

## News Update

### Editorial

#### THIS CENTURY'S PRIORITY

These past weeks, the climate, its evolution and its impact have been at the centre of important meetings and reports. Everybody wants to add his two cents, and the darkest scenarios flash before us like scenes from a disaster movie.

The water community is not just discovering this subject. It has been saying for a long time already that slow but significant evolutions have been observed for more than 50 years. But at the same time, caution is necessary in extrapolating this tendency over the next 50 years. As of today, one single reality must be recognized and was stressed during the recent conference in Nairobi: extreme events are on the rise, with drought in some places and flooding or hurricanes others. And the consequences are visible everywhere: Humanity is on the defensive, a defence that is very expensive and that finds its definition in additional dams, deeper drilling, taller and more protective dikes.

These unexpected investments are in addition to those already necessitated by unbridled demography and increasingly worse pollution. All of this reduces our ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. All of this rallies for an unprecedented awareness—awareness followed by concrete decisions, going beyond temporary enthusiasm and the media.

More than ever, we see the World Water Council's role being confirmed: to convince people that water, along with energy, is the priority of the century and that this priority be inscribed prior to all development policies.

What is obvious for the wide family of water must impose itself for everyone as the obligation of the century.

Loïc Fauchon  
President



Loïc Fauchon at the AWRA Conference

### At a glance

#### Loïc Fauchon receives the American Water Resources Association Award

The President of the World Water Council was awarded the American Water Resources Association Award in early November, during the Association's annual conference in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. This distinction, particularly renowned within the international community, had not been awarded since 2001. Granted by a jury of recognised American professionals, this prize is bestowed upon an individual in recognition of his or her eminence in a branch of water resources science and technology.

AWRA website: <http://www.awra.org/>

#### New Report Underlines Africa's Vulnerability to Climate Change

A new report on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation in Africa, released by the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and based on data from bodies including the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), indicates that the continent's vulnerability to climate change is even more acute than had previously been supposed.

[More information](#)

## This month's focus : Africa

With nearly 300 million people lacking access to potable water and nearly 313 million people without sanitation facilities, according to the 4<sup>th</sup> Forum African Regional Report, Africa remains at the centre of the international community's concerns. Immediate action is a priority, an emergency.

Accordingly, through this Newsletter, the World Water Council has gathered input on initiatives that contribute to change. We would especially like to thank our African members and partners for their contribution.

### 3 questions for

**Kordje Bedoumra**  
Director of the African Water Facility

#### → **What have been the benefits of the Forum of Mexico for Africa?**

The 4th World Water Forum was the opportunity for Africa to reaffirm its participation in the world water community and to voice its needs and its experience. Africa has benefited from worldwide exposure at the Forum to raise awareness at the international level and to prompt regional decision-makers to take immediate action on water issues on the continent. This will hopefully also galvanize the partnerships of the international community to achieve the objectives of providing water and sanitation services to all populations in Africa as a fundamental human right. Africa, for the first time, under the leadership of the African Ministers' Council of Water (AMCOW) and the coordination of the African Development Bank (AfDB), presented "The African Regional Document" on the main challenges and opportunities of water development in Africa and urged greater commitment from the international community to increase funding for rapid water infrastructure development in Africa. It was also the occasion to promote key regional initiatives.

#### → **In your opinion, how can the African Water Facility contribute to resolving water challenges in Africa?**

The establishment of the African Water Facility (AWF) is a response to the low levels of funding for development and exploitation of water resources in Africa. It is an initiative of AMCOW resulting from regional and international consensus to address investments in the sector. The AFW's mission is to improve the enabling environment and to strengthen water resource management in Africa in order to attract the massive and appropriate investments necessary for achieving national and regional water objectives. The AWF supports activities such as the improvement of IWRM (Integrated Water

Resources Management) policies, support to River Basin Organizations for the joint development of shared waters, targeting investment for small-scale infrastructure development, enhancement of information and knowledge in the sector, establishment of Monitoring and Evaluation systems, preparation of bankable projects.

