

“Europe and North America: Megacities, Water, and Climate Change” Preparatory meeting for Europe and North America (MAWAC-ENA)

21 September, 2021 - 17:00 to 19:00 pm (Paris time)

SUMMARY

I. Global MAWAC Alliance & Regional Platforms – Goals, Organizational Structure & Strategic Development

Mr. Philippe Pypaert thanked, on behalf of UNESCO, the ASC members for their contribution to the MAWAC program development and presented the goals, historical MAWAC concept development since 2015, proposed organizational structure, initial products and strategic development milestones of the Global MAWAC Alliance. He emphasized the essential role of the Regional Megacities Platforms as the core foundations of the MAWAC network in promoting relevant experience sharing among the megacities involved, as well as the critical need to involve the major stakeholders in each megacity, including policy decision makers, water operators, academic communities and other stakeholders, as appropriate, in the process.

At this stage, he called upon the ASC members to review the ToR proposed for the global MAWAC Alliance and establish the ToR for the MAWAC-ENA platform, including recommendations for the governance relationships between the global MAWAC network and the regional platforms. As for the milestones, he highlighted the need to prepare i) the 1st General Assembly of the Global MAWAC Megacities, scheduled to take place during the EAUMEGA 2022 Conference, January 11 to 14, 2022; and ii) the General Assembly of the MAWAC--ENA Platform, tentatively scheduled for the end of November 2021.

II. Priority Issues of Regional Interest & Expected Outcome for the Megacities – The main goals of this panel discussion were to: i) provide Ms. Olga Zinkova, from the Department of Natural Resources Management & Protection of the City of Moscow, the opportunity to share the current challenges of the City of Moscow raised by Climate change impacts on the natural resources and the metropolitan water ecosystem; and ii) promote the discussion among the experts of the water authorities of Moscow, Paris, Chicago, New York and Los Angeles on priority themes of common interest for framing the initial phase of a relevant experience sharing.

Ms. Olga Zinkova, described the water systems of the City of Moscow and highlighted the climate challenges due primarily to increased precipitation, leading to higher flood risks, with more intense summer storms. The water supply is almost exclusively based upon surface water and increased rainfalls, with higher flood risks, raise the needs for appropriate infrastructure solutions, including grey and green infrastructure, enhanced drainage, etc. It would be of interest to share experience, best practices and planning concepts on these issues.

Ms. Angela Licata, NYCDEP, and **Mr. Ed Podczewski**, MWRD, Chicago, emphasized that the issues brought up are common to most megacities, subject to increased risks of flooding, and the deployment of green infrastructure raises significant life cycle planning and operational issues.

Ms. Angela Licata briefly described the impacts and preliminary observations of Hurricane IDA, which severely hit NYC on September 1, with more than 3 inches of rain an hour. The inland flooding occurred at low tide - otherwise the damage would have been significantly more severe. She kindly accepted to share

future reports on the consequences and lessons learned. **Ms. Angela Licata** raised the issue of residents' education for improving societal resilience to extreme events and the need to develop and provide the residents with appropriate tools for active defense response at crisis.

Ms. Anne Le Strat highlighted the issue of residents' empowerment and the critical need for involving active participation of the civil society in framing the megacity adaptation strategy to climate driven conditions of extreme events and promoting socio-cultural resilience. The issue was also brought up by **Mr. Alan Cohn**, NYCDEP.

Mr. Ilan Juran briefly described the current initiative undertaken by NYU and the National Academy of TV, Art & Science, NY, which was presented at the UNESCO ECO-RISE Colloquium, November 2019, to promote relevant public awareness raising for enhancing socio-cultural resilience to extreme events through government collaboration with the media, educational and cultural communities. A special round table session on these issues is planned for the EAUMEGA 2022 conference. Within this context it is suggested that the Media, Educational Community & more broadly the Civil Society will be invited to participate in the ENA program development, as appropriate for the specific context of each of the megacities concerned.

For Paris, focusing more specifically on the wastewater management challenges **Mr. Jean-Pierre Tabuchi**, SIAAP, brought up the challenges due to the uncertainties concerning the climate change impacts on the river flow, storm water and the needs for monitoring and methods for treatment adaptation to the changing ecosystem.

Mr. Bruno Nguyen, recognizing the wide diversity of the climate impact challenges faced by the megacities in their specific context, suggested that for experience sharing planning purpose it would be helpful if the ASC members, representing the megacities concerned, could identify and rank the 4 to 5 priority themes, relevant to their challenges. For this purpose, a list of priority themes is attached for your consideration. As this list is obviously not all inclusive of the variety of challenges, please indicate any other issues as appropriate.

Experience & Knowledge Sharing Framework - **Mr. Ilan Juran** indicated that **Ms. Anne Le Strat**, during her tenure as Deputy Mayor of Paris and President of Eau de Paris, created the *Paris Observatory of Water (OPE* - <https://www-observatoireparisiendeleau>). With her leadership, NYU would like to suggest for your consideration to establish a network of water observatories of the ENA megacities as an inter-city framework for experience and knowledge sharing, with relevant data and information systems for regional knowledge base development, to support policy decisions, research, and education for the specific challenges and context of each megacity.

III. The MAWAC-ENA Platform ToR - It is envisioned that a draft document of the regional ToR will be prepared by the Acting Steering Committee before the official virtual General Assembly meeting of the MAWAC-ENA Platform, which is tentatively scheduled for the End of November 2021.

