

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE
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***22^e REUNION DES ATELIERS DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE POUR LA MISE EN
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***“Water, landscape and citizenship in the face of global change”
« Eau, paysage et citoyenneté face aux changements mondiaux »***

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WORKSHOP 2 – Water landscapes: international experiences

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The strategic planning of regions and cities: the water issue

Dear Colleagues,

First of all, let me extend my warmest thanks to the Government of Spain, the regional administration of Andalusia and the local authority of Seville, as well as the Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe, Mrs. Magelonne Déjeant-Pons, for the perfect organisation of the Conference. The creative and comfortable atmosphere in this hall contributes to the highly professional experience exchange, and the finest expression of new ideas and projects.

We are here to talk about water consumption in the period of global changes that are happening across the world. In Russia, special governmental attention is paid to this important problem.

Russia has the largest fresh water resources in Europe and this places her in the second place in the world. Meanwhile a number of regions suffer from the lack of water, mainly due to the uneven distribution of water resources throughout the country. At the same time, if preventive measures are not adopted, there is the hazard of seasonal flooding in virtually all regions of Russia. A significant part of the water economy of the country obliges serious attention to be paid to hydro-technical construction conditions, water transportation systems and purification plants, a significant proportion of which are in need of upgrading.

To comprehensively address these problems, the Russian Federation adopted The Water Strategy of the Russian Federation in 2009. This is a strategic planning document which specifies the main directions for the development of the Russian water-economic complex.

The main practical instrument for implementation of the Water Strategy is the Federal Target Programme, “Development of the Water-economic Complex in the Russian Federation, 2012-2020” (FTP “Water of Russia”).

I would like to briefly introduce these documents. To address the key problems there were specified certain directions for the Strategic implementation, such as guaranteeing the provision of population and economic branches with water resources; protection and restoration of water bodies and proofing against the negative effects of water; improvement of public administration; development of the system of State monitoring of bodies of water; provision of the innovative development of scientific-technical and technological base and staff development of the water-economic complex. One of the important directions for Strategy implementation is education and public awareness about the use and protection of water bodies.

The main mechanism for implementation of the Water Strategy is the Federal Target Program me (“Water of Russia”).

Goals of the programme:

- to guarantee of sustainable social and economic development of the Russian Federation with its water resources;
- to conserve and remedy water sources to a condition which ensures ecologically favourable life conditions for the population;
- to ensure protection of the population and economic entities from floods and other negative water impacts;

Tasks of the programme:

- elimination of local deficits of water resources in water-stressed regions of the Russian Federation;
- improvement of water resource conservation;
- decrease of intense human impact on water sources;
- remediation and ecological rehabilitation of water sources;
- improvement of operating reliability of waterworks (including derelict ones) by ensuring their safe technical condition;
- ensuring safety of population and economic entities from negative water impact using engineering protection facilities;
- development and upgrading of state system of water sources monitoring;
- forming of “ecological consciousness” and responsible attitude to water resources of the young generation.

Some of the planned results of the Strategy:

- improvement in satisfying the demand of the Russian Federation for water resources to 107 km³ per year;
- decrease of Russian GDP water consumption by 42%;

- halving water loss upon transportation from 10% to 5%;
- decrease of the share of polluted waste waters from 89% to 36%;
- decrease of discharge of pollutants into surface water sources by 40%;
- increase of share of territories protected from hazardous exposure to waters from 16% to 50%;
- decrease of share of waterworks in critical condition from 5% to 0%.

Significant funds were allocated for the implementation of these programmes and significant positive changes are expected from their implementation.

In my speech I mentioned crucial and major, but mainly technical, aspects of water saving. I would also like to mention the aspect which was earlier covered by Professor Naranio, mainly regarding spirituality and morality.

Many years ago I read a book by Aleksandr Belyaev called the “Air Seller”. In this science fiction novel, a talented but amoral and greedy scientist found a way to take oxygen from the atmosphere, so that when the population of Earth started suffocating its inhabitants, he set his price for the possibility to breathe normally. I remember how startled I was by such situation.

Water, much like air, is an element vital for human existence, and I am now worried by the problem of paid, bottled water. I accept such a facility, but only on condition of the free, not enforced, choice of a person. I believe everyone must have access to free water, but for now the situation becomes more unclear and more disturbing.

I foresee such processes as the formation of forced markets, and probably such a process is now developing right in front of our eyes... Let's be careful.

Dear colleagues, thank you for your attention.