#### → **How is the African Bank Programme on rural water launched last year progressing?**

By far the most important AfDB's water initiative is the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI), which is aimed at mobilizing African governments and the international donor community to accelerate access to sustainable drinking water supply and basic sanitation. The main target is to extend coverage of safe water and basic sanitation to 80% of rural populations by 2015 from the base level of about 47% coverage for water supply and 44% for sanitation in 2000. This will require providing access to drinking water supply to 277 million rural inhabitants and sanitation services to 295 million by the end of 2015. The investment needed for achieving the RWSSI targets is about USD 14.2 billion. The Bank is committed to providing 30% of the requirement from African Development Fund (ADF) and AfDB resources. About 50% will be mobilized from other multilateral and bilateral financing agencies, and the remaining 20%, from governments and beneficiary communities.

*Kordje Bedoumra*, a Chadian citizen, has 23 years of experience at the AfDB, including more than 10 years of management-level experience in the water sector. He played a key role in the conception and the development of the AfDB Water Sector Initiatives such as the RWSSI. Mr. Bedoumra was named Director of the AWF in April 2005 and Director of the AfDB's Water and Sanitation Department (OWAS) in July 2006.

More information can be found in our [Governors' profiles](#) on our website.

## 4th World Water Forum Outcomes

### Africa at the 4<sup>th</sup> Forum in figures

- More than 20 sessions, in addition to the African Regional Report (available [here](#), pdf 3.4 MB), were dedicated to Africa. The region was well represented in all framework themes, except Risk management. The main issues addressed were related to development and financing, the importance of women's participation in water management and the need for bottom-up approaches that would strengthen local actors and communities. More than 34 organisations from 11 different African countries were present, despite difficulties obtaining visas.
- Two hundred and twenty nine local actions were highlighted 50 of which were presented and discussed in sessions. Countries from Africa providing more than 10 local actions included: Nigeria (24), South Africa (21), Senegal and Uganda (14), Ethiopia (12), Burkina Faso and Kenya (10). The main issues of these actions were related to sanitation, communities' participation, water and food, watershed, water resources protection and water for development.

## Africities 2006

### Facilitate the strengthening of local authorities for meeting water challenges in Africa

The 4<sup>th</sup> African Summit for Local Authorities took place in Nairobi, Kenya, between 18 and 24 September 2006. The Summit provided a platform where major local government stakeholders from all over Africa could discuss and exchange with private sector companies, NGO's, major UN agencies, and other international organisations on how to best work together at the local level in order to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

On this occasion, the WWC, in partnership with UN-Habitat and United Cities and Local Governments – Africa (UCLG-A), organised a session entitled "Facilitate the strengthening of local authorities for meeting water challenges". The lack of capacity of local authorities is, indeed, one of the main constraints in achieving the MDGs in Africa. Nowadays, as part of decentralisation processes, central governments are transferring responsibilities for water and sanitation services more and more often to their local authorities. However, this transfer of responsibilities is often not accompanied by the transfer of human resources, technical know how and fiscal power. Based on this statement, participants agreed on recommendations addressed to each type of stakeholder.

Outcomes of the session will be used to build a programme that aims to define priorities for actions to facilitate the strengthening of local authorities. Click [here](#) for more information and to read the recommendations.

### Important commitments made during the Forum concerning Africa

- UN-HABITAT (United Nations Human Settlements Programme) announced a Memorandum of Understanding with the AfDB for low-scale urban water project loans and subsidies in the amount of 579 million dollars, through the allocation of 217 million dollars in subsidies and more than 362 million dollars in credit for investment in water and sanitation over the next five years.
- The French government committed to double public aid for water and sanitation projects to reach 9 million people in Africa by 2015.
- AMCOW and UN Agencies called for consolidation of existing efforts to achieve sustainable development and management of groundwater resources in Africa, through the establishment of Centres of Excellence under the guidance of AMCOW and NEPAD, with the support of relevant UN agencies and international partners.



Africities Summit 2006

### Main recommendations agreed upon during the WWC session at Africities

- All actors should focus on a concerted strengthening of the human, financial and technical capacities of Local Government and their water authorities.
- To ensure that money for water is effectively used for water, effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms must be put in place.
- Central and local government should give higher priority to water in their development plans and budgets.

## Water and...

### ■ **Security: WWC President addresses Security Issues**

On 6 November, Mr. Fauchon was given the opportunity to speak at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) based in Washington, DC, in a conference-debate organised on "Water 'Security': Defining the Linkages between Water, Peace and Stability." CSIS has been engaged in recent years in analyzing the impact of international water issues on economic growth, social development, geopolitical relationships and human health and well-being, in particular through the creation of its "Global Water Futures" project.

