

6th World Water Forum

Regional process commission: Proposed European framework

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*French National Committee
Regional Process Commission*

DRAFT WORKING PAPER (5)

PROPOSAL FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE EUROPEAN PROCESS « GREATER EUROPE »

Many European countries have developed, some for many years, tools and techniques for effective water management both at the level of large river basins and of community utilities or control of individual uses.

At continental level for example, the UNECE Helsinki Convention has been applied since 1992 for transboundary water management in Western, Central and Eastern Europe as well as in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

In the European Union, many directives have organized water management (resources, ecosystems, uses), especially the Water Framework Directive (WFD) since 2000 and its "Daughter" or related Directives laying down ambitious objectives and constraining procedures and deadlines for the Member States.

Management of municipal water supply and sanitation utilities is based, in varying forms, in almost all European countries, on the municipalities which have obtained positive results in health and hygiene for their population, by associating, whenever necessary, public or private specialized companies.

1. The geographic framework:

The European process for the preparation of the Forum concerns the European Union, but also the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus as well as Central Asia; **in general all countries of "Greater Europe", adhering to the UNECE Convention of 1992.**

The specificity of the Mediterranean Countries will have to be taken into account. A specific approach should be considered to organize work dealing with the problems specific to this basin and based on a partnership involving stakeholders representing the Mediterranean interests.

The "**Outermost Regions**" of the European Union should not be forgotten, and be associated to the process of course, and their characteristics will be taken into account in a specific way, when not already done in the general processes of their respective natural geographic region.

2. Organization of the partnership.

To facilitate the European process of the WWF6, it is essential to create a **“coordination consortium”**, in which we would invite the key European networks concerned to participate and play an active role.

It is indeed necessary:

- to very closely associate in all efforts and initiatives all the large European partner networks, such as the European Water Partnership (EWP), European Water Association (EWA), EUREAU (European water utilities association), EUROPE-Network of Basin Organizations (Europe –INBO), Europe Water Solidarity (SEE), European Centre for Rivers Restoration (ECRR), European Rivers Network (ERN), EURAQUA, Water Supply & Sanitation Technology Platform (WssTP), Euro-Mediterranean Water Information System (EMWIS), Central and Eastern Europe Network of Basin Organizations (CEENBO), Eastern and Central Europe – Water Partnership, Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP – Med), GWP – CACENA, Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia – Network of Water Organizations, Regional Environment Centre (REC) for Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Environmental NGO Network (CENN), Scientific Information Centre of Interstate Coordination Water Commission (SIC ICWC), the “Committee of European Outermost Regions”... **and others to identify.**

- And to propose them to play a significant and visible part in the facilitation and preparation process.

Of course, it is essential that the European Commission, the European Environment Agency, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, UNECE and OSCE, and the other intergovernmental institutions of the region specify their involvement in the European preparation process.

It is also essential that the “Institut Méditerranéen de l’Eau” (IME), GWP – Med, Blue Plan, Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations (MENBO), CEDARE, “Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel” (OSS), etc., **play also a leading role when the specificities of the Mediterranean Countries will be addressed.**

It will be proposed to the main European heads of Networks to join a “Coordination Board of this consortium” to closely manage the regional process.

3. Important regional priority issues in Europe:

We must keep in mind that enlarged Europe is the continent where there is the greatest number of Transboundary Rivers, lakes and aquifers. Since there are more than 276 rivers and 300 aquifers in the world crossing the borders of countries, this topic is obviously strategic, especially in the case of climate change, and this European experience could be made available to all interested countries in the whole World.

Without being exhaustive at this stage, as the process will enrich the scope of the approach, we can already propose to prioritize the following specific issues:

▪ **Topical issues:**

- Management of transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers (UNECE Convention, Water Framework Directive, international commissions ...),
- Prevention and management of flood risk,
- Prevention and management of water scarcity and drought risk, demand management,
- Measures for adaptation to the effects of climate change to be included in the WFD Programmes of Measures for 2015 - 2021...,
- Rivers and ecosystems protection and restoration, good ecological status of water bodies,
- Inland river navigation in Europe,
- European water and energy policy (hydropower, cooling of nuclear and thermal power plants, micro-power plants, energy saving in collective irrigation, drinking water supply and sanitation networks ...),
- Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and issues on agricultural and rural water (irrigation, non-point pollution, discharges of industrial breeding farms, sustainable agricultural techniques, inland fish farming , etc.),
- Access to the drinking water and sanitation services for the European underprivileged populations (social measures in the EU, European emergent countries, rural DWSS ...),
- Management of municipal drinking water supply and sanitation utilities and “public-private” partnerships, water pricing and industrial and commercial management),
- Water management in European outermost countries, the case of “Islands - basins”,

▪ **Transversal issues:**

- Professional training in water (basic and continuing training),
- “Science - policy” interface – dialogue between researchers - managers,
- Public participation,
- European cooperation with Third Countries in the water field (Europe AID, Bilateral cooperation, decentralized and solidarity cooperations, extension of the Oudin - Santini Law, ...),

4. A participatory process:

As a first step, it will be advisable to identify all the networks of stakeholders who could be involved as well as useful resource persons.

Depending on their specialization, it will be proposed to each associated network to lead or co-organize think tanks on each jointly selected priority topic.

Calls for proposals on specific priority targets (about 5/6?), to deal with under the "Grenelle" process, will allow this multitude of interested parties to participate.

We may propose:

- either **"specific regional targets"** with no relations with global targets and other priorities defined for the rest of the world,
- or **"regional specificities of the general targets"**, which could be considered as a decentralization process for specifying solutions suited to regional situations within the general targets of the thematic framework of the Forum...

It will be collaborative work.

Some of these targets would allow opening the "water box" and enlarge the participation of partners who are not directly specialized in the water sector.

A restricted kick-off meeting will be organized on 21 December 2010, in Brussels as Belgium, which holds the Presidency of the European Union, strongly involving the heads of the main European networks of the water sector and the various European institutions.

We may then organize 5 "meetings" of the "Grenelle" type and multi-topic meetings in 2011, and a summary meeting in late January / early February 2012, before the participation of the European partners in the Forum itself, according to the reporting methods which will be selected by the IFC.

With regard to these "sub-regional" meetings, we may consider the participation of Central Asia, Caucasus, Eastern Europe and the Russian Federation, the Mediterranean, the European Outermost Regions (the Caribbean?).

These meetings will be organized in various geographical areas to facilitate the broadest possible participation.

It will also be necessary that the IFC specifies the extent of the "Grenelle" processes to be considered for either mobilizing the network heads or a great number of participants by opening widely to all potential partners that may be interested?

Of course all this also depends on available budgets and the general policy of taking care or not of the travels and accommodation of some NGOs and representatives from emerging or far-away countries?

As regards Southern Europe and the Mediterranean, you can already block a meeting of "**Europe - INBO 2011**" and of the Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations in Porto - Portugal in October 2011, at the official invitation of the Portuguese authorities which have confirmed the invitation.

The Congress of the Scientific and Technical Association for Water and the Environment (Association Scientifique et Technique pour l'Eau et l'Environnement – ASTEE) will be held in June 2011 in Manosque (France), on the topic of performance of services, in partnership with EWA.

The secretaries general of the international transboundary river Commissions of Europe have been approached earlier in Malines late August.

The "EUROPE - INBO 2010" conference held in Megève from 22 to 24 September 2010, where two very important delegations of the Russian Federation (Federal Water Director...) and of the Member States of the Network of Basin Organizations from Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia were present, was the occasion of considering a strong association with the EECCA partners. The program of Megève allowed making a first test of ideas with the participants.

There was already a "Solidarité Eau Europe - SEE" meeting in Strasbourg in early November on DWSS in Eastern Europe.

An inventory of other European meetings planned before the WWF6 should be made, for possibly giving them the "WWF6 label".

5. Political process:

It is important that an approach be officially made by the French Authorities and / or the IFC to the European Commission, European Environment Agency, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, UNECE and OSCE, to clarify the terms of their involvement in the European preparation process.

It would be a significant advantage if one of the meetings could be held at the European Parliament or the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

6. Facilitation of the interested parties and interactivity:

It may be proposed to support the whole European process and to open it up to as many participants as possible, to create **a dedicated website** that is very interactive,

to disseminate information and gather the opinions and suggestions of everyone, or even to give online access to the meetings, or to receive votes, or interventions? ...

