

5th World Water Forum
Istanbul 2009

Americas Regional Process

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I. Introduction

A critical part of the preparation for the World Water Forum is the Regional Process in which each region of the world works together with its constituencies to present their unique perspectives and positions related to water resource management and services. The Americas, stretching from Alaska in the United States to Tierra del Fuego in Argentina, comprise one of the most diverse continents of the world in terms of its hydrological richness and scarcity and societal wealth and poverty.

The purpose of this document is to present the process by which the Americas Region is preparing for its participation in the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul, Turkey in 2009. It will begin by stating the larger objectives of the organizing body, the Americas Regional Consortium (ARC) and then go through the potential outputs along with the process and timeline that will be followed in order to arrive at the goals that are set down.

The Americas Regional Process was launched during two consecutive meetings held in São Paulo during the ABRH National Symposium in November 2007 and in Istanbul during the 2nd Coordinators Meeting in February 2008. During these meetings a group of institutions provided inputs for the regional preparatory process that is being laid out in this document. Institutions participating in these two meetings have become members of the ARC.

II. Objectives

Through dialogue that has already taken place with the organizers of the Americas Regional Process (ARP), it has been stated that there are two major objectives to be achieved prior to the 5th World Water Forum.

- 1) Present the Americas Regional Document at the 5th Forum; and
- 2) To ensure the participation of the Americas continent within several components of the 5th Forum.

The Americas Regional Document is an important objective in that it is a tangible output of the 5th Forum, which participants bring home with them and download following the Forum, and is a reflection of the continent itself. A cohesive, policy oriented professional document based on a number of regional thematic meetings and consultations must be presented that is representative of all areas of the Americas continent.

The second objective has many aspects as there are several areas of the 5th Forum where the Americas continent is able to contribute. Most significantly, these will be within the Political Process, the Thematic Process and the World Water Forum Fair and will be further explained in the Outputs section below.

III. Organization

Complying with World Water Council deliberations, the **Americas Regional Consortium (ARC)**, comprising over 30 members ([see Annex 1](#)), has been created in order to lead the regional process activities in the Americas towards the 5th World Water Forum.

A **Coordinating Group**, comprised of the National Water Agency (ANA) of Brazil, the National Water Commission (CONAGUA), the National Water and Wastewater Utility Association (ANEAS), both of Mexico, United States Corps of Engineers (USACE), the International Hydrological Programme – Latin America and the Caribbean (IHP-LAC) of UNESCO, Global Water Partnership (GWP), the Central American Integration System - Regional Committee on

Hydraulics (CRRH-SICA); the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank, is responsible to overview the regional process activities and works in close collaboration with all actors involved in the regional preparatory meetings. These institutions are providing contributions in cash and/or in-kind, in order to carry out the preparation of the 5th Forum in the American Continent.

The group meets on a regular basis via teleconference to follow up on the execution of the action plan associated with the organization of the Americas Regional preparatory activities and the Water Forum of the Americas.

IV. Outputs

1) Americas Regional Document

The focus of many discussions both in and outside of the preparations of the 5th World Water Forum is that of “Global Changes”. While climate change is one change that is gaining most attention in policy circles, there are other changes taking place that will have as great, and most likely greater, impact on water resources than climate change in the coming 40 years. These are population growth, urbanization and land-use changes. These four combined comprise “Global Changes”. Additionally, the main focus of the Political Process of the 5th Forum is “Water Management Adaptation Strategies for Global Changes including Climate Change/Variability”.

The Americas Regional Document, and other outputs, will have, as a common thread, “Global Changes”, with a focus on Climate Change, as these changes that will take place in the future not only affect the mega-cities of developing and developed countries alike, but also the smallest of villages spread throughout the deserts and forests of the continent. Everyone can relate to these drivers. The crux of the document will be to focus on each of these four “Global Changes”, again, with a focus on Climate Change, and discuss, in each of the sub-regional chapters (North, Central, Caribbean and South), how the different sub-regions of the Americas are prepared and/or adapting to such changes and what are the policies that the region might consider or might wish to develop with a view towards embedding those into global policy recommendations. It is within each of the chapters that then the topics of the Thematic Process of the 5th Forum can be addressed and prioritized. Those that are truly most important to the sub-regions of the Americas as they relate to the “Global Changes”.

The Document will be written with the inputs from the different meetings being organized in each of the 4 sub-regions, finalized after incorporating the results of the Water Forum of the Americas in November 2008 and presented at the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul in March 2009.

2) 5th World Water Forum Components

The preparation of the Americas Regional Document will provide material for contributions in the 5th Forum’s other component areas. In this regard, the two processes should go parallel with one another to optimize the use of time and resources.

a. Political Process

As mentioned above, the overall theme of the 5th Forum Political Process will be “Water Management Adaptation Strategies for Global Changes including Climate Change/Variability”. In concentrating the Americas Regional document on these drivers as well as on adaptation strategies

and policies, a lot of discussion and conclusions will come out about how these changes are (and will be) affecting the continent. This will provide a space to submit Policy Recommendations about what kind of strategies are necessary to adapt to these changes in the Americas. This will be a direct submission to the Political Process, which will then take this into account not only for contributions at the regional level for its work, but also as an input into the global issues themselves. There is much to be learned about adaptation strategies from other parts of the world as they have to confront these problems.