This conference brought together approximately fifty individuals, including representatives of the US Army Corps of Engineers, the American Defense Department, the US State Department, the American Congress, several Embassies, the World Bank and NGOs. The participants discussed a definition of water security on the international level, one that seeks to utilise water as a vector for peace rather than a source of conflict. The importance of first identifying areas that are at risk and of promoting productivity through risk prevention and education was highlighted.

The WWC and CSIS look forward to working together more closely in the future on projects related to security, risk and development.

The full text of Mr. Fauchon's speech and its French translation can be found [here](#).

[More information.](#)

### ■ **Monitoring: An Action Plan to Strengthen Monitoring Activities in Africa**

Monitoring activities have been creating increased interest at the highest level. The presence of political figures at the regional consultative meeting organised by the African Water Facility under the aegis of AMCOW on 21 and 22 September in Tunis is proof of it. Abdelmalek Sellal, Algerian Minister of Water Resources, opened the meeting, which was also attended by Bruno Jean Richard Itoua, Minister of Energy and Hydraulics from the Republic of Congo Brazzaville and Jenipher Namuyangu, Ugandan State Minister of Water Resources. This meeting enabled participants to share their experiences and to strengthen partnerships in order to support African countries in water monitoring activities. In the course of the two days of discussions, the participants, 85 representatives of institutions involved in monitoring activities, proposed an action plan that insists on the need to:

- Clarify concepts and to establish a common vocabulary in order to facilitate communication and interaction among the various active parties;
- Coordinate stakeholders, starting at the country level and for existing activities, and to strengthen national mechanisms and regional cooperation.

The African Water Facility expects to create a task force assigned to implement consultatively the recommendations and proposals formulated during this meeting. Information and Contacts: [www.africanwaterfacility.org](http://www.africanwaterfacility.org)

### ■ **Local Authorities: Contractualisation as a Tool for Strengthening Local Capacities**

In Africa, like in other parts of the developing world, management, financing and rules governing water supply and sanitation services require the involvement of many stakeholders within a framework that is more and more decentralised. Legislation and Performance Contracts are potential tools for guaranteeing quality and accessibility for these services.

The World Water Council participated in the first step of a 3-year process initiated by the World Bank Institute (WBI) in the framework of its Plan for Capacity Building. An international consultative workshop was held in Montreal between 17 and 20 October 2006 to discuss contractualisation of water supply and sanitation services. Organised by the International Secretariat for Water (ISW) and the WBI, the meeting aimed to develop a plan for creating modules on capacity building.

These modules would be taught as early as January 2007 during seminars centred around water supply and sanitation services that are adapted to developing countries, in particular in the Middle Eastern, North African and Sub-Saharan African regions.

[More information.](#)

Visit also <http://www.i-s-w.org/>

## Kyoto Prize

### “International Water Project” action in Kenya

**The Kazusabori Technology Transfer and Sustainable Community Water Development** - Njukini (Maasai land) in Kenya is a semi-arid area and is faced with a severe shortage of safe, reliable water. This is because of seasonal rivers/streams, low precipitation and frequent drought. The area was affected by cholera and water sources are in common contact with wild animals. The solution provided was training the community in Kazusabori technology to supply safe water and to improve their living and health conditions for their self-reliance. Ten people were trained and 6 wells were constructed at primary schools and in communities. After 8 months of training, ten members of the community can drill wells by themselves. Safe reliable water is now available and the prevalence of water-borne diseases has been drastically decreased.

Contact: [Hisayo Ohno](mailto:Hisayo.Ohno).

More information on the Kyoto Prize can be found [here](#).

### In brief

➔ Margaret Chan of China has been appointed General Director of the World Health Organization (WHO). More information is available on WHO's website: <http://www.who.int/>

➔ Workshop on “Developing Guidelines for Inter-Basin Water Transfers for Policy Makers in Africa”: Report now available for the workshop held in Accra, Ghana (25-29 September 2006). Click [here](#) to access the report (pdf, 1.4 MB)

➔ Congratulations! UNICEF celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this month. <http://www.unicef.org>



African children at the 4th Forum  
Photo courtesy of Leila Mead/IISD

## On the members side

### ➔ Reaching Students, Parents, Educators and Communities in Africa with Water Education

Reaching students through teachers using hands-on water education materials is the foundation upon which Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) was built. Project WET believes that water education can play a critical role in meeting the challenges each country faces in regard to sustainable water management.

