

# REPORT FROM PREVIEW SESSION – KICK-OFF MEETING

## European Regional Process towards the 7th World Water Forum

19th May 2014



### Session 1 General introduction

#### **World Water Forum 7 and links to Marseille - issues and objectives: Henri Begorre, French Water Partnership:**

An introduction to the overall framework around World Water Forum and the regional process and stressed the importance of linking one forum and one regional process to the next in order to learn from our experiences and taking lessons learned forward.

Mr. Begorre further presented to roadmap for the World Water Forum in 2015 and how the regional process fits into this.

#### **European regional process and objectives, Bjørn K. Jensen, Danish Water Forum:**

Presentation of the objectives of the regional process, which are to

- Gather stakeholders to debate water management and access
- Formulate concrete proposals – encourage actions and solutions
- Ensure political commitment
- Create a platform for debate and engagement

The outcome of the process will be to establish some session groups (multi-stakeholder partnerships) to implement first events in Europe and later sessions in Korea. They will also contribute to the thematic process and to science and technology process. We will also have to implement an overall regional session in Korea.

#### **Water in the SDG's – in a European context. Continued challenges, tasks, responsibilities and opportunities: Henrik Dissing, Danish Ministry for the Environment**

A presentation of the status in the international discussion of the development of a sustainable development goal on water and proposed a relevant way forward for a global water SDG in a European context, which could focus on three elements:

- Withdrawal vs availability balance
- Ecosystem services
- Water productivity

Mr. Dissing also proposed a way forward based upon an identification of key stakeholders and an establishment of European partnerships based on long-term assessments and an objective to move from divided to shared interests and to include major water users in the discussion on topics such as:

- Long-term supply scenarios
- Demand driven management
- Promoting high-efficiency technology
- Pricing of water
- Joint identification of barriers to sustainability

#### **Water security and sustainable growth – an input to the Post 2015 process from GWP, Richard Müller, GWP Central and Eastern Europe**

A presentation of a UN online consultation for the development of the SDG's, where water is entered as one of thematic areas. The outcome of the discussions were:

- Consensus on the need for a dedicated water goal within the post-2015 sustainable development framework
- The proposed goal of “*Securing sustainable water for all*” fits with national development priorities in the region of Central and Eastern Europe
- Strong support for a comprehensive and integrated view of water in the post-2015 development framework

- Need for clear definitions of terms and indicators

## Session 2 - Action Goals

### Climate Change adaptation - Nicholas Bonvoisin, UNECE

An introduction to UNECE and its activities, in particular related to climate change based upon pilot projects on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins, and its activities which are to:

- Promote cooperation on adaptation in basins
- Compare methodologies and approaches
- Promote a shared vision between basins
- Assist countries in implementing UNECE Water Convention and EU Water Framework Directive
- Support countries in developing adaptation strategies and measures
- Create positive examples
- Support dialogue and cooperation on design of adaptation strategy in transboundary context

It was recommended to include Climate Change among topics for the regional process.

### EU directives implementation - Jean Francois Donzier, International Office for Water

An introduction to the European challenges related to preventing the deterioration of water resources, reducing the emissions of substances, achieving "good status" for water and aquatic environments. For the implementation of the WFD it is important to take into account:

- not only the problems of quality of water and the environments,
- BUT, all the aspects of water management and their impacts,
- AND, in particular, obvious interfaces with navigation, energy production, agriculture, the prevention and protection against floods and droughts.

In the presentation it was argued that key themes within the European process and implementation of directives could be flood control, droughts and restoration of aquatic environments, and that among implementation mechanisms transparency of costs and polluter pays principle should also be taken into account.

### Transboundary water management - Arnould Lefebure, International Scheldt Commission:

An introduction to the large number of international European river basins and the European approach to transboundary river basin management and the tools to promote this such as the many international river and lake commissions. A specific feature in Europe is that the WFD, art 3.4, demands coordination of international water basins.

Important organisations are also UNECE (working within Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes) and EURO-INBO - European network of basin organisations. Both are promoting international cooperation.

### Water efficiency – Miriam Feilberg, DWF:

Presented the importance of inclusion of water efficiency in the coming SDG on water and well as in the regional process and in present the European policy development, and argued that:

- The topic fits into ongoing international priorities and is important to include in the regional process
- Incentives, approaches, tools, and operational targets and indicators for water efficiency are urgently needed globally
- Europe may lead the way based on our policy and technological lessons learned.

The presentations were followed by a breakout session discussing the topics presented. Notes from the feed-back of the discussion are attached to this report giving further details of the discussions and topics introduced.

