



European Youth Water Summit Declaration

Submitted by: **European Youth Water Summit 2010**

Referring to the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes August 12th 1998, we EYWS Participants think that “ensuring and encouraging the active participation of youth in all spheres of society and in decision making processes at the national, regional and international level” are of the utmost importance,

Drawing attention to ‘agenda 21’, of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro 1992,

Recalling the “Young People-Actors in their Towns and Regions” Conference which was held on March 7-8th 2002 in Krakow, Poland, “young people are citizens in the municipalities and regions where they live, in the same way as any other age group, and must therefore have access to all forms of participation in society and that reaffirming and promoting the role of young people in the development of a democratic society, in particular in local and regional public life, was endorsed and re-established”,

Reminding Aarhus Convention at Aarhus, Denmark, on June 25th 1998 environmental education and awareness among the public and youngsters, especially on how to obtain access to information, to participate in decision making shall be promoted,

Recognizing the ten items in European Water Vision 2030, we the youngsters of Europe approve ten items of Water Vision as well as we suggest to European Parliament to enhance youth participation in decision making process and draw attention to the education on water and water-related subjects.

Emphasizing that youth is the world’s future and that youngsters are going to be the new generation of citizens, policy makers and are going to be responsible for the problems regarding the water issues.

Fully aware of the fact that we the youngsters are very important part of European and local communities and we can also help to solve water problems with our strong power in creativity, imagination, energy and enthusiasm.

Desiring that youngsters are informed and aware of sustainable water management and are able bear the responsibility for future water problems and find solutions.

Keeping in mind, in order to reach the Water Vision for 2030, youth has to be involved to have a better dialog between Europeans and all generations and to be able to share and exchange ideas.

Deeply concerned of European youngsters’ lack of interest, political and environmental topics do not appeal to most of them. They often do not realize that water problems can affect their own health and prosperities, especially if they live in rich and industrial countries where they have access to clean drinking water.

Disturbed by lack of information provided to youngsters concerning water issues and insufficient encouragement from adults.

Regretting the immense gap between deciders and youngsters; we truly sense lack of communication between both.

Believing that there is a lack of trust between adults and youngsters, due to the latter’s limited professional experience, that their solution-focused projects are not taken into serious consideration and that youth local initiatives are not supported efficiently by politicians.

WE, EUROPEAN YOUTH, RECOMMEND:

1. **Commissioners of education and ministries of education of member states should make sure that life-long learning of environment and water is part of the formal education system in all countries and encourages that also other forms of learning in cooperation in water and sanitation issues.**
However, education on water-related issues should not be limited to school context; it should play a key role in our daily lives.
2. **We also ask them to facilitate to set up a communication platform for interested youths across Europe to exchange environmental issues. We ask the commissioner for the regions and the commission and association of the region to discuss with youth delegates how communication strategy can be developed to better the communication between youth and EU.**
Young people need more communication on water issues to raise awareness and more networking. Information should reach youth through the internet, magazines, youth publications, advertisement, movies, and television. For instance, it should be very interesting to create a cross country internet platform. It should also help us to decrease the distance between young people and their commissioners, because decision makers and decision making institutions seem so far way from us in daily life.



3. Different kind of events promoting the water issue could be held.

We request the EP to promote that the commission develops a funding mechanism to make it possible to have more and similar events like this.

First of all, as we ourselves are experiencing that youth exchanges, such as youth forums, are very enriching for us, we'd like to have more events like this organized.

They create a link between people of different cultures, with the same aims and the same goals.

Furthermore, competitions are a very interesting way of involving young people in the issue. It can be very motivating for youngsters. For instance, a contest for short-movies promoting the water issue could put international attention on the topic.

But, once you've reached the youngsters, and you've managed to get them engaged, there are still some obstacles. The largest problem they experience is the lack of financial means and technical support. Lots of young people have innovative and creative ideas, but they can't realize them due to a lack of money or logistic backing. On that point, it's important as well that this kind of investments and supports do not suffer due to the financial crisis.

4.A. We ask the commissioner for Youth and Education will assist in developing a scheme to involve youngsters more directly in the policy setting and legislation in the EU.

We suggest in order to increase the involvement of young people, to appoint youth ambassadors.

The function of these youngsters, coming from all Europeans countries and elected every two years, should be to represent the different clubs and organizations in their countries. This would imply that some young people are nominated as water ambassadors, who are involved actively in the EU programs concerning the water issue.

4.B. In addition, we urge member states and the Parliament to grant formal observer status and accredit youth organizations to be able to attend the sessions of the European Parliament.

5. We request of the vice president of the EP to facilitate that this declaration and our ideas are presented in and to the European Parliament.

6. In conclusion, we ask you to affirm the important role of youth in sound environmental and water management, and for that we urge you to recognize the human right to water and sanitation.

Brussels, March 18th 2010
Youth Water Summit
Unedited version

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