

First meeting European regional process, 27 February 2008

Draft summary of the proceedings

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Lessons learned from fourth World Water Forum
 - a. Involving business and politics
3. Relevant themes and topics for Europe
 - a. European Regional Document for fourth World Water Forum
 - b. Report on thematic sessions in Istanbul (7/8 February)
- **Lunch-break**
4. Existing initiatives and conferences in Europe
5. European Water House
6. European Regional Session and Regional Document
- **Coffee-break**
7. Regional Coordination: thematic consortia and regional committee
8. Session-proposals
9. Next meetings
10. AOB

Participants

A list of participants is attached to this document

Proceedings

Introduction

Tom Vereijken, chairman of the EWP, welcomed the participants and again emphasized the fact that the Regional Process should be an open process, accessible to all organisations. We should connect to parties that weren't involved in the Water Fora so far: business, politicians, local authorities, etc.

Paul van Hofwegen, programme director of the World Water Council, introduced the Forum and the preparatory processes. (his presentation is attached to this document) He stressed that the Forum had already started and that the the preparatory thematic,

political and regional processes were part of the Forum itself. If the Forum is to have a political impact it will need focus and should avoid to “preach to the converted”. We will have to make sure all the stakeholders, especially politicians, are involved, to enable the Forum to make a difference. The political process should culminate in a statement on Water Management Adaptation Strategies for Global Changes including Climate Variability/Change.

The meetings in Istanbul over the last months identified key issues the Forum will address. Because not everyone could be in Istanbul this list of issues is not finalized yet and input can still be given via the website of the World Water Forum at www.worldwaterforum5.org. Together with the thematic coordinators this list will be developed and published in the second announcement which will call for contributions to the sessions dedicated to these issues. The second announcement will be published on 22 March. The thematical coordinators will then coordinate the development of the sessions which should be finished in September, making sure the sessions focus on providing answers to the key questions. Virtual working spaces will be available for each theme, topic and region to make sure everybody can give their input.

During the Forum the themes will not each be addressed on one single day but the sessions will take place during the week. This is done to enable the sessions to take the results of earlier sessions into account.

Comments:

- The current market tendency of companies taking over water supplies as well as institutional changes in the market that are taking place is taken into account in Topic 4.4 “Optimising public and private roles in water services”.
- We will have to make sure we build on the large amount of work that has been done over the last years and not start from scratch in the various topics. The scoping documents that are written for each topic should make sure this is done.

Major Groups

During the second World Water Forum in The Hague in 2000 the need for a process to make sure all stakeholders are involved in the Forum was identified. The process so far is slow however, not due to unwillingness, but due to the fact people don’t know how to make sure all stakeholders are involved.

During the fifth World Water Forum a tool will be introduced and used which should make sure all the sessions and processes will involve all the stakeholders, thereby making the Forum an example of how these processes should be managed in the future.

