

Record of the 5th Meeting of the General Assembly (held on 11 December 2020)

On 11 December 2020, the General Assembly of the Global Network of Water Museums met (with on-line and telematic meetings), at 1.30pm CET (Central Europe Time) to discuss the following Order of Business:

1. Opening of the meeting and appointment of the Chair
2. Approval of the Record of last General Assembly (26 June 2020)
3. Update on the financial situation of the Global Network and status of annual membership contributions (fees 2020 received until Nov. 30th)
4. Approval of Annual Membership Contributions for the year 2021
5. Approval of the Forecast Budget - year 2021
6. Presentation of ongoing activities and planned activities for 2021: webinars, celebration of the WWD, and 2nd edition of the Youth Prize Contest "The Water We Want"
7. Proposals and suggestions from the members
8. AOB - Closing of the meeting

Members who are present:

Ahmed Sara, Living Waters Museum, India; Bangde Yang, Baiheliang Underwater Museum, Chongqing, China; Becker Christoph, Historisches Klaerwerk Krefeld, Germany; Bricchetti Edo, Martesana Ecomuseum, Italy; de Vries Sandra, The Netherlands; El Mandour Abdennabi, Musee Mohammed VI de la Civilization de l'Eau "Mohammed VI", Morocco; Eulisse Eriberto, Water Museums of Venice, Italy; Kerr-Wilson Ian, Canada; La Spada Giuseppe, Italy; Leordean Loredana, Aquatim SA, Romania; Lessa Joana, Portugal; Marbaix Julie, Musee de l'Eau et de la Fontaine, Belgium; Maruskic Kulas Margarita, Aquatika Karlovac, Croatia; Moors Eddy, The Netherlands; Rodes Javier, Museos de Mequinenza, Spain; Rovira Pujol David, Museu de les Aigües, Spain; Ruf Thierry, France; Scoullos Michael, HYDRIA Network, Greece; Serra Giménez Eudald, Museu de la Tecnica de Manresa, Spain; Sharroks Amy, Museum of Water, UK; Siampani Maria, Greece; Snabilie Hugo, Broekerveiling Museum, The Netherlands; Ulliana Maurizio, River Navigation Museum of Battaglia Terme, Italy; Vallerani Francesco, University of Ca' Foscari, Italy; van Melis Elise, Haarlemmermeermuseum De Cruquius, The Netherlands; Veres Loredana, "Leonida Truta" Water Museum of Cluj, Romania; Wang Jianping, Yellow River Museum, China; Yongming Chen, National Water Museum of China, Hangzhou, China.

Members who are not present (justified absentees):

Barlas Richard, Hamilton Museum of Steam and Technology, Canada; Boxer Graham, National Waterways Museum of Ellesmere, UK; Braun Ralf, Water Museum of Bavaria "Haus am Strom", Germany; Broek Emily, IHP-HWRP Netherlands Committee; Crowe Deirdre, Water Museum of Ireland; Damon Betsy, Keepers of the Waters, USA; De Laet Hilde, Hidrodoe Pidpa, Belgium; Castro-Henriques Mariana, Museu da Agua, Lisbon, Portugal; Crijns Huibert, Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands; Dodiță-Farçaș Daniel, Aquaserv S.A., Romania; Gottardi Marco, Parco Regionale Delta del Po, Italy; Haliori Keti, World Water Museum, Greece; Herrerias Gisela, Museo del Agua "Agua para siempre", Mexico; Horvath Istvan, Duna Museum, Hungary; Jansen Wim, Kring Vrienden 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands; Kabir Farah, Water Museum, Bangladesh; Lanzinger Michele, MUSE, Museo delle Scienze, Italy; Lee Kyung-ho, Jeju Water Exhibition Hall, South Korea; Letizia Domenico, Italy; Marchi Fabio, Consorzi dei Canali di Reno e

Savena in Bologna, Italy; Mizzan Luca, Natural History Museum of Venice, Italy; Otte Alexander, Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme of UNESCO; Poli Bordereau Anastasia, Musée des Egouts, France; Punt Aart, Waterlinie Museum, The Netherlands; Said Al Mesnad Fatima, Kahramaa Water Awareness Park, Qatar; Samoura Alassane, Musée de l'Eau de Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; Sanchiz Jose Font, Tribunal de les Aigues de la Vega de Valencia, Spain; Singha Sushmita, Water Museum of Udaipur, Rajasthan, India; Steiner George, Tourism Board Linz, Austria; Topcu Ercan, Ab-I Hayat Anatolian Water Civilizations Museum, Turkey; Vallejo Guerrero Sofia Emilia, Yaku Parque Museo del Agua, Ecuador; van Beek Peter, Biesbosch Museum Eiland, The Netherlands; Wiersma Peppie, Pop-up Museum Drowned Land, The Netherlands; Wundsam Karin, Water Adventure Mini-Danube, Austria; Xiaowen Zhang, Changjiang Civilization Museum, Wuhan, China; Xiao Yun Zheng, China.

