



**LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' DAY**  
**9 September 2008**

**In the context of the**  
**INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSOCIATION**  
**CONGRESS 2008**

**AUSTRIA CENTRE**  
**VIENNA**

# [ The organisers ]



**The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)** is the European umbrella organisation of 51 national associations representing local and regional government in 37 countries.

Water issues are addressed in CEMR's activities in the context of the EU internal market and the environmental policy.

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**United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)** is the world organisation with members in over 127 countries in all world regions, including cities and national associations.

UCLG has a committee on water and sanitation, which aims to ensure an integrated and sustainable management of water resources through cooperation between local governments and the international community.

**Contact:**

**The International Water Association (IWA)** is a global network of water professionals with members from research institutes and practitioners.

The focus of their work is on effective and sustainable approaches to water management, with emphasis on the science and management of drinking water, wastewater, storm water and the conservation of water resources throughout the world.

# [ Background ]

Water and related issues play a major role at local and regional level. The organisers have identified three major topics to be addressed in the conference:

1. The legal, financial and organisational framework
2. The impact of increasing economic growth and urbanisation
3. Challenges of the climate change

The first session will assess what means local and regional governments have to provide good sustainable water management service to the citizens, looking at the effectiveness of different organisational and legal structures (public, private, public-private, public-public organisational form). Complementarily, it aims to address the financial and legal challenges in the European internal market context and in the global setting, with problems involving bad management and transparency, which often cause inefficiency of funds available. Solutions such as hydro-solidarity and private-public financing will also be addressed.

Cities experience more and more urbanisation and are at the same time confronted with urban sprawl. Consistent with the United Nations' millennium development goal number seven, that seeks to ensure environmental sustainability, the second session intends to explore developments on different continents and to present solutions on how to face the challenges of rapid growing population and economic growth and its impact on the water management (e.g. planning, quality, regulations, risk management, etc.), the main question being that of finding the fragile balance between economic growth and successful water management.

Climate change has an important impact on water and influences many related issues that are directly or indirectly connected to water.

The third session will address the possible consequences of climate change on the use of water for energy (e.g. cooling, refining, and hydro-power) and the use of energy for water (e.g. wastewater, networks, transport and treatment). The direct impact of climate change on water management will also be discussed, as the problems linked to water may cause: more severe floods and droughts, as well as risks of contamination of drinking water by salt-water due to the rise in sea level. We also aim to take a broader view and look into the meaning of coastal zones and the role they play as recreation housing, tourism areas and how rising temperatures will need to be taken into account in the planning and building activities.

## **Some questions for discussions:**

- What are the challenges that local and regional authorities face at legal, organisational and financial level?
- Do they have the right instruments to handle these challenges?
- How can fast growing cities prepare for potential impact of water related questions?
- Are urban planners and local politicians able to take measures at the relevant levels to limit water related risks?
- What methods exist to handle problems like draught and flooding at local level?
- How can local authorities prepare for the challenges of climate change?
- What measures does the industry take to contribute to a sustainable water management?



- 14:00 **Keynote speech**  
**Stavros DIMAS**, European Commissioner for Environment (invited)
- 14:30 **Climate change and its challenges: how to adapt and prepare at local and regional level?**
- Bärbel DIECKMANN**, Mayor of Bonn, CEMR Executive President, President of the World Mayors Council on Climate Change
- Abel CABALLERO ÁLVAREZ**, Mayor of Vigo, President of the Network of Spanish Cities for Climate
- Greg NICKELS**, Mayor of Seattle, leader on climate change issues in the US Conference of Mayors (invited)
- Elected representative from UCLG and / or ICLEI
- Elected representative from Norway and / or the UK and / or the Czech Republic
- Thomas GRÜNEBAUM**, Ruhrverband
- Moderator: **Wim van VIERSEN** or **Richard HALL** (tbc)
- 16:00 Coffee Break
- 16:45 **Final Panel Discussion**
- Bärbel DIECKMANN**, Mayor of Bonn, CEMR Executive President, President of the World Mayors Council on Climate Change
- Greg NICKELS**, Mayor of Seattle, leader on climate change issues in the US Conference of Mayors (invited)
- Paul REITER**, Executive Director, IWA
- Antoine FRERAR**, CEO Veolia Environment
- Jean Phillipe CHAUSSADE**, CEO Suez
- Moderator: **Jeremy SMITH**, Secretary General of CEMR
- 18.00 END