

World Water Council

Weekly News Update

The Word of the President

A NECESSARY FORUM

Preparation for the 4th World Water Forum is at its height. Several days ago, a hundred water community organisation leaders came together in Mexico City. These Beacons are pillars and guiding lights for preparation of the large gathering that will take place in March 2006.

Their presence, their experience, as well as their enthusiasm have shown how important our future Forum is for the cause of water, which remains to be supported by all political and economic decision-makers. The priority given to local actions marks the need to change mentalities in favour of a real “decentralising revolution” for water.

Along with our Mexican friends whose organisation is hard at work day after day, we still have a long way to go. Nevertheless, our determination is strong, hand in hand, for a necessary Forum.

Loïc Fauchon

What's new

Water for Development: A three-level impact analysis

During the World Bank Water Week, a meeting on Water for Development—both a framework theme of the Forum and a programme of the Council and its partners—was held at the World Bank with the USACE, IUCN, the Secretariat of 4th Forum, the Japan Water Forum and the Council. One of the main decisions made relates to analysis of water impact on development, which will be conducted at three levels:

1. National: The World Bank and regional banks will contribute with their countries' studies.
2. Sectoral: Attention will be given to macro economic effects/benefits of water services and infrastructure for a variety of sectors such as health, environment, etc.
3. Local: Projects in the field will be identified through Regional Committees and integrated into the Forum with the help of the Beacons.

The 4th Forum will be the first step of this programme, which will continue beyond March 2006. For more information, please contact Paul van Hofwegen at p.vanhofwegen@worldwatercouncil.org

You can also visit the Water for Development page of the 4th Forum website at: <http://www.worldwaterforum4.org>

■ Towards the creation of a worldwide platform on solidarity funds

In order to reach the Millennium development goals, the international community committed itself during the 3rd Forum of Kyoto to strengthening public aid and North-South solidarity in the sector of water and sanitation and to promoting good governance in that sector by expanding the role of local authorities and governments.

On the one hand, actors of proximity cooperation have an important role to play. On the other, there exists a large variety of solidarity fund* models, based on sustainable links, providing adequate financial means and aiming to reinforce local actors' capacity and opportunities to exchange experience. Complementarities must therefore be found between local actions and official development aid.

As a partner of this project, whose field of action corresponds to the principal theme of the 4th forum, we are committed to debating this theme during the Forum preparation process and during the Forum itself.

In order to accomplish this, the programme we are establishing necessitates the creation of a steering committee in charge of defining, orienting and coordinating the work to be done to record the various forms of solidarity financing that exist. It will also try to evaluate the impact of these projects, make the initiatives more widely known and solicit interest on the part of backers of official development assistance funds.

To increase the data already available on existing methods and to feed debates and discussions, we are requesting input from organizations that have information and experiences to share. To join us on this project, please contact Elisabeth Catton at e.catton@worldwatercouncil.org.

** Related to the solidarity of water and sanitation actors : consumers/users, private and public operators, local authorities, managements institutions from the sector*

■ Launch of a journalist water training programme

Raising awareness on water issues and implementing monitoring systems for water policies requires, among other things, having well-informed and adequately trained journalists to deliver accurate information.

It is in this context that the World Water Council and the Secretariat of the 4th Forum have decided to develop a training program for journalists in developing countries. The aim of the program is to provide them with a better understanding of water problems and challenges. This program is being set up as a continuation of the water media network, which was launched by the World Bank Institute in Johannesburg and continued until Kyoto. The water media network enabled training for over 150 journalists and sponsored trips for 130 of them, making it possible for them to participate in both international events.

The program includes two main activities:

- A networking activity for over 900 journalists worldwide, aiming to give them access to information that is often difficult for journalists to find;
- Organisation of seminars in all major regions of the world, enabling participants to benefit from peer training.

This program is financed by several regional banks. Journalists who are interested in receiving more information or who wish to register with the network are welcome to contact Stephanie Porro at medianetwork@worldwatercouncil.org

In brief

→ New on the web

A new web site about the water cycle, including a comprehensive diagram available in 57 languages is now on line at

<http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/watercycle.html>, and is part of the existing Water Science for Schools Web.

→ ADB

ADB's Board of Directors and Management recently approved the amendment to ADB's Water Policy. Paragraph 32 on large water resources projects now says stakeholders must be provided with the opportunity to comment on the justification for the project, with their views being taken into consideration.

www.adb.org/Water/Policy/proposed_revision.asp

Members corner

WSSCC chair position open

Nominations for the WSSCC (Water Supply & Sanitation Collaborative Council) chairperson are open. Nominations should be sent to WSSCC Secretariat, Tirza Kouwenberg, no later than the 2nd of April 2005.

Pour plus d'information: www.wsscc.org

Challenges of Water Scarcity: A Business Case for Financial Institutions

The recently launched report, "Challenges of Water Scarcity: A Business Case for Financial Institutions", conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) and the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), shares insights as to the risks and challenges to be overcome by the financial community in the years to come. The report can be downloaded from: www.unepfi.org/water or www.siwi.org.

Did you know?

Drinking large quantities of water can significantly reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. It is as important as exercise or diet. Not drinking enough water can be as harmful to your heart as smoking.
Source: Loma Linda University.

In brief

→ USA

The U.S. President George W. Bush announced the nomination of Stephen Johnson as the new Environmental Administrator on Friday, March 4th. Stephen Johnson, 53 years old, was Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. He succeeds Mike Leavitt, who was, himself, nominated to head Health and Human Services in December.

→ Forum of Mexico

The second issue of the 4th Forum newsletter is now available on their website at : www.worldwaterforum4.org.mx
You will find information about the preparatory process, the thematic Forum and the up-coming events.

Events

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM : WATER FOR DEVELOPMENT WORLDWIDE

Istanbul, Turkey, 7-11 September 2005

Organised by : Republic of Turkey – Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works

The deadline for receipt of abstracts is 18 March 2005.

More information : www.dsi.gov.tr/sempozyumi.pdf

→ More crops per drop

A unique method for rice production known as the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) could increase rice yields in parts of India by 25-100 percent and at the same time reduce water use by 25-50 percent or more. This is the result of a study conducted by IWMI-Tata.

For more details : <http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/iwmi-tata/>

Agenda

President

March 8-12

Japanese week for Loïc Fauchon.

Meeting with :

- Japanese members of the Council
- Ryutaro Hashimoto
- Director-General of the Water Resources Department, Environmental Management Bureau
- Director General of the River Bureau
- Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport
- Ministry of Environment

March 18-20

21st Board of Governors meeting of the World Water Council, Rabat, Morocco.

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

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