Project WET's International Network currently has 23 countries, including five in Africa: Cameroon, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo, and Uganda. Since 2003, thousands of African students, teachers, and community leaders have been reached with Project WET materials and lessons. Click [here](#) to read full article. Contact: [John.Etgen@projectwet.org](mailto:John.Etgen@projectwet.org)

### ➔ Mobilising Resources for Water in Africa - African Water Facility goes online

The African Water Facility's (AWF) Website is now online at [www.africanwaterfacility.org](http://www.africanwaterfacility.org). The AWF is an initiative led by the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to mobilize financial resources for water sector development in Africa. Created in 2004, the AWF is hosted and managed by the African Development Bank (AfDB). To learn more about its mission, objectives, activities and financing provided by the AWF, please refer to the wealth information online.

Contact: [s.hadjadjaoul@afdb.org](mailto:s.hadjadjaoul@afdb.org)

### ➔ African River and Lake Basin Organisations Conference (R/LBOs)

Representatives of African River and Lake Basin Organisations met in Kampala, Uganda, 19-20 October to chart the way forward and to engage their institutions in a continent-wide effort to address the water crisis in Africa. The conference hoped to obtain agreement among senior-level decision-makers on water in Africa for establishing and supporting new R/LBOs, while rejuvenating existing ones within the framework of a region-wide mechanism under the auspices of AMCOW. More information and a full report can be found at: <http://www.amcow.org/events.php>

## Publications

### Human Development Report 2006: special focus on Water and Sanitation

This year's United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report, launched on 9 November in Cape Town, South Africa, is subtitled "Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis." It focuses mainly on the growing water and sanitation crisis. It also complements and reaffirms the message of the 2nd UN World Water Development Report that poverty, unequal access, wars, migration and unsustainable consumption patterns are the leading causes of the water crisis, rather than just scarcity of freshwater resources. <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/>



#### → 20 liters of clean water every day: the minimum requirement for respecting the right to water!

This is one of the main statements of the Human Development Report on the Right to Water. Other examples of what the Report says on the Right to Water include the following:

- Both the private and the public sector have roles to play in delivering on the right to water, though ultimate responsibility rests with Government.
- All Governments should go beyond vague constitutional principles to enshrine the human right to water in enabling legislation.
- Clear benchmarks should be set for progressing towards the target, with national and local governments and water providers being held accountable for progress.

Please click [here](#) to read all the Report statements related to the Right to Water.

## Where to meet...

November 26-27

**Inter American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering Congress (AIDIS)** - Punta del Este, Uruguay  
*Loïc Fauchon*

December 1

**OECD Experts' Workshop on Access to Drinking Water and Sanitation in Africa** - Paris, France  
*Paul van Hofwegen*

December 8-9

**General Assembly of the Arab Water Council and 3rd Arab Water Regional Conference** - Cairo, Egypt  
*Loïc Fauchon, Moktar Bzioui and Hachmi Kennou*

December 12-16

**East Asian Seas Congress** - Haikou City, China  
*Paul van Hofwegen*

Please feel free to send your press releases, publication & event announcements, etc. to be published in the *WWC News Update* to:

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## ... More events

### 3rd Arab Water Regional Conference

December 9-11

Cairo, Egypt - Organized by: National Water Research Center (NWRC) and Arab Water Council (AWC)

More information: [www.nwrc-egypt.org/arabwater2006](http://www.nwrc-egypt.org/arabwater2006)

Contact: [nwrc@nwrc-eg.org](mailto:nwrc@nwrc-eg.org)

### International Symposium on Water Resources and Renewable Energy Development in Asia

November 30- December 1

Bangkok, Thailand

More information: <http://www.hydropower-dams.com/>

Contact: [mb@hydropower-dams.com](mailto:mb@hydropower-dams.com)

### A few acronyms:

**AMCOW**: African Ministers' Council of Water

**AfDB**: African Development Bank

**NEPAD**: New Partnership for Africa's Development

**AWF**: African Water Facility

**RWSSI**: Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative