

Americas Follow-Up
Meeting of the 5th World
Water Forum

30th November – 1st
December, 2009



[WATER FORUM OF THE AMERICAS]

INTRODUCTION

At present the Americas is facing enormous challenges, including the construction of a new social culture to ensure human development in balance with the natural environment. However, we have not been sufficiently capable of implementing models that foster sustainable development.

In this scenario, water has become an increasingly scarce and limited resource, thus compromising development processes in the Americas. Although to date actions have been taken to address this increasing problem, the dimension goes far beyond the capacity of governments and of other stakeholders currently involved in water management. In this context, it is necessary to adopt new approaches, public policies and institutional frameworks. Gender perspectives and cultural diversity will be basic principles of the WFA.

It is thus necessary to create an autonomous and independent platform to strengthen and capitalise on the relationship between state bodies and agencies, academia, the private sector and civil society, so as to foster dialogue and consensus between regional stakeholders on relevant water topics. This platform has been named the **Water Forum of the Americas (WFA)**.

WHAT IS THE WATER FORUM OF THE AMERICAS?

- A multi-stakeholder cooperation platform in the Americas region, structured as an open and inclusive body, gathering partners who contribute willingly to the Forum's objectives, according to their respective mandates and capabilities.
- The Water Forum of the Americas is a mechanism for the analysis, debate and consolidation of a Regional Water Agenda, created with the purpose of fostering changes and implementing solutions that address water challenges in the region.
- The WFA will have a flexible structure, based on the principles of inclusiveness, dialogue, transparency, legitimacy and delegation of responsibilities to its partners in order to develop the activities and initiatives agreed upon.

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OBJECTIVES

- To provide an open and independent forum to address regional and national challenges regarding water resources management.
- To assist in the mobilization of financial resources for concrete initiatives and projects.
- To support and stimulate the cooperation among its partners.
- To promote the regional water agenda in the political and legislative arenas, thus helping to bridge divides among experts and politicians.
- To promote the construction of a long-term Americas Water Vision, and to stimulate the countries in the region to develop their programs and policies according to the realities of each country.
- To promote the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.
- To facilitate the development and exchange of appropriate technologies, as well as capacity building processes.
- To coordinate and support the regional preparatory process and efforts towards the 6th World Water Forum.

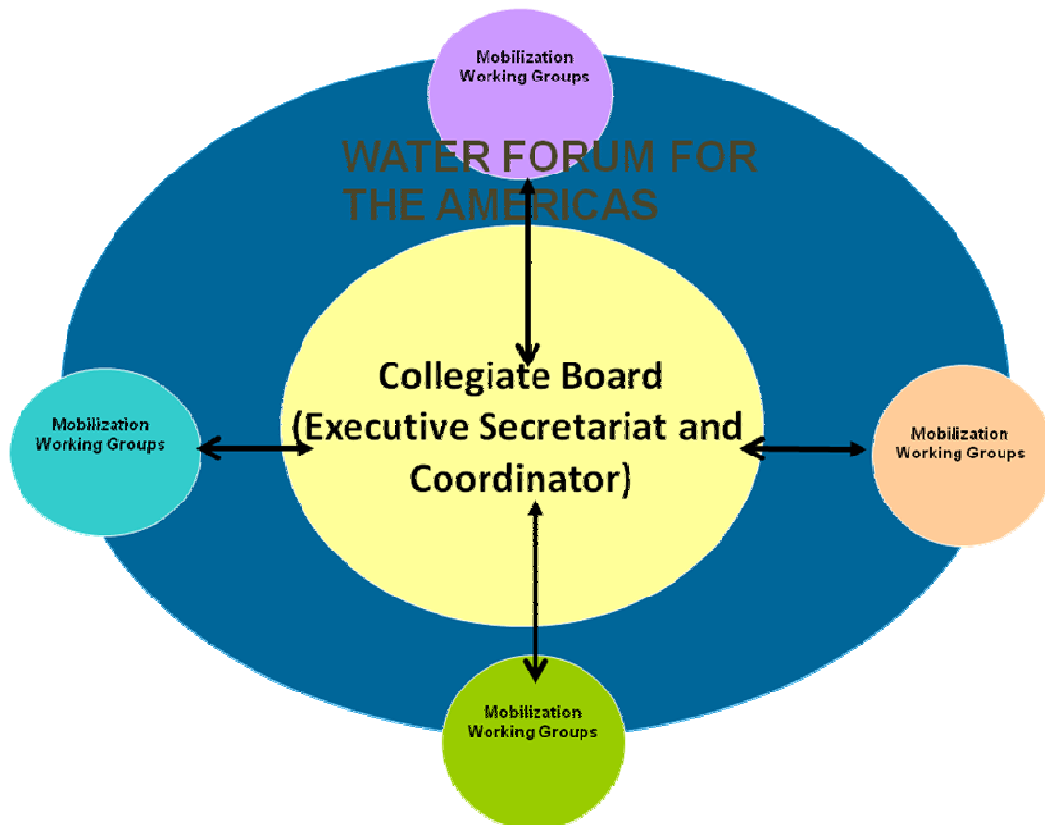
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Americas Water Forum is a multi-stakeholder cooperation platform in the Americas region, with balanced sectorial and sub-regional representation. It has a streamlined and consolidated governance structure with a collegiate board and rotational coordinator. The time period of the rotational coordination is to be defined by the collegiate board. The initial members of the collegiate board will be the members of the Executive Committee of the ARC from the 5th World Water Forum.

The coordination structure is supported by a dedicated administrative and executive body, provided by one of the partners involved in the process. This structure will build upon existing mechanisms and organizations present in the region, sub-regions and at the national level.

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All partners recognize that by combining their efforts, they will add value to the collective cause. Ad-hoc working groups will be established to carry out specific activities, but will not be members of the collegiate board. The organization structure is proposed as follows:



Furthermore, it is proposed that the executive secretariat functions will be carried out by the National Water Agency of Brazil (ANA), and the coordination of the process will be carried out by the National Association of Water and Sanitation Utilities of Mexico (ANEAS). Coordination between partners will be facilitated by both virtual and physical mechanisms.

Any organization working in the region, interested in taking part in the process, is welcome to contribute to the objectives of the Americas Water Forum.

WORK PLAN

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The WFA will strive to establish an initial two-year work plan covering the period up to the 6th World Water Forum in March 2012, in line with the aforementioned objectives, and building on the bases laid down by the Message of Foz de Iguassu and the debates and ideas expressed at the 5th World Water Forum Follow-Up Meeting in San José, Costa Rica. The partners in the process will also make efforts to ensure the continuity and sustainability of coordination over water issues in the Americas region. The work plan should aim to identify clear goals and to provide the strategy and implementation schedule to reach these goals.

FINANCING

Based on the work plan, the financial needs will be identified, and funding will thus be sought from several sources, including the following:

- In-kind contributions from the partners
- In-kind and financial contributions raised by the working groups for their specific work, on an ad-hoc basis
- Contributions by sponsors
- Regional / international financial institutions

Furthermore, the WFA could aim to establish a dialogue on financial issues with existing funds in other regions of the world.

The following is presented to participants gathered in San José, Costa Rica, on December 1st, at the Americas Follow-Up Meeting of the 5th World Water Forum, for their discussion and feedback, with the aim of producing a consensual proposal at the end of the meeting. Following consensus among participants, efforts will be made to reach out to other key stakeholders, not present at the meeting, who might be willing to contribute their time and resources to the activities of the WFA.