



'Crunch time for Europe's water'

EEB Conference

November 18 2008, Brussels, Belgium

Venue: Residence Palace, Salle Polak, Rue de la Loi 155



Fundación Biodiversidad

Conference background

It is high time for a new approach to water management in Europe. After 8 years of intensive preparatory work Member States will have to present their draft River Basin Management Plans by the end of 2008. These plans are supposed to establish the main water protection objectives for the next 20 years. They should propose measures to address the most pressing challenges facing water management in Europe today: limited space and water availability for functioning aquatic ecosystems, which can effectively maintain life-sustaining services in times of environmental change.

Governments will have to leave well-trodden paths in order to tackle diffuse pollution from farming and newly recognised problems of too many over-engineered rivers as well as increasing levels of consumption of scarce water resources. The River Basin Management Plans will have to cover new ground to meet the challenge: fostering public ownership, applying environmental economics and using integrated ecosystem assessments are some of the necessary ingredients for success. In order to assess how governments are performing and whether their draft plans will rise to the challenges, EEB in cooperation with WWF, developed a set of headline indicators. Those will serve as the basis for an in-depth assessment during the following 6 months.

On November 18, these headline indicators will be officially launched and discussed with policy makers and key stakeholders.

Agenda

Conference Chair: John Hontelez, EEB Secretary General

Morning session 9.30 – 13.00

- Key note presentation: *Climate change - challenges and opportunities for EU water management*, **Daniela Jacob**, Max Planck Institute for Meteorology, Hamburg
- Panel: *Headline indicators to assess River Basin Management Plans*, moderated by **Stefan Scheuer**, consultant
 - o Presentation of indicators by **Pieter de Pous**, EEB Water Policy officer
 - o Reactions by EU Water directors: **Chris Ryder**, UK Deputy water director, **Jean Claude Vial**, Deputy Director France, **Marta Moren Abat**, Spanish Water Director, **Leszek Bagiński**, Polish Water Director, **Peter Gammeltoft**, DG Environment

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch break

Afternoon session 14.00 – 17.00, Show casing best practice in addressing key challenges

- *Ownership and transparency*: Pilot project in BaWue, **Thomas Uhlendahl**, University Freiburg
- *Reducing water wastage*: irrigation in the Donana Delta, **Celsa Peitado WWF Spain**
- *More space for rivers*: Sustainable flood management in Scotland **Greig Stuart**, Scottish Government; Lower Danube Green Corridor, **Orieta Hulea**, WWF DCP
- *Healthy and safe water for people and nature*: Ecological Engineering in Denmark, **Carl Hoffman**, Danish National Environmental Research Institute
- *Vision and learning from past errors*: **Klaus Lanz**, International Water Affairs

Conference conclusions 17.00

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