To develop this site, **sending electronic letters**, probably 4, also could be considered to take stock of ongoing discussions, mobilize partners, to inform about the dates and diary of the preparatory events, to launch calls for project initiatives and ideas.

Each network head of the “consortium” will of course be requested to disseminate information to its members.

Visio conferences will also be used whenever possible.

7. Budget outline:

The budget will depend on the general policy adopted by the IFC, with regard to the costs of meetings (meeting rooms, translation, coffee breaks....), the taking care or not of the travels and living expenses of a particular category of participants

In the same way, the form of refunds remains to be defined according to the general policy adopted by IFC for the Forum itself.

In any case, it is now necessary to foresee a budget for the “consortium” secretariat according to the facilitation and mobilization principles proposed above.

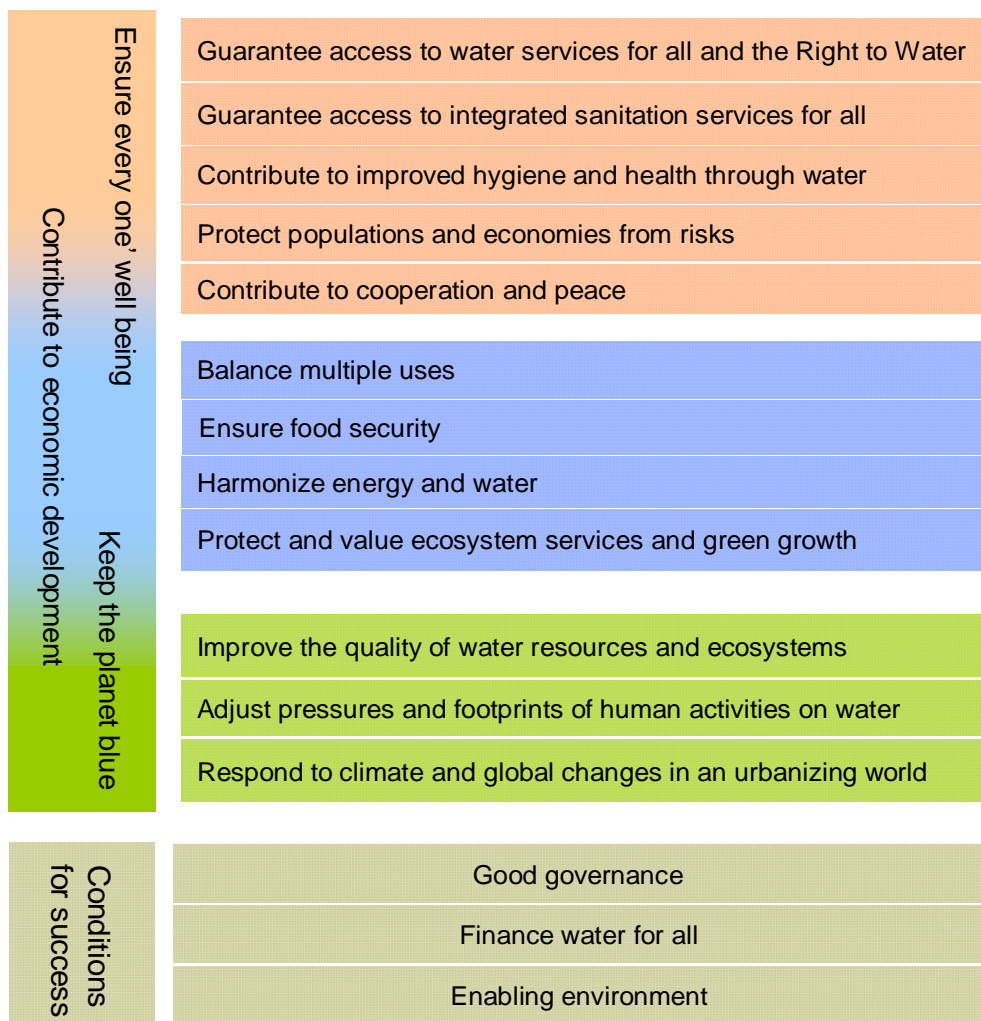
Draft Thematic Framework for the 6th World Water Forum

CREATE A BLUE MOVEMENT !

3 strategic
directions



12 key priorities for water action:



3rd September 2010 - IFC