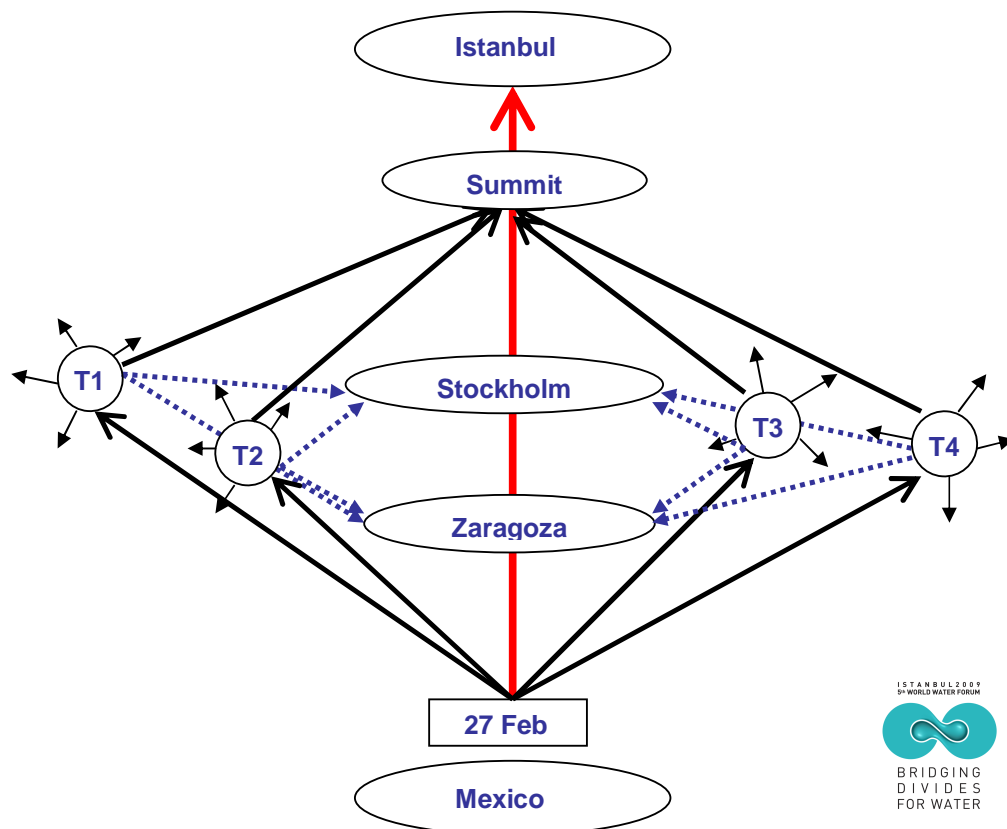
Training workshops will be given in all the regional processes and the knowledge gained will be used in training workshops in the Learning Center at the the Forum itself. This should result in a tool or manual to be used in these kind of processes in the future.

Comments:

- There have been a number of EU projects that have worked on these issues and we should make use of their results.
- A letter has been sent by the German government how they should connect to this process and how to connect this to the regional process.

Relevant themes and topics for Europe

Tom Vereijken explained the draft set-up of the Regional Process as visualized in the graph below.



The goal of this meeting was to define which issues are currently of major importance to Europe and therefore should be focused on in the Regional Process. For each of these issues we would like to bring together a regional consortium developing the regional aspects of the issue and connecting to the (global) thematic process. These consortia are shown as T1-T4 in the graph above and will connect to existing conferences and initiatives in Europe.

A Regional Coordination Committee will manage the regional process as visualized by the red line in the graph. This Committee will coordinate the writing of the regional document, will organise the regional session and connect to the other regional processes. It will also develop initiatives like the European Water House which will be further explained below.

We propose to bring together the preliminary results of the regional process in a high level summit in October 2008 in Brussels. In the period leading up to this event we would like to bring together the thematic consortia and regional committee during important events like the Zaragoza EXPO and the Stockholm Water Week.

Comments:

- There are a lot of conferences already planned in Europe and we will have to make sure the process connects to these.
- We need to involve the CEE countries and Eastern Europe outside the EU. Therefore we also need to connect to the Council of Europe.
- We need to connect with the other Regional Processes. Also to make sure we discuss the same issues under the same titles.
- Preliminary input in the political process should be ready by September

Bringing “new” stakeholders to the Forum: business and politicians

One of the goals of the European Regional Process should be to bring actors to the Forum that haven't been involved so far, mainly business and politicians. The EWP recently initiated the set up of the Aquawareness programme, one of the main goals of which is to make business aware of the water challenges. The EWP is also involved in a number of initiatives in the European Parliament, for instance the EP Report on the EU Communication on Water Scarcity and Droughts. These two initiatives can be a stepping stone to bring these stakeholders to the Forum. They were introduced at the meeting by Agnes Biesiekierska of the EWP and her presentation and a document explaining the Aquawareness programme are attached to this document.

Themes and Topics

All the participants were asked to give their opinion on what the most important issues in Europe currently are. Below the issues that came up in the discussions are listed. In the attached document you will also find the ones that were mentioned in the questionnaires filled out during the meeting.

