RESEAU INTERNATIONAL DES ORGANISMES DE BASSIN
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9th WORLD GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS

FORTALEZA (BRAZIL)
13 - 16 AUGUST 2013

"DECLARATION OF FORTALEZA"

"Better water management at river basin level
to face the large world challenges"

FINAL VERSION

From 13 to 16 August 2013, 319 delegates coming from 49 Countries, representatives of governmental administrations in charge of water management, of Basin Organizations, already existing or being created, and from interested bilateral and multilateral institutions, research centers and associations, met in Fortaleza in Brazil, for the ninth World General Assembly of the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO).

Floods, droughts, water-borne diseases, pollution, wastage and destruction of aquatic ecosystems: in many countries in the world, the seriousness of the situation requires the implementation of a comprehensive, consistent and integrated water resources management, focusing on upstream and downstream solidarity between all countries and all users.

Climate change will exacerbate this situation as one of its main effects is a rapid change in the hydrological cycles all over the World: Extreme flooding and drought phenomena will become more frequent and more intense and these changes are already noticeable in many regions of the World with a wide variety of situations.

We must act quickly!

The World General Assembly of Fortaleza was thus organized around large strategic topics for the necessary implementation, in the basins of rivers, lakes and aquifers, of programs for adapting to the large world challenges that are essentially a population growth even faster than initially foreseen, food and energy demand and adaption to the effects of Climate Change.

Five roundtables were thus organized on the following topics:

- Water management, priority of the new post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN?;
- Adaptation to the effects of climate change and prevention of extreme phenomena of floods and droughts;

- Institutional frameworks for action of Basin Organizations and participation of local authorities, water users and the public: role of basin committees;
- Management of transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers,
- Financing of water management and of basin organizations.

The last World General Assembly of INBO, which was held in January 2010 in Dakar, at the invitation of the Organization for the Development of the Senegal River (OMVS), had already been entirely devoted to the general topic of "necessary adaptation to the consequences of Climate Change on hydrological cycles in the basins of local, national and transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers" is more relevant than ever!

Today, the findings are alarming.

The Delegates expressed their concern over freshwater resources being limited and random. They are increasingly used, wasted and polluted and aquatic ecosystems are threatened or even have been destroyed.

Freshwater is essential to sustain life on our planet and ensure the health and socioeconomic progress of our societies. In the context of these global changes, improved governance, respectful of the environment, is one of the main keys to sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

Integrated water resources management at the level of basins of rivers, lakes and aquifers, either local, national or transboundary. is essential worldwide!

It is necessary to repeat the obvious: The basins of rivers, lakes and aquifers are the natural geographic areas where water flows on the soil or in the ground, from upstream to downstream, whatever are the administrative boundaries or limits crossed.

Water has no national or administrative boundary and management of transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers especially requires a concerted, coordinated and consistent approach among all riparian countries concerned (*).

The first experiments in integrated basin management were carried out more than fifty years ago ....

Over the past two decades, basin management experienced a quick development in many countries, which made it the basis of their national legislation on water or experimented it in national or transboundary pilot basins.

These experiments clearly show that water management, when well organized on this very relevant scale, has many advantages, although, of course, all the problems cannot be solved overnight.

To cope with the challenges brought by global and climate changes and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and poverty reduction objectives that the international community will have for post 2015, it is necessary to implement the institutional reforms needed for introducing or improving water management at basin level.

(*) A map of transboundary aquifers is presented, for instance, on the Website www.WhyMap.org).

This basin management should be based on some basic principles:

- At the side of the relevant Governmental Administrations, **active participation in decision-making should be organized,** involving the local authorities concerned, including municipalities, representatives of different categories of users and associations for environmental protection or of public interest. Indeed, this participation will allow, by taking account of the real field needs and through dialogue, ensuring the social and economic acceptability of decisions, the provisions to be acted upon and the contribution capabilities of the stakeholders in social and economic life. Decentralization in a basin is the basis for better effectiveness in water policies.