Mr. Bruno Nguyen and Mr. Jean-Claude Deutsch emphasized the need to review the proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Global MAWAC Network, which are already under discussion; and ii) engage the preparation of the MAWAC-ENA Platform Terms of Reference, consistently with the goals and the ToR proposed at the Global MAWAC Network level. The regional ToR will describe the purpose and the objectives of the MAWAC-ENA platform, its particularities compared to other existing groups/alliances, its management rules, scoping strategy for experience and knowledge sharing framework among the megacities, potential resources for mutually engaged collaborative initiatives, as well as its relations with the Global MAWAC Alliance and Regional Platforms.

Mr. Jean-Claude Deutsch solicited the active participation of all the ASC members in the review of the ToR proposed for the Global MAWAC Network and the development of the MAWAC-ENA ToR. Recognizing the wide diversity of contexts of the megacities concerned, the participation and the input of all the ASC members is essential for the development of ToR which may be adopted and adapted to the specific context of each of the megacities involved. He emphasized that one of the essential roles of the ASC in accomplishing the MAWAC-ENA goals is to initiate and promote the inter-city multi-dimensional ENA network of the stakeholders of the metropolitan water ecosystems, including the policy decision makers, the operators, the academic communities and other stakeholders as appropriate for the context of each of the megacities concerned. He suggested the preparation of a white paper on the identified priority themes, which will provide a baseline framework for the development of a relevant experience and knowledge sharing platform. As pointed out earlier by **Mr. Philippe Pypaert** the challenges of the megacities were summarized by 15 megacities in the UNESCO - ARCEAU-IdF 2015 publication on “Water, Megacities and Global Change: Portraits of 15 Emblematic Cities of the World” and is currently being updated for publication at the EAUMEGA 2022 Conference.

Mr. Bruno Nguyen emphasized that while the MAWAC-ENA Platform Terms of Reference, have to be consistent with the goals and the ToR proposed at the Global MAWAC Network level, the ToR of the ENA platform will focus on the development of the regional experience and knowledge sharing framework among the megacities, potential resources, scope of activities and relations with the Global MAWAC Alliance and Regional Platforms. They should also include the selected system for the experience and knowledge sharing framework, accessibility terms, and other strategic development and operational deployment issues. For this purpose, **Mr. Ilan Juran**, suggested to create a working group including NYU, ARCEAU-IdF, UNESCO, W-SMART and other ASC members to draft the ToR for review by the ASC members before its next meeting, tentatively scheduled for the end of October. **The draft ToR will be forwarded for your review and discussion before our next meeting.**

Post meeting, Jean-Claude Deutsch forwarded the Strategic Global Frame attached, which is a document describing the vision of the MAWAC by UNESCO, including the proposed ToR for review comments. We thank Ed Podczewinski for his review comments concerning the SGF, attached. At this stage we would appreciate if you could share with us your comments at your earliest convenience. Your comments are intended to be used, not only to responding to UNESCO, but also as a valuable basis for the writing of the Regional ToR.

With regard to potential resources, Mr. Philippe Pypaert emphasized the need to creatively mobilize the resources of the networks involved, which for UNESCO may include the deployment of existing platforms, such as NIMS, and the involvement of the research resources of UNESCO Chairs and Category 2 research centers. However, it is envisioned that the MAWAC global network and the regional collaborative platforms of governments – operators – academics and other stakeholders will actively leverage potential resources for their strategic program development and identified scope of activities.

IV. The Next Step: 1st General Assembly Meeting of the MAWAC-ENA Megacities, tentatively scheduled for End of Nov. 2021. This meeting will be jointly organized by UNESCO, NYU, ARCEAU-IdF, W-SMART and MGP, with official invitation letters to the mayors of the megacities involved issued by UNESCO.

Mr. Philippe Pypaert updated the ASC members with regard to the UNESCO process for inviting the mayors. **Mr. Ilan Juran** emphasized the need to coordinate the UNESCO invitation process with the ASC members, who represent executives and experts of the water departments/utilities of the megacities concerned, and suggested that the executives of these departments advise the ASC on the best way to approach the mayors

and for any documentation that may be useful for this purpose. **Ms. Lin Kaixin** indicated that the process has to follow the UNESCO diplomatic venue, which involves the delegations of the countries concerned.

At this stage we would like to thank **Mr. Peter Grevatt**, CEO of the US Water Research Foundation, for accepting our invitation to join the ASC and provide overall perspectives of the R&D challenges of North American utilities.

The Next Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 4, or Friday 5, 17:00 – 19:00 Paris Time (11:00 to 1:00pm EST). The meeting will focus on the preparation of the virtual General Assembly (GA) meeting of the MAWAC-ENA Megacities and its proposed agenda, including substantive discussions on:

- I. **Preparation of GA meeting agenda** for the General Assembly of MAWAC-ENA Megacities;
- II. **Composition of delegations** of the megacities for the GA Meeting;
- III. **Logistics and invitation process** including local coordination at the level of each megacity;
- IV. **Discussion issues** format and expected outcome of the meeting;
- V. **Priority Themes & Framework** for Experience and Knowledge Sharing
- VI. **ToR** for the Global MAWAC and the ENA Platform
- VII. **Preparation of the General Assembly** of the Global MAWAC Megacities scheduled for January 14, 2022;
- VIII. **Other issues**