1. Opening of the meeting and appointment of the Chair

The President Eddy Moors opens and chairs the meeting. As the valid quorum of members is present, the President begins the General Assembly at 1.30 pm CET. The meeting closes at 3.10 pm. The President states that all museums unfortunately are facing difficult situations and budgets constraints due to COVID. However, he expresses the hope that we can overcome this critical situation with new projects and ideas. Next year IHP will launch its 9th Phase, and also the situation of WAMU-NET will be considered and discussed within the next Intergovernmental Council of UNESCO-IHP, being one of its flagship initiatives.

2. Approval of the Record of last General Assembly (26 June 2020)

The record of the previous meeting of the General Assembly is approved. In June it was discussed how WAMU-NET had to make consistent changes on the planned program of activities for 2020, including cancellation of the 4th International Conference at Hangzhou, China. All activities were transferred on-line and on Social media. A punctual analysis of how to manage the difficult financial situation for the year 2020 and the next years was made at any rate.

3. Update on the financial situation of the Global Network and status of annual membership contributions (fees 2020 received until Nov. 30th)

The updated Forecast Budget at 31 Dec. 2020 that was sent in advance by the Executive Director is discussed. Compared to the last Forecast Budget discussed on June 26th at the previous GA, the predicted revenues from the UNESCO Beijing Office and IHP-HWRP Netherlands for producing two videos have been confirmed. These new incomes enable to make an anticipation of the budget 2020 with a positive balance. Looking at the financial document sent in advance to all members ("Bank Account at November 25th with Forecast until 31st December 2020"), it can be noticed that the year 2020 may close with a surplus of approximately 500 € at 31/12/2020. Also, it is noticed that there are still some membership fees to be paid in 2020. In general, it can be noticed that approx. 50% of revenues came from membership fees, and the remaining 50% are revenues produced by projects. As a result, thanks to the careful consideration of all costs managed by the Director, the situation of WAMU-NET is under control. The internal Auditor, Ian Kerr-Wilson, congratulates the Director and the Management Board for the good job and for the control of all costs in this difficult year. The Director states that this result was made possible thanks to the additional support of the Netherlands HWRP Committee, the UNESCO Beijing Office and the National Water Museum of China, Hangzhou. Also, he anticipates that for the next year similar revenues must be sought, if possible, with the support of other WAMU-NET members.

4. Approval of Annual Membership Contributions for the year 2021

The Management Board proposes for 2021 the same contributions for membership of 2020. Considering the difficult situation that all museums and institutions are currently going through, with no exception for WAMU-NET, this seems a reasonable proposal. On the basis of revenues from WAMU-NET members, the 2021 Forecast Budget was outlined for the approval of the GA. Members are invited to send their votes concerning this OoB. Annual membership contributions for the year 2021, as detailed in the Attachment n.1, are approved by the majority of members.

Votes in favor: 37

Not in favor: 0

Abstained: 0

5. Approval of the Forecast Budget - year 2021

The Forecast Budget prepared by the MB is presented and discussed. Given the current situation dictated by a worldwide economic crisis, due to COVID pandemics, the internal auditor, Ian Kerr-Wilson, states that at present it would be difficult to approve a Forecast Budget for the entire year. It is wiser to consider only a six-months forecast, given the fact that membership fees can cover most of WAMU-NET expenses until June. Approximately 20k € are expected from membership annual contributions: currently this is the only revenue for 2020 unfortunately. Thus, the remaining costs must be covered by project revenues, and the period until June will be functional to generate new incomes from projects. In this way, the forecast budget for the 1st semester shows that there is only a small deficit (-700 €) until the end of June. It is stressed that a lack of additional revenues will jeopardize the running of WAMU-NET institutional activities.

The announced commissioning of a new video by prof. Scoullos (Hydria Network, Greece) can generate an additional net revenue of approximately 5k € that may cover other costs for the 2nd semester. The President, Eddy Moors, stresses that similar projects should be considered and commissioned to WAMU-NET by all Network's members. The Director Eulisse notices that the contained deficit recorded in the proposed Forecast Budget for the 1st semester is possible. However, consistent cuts must be made concerning staff costs. This seems the only viable solution at this stage, although it may impact negatively the performance of WAMU-NET for 2021. With approx. a 50% cut on stipends (compared to 2020), the Communication team will have to work for the maintenance of two web sites (the institutional one and the web site of the Youth Contest TWWW). Also costs for managing the secretariat record a 50% cut. Currently also Civiltà dell'Acqua is strongly affected by the economic crisis due to the Covid and this will impact negatively on the in-kind support provided so far by Civiltà dell'Acqua to the Global Network. At present state, considering the current costs of an Executive Director that is working at least 2 days/week for the Global Network, for 2021 the annual fee paid by WAMU-NET to Civiltà dell'Acqua should cover at least 1,5 days/week (which matches the amount of 13.500 € included in the Forecast Budget). Because of this critical financial situation, in 2021 the prize of the youth competition TWWW will be symbolic and without any cash prizes. There is a need to develop a new fundraising strategy. Members agree on the proposal to approve the forecast only for the 1st semester of the year and to update the 2nd semester in June, when it will be easier to predict the situation until December. Members are invited to send their votes concerning this OoB, and the majority of them approve the Forecast Budget until June as detailed in the Attachment n.2.

