

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

WATER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2003

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1. Introduction

The Water Development Department is responsible for implementing the water policy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment. Main objective of this policy is the rational development and management of the water resources of Cyprus. In this context, the responsibilities of the department cover a wide and diverse spectrum, which includes: a) the collection, processing and classification of hydrological, hydrogeological, geotechnical and other data necessary for the study, maintenance and safety of the water development works, b) the study, design, construction, operation and maintenance of works, such as dams, ponds, irrigation, domestic water supply and sewerage schemes, water treatment works, sewage treatment and desalination plants, and c) the protection of the water resources from pollution.

2. Structure and Activities

The Water Development Department consists of the following divisions: Water Resources, Hydrology, Planning, Design, Rural Projects Planning and Design, Sewage and Reuse, Construction, Management, Operation and Maintenance of Government Water Supply Systems, Operation and Maintenance of Irrigation Systems, Telemetry and the Mechanical-Electrical Services Division. The Department has also four Regional Offices, located in Nicosia, Limassol, Paphos and Famagusta-Larnaca.

3. Activities

The basic water policy of the Government is the production of desalinated sea water, the use of non-conventional sources such as the use of recycled water for irrigation, recharge and amenity purposes, the desalting of brackish water, the efficient use of available water including the better use of pricing and water conservation measures, the harmonisation with the European acquis, the protection, preservation and improvement of the water quality, the introduction of new effective management procedures through the establishment of a Water Entity and the development of the remaining existing water resources with the construction of dams until 2015.

During 2003, every household in every part of free Cyprus had continuous supply of drinking water on a 24-hour basis. The new desalination plant near Larnaca Airport, the largest of Cyprus in this sector, coupled with the Dhekelia plant produce 33 million cubic metres of water a year. This quantity along with the quantity of water in the dams constitutes safe quantities for completely lifting restrictions.

Regarding agriculture, however, the water rationing measures continued. The percentage of the demand satisfied was 80% for seasonal crops, 85% for permanent crops and 60% for stock farming crops.

Further to the above, the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment implemented several other measures to increase the supply of water and to encourage water conservation.

During the year under review, the Water Development Department continued its usual work with the aim of achieving the above-mentioned goals and has continued or initiated the implementation of numerous projects and programmes vital to the further development of all sectors of the Cyprus economy.

The main construction works included the construction of kannaviou dam, the irrigation schemes of Dhiarizos Valley and the completion of Asprokremmos water treatment plant.

Other activities also included the completion of the Environmental Impact Assessment Study for Soleas Valley and three small dams Kannaviou, Palechoriou and Aradhippou. Furthermore legal drafting of a new Water Law, transposing all the provisions of the Directive 2000/60/EC, was approved by the Council of Ministers in December 2003 and submitted to the House of Representatives for enactment.