- **Integrated Information Systems**, guaranteeing good knowledge on resources and their uses, polluting pressures, ecosystems and their functioning, risks and their evolution, should be organized to be an objective basis for dialogue, negotiation, decision-making and evaluation of undertaken actions, as well as coordination of financing mechanisms by the various donors.

- **Basin management plans or master plans, established through dialogue with all the stakeholders** should define the medium and long-term common objectives to be achieved and orientate the implementation of practical actions, through the development of **Programs of Measures** and successive multiyear **priority investments.**

As shown in the assessment of River Basin Management Plans which has been made in the European Union, it is necessary to develop more highly integrated approaches on surface, ground and coastal waters, to take particularly into account the effects of climate change and seek transverse and cross-sectoral solutions to reduce pressures on available resources, restore the hydro-morphology of rivers and protect or restore aquatic ecosystems, (restoration of wetlands, migratory fishways, ecological continuity, buffer grass and forested strips along watercourses, protection areas and recharge of aquifers, etc...).

The role and services provided by aquatic ecosystems should be better recognized, as they function as "green or blue natural infrastructure" also ensuring flow regulation and self-purification of water.

We should also guarantee the protection, at national and international level, of surface areas that feed aquifers.

- **Sustainable financing of water resources management and of the organizations that are in charge of it** must be guaranteed regarding investments and sustainable operation based on the application of the "polluter pays" and "user pays" principles in particular, while ensuring, of course, all necessary geographical, cross-sectoral and social equalizations, and true solidarity between all categories of users.

Clear legal and institutional frameworks should allow the application of these principles in each country and in transboundary basins. They should allow organizing the solving of potential transboundaty conflicts and their peaceful settlement in a sustainable manner for all.

"The World PACT for better river basin management", initiated by INBO on the occasion of the World Water Forum in Marseilles in March 2012, today has been signed by 128 member organizations around the world; it adopts the principles outlined above and commits signatories to actually put them into practice.

In particular and whatever the historical, political and socioeconomic situation, this integrated water resources management requires the establishment of bodies, in the form of basin organizations, agencies, commissions or authorities, adapted to each situation and having the means and necessary competences to fulfill their tasks, especially planning, coordination of initiatives, management of information systems, implementation of studies and research or education and awareness of the various partners.

Basin Organizations worldwide, whether national or transboundary, are invited to sign the "Pact" if not already done.

"The World PACT for better river basin management" relies on true field experience and several years of positive experiments implementing basin policy in many countries. It provides guidance for initiatives in the most effective directions, based on best operation practices. It should serve as a basis for the development of a UN post-2015 Sustainable Development Goal, devoted to water resources management.

Today, it is useless to "reinvent the wheel" as all effective tools are available to move forward fast if there is a political will to decide to do so!

Any right-thinking person would not understand that freshwater protection is not included in the priorities of the new post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, as water may be a limiting factor for economic and social progress of mankind in the coming decades.

The creation and strengthening of basin organizations should be supported worldwide and ensure effective management of water resources and aquatic ecosystems!

Considering the crucial significance of basin management for improving water governance, the delegates of the General Assembly of the International Network of Basin Organizations gathered in Fortaleza required that International Official Development Assistance for the water sector prioritize projects aiming at establishing, strengthening and developing basin organizations in accordance with the principles mentioned above.

Exchange of know-how, implementation of twinning arrangements between basin organizations, documentation availability and transfer of practical knowledge, appropriate training of staffs, decision-makers and water users and sharing of tools through exchange platforms are all effective ways to disseminate good practices gained in the field.

Production and availability of reliable information and data, that allow having a good knowledge of water resources, aquatic environments and their use, are essential to enable a constructive dialogue between partners, facilitate decision-making and allow following up its application, and the effective participation of the people concerned in water policy.

Whatever the level, either national or transboundary, access to information on the status and evolution of water resources and uses is one of the keys to effective implementation of water policy.

"We only can manage what we can measure!"

INBO Members recommended that the national Public Authorities and bilateral and multilateral cooperation organizations support, in the basins, projects aiming to establish or improve comprehensive information systems connected at the national, regional or transboundary level. The exchange of consistent information between the riparian countries of a river, a lake or a transboundary aquifer is the keystone of any cooperation in these basins.

