, the hills gradually disappear under the Karst Edge.

The Slovene Karst (500 km<sup>2</sup>) is a high lime plateau situated between the Trieste Bay and the Vipava Valley, with several thousand karst caves and abysses. This kind of landscape consists of relief and underground forms without surface water flows. The planned reforestation of the karst barren land has thoroughly changed the appearance and economy of the region.

The inhabitants of the Primorska region traditionally welcome their guests with smoked ham (prosciutto) and a glass of excellent karst red wine (teran) from their own vineyards, a welcome which will be extended to the participants of the IGU colloquium.

Itinerary: Ljubljana – Koper – Izola – Sečovlje salt pans – Padna – Korte – Piran – Portorož – Ljubljana

More information is available at:

[http://www.burger.si/Koper/uvod\\_eng.html](http://www.burger.si/Koper/uvod_eng.html)

[http://www.burger.si/Izola/uvod\\_eng.html](http://www.burger.si/Izola/uvod_eng.html)

<http://www.burger.si/Obala/ObalaENG.html>

[http://www.burger.si/Piran/uvod\\_eng.htm](http://www.burger.si/Piran/uvod_eng.htm)

<http://vodnik.kras-carso.com/>



## **Third day of excursion: Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> July**

### **Ljubljana – capital of Slovenia**

Ljubljana is the economic, political, cultural and business centre of Slovenia. It is surrounded on all sides by a hilly or a mountainous barrier, the rim of the Ljubljana basin which is the largest basin in the Slovene Alpine area. The city centre is situated at the Ljubljana passage, one of the most important European traffic junctions, which has enabled the city's development. During the period of industrialization, the city lagged behind other Slovene urban areas, but its administrative-political, cultural, and economic functions were strengthened. When Slovenia gained independence in 1991, the city became the national capital and experienced rapid economic development resulting in a high degree of centralization focussed on Ljubljana.

The city fulfils its cultural, scientific and educational functions via the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the University of Ljubljana, the National and University Library, the cultural centre of Cankarjev dom, and other institutions.

The unique-looking old city centre combines the heritage of the medieval period with Baroque and Art Nouveau masterpieces, ancient Roman monuments and the unique legacy of the famous architect Jože Plečnik. Ljubljana's surrounding area offers a range of natural sights and rich cultural heritage.

More information is available at:

<http://www.visitljubljana.si/>

<http://www.euroave.com/maps/00mapx.php?xcity=ljubljana>