Mobilization for the 8th World Water Forum increases

One more preparatory stage for the 8th World Water Forum has been concluded. The 2nd Stakeholders Consultation Meeting received 796 participants from 51 countries on April 26th and 27th at the Ulysses Guimarães Convention Center, in Brasilia. The goal of this meeting is to give shape to about 100 thematic sessions that will be organized based on nine themes during this Forum edition, which has “Sharing Water” as its overarching theme.

These numbers themselves show the interest of Brazilian and foreign water resource communities in hosting in Brasilia, next year, an event that meets the world expectations. There is general mobilization and it suggests that Brazil will certainly have a great and successful 8th World Water Forum”, celebrates Benedito Braga, President of the World Water Council (WWC).

The 2nd Stakeholders Consultation Meeting was opened by the Governor of the Federal District, Rodrigo Rollemberg. The Executive Secretary of the Ministry of Environment – Marcelo Cruz, the Minister of Foreign Affairs – José Antonio Marcondes de Carvalho, the President of the Federal District Regulatory Agency for Water, Sanitation and Energy (ADASA) – Paulo Salles, Senator Roberto Munic, and Venito Tadine – from the Brazilian Association of Infrastructure and Basic Industries (ABDIB) - were also present at the opening ceremony.

“Brazil has 12% of the planet’s freshwater, and 60% of transboundary river basins pass through Brazilian territory. These numbers place the country in an important and highlighted position in the world scene”, stated Marcelo Cruz.

Representatives from several sectors, such as governments, companies, financial institutions, universities and NGOs, participated in debates on the core themes and cross-cutting topics, aiming at determining the preliminary content of the event that might receive about 15 thousand participants from over 100 countries in March/2018, in Brasilia.

“Among the outcomes achieved, the set of thematic sessions to take place during the forum’s week was defined, as well as the strategy for the preparation of all processes part of the world’s biggest water-related event. We can state with all certainty that all goals have been met”, states Ricardo Andrade, Secretariat Executive Director of the 8th World Water Forum.
Thematic Process

The Thematic Process Commission is composed by representatives of several stakeholder groups from various countries and provides general guidance to the development of the 8th World Water Forum program. The Commission promoted a wide consultation about the possible sessions to be organized by the Forum in 2018, which resulted in more than 330 suggestions of relevant topics and sessions. These contributions will now be analyzed and consolidated by a group composed by more than 45 Brazilian and foreign organizations that include representatives of the civil society, governments, international organisms, private sector, and NGOs. The final outcome will comprise the draft of sessions and the list of session coordinators of the 8th World Water Forum.

Sustainability Focus Group

The Sustainability Focus Group is a cross-cutting topic to all other processes of the 8th World Water Forum. It seeks to ensure that sustainability issues are incorporated into the other process commissions. More than 60 people discussed the several themes suggested to be addressed during the event. The commitment with sustainability to be proposed by the Forum, the online communication platform, technologies for efficient water use, and actions to reduce and compensate water and carbon footprints during the event can be highlighted, among other topics.

The outcomes will be used to improve the Forum organization process in order to ensure that all identified issues will be properly addressed during the event.

Regional Process

The Regional Process Committee is responsible for integrating regional contributions to the Forum’s program and for encouraging regions to mobilize stakeholders and to increase political commitments on water-related issues, mostly by the organization of regional events. 132 people from 25 countries participated in the works at the 2nd Stakeholders Consultation Meeting, promoting an inclusive participation. For each of the six themes, the participants discussed common situations, challenges, opportunities, issues and solutions related to different regions and continents. They also identified case studies related to sustainable water management.

Political Process

The Political Process Commission guides the political program and promotes the connection between official authorities in the global level to the 8th World Water Forum. More than 50 people participated in the event, including representatives of the Judiciary, Executive and Legislative Branches, in addition to the civil society, universities, NGOs, international organizations, and governments from other countries.

The meeting has promoted the understanding of concepts that will be the basis for future contributions to the 8th Forum. The following are among the highlighted topics: proprietary water rights; environmental flow and governance of urban river basins; human right to water; environmental disasters; water commercialization mechanisms; and mediation between power generation and water crisis.
Citizen’s Forum wants to occupy the city to speak about water

The Citizen’s Forum Commission, responsible for organizing the civil society participation in the 8th World Water Forum, has discussed the social mobilization with the participants of the 2nd Stakeholders Consultation Meeting. The goal is to involve several social sectors and identify leaderships to take them to the Forum. Representatives of youth, indigenous communities, river basin organisms, NGOs and gender/women movements have taken part in the activities.

The Citizen’s Forum organization seeks to engage Brazilians and foreigners and to increase public attention and awareness as to water-related issues. The movement nicknamed “Citizen Participation” will conduct thematic sessions and promote the inclusion of social issues to the Forum, as well as the exchange of experiences in convenient places and spaces of interaction.

To use public spaces effectively, the event organization has been articulating with the Governor of the Federal District so that permits may be granted for the use of spaces (such as Cine Brasilia and Funarte) where there will be cultural activities and debates. The program will be determined by the network members.

The Citizen Village will be an open free space to enable wide participation of the society. Forum guests will engage in dialogues with people in the Citizen Village, where there will be projection panels exhibiting the schedule of the sessions.

The Citizen Village will also have cultural activities, such as: movies about water, exhibition of photographs, food activities, folk music presentations, and handicraft fair. The main actors of the Citizen’s Forum will be women, youth, children, traditional peoples, indigenous communities, NGOs and river basin committees.

The coordination has also promoted online thematic discussions that, with time, may merge with others and be extended to more than one group. In addition, pre-forums will be promoted to level out the online discussions and to encourage the engagement process. The coordination also seeks to connect the participants of national and international water events that will take place until the 8th Forum.

Take your voice to the World Water Forum

The 8th World Water Forum would like to know your story. Send videos with your experiences, best practices, solutions, solved problems, and other experiences related to water or its shortage. You can send documentaries, fictions or animated movies that last up to 4 minutes. To participate, fill out the application form – available until October 1st, 2017.

filmambiente.com/festival/pt/a-voz-dos-cidadãos/
Carlos Saito, Ecology Professor at the University of Brasilia, Brasilia, Brazil.
"I was informed that another opportunity to participate will be opened through the website. I think this is very important because many people couldn’t come due to financial issues. It is very important to receive their contributions; it is a matter of transparency and democracy."

Mariana Matinato, UN Global Compact, São Paulo, Brazil.
"I am very satisfied with the event organization and with the high level debates. I came from São Paulo and it has been worth to come, the experience was very enriching. If it is up to me, I will certainly be back for the Forum next year."

Lis Vale, Environmental Engineering Student, University of Brasilia, Brasilia, Brazil.
"I had the chance to get to know several contexts from different countries and see how each one copes with their water issues. I participated in the debates on Development in the Regional Process and it was very rewarding."

June Lee, Korea Water Forum, Seoul, South Korea.
"It was the first time for me and my colleagues to come to Brazil (sic), Brasilia. I think we got some good opportunity to make it happen in the capacity, science and technology field."

Constanza Gonzales, Risaralda’s Regional Autonomous Corporation, Pereira, Colombia.
"I am surprised; I thought the event would be smaller. I believe the event organization was magnificent, very well organized. The volunteers were very helpful and the assistance was great."

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