

# The Alternative World Water Forum Charter of Principles

## Preamble

The objective of the Alternative World Water Forum (AWWF) - in French, the *Forum Alternatif Mondial de l'Eau (FAME)* - is to create a concrete alternative to the sixth World Water Forum (WWF) which is organized by the World Water Council. This Council is a mouthpiece for transnational companies and the World Bank and they falsely claim to head the global governance of water.

For several years, different civil society movements have fought side by side for water conservation and citizen management of water. Activists have created platforms, propositions and campaigns at events such as the 2003 Alternative Forum in Florence, the 2005 Alternative Forum in Geneva, the 2006 Alternative Forum in Mexico or the 2009 Alternative Forum in Istanbul and within international Social Forums such as those in Porto Alegre, Caracas, Nairobi, and Belem. These gatherings helped solidify the movement to reappropriate water, a communal resource which belongs to all of humanity.

The world water movement, in its many forms, has given birth to national water rights networks (such as in Italy), continental networks (in Africa), and has led to the decline of water privatization in Latin America, Africa, Europe, and notably, in France. France, home to the main multinational water companies, yet has had water come back to public management in Paris.

The water movement has participated in the fight to have the access to water recognized as a fundamental human right. Water was declared a human right by the United Nations on 29 July 2010.

The AWWF will pursue and amplify the water movement by

- creating and promoting an alternative vision of water management which is based on ecological and democratic values
- continuing research to find solutions to the worldwide water crisis
- making the water movement structure sustainable.

## Charter

1. The Alternative World Water Forum - in French, the *Forum Alternatif Mondial de l'Eau (FAME)* - is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, and free exchange of experiences. These discussions may lead to effective action and civil society movements which oppose the water resources be managed using profit logic by capitalistic companies, and even sometimes by public companies. The AWWF stands for ecological, social and

citizen-based water management, water resource protection, and proper water distribution among different types of users.

2. The Alternative World Water Forum brings together and interlinks different organizations and movements from civil society from around the world. However, the Alternative World Water Forum does not claim to be the voice of all people who fight for water resource protection and ecological and citizen management of water.
3. The Alternative World Water Forum is part of the World Social Forums in the sense that that both forums encourage local and international initiatives to make their voices heard in international organizations. Both forums support movements which inspire change, put transformative actions on the global agenda, and build a better world.
4. The alternatives proposed by the Alternative World Water Forum stand in opposition against the capitalistic globalization of water and sanitation services which have been implemented by large multinational companies and governments and international institutions. They serve their own interests, as does the World Water Forum. The Alternative World Water Forum aims to make the following statements come true:
  - Water should be recognized as a common good for all of Humanity. Water is vital for all life and is not a commodity.
  - National constitutions should officially recognize that all citizens have the right to drinking water and sanitation. This is in accordance with the United Nations declaration on 29 July 2010 that access to water is a "human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights."
  - Public services should manage water in a participatory manner and protect water resources from agricultural pollution, industrial pollution, pollution from medication, and overexploitation.
  - Water should be democratically distributed among different users in consultation with all parties: general public, agriculture, industry, and the preservation of biodiversity.
  - Necessary infrastructures must be created or improved by government bodies, as they hold public-service authority. These infrastructures must be available everywhere and not only in place where it is profitable; they must distribute and treat water effectively and democratically, while respecting quality norms and protecting the environment.
  - Domestic water consumption should be priced using progressive rates to make water use really affordable and abuse penalized, and without any profit for the capital invested.
  - Alternative techniques in producing and treating water should be promoted. Examples: rainwater recovery, wastewater recycling, lagooning, recovery of

humidity in air, use of morning mist, manual pumping, and solar energy use. Unpatented solutions should be privileged.

- Consequences of global warming should be anticipated: flooding, draught, freshwater contamination by saltwater. The resilience of ecosystems and soils should be developed.
5. The Alternative World Water Forum in Marseille 2012 will be a demonstration which is localized in time and place. With the certainty that "another world is possible", as proclaimed in Porte Alegre, the Alternative World Water Forum is a permanent process of seeking and building alternatives. This process is not reduced to the events supporting it.
  6. No participating organization at AWWF will be authorized to express positions on behalf of the Forum, if these positions have not been adopted by all participants. Organizations, or groups of organizations, which participated in Forum meetings must be assured the right to deliberate on their own declarations and their own actions, whether single-handedly or in coordination with other participants. The Alternative World Water Forum is committed to widely circulating such decisions, using the means as its disposal, without directing, hierarchizing, censoring or restricting them. They are to be taken as deliberations of the particular organization or group of organizations in question.
  7. The Alternative World Water Forum is pluralistic, diverse, non-religious, non-governmental, and is not tied to any political party. The Alternative World Water Forum expresses positions in a decentralized manner via networks and undertakes concrete actions at a local and international level. The aim is to find alternative ways to protect water resources and manage them in an ecological, public, and participatory manner.
  8. The Alternative World Water Forum will always be open to pluralism and a diversity of commitments and actions of participating organizations and movements. The Alternative World Water Forum welcomes people of all ages, ethnic background, culture, generations, and having different physical abilities, as long as the participants respect the Charter of Principles. Governments, military organizations, international economics institutions (International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Trade Organization), diplomat representatives and political parties as such are not allowed to participate. However government leaders, members of legislature or member of political parties are able to participate in a personal capacity if they respect this charter.