These information systems should not only focus on water resources and environments but also on the uses and their direct and indirect, technical, sociological, economic and environmental impacts, etc.

The link (nexus) between water, energy and food should be considered in basin management programs.

These information systems should be established fully in line with national information systems, and built on existing ones. It is particularly recommended to think in terms of shared and interconnected water information systems, managed through a collaborative network of institutions.

It is indeed essential to well identify the institutions responsible for the organization and permanent operation of such systems and to guarantee them not only sufficient resources for the corresponding investments, but also for allowing their continuous operation in the long term.

It is also necessary to promote the emergence of means and competences in specific engineering for data administration and train the professionals concerned.

Global and climate changes will lead to more extreme events with greater intensity. Information systems should take into account this new datum. Floods, droughts and accidental pollution warning networks should, in particular, be established, improved, developed and coordinated to better respond to natural disasters caused by water and to protect lives and property. We must also invest in integrated monitoring systems, relying on modern technologies and using the possibilities provided by the new means of earth observation, in particular.

Adaptation to the effects of global and climate changes is a local and world priority!

Climate change now seems to be unavoidable. One of the first consequences will be a change in the hydrological cycles.

Changes in precipitations and hydrological cycles have already started and will undoubtedly be felt by 2040 or 2050, i.e. in less than a generation: It is necessary to react quickly, before it is too late.

During the past forty years, the number and intensity of floods and droughts have already increased, sometimes in a spectacular way.

In particular, for the niveoglacial rivers having their springs in the mountains, the reduced snow cover and accelerated melting of glaciers have already an impact on the water supply, especially during low flow periods, and on the increasing risk of flooding.

With climate change, extreme meteorological phenomena are likely to be more frequent and more violent with considerable effects on all sectors, which will affect entire economies and societies, especially in the poorest countries.

The demographic, economic and ecological consequences may be very significant and require global mobilization to quickly prepare the necessary adaptation programs in each basin, taking account of surface and groundwater.

Very large areas of human life and economic activity will be seriously endangered, with significant risk of people's displacement.

These effects combine with the significant pressures on water resources already linked to population growth, urbanization and economic development.

Global warming is a "threat multiplier", exacerbating the difficult situations and increasing tensions even in stable regions!

"If greenhouse gas emissions are responsible for global warming, freshwater is the first victim!"

It is therefore essential now to adapt policies and mechanisms for managing water resources to cope with the effects of climate change and other global changes.

We must learn to anticipate damages and take the necessary measures to prevent or at least minimize their negative effects, in short we must adapt!

Prompt action will reduce costs and damages.

In parallel to efforts made on mitigating the effects of climate change (reduction of greenhouse gas emissions), the results of which will be felt in the long term, it is now accepted to look quickly for all means of adaptation to its adverse impacts on water resources.

This applies to many sectors such as hydropower and cooling of thermal and nuclear power plants, food production with irrigation, fisheries and aquaculture, urbanization, with the needs for drinking water supply and sanitation, or inland waterways transport, etc.

The water sector is one of the areas most directly affected by changes in the hydrological cycles, and thus in the spatial and temporal availability of resources, impacts on all uses, consequences of erosion and effects of extreme events such as flooding and drought, the spreading of invasive species, not to mention the rise of sea level and its impact on river flows, salinization of coastal aquifers, coastal erosion, etc.

As adaptation actions will take several decades before having a visible and significant effect, considering the time required for institutional reforms (over ten years), large-scale investments (25 years for a dam), for changes of habits in consumption and use (a generation: 30 years), **the extreme urgency of action is perceived!**

Beyond global, regional (recent adoption of the European strategy on climate change adaptation) and national strategies that must be established, **adaptation to the**

effects of climate change on freshwater should be done effectively on the basin scale.

It is essential to quickly assess, using various scenarios, the hydrological consequences of this change, by also taking into account other expected global changes (desertification, demography, increased urbanization, changing food and comfort habits) that have also a strong impact on water resources.