The Americas Regional Document will contain Policy Recommendations on Water Management Adaptation Strategies for Global Changes in the Americas that will be submitted to the 5th Forum Political Process.

The composition of the ARC reflects the decision of the Coordinating Group to build its preparatory process on the involvement of political groups and stakeholder interaction, including representatives of national governments, parliamentarians and local authorities. As an example, one can cite the creation of temporary Congressional subcommittees at the House and Senate to plan the effective participation of the Brazilian Congress in the 5th World Water Forum. Public hearings are regularly being held – and others planned – by members of the Congress to discuss national legislation on water resources management and other water-related issues with the participation of all other stakeholders. Furthermore, Members of the House and Senate are reaching out to their counterparts in the different countries of the region to stimulate their involvement within the context of regional parliamentary bodies (i.e. Mercosur, Parlantino, among others).

b. Thematic Process

The Thematic Process of the 5th Forum has [24 Topic areas](#) that have been chosen. While not all of these Topic areas are as important to the Americas as others (the Americas Process will prioritize them), there are certain Topics that are more crucial to the continent. There will be approximately 100 Topic sessions and the Americas Regional Consortium should be involved in the process so that it is ensured that some of these sessions focus on American issues, whether these are issues that are of importance to the American Region or sessions that are dedicated to the Americas.

Members of the ARC should participate in the Thematic Programme coordination and organization in order to allow for the Americas to be on the agenda of the Thematic Programme. The Americas Regional Process can then help these representatives to the Thematic Programme in helping develop the sessions for the 5th Forum itself.

c. World Water Forum Fair

In the past, each region of the world has had a pavilion that presents that specific region to the participants of the World Water Forum. This should not change for the 5th Forum. Because of the Americas' uniqueness and diversity with regards to the water resources found on the continent, this should be shared with the world at such event where this type of expression is looked highly upon.

d. Day of the Americas

This is the showcase day for the Americas continent. At this point it is uncertain what day of the Forum Week this will be. This is an important point, because it determines who will be available for speeches, roundtables, etc. If this day coincides with the Ministerial Conference, there could be the potential for getting several ministers to participate in the Americas Day festivities.

Potential elements of the Day of the Americas:

- Interactive Roundtable Discussions
- Americas Regional Document Presentation
- Sub-regional Thematic Sessions
- Cultural Presentations
- Thematic Panels

V. Process and Timeline

A series of meetings has been suggested by the ARC in preparation for the Americas Regional Process. With these in mind as potential opportunities to push forward the Americas Process towards Iguassu, and then Istanbul, the following timeline is proposed ([see Annex 2](#)).

The **Water Forum of the Americas**, scheduled in Foz do Iguacu, Brazil in November 2008, aims to bring together the various stakeholders involved in water policy planning and management in the Americas. It will gather professionals specialized in water resources management, ranging from government representatives to members of civil society, academia and water user organizations as well as politicians and decision-makers. The goal is to create a platform for discussion aimed at proposing an evaluation of the state of water policy and management in the Americas and adequate policy solutions.

This Forum will be preceded by **4 sub-regional Fora**, namely:

- Central America: El Salvador, June 19-20, 2008. Coordinated by the Regional Committee of Water Resources of Central America - CRRH-SICA - (preceded by the X Water Information Summit).
- Caribbean: Grenada, Jamaica, June 23, 2008. Coordinated by the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute - CEHI. (organized during the 4th Caribbean Environmental Forum, 23-27 June 2008).
- South America: Montevideo, Uruguay, September 10-11, 2008. Coordinated by UNESCO International Hydrological Programme – IHP-LAC - (preceded by the Water and Global Change Forum).
- North America: ANEAS 22nd Annual Conference, Guadalajara, Mexico, November 3-7, 2008.

These 4 sub-regional Fora will be supported by additional regional preparatory meetings and sessions, thus providing a participatory process involving representatives from the governments, NGOs, academics, the private sector and all other actors involved in water issues in all countries of the Americas region.

Participants to these sub-regional consultations will provide inputs to the draft sub-regional documents, which will be developed by a team of 4 Sub-regional consultants and 1 Regional consultant, responsible for incorporating the main outcomes of the sub-regional meetings and of the Water Forum of the Americas into the Regional Americas document, described above.

VI. Conclusion

The Americas Regional Process aims at being inclusive, comprehensive and at creating a valuable contribution to the 5th World Water Forum in Istanbul. In order for there to be a common thread that is universal to the entire Americas Region, it has been proposed to use “Global Changes” as the subject that unites the diverse areas of the region. Not only being appropriate in terms of its

timeliness because of the political emphasis being put on these “Global Changes”, these are the true themes that we are going to be forced to confront in order to conserve and preserve the water resources of the continent.

