

Weekly News Update

The Word of the President

FOR A SIMPLE AND ACCEPTED MONITORING

Monitoring was at the core of several meetings during the last Conference on Sustainable Development at the United Nations.

In New York, we defended the World Water Council's position on this subject.

It is an important subject at a time when everyone agrees we should have more refined capabilities for observing the progress of policies regarding water access. It is legitimate, in particular, that donors be able to understand coherent supporting figures and how incoming assistance is used.

In order to do that, monitoring must be understood as a simple and positive procedure, as progress and not only control. Monitoring requires reciprocal trust among all those who participate in it. It requires that we be profoundly convinced that, on site, it is useful and sustainable. It also means that within international institutions or with financial backers, we must accept the fact that there is not one single model, but, to the contrary, the specificities and local particularities are taken into account, in order to, first of all, help those in the field to receive and react.

As we said, let's put in some heart and give a human dimension to all that. The Council, in any case, is committed to establishing the Water Monitoring Alliance. It is a tool designed to count and analyse monitoring systems that already exist. It's a platform benefiting from an Internet site to exchange, reflect on and propose advances in this domain.

Each stakeholder involved in water must now contribute to its development and its proliferation. Thank you for participating.

Loïc FAUCHON

Programmes

The Water Monitoring Alliance launches its website

As we can see, more and more importance and recognition are devoted to monitoring, notably through international declarations. Such is the case in the NGO major groups statement made at the CSD: *"Monitoring needs to be regular to ensure a proper sense of urgency.... This information is critical for planning and efficient allocation of resources for the poorest"*; or in the Norwegian statement which emphasizes the need for reinforcing existing monitoring mechanisms: *"Monitoring and assessment systems for access to water supply and sanitation services need to be active and adequately resourced from the sub-national to the international level"*; or that of the African group, which concludes, *"It is equally beneficial to provide financial and technical support for the efforts to African countries in developing monitoring, evaluation and reporting capacity."*

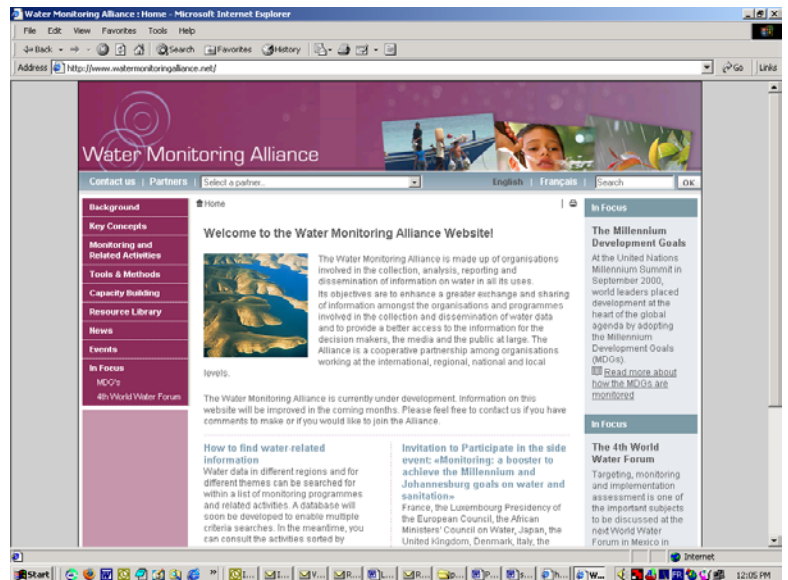
It is in this context that the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development and the World Water Council came together to establish the Water Monitoring Alliance, a project that aims to improve the dissemination of information on existing monitoring systems, facilitating data-sharing and improving coordination among the numerous activities that are conducted in this field.

To be continued page 2

The Water Monitoring Alliance website was launched on April 20th at the Commission on Sustainable Development. It can be consulted at <http://www.watermonitoringalliance.net>, in both English and French.

Please note that the website is continually updated to include programmes and activities inventoried by the working team based at the World Water Council's headquarters in Marseille.

Don't hesitate to give us your comments. Simply write to Marie Lagier at m.lagier@worldwatercouncil.org, who can also give you more information on how to become a partner.



Zoom

The 4th Forum at the CSD in New York

On April 20th in New York, the 4th World Water Forum Secretariat and the Council organized an informative meeting about the Forum's theme for the participants of the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13). This meeting was quite successful despite another side-event on Monitoring, co-organized by the French government and the WWC, being held at the same time.