Research and prospective efforts should be increased and accelerated to give local field decision makers the essential elements for designing appropriate and necessary diversified programs.

It is also essential to prepare future generations by developing educational tools and youth participation in climate change, relying particularly on "Youth Water Parliaments".

Women's work in daily water management is prominent in most countries, it is absolutely necessary to train them and take into account the cultural elements that are related.

We should work on adapting policies, mechanisms for water resources management and investments to make them more relevant and above all more flexible to climate change.

It is urgent to learn to anticipate future damage and take the necessary measures to prevent or minimize their negative effects.

Similarly, **we should learn to work in a context of increasing uncertainty.**

It is also necessary to acquire projection capabilities in the very long term, with a time step much longer than the one used now in defining strategies and developing multi-year management plans.

It is essential to quickly develop a sufficient and solid knowledge base on the consequences of climate change and on the vulnerability of areas and economic sectors, because those remain not very reliable as a whole.

The exchange of information on good practices is very important.

If climate change can no more be doubted, significant uncertainties remain regarding its local impact and the best way of facing it in each situation. It is clear that it is necessary to increase research on climate on the fine scale of each large basin or region.

In a very practical way, it is essential to test the sensitivity of each basin and the relevance of the management plans using various projection assumptions provided by climate models, in order to establish as finely as possible the combinations of measures to be taken with best cost-effectiveness, especially in the case of transboundary basins which require increased coordination and exchanges between riparian countries.

But we should also act very quickly now without waiting for all confirmations and there is a whole set of measures (no-regret measures), which in any case will go towards better management and greater resilience and that should be implemented without delay.

Following the World Water Forum in Marseilles, and in view of the forthcoming Forum in Korea, UNECE and INBO have launched a network of basin organizations working on the issue of adaptation to climate change in the basins of rivers, lakes and aquifers, especially transboundary, in order to share their approaches, test the measures that will be most effective and disseminate good practices and developed tools.

To date, twenty basins are members of this network and participated in workshops held in 2012 and 2013.

If the outline of the actions needed to adapt in the basins is now known, with the different steps, from the understanding of vulnerabilities and impacts to the development of adaptation measures and their implementation (the UNECE Guide to the adaptation to climate change and water, the two Handbooks on IWRM in basins, etc.), the collection, analysis and large-scale dissemination of best practices resulting from field experiences already undertaken by national and transboundary basin organizations are still to be done.

INBO members recommended that such initiative be supported and extended to accelerate the adaptation processes in the basins.

They also recommend that exchange platforms between climate experts and decision makers in the water field be established.

Policies and mechanisms for adaptation to climate change should be developed in each basin. They should be consistent with the national plans for the national basins and with the plans of riparian countries for transboundary basins.

It is essential to quickly develop ambitious basin management plans or master plans in this direction and the programs of measures needed.

It is necessary to quickly update Basin Management Plans, when they exist, to pragmatically respond in time to foreseeable future developments.

In most areas of the world, basin planning will allow adjusting in the long term the users' demands to the water resources, either available or to be developed, in order to avoid persistent shortage and to also give responses to the increasing flood hazards.

With regard to floods:

The "upstream-downstream" common cause should be the basis of consistent flood management on the scale of basins and sub-basins.

Protection against floods must pass through a coordinated approach that combines the protection of persons and property, protection of groundwater intakes and boreholes that can guarantee water supply during floods, vulnerability reduction, restoration of free flow in rivers, preserving and recreating natural flood storage areas, predicting events, identifying risk areas, controlling urbanization, including a ban on new construction in high risk areas, warning and education....

It is essential to develop international exchanges on flood management to improve our knowledge and disseminate good practices.

In transboundary basins in particular, we should promote cooperation between riparian States to jointly search for coordinated solutions, by sharing information and responsibilities based on common knowledge of risk and vulnerability.

With regard to droughts:

Climate change will worsen the structural problems which already lead to water scarcity in many areas: in this regard it is useful to distinguish between drought and scarcity; the latter being primarily linked to a permanent and structural imbalance between available resources and water abstractions.

