



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE WORLD WATER FORUM AND THE VOICE OF CIVIL SOCIETY (NGOS AND CBOs) INSIDE

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*Here is a list of propositions to be shared with the different networks and to be presented to WWC Administrators in order to improve the World Water Forum process and the role of NGOs/CBOs inside. The recommendations are organised under main processes.*

### 1 – GLOBAL

#### 1a – Analysis

##### **Aim and mandate:**

- The forum, as it is not a UN one, lacks political dimension. Therefore, participants commit shyly to it.
- The format of the forum varies from one to the next, according to hosting country specificity toward civil society, technical process, politics, etc... allowing certain risks (e.g. representation of civil society during the WWForum).
- NGO participation has decreased since Marseille and NGOs & CBOs partners are not enough represented
- UNICEF, UN lead agency for WASH at country level, is not present
- The weakest processes are the regional process and citizen forum
- Apart from lower NGO/ CSO participation in general, there was low visibility of women and women's perspectives

##### *Concerning the WWC :*

- More NGOs should be members of the General Assembly of the WWC. Lack of consideration and decision making power for NGOs and CSOs, especially in Commissions.

##### **Logistics:**

- Too many sessions (400 at the WWF7)
- Lack or poor pre and post forum communication (website heavy and not updated)
- No evaluation of the event by the participants

- Internal communication problems (Wi-Fi, video conference facilities, etc.)
- Lack of communication with external stakeholders (ex. Very few articles in the media)
- Big problems with registration and accommodation at WWF7
- The format of the whole forum should be revised:
  - o Less sessions
  - o First day or first 2 days in silos (groups such as youth, politics, etc. then 1 or 2 days on cross-nurturing and finally one day for commitments and SDG monitoring).
- Two locations (Daegu and Gyeongbuk) which isolate some of the process like the Citizens' Forum
- A limited number of languages : only English and the hosting country's language which makes it difficult the understanding and the involvement of the NGOs/CBOs
- The communication around the Forum and the main steps was low

**Budget:**

- Budget allocation is not transparent enough.
- Recurrent problem to fund coordination of civil society and its representation at the forum, including its work in different process (like in design groups)
- Problem with timeframe: the budget is validated too late, which makes difficult the involvement and presence of NGOs, especially from developing countries.
- The budget mechanism aims at reimbursing the participants travel, visas and accommodation: participants have to advance funds; this closes the doors to most of developing countries participants.
- The financial support is not enough sufficient to cover all the expenses of each grantee.

**1b – Recommendations**

**Aim and mandate:**

- Increase interest and global political insight by empowering the role of the Forum in the SDGs process. For instance, countries could be able to present publicly their progress towards water targets during the Forum. It could link with partners (especially donors and private / NGO stakeholders) to find enabling partnerships to achieve them. This shall also ensure a connection with the UN system (at least the JMP & GLAAS project holders such as WHO and possibly UNICEF).
- Need NGO representatives in ISC (already the case), but chosen by the NGOs for a real representation
- Hosting countries should commit to a set of binding principles in a white paper which should be included in the bid, especially :
  - o Each Process Commission must have at least one NGO representative as a member
  - o Only one location for the WWF7
  - o Three official languages minimum (French, English and Spanish) : before, during and after the Forum (website, preparatory documents, restitution of sessions etc.)
  - o A sufficient budget for financial support for civil society
  - o A follow-up of the previous Forum

- Need to involve more CSOs & NGOs in the organization of the Forum (then to ensure enabling budget for coordinating, preparing, visiting the forum, and ensuring a proper representative in the different process).
- The Forum should be diversity and gender mainstreamed

*Concerning the WWC :*

- For a best representation, WWC could copy UN structure (major groups) or WWC colleges and have a college dedicated to NGOs

**Logistics:**

- External Communication : The WWForum, its events and declarations needs more external visibility (web) to attract people and be more considered
- Internal Communication : Need modern communication tools (video-conferences, social media, updated websites) to ensure more dialogue with audience and put more pressure on speakers
- After each Forum, participants should get the opportunity to give feedback on the Forum
- Reduce size of Forum and sessions (and use money saved to fund NGO participation)
- Improve registration and accommodation process
- Only one location
- Reinforce the communication on the Forum with a clear communication strategy, and attractive and complete communication tools (website in particular)

