

# A Brazilian journey

WORLD WATER COUNCIL - 2011



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Several ministers, some governors, about ten senators and the same number of parliamentarians, countless meetings with NGOs, several mayors, professional organizations, enterprises, journalists, large audiences composed of thousands of people, 22 speeches and a lot of interviews, more than 5,000 kilometers traveled within the country: this was the schedule of the official visit of the President of the World Water Council and his accompanying team when visiting Brazil from 25 September to 2 October 2011.

Each of these meetings was characterized by an exceptional interest in all water issues.

## Water and global changes highlighted at the XIV<sup>th</sup> IWRA- World Water Congress

Global changes facing water management were at the heart of the debates of the XIV<sup>th</sup> International Water Resources Association World Water Congress held in Porto de Galinhas from 25 to 28 September 2011.

Invited to speak at the opening session, the President of the Council recalled that “in the face of global challenges and threats which weigh heavily today on water, the future of water not only depends on technological progress, but also depends on political commitments.”

The President of the World Water Council and Benedito Braga, President of the International Forum Committee, moved by the performance of a young Brazilian pianist in the opening ceremony, invited her to come to the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum next March for a concert benefiting a project on access to water in Brazil.



This was also the occasion for Benedito Braga, Dogan Altinbilek, and Jun Xia to present in plenary session of about 800 participants, the situation regarding the preparation of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.



## Focus on water and food: Introduction of the CNA to the Council

The visit in Brasilia was also an occasion to celebrate the induction of the Brazilian Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock (CNA) into the World Water Council. The powerful Brazilian agricultural federation, 800 000 members strong, is very influential in Brazilian decisions on matters of food security, energy production, biofuels and the sustainable management of water resources.

Senator Katia Abreu, President of CNA, was very pleased for her organization to join the water community, stating "You can stand by us as partners. In the future, we want to contribute to the development of innovative proposals for sustainable water use, essential to food production and the preservation of ecosystems."



*K. Abreu, L. Fauchon*

Invited to speak during this ceremony, the President of the Council was also pleased for the Council to welcome a new member, declaring that "for agriculture, smarter and more efficient management is necessary in the long-term. It calls for urgent action to promote agro-responsibility and water vigilance. This also demands greater respect and better understanding of the rural world."

Finally the President of the Council recalled that "in this matter, we need to be careful when using the term water-food-energy nexus, commonly used nowadays. Of course, we need water and energy to produce food, to sustain an ever increasing number of citizens in this world. But don't forget water for health, which is an essential element of development."



# Minas Gerais: Committed to promoting transfer of knowledge

On 28 September, the President of the World Water Council took part in the inauguration of the City of Waters launched by the UNESCO HydroEx Center located in Frutal, Minas Gerais. Before the students and professors of this Center, Loic Fauchon declared that “without transfer of knowledge, the future of water, and thereby of humanity, is in danger.” He also stressed the urgent need to implement rigorous policies for water demand management. “This is the only way to achieve water self-sufficiency”, which is “a prerequisite for the development and the protection of the Earth.”

He then visited Inhotim, a modern open-air art gallery spread over more than 60 hectares. This Institute is at the vanguard and aims to preserve cultural heritage while protecting the environment.

Narcio Rodrigues, Member of the Brazilian Congress and currently Secretary of State of Science and Technology in the state of Minas Gerais, launched the UNESCO water observatory project in Inhotim, dedicated to quali-quantitative monitoring in river basins to support better risk management.





## Membership : Increased mobilization of the Brazilian organizations



At the headquarters of the National Water Agency, the President Vicente Andreu and his main collaborators highlighted the importance of promoting water governance to advance the cause of water in the political agenda. Among other initiatives, he mentioned the work carried out by Governors Paulo Varella and Ricardo Andrade to mobilize the Brazilian water community at the international level.

The firm mobilization of the Brazilian water community to take part in the next World Water Forum in Marseille was felt strongly, notably during the meeting of the Brazilian members of the WWC held in Brasilia on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, and in Sao Paulo with the members of the Brazilian Association of Infrastructure and Basic Industries (ABDIB) which gathers the major Brazilian companies, both public and private, related to the implementation, operation and financing of projects in the infrastructure, service, supply and manufacturing sectors.