The prevention of recurring droughts in several regions must be planned in the long term in each basin, by solving the structural problems which occur, in order to prevent, in the best possible way, their effects and to avoid the total degradation of water resources.

More than ever, a better balance between the use of new water resources and demand management should become the rule to alleviate the pressure on resources, especially in times of drought, by firstly reducing withdrawals and developing water saving. This balance will be specific to each basin by taking into account the available water resources. This applies to all uses, but due to the relative importance of water abstractions for irrigation a special effort is needed to rationalize water use in agriculture.

The rarefaction of the resource will also require looking for new ways.

If mobilizing new resources and creating new reserves are needed; this should be done after making sure that water demands are rationalized, that projects are ecologically and socially acceptable and economically reasonable, while looking for "with no regret" approaches i.e. sufficiently flexible in the future.

But building new dams will not be enough without the implementation of water saving and recycling programs: the solutions will pass by proactive water management together with constant incentive measures for more rational uses facilitated by innovation and new technologies.

Plans for the Management of Water Scarcity should prioritize drinking water supply, making sure that water is equitably and soundly shared between the various uses, ensuring a better optimization of water and avoiding wastage.

They must ensure a better use of water and existing resources before planning to launch projects to mobilize new resources.

Water saving, leak detection, recycling, the reuse of treated wastewater, groundwater recharge, desalination of sea water, research on low-consumption uses must become priorities.

This new water resource management approach will only be possible if it is based on the acceptance of all stakeholders in each basin.

A new approach to water uses in agriculture should be especially looked for.

In a context of increased pressure on water resources and arable lands, **the importance of the agricultural component** should be stressed, as continuing the "business as usual" scenario would be irresponsible.

Feeding the world population today and in the future (9 billion inhabitants foreseen in 2075 and maybe 11 billion in 2100) implies using, in all the countries, an agriculture which is less water-consuming and less sensitive to climate hazards: to a very large extent that will require effective irrigation and the improvement of rain-fed agricultural productivity.

The farmers will be among the first victims of the fluctuations of water supply due to the variations of the climate: we must establish appropriate policies to help them adapt.

The reduction of non-point pollution, as regards the use of fertilizers and pesticides, is also a prerequisite to maintain or recover good water and environment status.

Finally, water scarcity will have major impacts on aquatic ecosystems and on the ecological quality of rivers. **More than ever policies to preserve their biodiversity and ensure an "ecological" reserved flow can reduce these effects**.

Cooperation between riparian Countries of transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers should be improved.

Proper transboundary basin management requires strong cooperation between riparian countries. There are many agreements over the world but they are mostly limited to one or two issues (inland navigation, building of dams, flood control, flow rate sharing, etc.) and do not or not entirely cover all the topics of water resources management.

Still up to now very few agreements are related to transboundary aquifers.

It is now essential and urgent - taking into account the imminence of the effects of climate change - that these cooperation agreements, conventions or treaties be broadened and consolidated to take account of: e.g. pollution control, environmental protection and integrated management of shared basins, adaptation to the effects of climate change on water resources. Integrated resource management is essential at this level.

Where there is no agreement yet, it is essential that the riparian countries establish one and create common institutions necessary for its implementation.

The Helsinki Convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes of 17 March 1992 gives a cooperation framework in this field which is now applicable to all the countries of the world.

Moreover, the United Nations Convention of 21 May 1997, on the uses other than navigation on international watercourses, even if did not yet come into effect, defines principles recognized as a basis for relations among riparian States concerned.

Resolution A/RES/63/124, adopted in December 2008 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, offers to the States a legal framework for transboundary aquifers management.

In addition, the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) of 2000 (2000/60/EC) lays down an objective of good status in the national or international basin districts of the 28 current Member States and of the Countries applying for accession to the European Union. Its content can inspire other regions of the world to develop regional

cooperation in the field of water based on the principles of integrated basin management with performance targets.

To get things done, we need cooperation agreements on transboundary basins that lead to the establishment of international commissions, authorities or transboundary basin organizations.

Such commissions, authorities or international organizations allow better dialogue, exchanging useful information, resolving potential conflicts, sharing benefits from better joint management and strengthening transboundary cooperation.