Votes in favor: 37

Not in favor: 0

Abstained: 0

6. Presentation of ongoing activities and planned activities for 2021: webinars, celebration of the WWD, and 2nd edition of the Youth Prize Contest “The Water We Want”

The Director comments the Report on the communication campaign TWWW commissioned by the UNESCO Beijing Office and the National Water Museum of China, Hangzhou, and its positive results. In addition to the main video of the campaign, 21 additional video-posts have been produced and disseminated successfully. Results include more than 120.000 people reached on Facebook (in English). Translations were made also in Chinese and Spanish using different media. Activities planned for next year include: International Webinar of the Global Network “Embracing Changes”, coordinated by the National Water Museum of China, Hangzhou (in January); webinar and musical performance on the occasion of the next WWD, on March 22nd; TWWW awarding ceremony (in May/June); next General Assembly including the renovation of governing bodies (in June); the first Winter School organized by the UNESCO Chair in Venice (in October). Indeed, in June the next GA will convene for the renewal of WAMU-NET governing bodies. Manifestations of interest to be included in the management bodies will be made possible using a specific template. Also, the Director Eulisse announces the new members who recently joined the Network: the Regional Park Delta Po (Italy) and OSE Water Museum (Uruguay). All new members will be reported in the newsletters.

7. Proposals and suggestions from the members

The new Director of the National Museum of China, Mr. Chen Yongming, introduces the next International Webinar planned in January and coordinated by his museum. The webinar will focus on the on-line activities carried out by museums during the COVID and will include two round table discussions. The title is “Embracing Changes”; the 1st round-table discussion will focus on-line strategies, and the 2nd on off-line activities implemented by water museums in these difficult times. The webinar will be the opportunity for all water museums to meet, at least virtually, and exchange experiences on how to overcome the crisis. The President Eddy Moors suggests it is crucial to learn from one another on how to overcome difficult situations; he invites all members to join the webinar, make suggestions and share experiences, including the unsuccessful ones.

Prof. Francesco Vallerani, member of the Advisory Committee, presents the new training course which will be organized on the second semester of 2021. The course is based on the new UNESCO Chair titled “Water Heritage and sustainable development” hosted by the University of Venice. The Chairholder is Prof. Vallerani and the training course will be coordinated by the Executive Director, Eriberto Eulisse, in cooperation with Dr. Sara Luchetta. This Chair based in Venice will create some unique opportunities of training to all water museums and will investigate on the main gaps and training needs especially from less developed countries. The main goal of UNESCO is global education, and this Chair is an academic project based on Human Geography that will develop a multidisciplinary research perspective aimed at recovering cultural and social water-related heritage in connection to SDGs. The course will be developed in cooperation with researchers from all over the world. Four online courses will be developed for the next four years. The objective is to maximize the contribution of water museums on local urban and rural development and for territorial attractiveness. The 1st course will focus on water heritage in and out of museums, on the relationship between water heritage and communities, eco-museums, participatory approaches and outdoor education. Prof. Thierry Ruf and Prof. Michael Scoullou



congratulate on the design of this new training activity and confirm open collaboration to develop the educational activities.

The Executive Director also confirms that WAMU-NET is planning to organize with IHP a proposal to the next World Water Forum that will be organised in Senegal. This will be a unique opportunity to develop further networks of water museums in Africa, and so will be a good opportunity for the development of new African museums. Prof. El Mandour confirms the availability of the National Water Museum of Morocco to host the 5th Conference of WAMU-NET in Marrakech, if compatible with the Covid pandemic; he also confirms the intention of the Moroccan Minister of Islamic Affairs to act proactively for the creation of a sub-network of water museums in Africa.

8. AOB - Closing of the Meeting

The President thanks all members for their active contributions, invites the participants to vote, and expresses the hope to meet again in presence in the near future, but in the meantime stresses the opportunity to discuss through on-line tools.

The meeting closes at 3,10 pm CEST.

Venice, 11 December 2020

The President
Eddy Moors

The Executive Director
Eriberto Eulisse