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European Regional Process for the fifth World Water Forum

Planning document, updated 01/12/2008

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1. Introduction

In March 2009 the fifth World Water Forum will take place in Istanbul. Being the world's largest water-related event, the Fora are organised every three years as a joint venture between the World Water Council and the government of the host country. The Forum is an open, all-inclusive, multi-stakeholder process, which is the culmination of over two years of preparatory activities. It aims to raise the importance, awareness and understanding of water issues and propose concrete solutions to address global water challenges.

To prepare for this Forum a thematic and a regional process has been set up and thematic and regional coordinators have been selected. The thematic coordinators will form consortia to develop their respective theme, topics and sessions. Seeing that issues differ across regions, the regional coordinators will develop these themes in their regional context, provide region-specific input into the Forum and enable an exchange between the regions.

The European Water Partnership has been appointed European Coordinator. This document contains an updated overview of the objectives of the European Regional Process (ERP), the actions taken so far and the activities planned for the future.



2. Your input

The European Regional Process aims to be as inclusive as possible, reaching out to stakeholders in the whole of (geographical) Europe, specifically focusing to include the input from Eastern and Southern European countries as well. To define 'geographical Europe', the definition of the Council of Europe is used.

We would like to urge you to contact us when you are interested in taking part in the European Regional Process. Throughout this document you will find the various themes, events and initiatives you could be part of and the details of the individuals and organisations to contact. These opportunities are highlighted in coloured boxes throughout the text. For general information on the European Regional Process, contact the EWP at h.riedstra@ewp.eu or 0032 2 735 0681.

3. Regional Process

a) set up and objectives

The aim of the regional process is to mobilise actors in the region and act as a catalyst for specific contributions from the region to the Forum. Seeing that issues differ across regions, the regional coordinators will develop these themes in their regional context and provide region-specific input into the Forum. Each region is coordinated by a specific organisation or group of organisations that brings together the various stakeholders from all sectors and corners of the region. The European Water Partnership has been appointed European Regional Coordinator.

In November 2007 and February 2008 Thematic and Regional coordinators meetings were held in Istanbul, Turkey. These meetings were mainly focused on the thematic process, to identify the 100 key questions the Forum should address. At the second meeting in February a short Regional session was organised which brought together a number of participants in the European Regional Process.

In the months leading up to these events the European Regional Process was communicated as broadly as possible and a large number of interested organisations as well as events to connect to were identified. These organisations met for the first time in Brussels on 27 February to identify key topics the European Regional Process should address. The topics are listed below, together with the details of the organisation coordinating the theme.