However, these institutions may be effective only if they have mandates clearly defining their tasks and responsibilities and if they have the necessary and sufficient human, technical and financial resources and their sustainability guaranteed.

It is therefore essential that bilateral and multilateral cooperation organizations support the creation and strengthening of such basin institutions.

In the particular case of transboundary aquifer basins, we need to encourage and assist riparian countries in establishing management agreements, particularly for fragile and overexploited groundwater.

It is necessary to promote information exchange and capacity building for basin organizations to also integrate groundwater management in their responsibilities and action plans.

Groundwater must of course be managed with surface water in a coordinated way.

The participation of local authorities, users and the civil society should be organized and increased.

A new approach to resource management, based on the support and participation of all the basin's stakeholders, should be developed to effectively ensure the protection of water resources and aquatic environments, efficient water use in all sectors, wastewater and pollution management, risk prevention and control.

Obviously, the first stakeholders concerned are the political and local authorities, including municipalities, whose permanent support is needed, but also the water users who put direct pressures on water resources.

The stakeholders' acceptance and participation should first be organized through Basin Committees or Councils, in which the representatives of the interested parties need to have access to the information, may talk and have a true decision power.

We should enhance the representation of all the economic sectors concerned, of the civil society and youth through this designation process.

These Basin bodies should be involved in the decision-making related to water policy in the basin, with procedures and a mandate clearly defining their role.

They should be involved in the definition of long-term objectives, in the preparation of Basin Management Plans, in the definition of development and equipment priorities, in the implementation of Programs of Measures and multiyear priority investments, as well as in the setting of financing principles.

Involvement of the various partners at the earliest possible time is a prerequisite to their appropriation of the decisions and acceptance of all the measures which will have to be taken. This point is especially decisive for the definition of a real cross-sectoral strategy of adaptation to climate change.

In addition, it is necessary to establish cross-sectoral links to foster exchanges of information and experience as well as the coordination of actions in each basin, especially between professionals and institutions responsible for surface water and groundwater.

Besides water professionals (engineers, technicians, civil servants, etc.), we must involve new participants whose direct or indirect role is increasingly important (local elected officials, community representatives, urban planners, developers, contractors, farmers, fishermen, industrialists, fish farmers, electricians, professionals in navigation and tourism, leaders of trade unions, cooperatives or associations, etc.): all of them have a common point, water is not their profession and they usually have not been especially prepared to perform duties in this sector.

They must also get organized to ensure effective representation of the sectors from which they come.

Members of the Basin Committees must thus be clearly informed or especially trained to fully exercise their responsibilities.

Finally, significant means should be devoted to public awareness and participation, women and young people in particular, and to the training of their representatives on decision-making.

Specific actions should also target opinion formers such as journalists, teachers, community leaders, health workers, etc.

The transfers of research outcomes to water managers and decision makers should be accelerated and facilitated to help improve and build this decision-making.

Research in sociology and economy must be increased whereas it is still almost non-existent.

From this point of view it is interesting to make better known the findings of projects funded for strengthening the "**Science-Policy Interface**", especially supported by the DG Research and Innovation of the European Commission, to which INBO is associated with the partners of the European "IWRM-Net" project in particular.

Similarly INBO participation in various recent initiatives for the development of innovation in the water sector, and of methods that accelerate the transfer of research findings to managers and decision makers, should greatly benefit basin organizations for carrying out more effective actions. This will be particularly true of the European WaterPiPP (Public innovative Procurement Policies) project to facilitate the opening of public procurement to innovation.

With the quick development of the Web, new online "smart" services will develop to allow real-time answers to questions asked by different categories of managers and users, and by the public more generally.

Financing of water management and basin organizations

The means necessary for sustainable management, administration, conservation and control of water resources and ecosystems and for the operation, maintenance and renewal of community services and installations require huge financial resources.

The resources specifically devoted to the management of water resources and aquatic ecosystems are notoriously inadequate in the context of current changes, they only represent a small share of resources devoted to public services (drinking water supply, sanitation, irrigation …) and major infrastructure, while water resource is likely to be the limiting factor!

