

Preface to the 2nd International Workshop on the “Neogene of Central and South-Eastern Europe”

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Welcome to the 2nd international workshop on the “Neogene of Central and South-Eastern Europe” at Kapfenstein in the south-eastern part of Styria (Austria; Fig. 1). Following the successful idea of the 1st workshop at Fruška Gora Mountain in Serbia (RUNDIĆ et al. 2005a, b) in 2005, we discuss topics related to the Neogene on our field trips in the Styrian Basin and in the afternoon sessions.



Fig. 1: View at Kapfenstein from the south.

Especially, the Neogene period is of particular interest for mankind. It acts as an archive of the (near) past, as well as it is a marker for our future and contains a lot of essential raw materials. Vigorous climatic fluctuations, volcanic eruptions and significant changes of faunas and floras are documented in Neogene rocks and reach out far beyond historical documents. Due to the understanding of the geo- and biologically active mechanisms, we will be able to estimate the impacts of currently ongoing processes in more detail.

Despite geology has not known political borders, with the fall of the Iron Curtain new chances for earth scientists opened. A novel era of research communication has been started. Considering that geology takes place in the field, the excursion program is intimately linked with the scientific indoor lectures.

The region "Steirisches Vulkanland" around the meeting place is rich in wonderful geological sites. Variegated volcanic rocks, deep water siliciclastics, carbonate build-ups, limnic-deltaic sediments and maar lake deposits, ranging from the Lower Miocene to the Plio-/Pleistocene, offer the possibility to study different geological aspects.

Kapfenstein, as a municipality which focuses on geotourism, has an intense geo-historical relation with the workshop. The castle of Kapfenstein was the domicile of Arthur WINKLER-HERMADEN, a famous Austrian earth scientist of the early 20th century. In 1957 he summarized his investigations in the fundamental textbook "Geologisches Kräftespiel" dealing with geological problems of Central and South-Eastern Europe.

References

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