- Managing and protecting water resources. Developments in the WFD since the fourth World Water Forum; UN Convention on transboundary rivers; Exporting WFD principals (EUWI and EU projects have worked on this); WFD commitment to involve all stakeholders;
- Flood management: Flood protection; EU Integrated Flood Prevention;
- Water Scarcity and Drought Management (in wider Europe). Linking to EU communication and EP report on Water Scarcity and Drought;
- Sanitation: household water management; waste water; MDG's; existing political process
- Land use management: economic, industrial, energy and technological development
- Agriculture
- Climate change: Adaptation technologies and strategies; methodology to address Climate Change; Scenario's on investment needed; linkages between adaptation and water; focus political will on prevention instead of relief measures;
- Link between IWRM and service provision
- Watervision for Europe: building on earlier work; SCENES; UK scenario's made by service providers and government;
- Finance: possibilities to attract enough finance; even richest EU countries currently lack finance; water efficiency; balance between economic goals and equity;
- Water efficiency: needed to be able to charge people for use;
- Governance: improving efficiency; providing water for poor and vulnerable people in Europe; effectively engaging stakeholders; how to implement decentralization; optimizing public and private flows;
- How to implement the right to water and sanitation;

General comments:

- Is the European process meant for Europe or to show Europe's achievements and challenges to the world?
- We should discern between issues where Europe can export its knowledge and issues where we haven't found a solution yet.
- The 100 key questions should be leading. The next meeting of European regional process could couple the key issues to the key questions.
- The attitude among EU politicians for water is becoming more positive. We should build on that in trying to include politicians in the process.

Which organisations can be leading in the European process?

The question was now posed to the participants who would be willing to participate in the European regional process and on what themes:

General comments:

- Process of thematic input should continue after Istanbul. EWP would be willing to coordinate this, if desired and in cooperation with other parties.
- We will need to use multimedia output to reach all the stakeholders.
- Zaragoza is very close so we have to act fast

The idea to use EXPO Zaragoza as a preparatory meeting for Istanbul is not new. The idea is now coming up again, also with support of the Turkish secretariat of the Forum. We should organise a separate meeting to coordinate ourselves for the EXPO.

- Ms. Anna Osann Jochum (University Castilla la Mancha) will be the lead partner for EXPO Zaragoza

One of the main themes we should focus on is finance. Not only the supply side, but also demand side and a group around this issue should be created.

- Mr. Jose Frade (EIB) offered his availability in taking the lead on this issue, depending on the availability of resources.

A second main theme should be River Basin Management and the WFD. Also together with the former USSR republics. (on June 5th there will be a conference in Moscow on experiences in implementing the WFD in former USSR countries)

- Jean Francois Donzier (INBO) offers to take a lead role in the coordination of this issue.

A third main theme will be Sanitation. A side event could be organised at the Wageningen Conference on Sanitation (The Netherlands) in May.

- Claudia Wendland (WECF) is willing to take a lead role in this theme.

The thematic process on Global Changes and Climate Change adaptation is already well established. Marloes Bakker (CPWC) will be the contact between the regional process and the thematic process on Global Changes.

The connection with the political process should be very well established.

- Joshua Newton (Unesco, WWC) will be the main contact with this process.

Roundtable

- In September the World Water Congress will be organised in Montpellier
- Pollutec: Water Business Forum will take place in December in Lyon
- International Conference "Water for Energy, Energy for Water", Unesco Paris
- French EU presidency: Sustainable development days (local governance), also including water.
- We should take into account the trade dimensions of water
- IWRM, transboundary water management and groundwater should be considered as themes
- The outcomes of this meeting will be placed on the server of the European Water NGO's to ensure their participation
- We should connect to the Romanian Water Association and their yearly conference.

Questionnaire

We would like to thank all those of you who handed in their questionnaires, the results of which are attached to this document. If you have any additions to these documents, please send them to h.riedstra@ewp.eu.

Follow up

The EWP will send around a draft document containing our plans for the continuation of the Regional Process shortly after the meeting. We were delighted to see such a large group of individuals from different organisations already so early in the process. However, to ensure the openness of the Process, we would like to invite you to inform any other interested organisation not taking part yet.