When a river is dry, or when the level of an aquifer is lowering, how can we feed the supply systems?

Adaptation requires complementary and additional financial resources that will have to be found by adopting new mechanisms such as basin taxes, insurance systems or market instruments.

The development of public - private partnerships can provide effective solutions.

It is necessary to set up everywhere complementary financing systems that are based on the users' participation and common cause.

It is thus necessary to consider **specific and additional financial resources** by combining national or local administrative taxes, the pricing of community services, social, geographic and cross-sectoral equalization mechanisms or taxes specific to objectives selected through dialogue.

Such water taxes apply the "polluter-pays" and "user-pays" principles.

These arrangements are an incentive to limiting wastage and to removing pollution by changing the users' behavior.

INBO recommended the progressive and wide use of the cost recovery principle, through the establishment of basin water taxes, which have shown their efficiency everywhere they have been applied under good conditions, i.e. on a long term basis and with strong political support.

Such arrangements enable improving resources and environments, favoring access of everyone to water supply and sanitation, while ensuring common cause between the categories of water users, between upstream and downstream areas and between social groups and they have an interactive effect on consumption reduction and pollution control, on limiting waste and removing pollution by changing the users' behavior.

It is quite clear that if financial resources are insufficient, management plans cannot be executed!

Money does not grow on trees, but comes from a means or a combination of means recalled by the OECD rule of three "T": local, national or basin **T**axes, **T**ariffs paying services or **T**ransfers from other economic sectors (electricity, navigation, oil, mining, gas ...) or international aid.

With all the necessary social equalization, we should more and more consider that "water pays for water"; payment that may come from taxpayers or consumers, users or polluters, according to the principles already used for electricity, telephone or other

public or private services, which does not preclude national, regional or local funding by public authorities whenever needed.

Conclusion:

Better water governance is more than ever a priority when this resource is already a limiting factor for sustainable development in many countries of the world and that the impact of global and climate changes will worsen the situation.

While it is assumed that most Millennium Development Goals, -including in the water sector-, will not be met, and that thinking has started for defining the UN post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, INBO members consider essential to include water resources management in the top priorities as this more and more scarce resource is essential for economic, social and environmental development.

Unprecedented institutional and citizen mobilization is essential for humanity to win the water battle today and for the future.

Organizing this management on the scale of national and transboundary basins is an effective solution which has been widely proven when supported by strong political will.

Water management at basin level should be organized and developed in all the regions of the world, as its effectiveness has been widely proven.

It is also a basis for realism and efficiency in adapting water management to the effects of global and climate changes, beyond academic speeches, in consistency with the development of an appropriate legal and financial framework.

These actions require strong political will and tireless commitment over a long period. This is why INBO demands that the international community incorporate in the post 2015 agenda a specific Water Goal integrating a target on sustainable basin management of water resources.

In particular, it is ready to provide its know-how in basin management to the UN Agencies and Committees responsible for defining the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

It also intends to get mobilized for the next major world events on water, especially for the preparation of the 7th World Water Forum to be held in April 2015 in Korea, for the United Nations Climate Conferences and for the first International Environment Forum for Basin Organizations to be organized by UNEP in November 2014 in Bangkok.

INBO intends continuing its members' active contribution in improving water governance respecting the national specificities and give real responses to adapt to global and climate changes in national and transboundary basins, by emphasizing the participation of the civil society and youth in the decision-making and management processes.

INBO member organizations have more and more recognized experience and know-how which they intend to pool, disseminate and put at the disposal of all the countries and institutions which would like to follow them in an effective basin management approach.

Investing in water resources management is profitable! It produces immediate and long term benefits and creates the necessary conditions for social, economic and environmental progress.

Participants in the 2013 World General Assembly of INBO want to spearhead the global battle for water resources protection.

With their practical field experience and positive results already achieved, they want to convince and mobilize decision makers and all their fellow citizens to leave our children and grandchildren a "Blue planet" where water is pure and sufficient, in the basins around the world.

Unanimously approved on 15 August 2013 in Fortaleza in Brazil.