Igor S. Zektser (02.05.1937 – 24.05.2016)

A wonderful person, an outstanding scientist, organizer and a wise leader, – always friendly, calm and reasonable, able to appreciate humor and loving life – Igor Semenovich Zektser has passed away.

Igor Zektser graduated from the Geological Faculty of Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU). He began his scientific career as a student at the Department of Hydrogeology of MSU and, after graduation, was assigned to work in the research sector of Geological Department of MSU, where he was engaged in regional hydro-dynamics.

From 1965 to 1968 Igor Zektser worked in VSEGINGEO as a senior researcher, where he continued his study of groundwater flow. There he was a supervisor of a number of hydrogeological field parties of the USSR Ministry of Geology which studied the groundwater regime.

In 1968 Igor Zektser was invited to work in the newly created Institute of Water Problems (IWP) of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, where he was firstly a senior researcher and Head of the Laboratory. Since 1972 he was the head of the Department of Groundwater and Problems of Groundwater Flow, and then the head of the Laboratory of Regional Hydrogeological Problems for almost 50 years.

The International scientific activities of Igor Semenovich were extensive. In 1996 he and his colleagues organized the Moscow

International Symposium on the study of groundwater discharge into the sea at which scientists from 19 countries participated. In the early 1990s he was elected to membership of the Bureau of the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH), and since 2009 was a Vice-President of IAH. In 2010 Igor Zektser was elected as academician of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

He actively participated in many international symposia, conferences and congresses organized by UNESCO, IAH, IAHS, and the International Union of Geological Sciences. From 1986 to 1990 he was UNESCO Expert and Scientific Leader of UNESCO IHP - III Project 2.3 "Role of Ground Water in the Hydrological Cycle and in Continental Water balance". As the Chairman of the IUGS-GEM Working Group on Drinking Water Igor Zektser organized Workshops in Vilnius, Warsaw, Bulgaria and Russia, which focused on the modern state of groundwater use in different natural, climatic and anthropogenous conditions; prediction of the changes of groundwater recharge in the 21st century in different climatic scenarios; analysis of the influence of groundwater withdrawal on large scales on land subsidence, vegetation and activation of sea water intrusion into coastal zones etc., publishing papers and monographs.

Professor Zektser laid the basis of a doctrine of groundwater flow, which was first set out in his monograph "The doctrine of the formation of groundwater flow and scientific and methodical bases of its study". He was awarded, by Russian Academy of Sciences, the F.P. Savarenskiy Award for this monograph. Igor Zektser developed methods of regional assessment, forecasting and mapping of natural groundwater resources. He was one of the main authors of unique maps of groundwater flow of the USSR, Central and Eastern Europe and Map of Hydrogeological Conditions and Groundwater Flow of the World, published in the USA by UNESCO. Igor Zektser was the author of 14 monographs. His main works were published in Russia, the United States, France, Bulgaria and other countries.

Igor Zektser was a talented scientist and a remarkable teacher. For the staff of the Institute of Water Problems he meant a great deal. His passing is an irreplaceable loss for all his family and colleagues. The memory of Igor Zektser will remain forever in the hearts of all who were lucky to be near him.

From the staff of the Institute of Water Problems of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow