



SHORT SUMMARY OF THE 8th WORLD WATER FORUM IN BRASILIA (18th-23rd March)

“Glass half full”

06.04.18



GENERAL ATMOSPHERE: A POSITIVE SURPRISE

Despite many uncertainties leading up to the Forum, the event was well organized and the Ulysses Guimarães Conference Center, the Exhibition Area and the Citizen Village were all very busy. The general atmosphere in the Forum was very friendly. Unlike the last World Water Forum held in 2015 in Korea, the proximity between the different areas of the Forum, including the food court, made exchanges and participation in various events easy. The Citizen Village was very popular, especially among the general public in Brazil.

An alternative Forum was held at the beginning of the week at the University of Brasilia. With around 7000 participants, it was very busy. It was very much focused on the implementation of the right to water and sanitation, with regards to the official Forum’s Ministerial Declaration. But very few links were made between both forums. A demonstration was also organized in Brasilia.

SIX HIGH EXPECTATIONS OF THE FRENCH WATER PARTNERSHIP’S MEMBERS

The members of the FWP collectively carried out **six key messages** based on the 2030 Agenda and aiming at facilitating sustainable development in the international water sector:

- To establish a **global water governance** by creating for that purpose a political dialogue within the United Nations
- To monitor and evaluate the progress made towards the



water-related SDG targets

- To sustainably and equitably share **water resources** between their different uses in a context of growing pressure
- To significantly increase **funding**
- To promote **technical, social and environmental innovations** (including nature-based solutions)
- To respond to **emergencies** and **build resilience**

SOME VERY DIFFERENT CONTRIBUTIONS STEMMING FROM THE FORUM PROCESSES



This Forum – called “*Sharing Water*” – was built around **five processes**: **political** (ministerial, parliamentary, local and regional authorities, judges and prosecutors), **thematic**, **regional**, **sustainability** and **citizen**. The **declarations** from three of these processes (sustainability, parliamentarians, judges and prosecutors) reflect most of the expectations expressed by the members of the FWP. This can be said to be partly thanks to the active participation of these members in these three processes.

- The FWP is particularly satisfied with the **Sustainability process**. Its declaration wholly takes into account its members expectations.
- The **Ministerial Process** led to a « weak » Declaration¹ which doesn't respect the principle of non-regression with regards to the previous Forums' Ministerial declarations, despite contributions from various countries including France. This could be explained by the political and internal situation in Brazil. However, the Ministers expressed their will to reach the SDG targets related to water and sanitation by 2030 and sent a message to the HLPF to take into account the results from the Forum's different processes. That said, this Ministerial declaration regrettably does not take into account the FWP's members' main expectations, which shows the lack of consensus between the States on several major political points:
 - ✚ The political dialogue on water within the United nations
 - ✚ The link between water and the UNFCCC (Climate Convention)
 - ✚ SDG monitoring: strengthening of knowledge in the respective countries and UN indicators

¹ Retrouver les liens vers les différentes déclarations :

Pour le Processus Sustainability: <http://www.worldwaterforum8.org/en/sustainability-focus-group-commission>

Pour le Processus Politique: <http://www.worldwaterforum8.org/en/political-process-commission>

Pour le Processus Thématique : <http://www.worldwaterforum8.org/en/thematic-process-commission>

Pour le Processus Régional : <http://www.worldwaterforum8.org/en/regional-process-commission>

Pour le Processus Citoyen : <http://www.worldwaterforum8.org/en/citizens-forum-commission>

Emergency situations

- Many MPs from all over the world participated in the **Parliamentarian Process**. This led to a particularly substantial Declaration which took into account most of the messages carried out by the members of the FWP.
- The **Local and Regional Authorities Declaration**, which was prepared without the implication of most of the concerned international networks, doesn't bring anything extra to the table.
- The **Judges and Prosecutors' Declaration**, which results from a new process, brings new and useful insights for advocacy in the international water sector. This Declaration states 10 principles on the protection of the right to the environment which are important for the interpretation of certain concepts at the core of jurisdictional decisions.
- The **Thematic and Regional Processes** brought very useful contributions on more technical aspects and contributed to the general discussions at the Forum. That said, the essential "Water and Health" theme was barely present and didn't lead to much progress.

Participation of **civil society from developing countries** – African in particular – remains insufficient due to funding difficulties faced by the Forum organizers. Despite many efforts, representation of **women** and **young people** in the panels was insufficient, particularly with regards to Latin America.



Several new themes emerged from different processes:

- **Nature-based solutions**, the theme of 2018's World Water Day and of the UN's World Water Report, launched at the Forum
- **Circular economy**
- **Source-to-sea**: integrated management of fresh, coastal and marine water resources

National and regional partners actively participated in this Forum. This is a strength that needs to be developed since they represent an important number of public and private stakeholders worldwide.

GLOBAL RESULTS WHICH BENEFITTED FROM A VERY STRONG AND USEFUL PARTICIPATION OF THE FWP'S MEMBERS

The **important FWP delegation**, comprised of **200 members**, carried out collective messages which contributed to the Forum as well as to the progress of its different processes. This showed the very

importance of **collective preparation** over several months amongst the different colleges which the FWP is comprised of.

The French Pavilion, created and animated by the FWP's secretariat, made **the French stakeholders at the Forum visible** through many different events (showcases, cafés, side-events...). This space also served to facilitate exchanges between French and international participants, namely French-speaking, but also between members of the FWP's different colleges, who might not have been used to working together. These exchanges proved to be pleasant and valuable.



During this Forum, **bilateral meetings were held between the Senegalese and Moroccan Prime Ministers; most of the African ministers present at the Forum** (Senegal, Cameroun, Gabon, Angola, Chad, Burkina Faso, Togo, Morocco); **and the President of the French Water Partnership**. This speaks to what the FWP represents for these countries on a political level.



In preparation of the **2021 Dakar Forum**, this Forum in Brasilia will have helped to reinforce pre-established relations with the Senegalese authorities. This was made possible through the organization of joint events in the context of the Forum on both these countries' pavilions.



Through the organization of an event on **French-Brazilian cooperation in the water sector**, the participation of the FWP's members at the Forum served as an opportunity to look back on thirty years of a rich cooperation between both countries specifically related to water management by river basin. This event helped identify ways in which this cooperation can be strengthened in the future, especially with regards to nature-based solutions.

WHAT NEXT?

On a **political level**, the progress made at the Forum in Brasilia must now be carried out in the preparation of the HLPF held in New York in July.

While all the Declarations present useful recommendations which will need to be highlighted, the **Sustainability Declaration** is a particularly important and far-reaching document. Support from States ready to play a leading role in the preparation of the HLPF in July 2018 will have to be sought. As important international and multi-stakeholder organizations, the **World Water Council** and the **Global Water Partnership** could be good messengers for this HLPF.

With regard to the **Forum in Dakar**, considerable support of the Senegalese authorities will be necessary. This support will aim to promote the progress made at the Forum in Brasilia as well as that which will concern specifically the SDGs, namely following the HLPF in July.

CONCLUSION

The Brasilia Forum will have been an important step in influencing the HLPF next July with regard to the implementation of the SDGs. It will also have played an important role in the preparation of the Dakar Forum as well as in consolidating the collective strength of the global water community.

We would like to thank all the foreign partners of the French Water Partnership for being present this whole week, which was filled with enriching shared experiences and positive energy!

Please find all our pictures, videos and news from the World Water Forum at: <https://www.partenariat-francais-eau.fr/en/calendar/evenement/8eme-forum-mondial-de-leau-brasilia/>