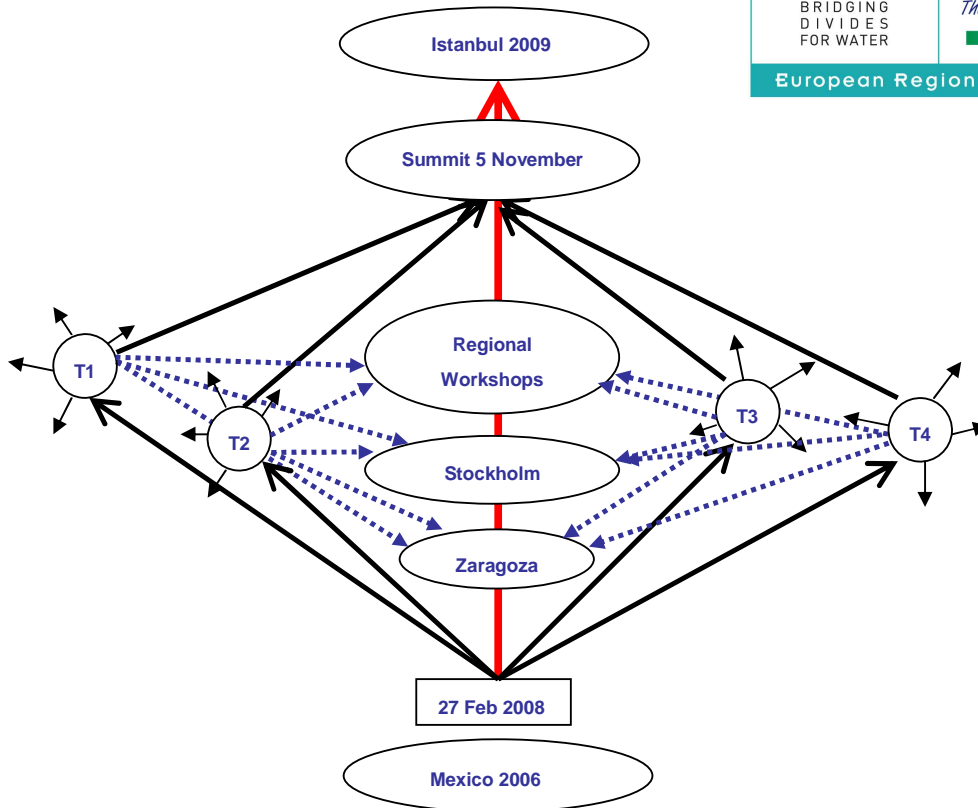


For each of the themes a group of interested parties and a thematic coordinator were identified to start a regional thematic consortium. These consortia should involve all stakeholders and should have a wide geographical coverage.

If you are interested in participating in and contributing to one of the themes of the European Regional Process, please contact the organisation coordinating the theme (listed below).

Future of Water in Europe	Aquawareness (EWP) – Agnes Biesiekierska. - a.biesiekierska@ewp.eu - 0032 2 735 0681
Climate Change and Adaptation	EWA – Paul Horton - paul@ciwem.org
Water for Energy, Energy for Water	EWP – Harro Riedstra - h.riedstra@ewp.eu - 0032 2 735 0681
Basin Management and Transboundary Cooperation	INBO – Jean Francois Donzier - jf.donzier@oieau.fr
Finance	European Investment Bank – Jose Frade - Frade@eib.org
Sanitation	Women in Europe for a Common Future – Sascha Gabizon - sascha.gabizon@wecf.eu
Water Scarcity and Droughts	Water Scarcity and Droughts Expert Network – Gabriele Bonaiti - g.bonaiti@rivieraberica.veneto.it
Water Science and Technologies	RWTH, Aachen University - Christian Kazner - Christian.Kazner@avt.rwth-aachen.de

The set-up of the European Regional Process as defined during the first meeting in Brussels is visualised below:



The European thematic consortia are visualised in the graph by "T1"- "T4" and have the following aims:

- The development of the regional aspects of the theme
- Connecting to the (global) thematic process related to the theme
- Connecting to existing initiatives and conferences in Europe
- Writing the regional document
- Providing input to the sessions at the Forum: the regional session and the various thematic sessions.

Furthermore a European "Regional Coordination Committee" is set up, visualized by the red arrow and consisting of the thematical coordinators and representatives of the broader European organisations on water. The aims of this Committee are:

- Overall coordination of the European Regional Process, making sure wider Europe is represented.
- Organisation of the European Regional Session / Day at the Forum
- Coordination of the writing of the European Regional Document
- Connecting to the other Regional Processes
- Bringing Business and Politicians to the Forum
- Developing further initiatives (European Water Area)



Regional thematic consortia

The goal of the regional thematic process on the topics mentioned above is to result in a clear statement on the current status in Europe, the challenges we face and recommendations to address these challenges. These recommendations will take the form of a number of resolutions per theme. The fifth World Water Forum is very much focused on achieving a political result and these resolutions will be brought into the Political Process at the Forum. Furthermore the results of the European Regional Process will serve as a guidance for future policy development in Europe and will be brought in into global policy processes, specifically COP15 (UN Climate Change conference in Copenhagen 2009).

To achieve a focused European Regional Process, a number of focuspoints are identified in advance together with the regional thematic coordinators, connecting to the global thematic process. On these focuspoints recommendations and key messages will be set up and discussed during the thematic process, to be presented in Istanbul.

b) Outputs

There are three main outputs to be prepared for the Forum, which are listed below. However, we think the regional thematic processes should remain in existence after the Forum and not only focus on delivering results at the Forum itself. In consultation with the coordination committee the thematic coordinators are free to develop their activities to further their respective themes.

European Regional Document

The results of the regional thematic processes will be summarised in a European Regional Document similar to the ones published at the last Fora. This document will provide a clear overview of the actions taken per theme, the challenges Europe faces and the recommendations to address these challenges, making sure to follow up on the work done for the fourth World Water Forum and initiatives already undertaken in Europe. It will also focus on best practices in Europe. Preliminary drafts of this text will be saved in the working space at the website of the European Regional Process to enable participants to comment on them. The European Regional Document should serve as a guidance document for future policy development in Europe on the themes and as input in the political process during the Forum.

The European Regional Document will consist of a chapter for each of the themes of the European Regional Process, focusing on the best practices in Europe and leading to key European messages and policy recommendations for each of the themes. A detailed set up of the Document is available at the website of the European Regional Process at www.ewp.eu/erp09.



If you would like to contribute to the writing of the European Regional Document, you can still do so by contacting the thematic coordinator of the theme you are interested in or the EWP at l.minelli@ewp.eu.

Timeline:

- 20th November to 5th December: drafts open on www.ewp.eu/erp09 for comments
- 15th December 2008: second drafts to be sent to the World Water Council
- 1st to 15th January 2009: World Water Forum Secretariat to give comments
- 1st February: Document ready to print

European Regional Session

Secondly the regional thematic processes will provide input into the European Regional Session at the Forum. At this event the European Regional Document will be presented and the European thematic processes will have the chance to present and discuss their results and resolutions. Because each region has a separate session in the programme in Istanbul, this session will provide the best opportunity to connect to the Political process, attracting a large audience and thereby giving politicians a platform to discuss their ideas.

The World Water Forum Secretariat and the World Water Council are currently planning a 4 hours session. As soon as we receive confirmation of this we will set up a high level programme for the session and start inviting speakers.

The European Regional Session will consist of high level panels on the issues of the European Regional Process in general and on some of the themes specifically. Various Heads of State and ministers have already indicated their interest in participating in such a European Day.

If you would like to contribute to the European Regional Session, please contact the EWP at h.riedstra@ewp.eu

Input in the thematic sessions at the Forum

On the 22nd of March 2008 the second announcement of the Forum (available at www.ewp.eu/erp09) was published by the World Water Council. This document lists the six themes of the conference in more detail and calls for contributions to the sessions.



The call for contributions is now closed on the website of the World Water Forum. However, if you would like to contribute to one of the sessions, you can still contact the session coordinators directly to discuss if there are any possibilities to still participate in the sessions.

On the website of the World Water Forum (www.worldwaterforum5.org) a list of sessions and coordinators can be found. You can contact directly the coordinators to discuss any possibilities to cooperate in the sessions.

c) focuspoints

Southern and Eastern Europe

The European Regional Process has a clear focus on connecting to Southern Eastern Europe. The European Regional Coordination Committee will work to extend its networks in these regions and connect to organisations working in the region, making sure they are involved to the maximum extent. A regional workshop has been organised in Zaragoza to involve the Southern countries. On 8 October, a workshop was organised in cooperation with Global Water Partnership – CEE in Budapest, focusing on the Central and Eastern countries. Furthermore, a subregional preparatory meeting was organised on 9-11 October by the Ukrainian Sustainable development and Ecological Education Center in Kremenchug, Ukraine.

Thematic coordinators are urged to include organisations from these regions in their consortium and to connect to existing regional conferences, also making use of the extension of networks by the European Regional Coordination Committee. Furthermore the draft documents within the thematic consortia will be saved on the website of the European Regional Process to enable actors from these regions to contribute while avoiding travel expenses.

Representation European Regional Process in existing Conferences

The European Regional Process connects to as many existing initiatives and conferences in Europe as possible, to ensure a broad knowledge base within the themes. A list of identified conferences has been contacted to make sure their results can be used as input in the European Regional Process and a logo has been developed to show the connection between these conferences and the European Regional Process. A list of these conferences is available via the website of the European Regional Process.



Furthermore the European Regional Process should be as visible as possible through the representation of the European Thematic Consortia or European Regional Coordination Committee at these conferences.

If you would like to connect your conference or initiative to the European Regional Process, please contact the EWP at l.minelli@ewp.eu.

Joint European Contribution

At the Forum in Istanbul a focus on the European participation will be achieved via a European pavilion: The European Water Village. This pavilion will bring together the European participants and will enable them to organise their own meetings and activities, thereby providing an incentive for business and politicians to come to the Forum. More information of the European Water Village can be found below.