**Budget:**

- The WWC should come up with a real funding strategy:
  - o not depending just on the host country and one or two business sponsors
  - o does this together with the different types of members
  - o sets binding criteria for travel support etc.
  - o with funds to cover the work of NGOs/CBOs in the process committee or in the design groups, when requested
  - o with sufficient funds for NGOs and CBOs (Community Based Organisations) from both North and especially the South
- WWC should be accountable and ensure efficient monitoring of the budget disbursements
- Also need a financial envelope (around 90.000 euros) to ensure NGOs coordination

## **2 - POLITICAL PROCESS**

### **2a – Analysis**

**Global:**

- Right now there is no accountability from WWForum to participants, WWC members, etc.
- The WWForums should clarify its objectives: Is the WWForum simply a good place for networking and exchanges within the water sector or do we want to achieve political goals? In that case, the WWF is not politic enough.

- There is no monitoring of the commitments taken in each Forum. It should be the role of the WWC but it does not.

#### **Ministerial Process:**

- What is the real scope of the Ministerial declaration: Is it really useful to have a new declaration every 3 years without monitoring previous commitments?
- Purpose of high level panels is unclear (declarations, no interaction with audience etc.)
- Not enough interest from ministers (for instance, no ministers from France)
- NGOs have not enough opportunities for involvement in the prepcom, to share their messages
- Some panels are held behind closed doors and NGOs cannot attend
- Weak communication on the Ministerial Declaration

#### **Parliamentary Process:**

- Concerning the parliamentary declaration , we are focused on the same things as previously, for instance the Parliamentary Helpdesk, without any financial means for its effective implementation

#### **Local Authorities Process:**

- The declaration of the local authorities is weak and there was not enough involvement of local authorities.

## **2b – Recommendations**

#### **Global:**

- WWC should feel committed to follow up on commitments taken during the Forum and especially in the Ministerial Declarations. This, in a transparent way. Its mandate must be clarified in that framework.
- The WWForum should be a place to monitor progress of SDGs, which would build bridges with UN process and ensure more visibility and stakeholders' engagement and participation (ex. Like the current link with OECD)

#### **Ministerial Process:**

- The Declaration achievements shall be transparently monitored
- High level panels should be more inspiring and should convey an official document that could set the path of the next Ministerial Declaration.
- Promote interest from ministers and EU by making the forum more political, more binding, more monitored and more visible
- NGOs must be invited to Ministerial roundtables and be systematically represented in all High level panels.
- A more important presence of civil society could also increase political will.
- Empower the communication on the Ministerial Declaration to give it more impact.

#### **Local Authorities Process:**

- Find a way to trigger local authorities involvement and representation

### **3 - REGIONAL PROCESS**

#### **3a – Analysis**

- 3 problems: preparation, participation / representation and funding
- Lack of political leadership in some regions
- Some regions don't have enough money to organise it
- The problem is who manages the money and who leads the process for each region
- Process sometimes quite closed : it involves above all institutional organizations and not enough NGOs
- Not enough mix-commissions (NGO, private sector, local authorities, donors, etc.)

#### **3b – Recommendations**

- Improve preparation, participation / representation and mainly funding
- Need a proper institution to manage transparently the funding allocated to this process
- Need to identify, for each region, a proper lead institution
- Need to involve more NGOs into the regional process
- Need to create mix regional commissions (including NGO, private sector, local authorities, etc.)

### **4 - THEMATIC PROCESS**

#### **4a – Analysis**

- Too many sessions (400 sessions)
- Very hard to understand how to get involved in sessions unless you are part of the small water elite bubble (especially for CBOs and CSOs)
- Lack of Southern partners representativeness in the sessions
- Uneven quality sessions

#### **4b – Recommendations**

- Reduce to maximum 100 sessions
- Make the involvement process to the thematic sessions more visible and easy to access (online expression of interest).
- Ensure at least 1 representative from the South at each session, as a panelist

## **5 - CITIZEN'S FORUM (NGOs/CBOs, WOMEN, YOUTH AND INDIGENOUS GROUPS)**

### **5a – Analysis**

- The citizens' forum is not working properly.
- Participants are spread into different geographical locations (e.g. WWF7)

### **5b – Recommendations**

- A new format to the citizens' forum shall be found. Need to consult participants to get their views on how to improve it, e. g. to focus on streamlining participants in other processes (quotas?)?
- It is crucial to have a space for CBOS and CSOs to exchange experiences (like the Business space) – this should be a mirror of the World Water Council structure, where this specific college shall also be specifically redesigned into a civil society (NGOs & CBOs) one.
- Participants need to be in the same location as other stakeholders