To the Brazilian members, the President of the Council shared his enthusiasm with the upcoming participation of Brazilian partners in the next Forum.



# A strong political mobilization for the cause of water

## The Istanbul Water Consensus: The State of Sao Paulo sets the tone

The importance of urban water challenges was also on the agenda of the WWC delegation. Before an audience mainly composed of mayors, the President of the Council thanked the Secretary of State for Environment for his strong support in mobilizing local authorities on water management related issues. He praised Rosa Mancini, Adviser to the Secretary, for her role in promoting the Istanbul Water Consensus. She “has done a lot to motivate Brazilian municipalities to sign the Istanbul Water Consensus”, he said. For Loïc Fauchon, the state of Sao Paulo, strong of 598 signatories, sets a good example and such efforts need to be widely disseminated, notably during the next Forum.

To assess the progress made by each signatory city to effectively implement its commitment and pledge, the state of Sao Paulo set a voluntary reporting mechanism through a dedicated webpage. The representatives of the 3 cities that best performed will be invited to take part in the 6<sup>th</sup> Forum in order to share their experience with other local authorities present.



## Brazilian parliamentarians strongly involved

Numerous are the parliamentarians who, like Katia Abreu or Narcio Rodrigues, expressed their interest in the implementation of the Helpdesk and in taking part in the World Water Parliament, with an aim to promoting better water laws and effective oversight of public funds spent on water projects.

# Hydro diplomacy: from the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum....

Finally, the visit of the WWC delegation was characterized by high level political mobilization. During a meeting with Izabella Teixeira, Minister of Environment of Brazil, the President of the World Water Council underlined “the essential role that Brazil plays and will play in the future to support the cause of water within the international community, thanks to the mobilization of its political leaders.” On that occasion, Loïc Fauchon gave all due credits to the President of the 6<sup>th</sup> Forum, Benedito Braga, a Brazilian citizen and former Director of the National Water Agency of Brazil.

Confirming her plans to lead the Brazilian delegation to Marseille in March 2012, the Minister showed her enthusiasm for Brazil to bring innovative solutions to the Forum.

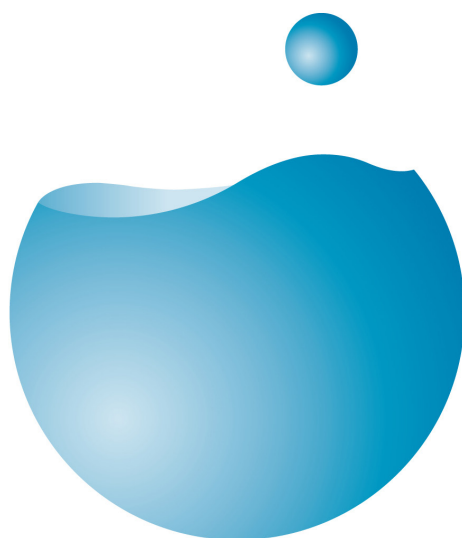
In a separate meeting, President Fauchon invited Fernando Bezerra Coelho, Minister of National Integration, to visit Marseille on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November of 2011.



## .... to Rio+20

With the upcoming Earth Summit to be held in Rio in June 2012, “Brazil provides a chance for the world. It is up to us to make the voice of water heard and to place it on the agenda of this major summit.” With these words, Loïc Fauchon assured the Minister of Environment that the Council would reflect on how it can contribute to the Rio+20 debates during the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.

As a follow-up to his meeting with Ambassador André Correa do Lago, in charge of the organization of the Rio+20 Conference, Mr. Benedito Braga held talks with Mr. Fernando Lyrio, Special Advisor on Rio+20 at the Ministry of Environment. During this meeting, Mr. Lyrio confirmed that water issues would be discussed during the Rio+20 Conference and that an official meeting would be held between the preparatory sessions and the Conference and that the World Water Council would be invited to participate in this meeting.



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