Cesar Herrera opened the meeting with a presentation of the general framework for the Forum, before giving the floor to Roberto Lenton, co-chair of Task Force 7 on water and sanitation. A representative of UNDP and a cc-beacon for the Forum theme "Water supply and sanitation for all", Mr. Lenton explained that the results of the Task Force, along with those of the CSD-13, would be integrated into the preparation of the Forum's theme. "We have always imagined that the Forum would be the place to hold privileged discussions on concrete actions that should be implemented in accordance with the proposals included in our report," he said.

Regarding regional preparation of the Forum, Hideaki Oda, President of the Japan Water Forum, presented the main principles of the Asian preparatory process. He insisted on the important role of the Kyoto Water Prize in involving grass-root NGO's in the Forum.

The Kyoto Prize, which will reward the most deserving NGO with a US\$50,000 award, plans, in addition, to sponsor the participation of numerous grass-root ONG's in the Forum.

In the question and answer session, strong interest was expressed by the numerous participants, but the lack of local representation of theme leaders was criticized. Several representatives of the major groups of the UN (young people, women, indigenous peoples, etc.) suggested that the list of beacons be completed with that in mind, an idea that had already been strongly emphasized at the Board of Governors meeting in Rabat (March 2005).

In brief

World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)

WWAP deputy coordinator, Carlos Fernández-Jáuregui, met with Cristobal Jaime, president of the National Water Commission of Mexico, Arturo Montiel Rojas, governor of the state of Mexico, and other officials to discuss the preparations for the 4th World Water Forum, where the second edition of the **World Water Development Report (WWDR)** will be released. They considered ways to ensure the active participation of case study countries and Member States.

Access full chapters of the WWDR:
<http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr/index.shtml>

Source: UNESCO, *Currents - news from the Issue n°15, April 2005*

On the member side

→ Soon to start: an E-conference on corruption

The IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre based in Delft, Netherlands will organise an e-conference on Transparency and honesty in the water and sanitation sector from May 9-27, 2005.

How can transparency be improved and honesty ensured? How can corruption be eliminated? The focus of the discussion will be on finding and mainstreaming solutions.

E-Conference web page: <http://www.irc.nl/>

More information: Cor Dietvorst, dietvorst@irc.nl

→ United Nations Development Programme

Within the framework of the "Public-Private Partnerships for the Urban Environment" (PPUE) facility, the United Nations Development Programme (PNUD) is calling for proposals. The proposals should be innovative ideas from local partners in the supply of or accessibility to basic urban services (water, sanitation, energy and municipal equipment) and have a direct impact upon underprivileged urban populations.

National governments, local communities, basic communities, associations of local authorities; chambers of commerce; and NGO's from PNUD program member countries are eligible for this facility.

The availability of funds for selected projects is anticipated for the end of July 2005. Proposal submission deadline: 30 May 2005. For more information: <http://pppue.undp.org>

→ World Bank

Com+ Alliance of Communicators for Sustainable Development, with the backdrop of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD13), is sponsoring the launch of the World Bank's Little Green Data Book 2005. The book reveals new indicators for over 200 countries including which countries are on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals for water and sanitation and trends in environmental degradation and the impacts on human health.

In brief

■ Water as basic human right

→ Actor Leonardo DiCaprio signed a petition that calls on President Bush and other government leaders to commit to a legally binding United Nations treaty declaring clean water as a basic human right. He spoke in support of the Millennium Water Alliance (MWA) which aims to make clean water and sanitation accessible to half a billion people by 2015. Millennium Water Alliance Website: <http://www.mwawater.org/>

→ On 19 April 2005, the Belgian federal government has adopted a "water resolution" in which it recognizes access to safe water as a human right that should be included in the Belgian constitution.

(source Weekly, <http://www.irc.nl/page/17853>)

■ Dutch pavilion makes splash at World Expo

The world exposition Expo 2005 opened in the Japanese prefecture of Aichi on 25 March 2005. The Dutch pavilion combines characteristically Dutch features with modern filmmaking techniques in service of one central theme: water. More in the press release and on www.holland-expo2005.com.

Please feel free to send your press releases, publication & event announcements, etc. to be published in this Weekly News Update to : Stéphanie Porro
Ph.: +33 (0)4 91 99 41 00 – Fax: +33 (0)4 91 99 41 01
s.porro@worldwatercouncil.org

Did you know?

At the continental level, America has the largest share of the world's total freshwater resources (45%), followed by Asia (28%), Europe (15.5%) and Africa (9%).

In terms of annual per capita resources in each continent, America averages 24,000 cubic meters; Europe, 9,300 cubic meters; Africa, 5,000 cubic meters; and Asia, 3,400 cubic meters.

Source: *Land and Water Development Division Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*