4. Regional Workshops

The European Regional Process aims to include stakeholders from entire (geographical) Europe. Therefore the meetings of the European Regional Process are organised in the different European regions. As mentioned before, apart from the meeting organised in Brussels in February, a workshop was organised in Zaragoza in July, which enabled us to make sure the Southern European input is incorporated in the European Regional Process. A report of this meeting as well as the presentations given is available on the website of the European Regional Process at www.ewp.eu/erp09. On October 8th a workshop was organised in Budapest together with GWP-CEE to involve Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the Ukrainian Sustainable development and Ecological Education Center organised a subregional preparatory meeting from the 9-11 October in Kremenchug, Ukraine.

Upcoming workshops within the European Regional Process:

- 8 and 9 of January 2009, Copenhagen
- 26 January 2009, Vienna
- 4 and 5 February, Brussels



5. European Water Area

The World Water Forum will also host the World Water Expo: a venue for the participation of companies related to water that wish to present their services, products, activities and works. This component aims to allow the expression of water entrepreneurship, and effectively bridges the supply with the demand for innovation and new water technologies.

The fourth World Water Forum, in Mexico 2006, also hosted an EXPO. The European countries and companies were spread all over the venue and the question was raised why there was no united European contribution to the EXPO. The European Regional Process hopes to address this issue by setting up a "European Water Area", a pavilion at the EXPO bringing together European countries, business, ngo's and government, including the European Union Institutions. The European Water Area should enable Europe to show its unity, delivering a strong combined message and presenting the shared best practices and experiences. It should provide extra opportunities for participants to present themselves and host meetings and workshops. By combining the efforts of the European actors, costs will be lower, which will also enable those countries and businesses to participate that otherwise wouldn't be able to attend.

The World Water Council and the World Water Forum Secretariat are currently deciding on the place to assign to the Regional Processes at the Forum. As soon as we receive their answer we will proceed in setting up the Area and its activities.

For more information on the European Water Area and how to participate in it, please refer to the website of the ERP at www.ewp.eu/erp09 or contact the EWP at h.riedstra@ewp.

6. Political Process

Apart from the Thematical and Regional Processes, the Forum also features a Political Process. The Political Programme of the Forum aims to bring together politicians and elected officials from all over the world, not only responsible for water, environment, agriculture or energy policies, but also for finance or other domains, in order to create the understanding for the urgency of positive and pro-active policies on water issues. This process is, as much as possible, directly related to and fed by the thematic and regional frameworks and processes of the Forum. One of the outputs of the Political Process is a Ministerial Agenda, which will be prepared in four Preparatory Committee (Prepcom) meetings, the next of which will take place on 4/5 December in Geneva.



The Discussion Paper preparing the Ministerial Agenda is available on the website of the ERP. For more information on the political process please contact Lucilla Minelli at l.minelli@ewp.eu.

The European Regional Process is connecting to the political processes and institutions in Europe, whether it be the European Union or the wider Europe. Existing frameworks like the Water Directors meetings and Aquawareness are used to bring the thematic work to the political level. The European Regional Process also makes sure politicians are directly involved in the thematic work, specifically by organising the European Policy Summit on Water on the 5th of November. Apart from bringing the policy recommendations resulting from the European Regional Thematic Process to the Political Process during the Forum and to the European Political Processes, the European Regional Process also works to include them in broader global processes, specifically COP15.

7. European Policy Summit, 5 November

On the 5th of November 2008 the third European Policy Summit on Water took place in the Bibliotheque Solvay in Brussels, this year focusing specifically on the European Regional Process for the Fifth World Water Forum. This high-level policy event, organised by the EWP and Friends of Europe and supported by DOW Europe, the Coca Cola Company and Veolia Environnement, brought together senior representatives from the European political level, business, research and ngo's to discuss three of the themes of the European Regional Process: Climate Change and Adaptation, Finance and Water Scarcity and Droughts.

The results of the Summit are available on the website of the European Water Partnership at www.ewp.eu. A full report of the event will be available in the coming weeks.



8. Contactdetails.

For more information on the European Regional Process, please contact the EWP at the details below:

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0032 2 735 0681

Lucilla Minelli
European Water Partnership – Communications and Project Officer
l.minelli@ewp.eu
0032 2 725 0681

For specific themes within the European Regional Process, please refer to the contactdetails mentioned under 3a.

More information on the European Regional Process is available on the website of the European Regional Process at www.ewp.eu/erp09.