VII. Annexes (next page)

Annex 1: The Americas Regional Consortium

AMERICAS REGIONAL CONSORTIUM		
Institution	Acronym	Reach
UN World Water Assessment Programme (UNESCO)	UN WWAP	Global
World Bank	WB	Global
UNESCO –IHE Institute of Water Education	UNESCO-IHE	Global
World Water Council	WWC	Global
Gender Water Alliance	GWA	Global
The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Global
UN-Habitat “Latin-American and Caribbean Program”	ONU-Habitat	Global-Regional
Global Water Partnership	GWP	Regional
Organization of American States	OAS	Regional
International Hydrological Program (IHP) of UNESCO for Latin America and the Caribbean	UNESCO-IHP/LAC	Regional LAC
Caribbean Environmental Health Institute	CEHI	Caribbean
Inter-American Development Bank	IADB	Regional
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	ECLAC	Regional
Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering	AIDIS	Regional
Institute of the Americas	IA	Regional
Interamerican Water Resources Network	IWRN	Regional
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture	IICA	Regional
Yoga del Sol	YS	United States
Central American Integration System - Regional Committee on Hydraulics	CRRH-SICA	Regional – Central America
National Water Agency	ANA	Brazil
Brazilian Congress – Committees on the Environment	CMADS/House, CMA/Senate	Brazil
Brazilian Water Resources Association	ABRH	Brazil
Applied Research Institute on Economics and the Environment	Instituto Ipanema	Brazil
British Columbia Environment	BC Environment	Canada
Costa Rican National Assembly	CRNA	Costa Rica
Asociación Andina de Empresas de Servicio de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado	ANDESAPA	Ecuador-Región Andina
National Association of Water and Sanitation Utilities	ANEAS	Mexico
National Water Commission	CONAGUA	Mexico
American Water Works Association	AWWA	United States
American Society of Civil Engineers – Environmental and Water Resources Institute	ASCE-EWRI	United States
U.S Army Corps Engineer	USACE	United States
American Water Resources Association	AWRA	United States
World Wildlife Fund US Chapter	WWF-US	United States

Annex 2: Americas Regional Preparatory Meetings to provide input to the Forum Process

Regional Preparatory Session	Event	Responsible organization/Partners ⁽¹⁾	City/Country	Consultant
Central America Regional Consultation Forum toward the 5 th World Water Forum 19-20 June	Water Information Summit 16-18 June 2008	CRRH-SICA/ World Bank, PREVDA (European Union-SICA), WaterWeb Consortium, MARN-SNET, UNESCO/IHP-LAC, GWP-CA, IWRN	San Salvador/ El Salvador	Alexander López
Caribbean Regional Consultation Forum toward the 5 th World Water Forum 23 June	4 th Caribbean Environmental Forum (CEF 4) 23-27 June	CEHI/ OAS, UNESCO-IHP, GWP Caribbean, CCCCC	St. George's/ Grenada	Vasantha Malliha Chase
South America Regional Consultation Forum toward the 5 th World Water Forum 10-11 September	Water Resources and Global Change Conference 8-10 September	UNESCO-IHP/ DINASA, CIH, CAZALAC, OAS, IRI, Mercosur, AVINA	Montevideo/Uruguay	Francisco Lobato
North America Regional Consultation Forum toward the 5 th World Water Forum 3-4 November	XXII Annual Conference 3-7 November	ANEAS/ AWWA, USACE, AWRA, CONAGUA, EWRI-ASCE	Guadalajara/Mexico	Cesar Herrera
Water Forum of the Americas	24-25 November	Americas Regional Consortium - ARC	Foz do Iguacu - Brazil	Victor Pochat

List of Organizers

ANEAS -	National Association of Water and Sanitation Companies – Mexico
AVINA -	AVINA
AWRA -	American Water Resources Association
AWWA -	American Water Works Association
CAZALAC -	Water Center for Arid and Semi-Arid Zones in Latin America and the Caribbean – UNESCO
CCCCC -	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CEHI -	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CIH -	International Hydroinformatics Center – Itaipu
CONAGUA -	National Water Commission – Mexico
CRA -	Americas Regional Consortium made of ANA, ANEAS, CEHI, CONAGUA, CRRH-SICA, GWP, IADB, OAS, UNESCO-IHP-LAC, USACE, WBG
CRRH-SICA -	Regional Committee on Hydraulic Resources – Central America Integration System
DINASA -	National Directorate for Water and Sanitation – Uruguay
EWRI-ASCE	Environmental and Water Resources Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers – USA
GWP -	Global Water Partnership
IRI -	International Research institute for Climate and Society/Columbia University – USA
IWRN -	Inter-American Water Resources Network
MARN-SNET -	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources-The National Service of Territorial Studies – El Salvador
MERCOSUR -	Common Market of the South
OAS -	Organization of the American States
PREVDA -	Vulnerability and Environmental Degradation Reduction Regional Program – European Union
UNESCO-IHP -	International Hydrological Program – UNESCO
UNESCO/IHP-LAC -	International Hydrological Program for Latin America and the Caribbean – UNESCO
USACE -	United States Corps of Engineers
WBG -	World Bank Group