## Session 3 - Implementation mechanisms

### WWF 2015 Science and technology process, Bjørn K. Jensen, Danish Water Forum

Introduction to the goal and objectives of S&T process, which is to promote innovation in the water sector building on sound and effective linkages between science, technology, policy and practice.

The objectives of the process are:

- To improve the understanding of the role of science and technology in innovating the water sector
- To develop guidance on the use of science and technology to implement and innovate water policies and realities
- To create market and network opportunities for problem owners and science, technology and engineering solution providers

The S&T process will be linked to both the thematic and regional processes and should thus be taken into account in our work.

### **WssTP – Durk Krol, WssTP Director**

Presented the objectives of WssTP, which are to:

- Improve coordination and collaboration in RTD & Innovation
- Enhance competitiveness of the European Water Sector
- Contribute to solving societal challenges through RTD & Innovation

Among the Platforms objectives are to work with increasing water stress, reducing impact of extreme events, infrastructure, technology transfer and the establishment of an “Enabling Framework”. It is also an objective to work towards meeting the MDGs for Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation Services in Developing Countries.

### **EIP Water – Robert Schröder, EIP**

EIP is established based on an understanding that innovation is an important element in the future for water. The aims are to facilitate innovative solutions and create market opportunities within 8 priority areas that can be seen on website. These are coordinated with other discussions in Europe. The EIP work through innovative partnerships and action groups. The latter also to bring together demand and supply side, which is needed as well an identification of barriers for better management.

EIP is interested in participation in the regional process and in being included in the net steps taken. There will be an annual conference in Barcelona in November, which is open and could include a session linked to the regional process.

### **European priorities and global links – Robert Schröder on behalf of Marta Moren:**

Present key priorities from the EU water policy are:

- Implementation of policies, when it comes to WFD there are serious gaps
- Revision of the WFD in 2019, establishment of how and how much
- Creating horizontal links such as agriculture
- Few, but some, new policy areas pointed out by the Blue Print: water efficiency and water reuse, leakages and eco-system services – making sure water is included.
- Creating global links, EU/China/India and opportunities for the European water sector, working towards the MDG's
- Promote involvement of the general public and stakeholder groups in discussion such as implementation of water policies or pricing schemes.

### **Youth Parliament for Water and International Youth Steering Committee – contributions and links to the European process - Bart Devos, International Youth Steering Committee**

Presentation of the activities of the youth component linked to World Water Forum in 2015 including the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Youth Parliament for Water, which will take place in Douai, France in December 2014 and which is proposed to be included in the European preparations as well.

## **Session 4 - Way forward**

Reporting back to plenary from break-out discussions on implementation mechanisms suggested a focus on:

Group 1 proposed the following elements to be developed:

- 4.1 Governance has a high priority, action groups such as EIP Water should be included, make use of existing partnerships and ensure links to them, cross-sectional funding programmes are important
- 4.3 Water cultures is also gender and access to water and sanitation
- 4.4 Economics and finance must link to planning and good governance being a high priority in Europe.

Group 2 selected two implementation mechanisms to prioritize:

- 4.4 Economics – need to take into account the social impact and affected people
- 4.5 Train the trainers to carry out activities

Group 3 highlighted the following aspects:

- Taking advantage of existing mechanisms created by international organisations such as WFD.
- Civil society and NGO's must be included in discussions
- Major water users are important to include, implementation of this must be prioritized.
- Awareness rising on the importance of water – creating a water culture
- Justice and equity – implementation of the right to water.

### Discussion

In the discussion about the implementation mechanisms it was emphasized that:

- Partnerships are important and activities should be built around existing partnerships to a large extent
- Focus on improving implementation mechanisms is important. How can we achieve the benefits from implementation mechanisms?

### Overall Topics

Based on the presentations, the break-out session discussions and the feed-back to the plenary the following topics were presented as key topics for European process:

1. Water efficiency (in a broad definition)
2. Transboundary water management
3. Implementation of EU Directives and UNECE Convention
4. Climate Change
5. Urbanisation – innovative urban water management

Science and Technology is not a topic in itself, but a number of sub-topics mentioned related well to this aspect such as Data and Knowledge and gap skills and should be included in activities either linked to S&T or as a topic in its own right.

A Sustainable Development Goal on Water is not a topic in itself, but an overall framework and all topics will contribute to discussions of the SDG and its targets and implementation mechanisms.

Among implementation mechanisms partnerships – also using existing ones, active public participation and planning were mentioned.

Other topics listed were groundwater, energy/food nexus, water quality, asset management, access to water & sanitation and they should be included under the different headings.

Session group coordinators were not finally identified, but some organisations volunteered to participate. The secretariat will follow up on this and establish session groups around the topics.

An initial list of events to be included in the European process was discussed and is attached this report. More events may be included.

