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Photo: SWE

## Annual Report 2009



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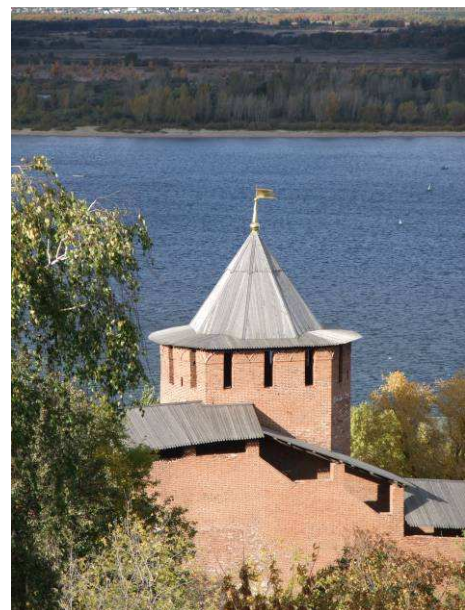


Photo: C. Monod



## A Word from the President

### Continuity in change

Solidarity Water Europe (SWE) and its partners, friends and supporters have always considered water to be an essential component in all civilizations, participating in maintaining life, cultural diversity and ethics. This shared reference gives hope for solidarity and democracy through water and for water in Europe.

During 2009, SWE and its partners stepped up their efforts to remind Europeans from the North, South, East and West that endemic poverty exists here, on our doorsteps and that fundamental human rights (to food, health, housing, water, a healthy environment, education, security, work etc.) are far from being universally fulfilled.

We do not have the right to ignore or to deny this reality. We must do everything in our power to diminish the growing gap between rich and poor. Just because a country becomes a member of the European Union does not mean that from one day to the next the population's living conditions and environment miraculously improve. Once the initial grants have been spent, if the people have not had the opportunity to take responsibility for their own development, the chaos will only increase.

In addition to the networking and lobbying activities and the actions carried out in Moldova, Istanbul and Nizhni Novgorod, 2009 was a year of changes affecting the day-to-day operations of SWE. The board was restructured. Victor Ruffy, co-founder of SWE accepted its nomination as President of the Board and as member of ISW's board. Thierry Umbehr joined the team as General Secretary. I myself, as President of the Water Sages, shall now be turning my attentions to the vision of the SWE-ISW family in collaboration with our associates while continuing to support and promote the movement.

I would also like to take this opportunity to offer my heartfelt thanks to the SWE team, for their availability and dedication and for the quality of their work: Nicole Crochet, Cathy Martinez-Mermin, Thierry Umbehr and Florence Kohtz. I would also like to offer special thanks to those who have contributed to our construction and collective efforts for solidarity for water: Vincent Jullien, Isabelle Jost, Christine Bismuth, Lionel Cavicchioli, Josef Mulligan, Sophie Schmitt and Emilie Brocard. My gratitude also extends to all the members of the board, past and present.

The battle continues and I am with you all 100%.



Photo : SWE

**Raymond Jost**  
**Founder of SWE and ISW**  
**President of the Water Sages**

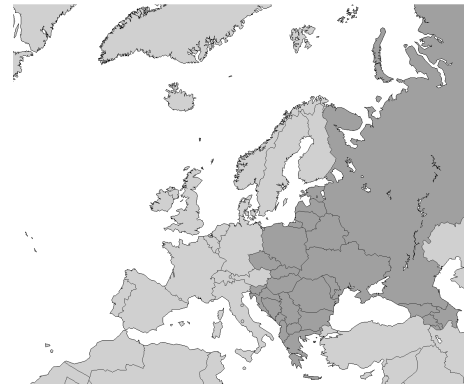


## Solidarity Water Europe : the renewal

Solidarity Water Europe (SWE) is an international non-governmental organisation created in 1998 at the joint initiative of the council of Europe and the International Secretariat for Water (ISW) based in Montreal, with the support of the French Water Agency Committee.

### Our Missions ...

SWE has set itself the mission of fostering access to water and sanitation for the poorest populations, particularly those in Central and Eastern Europe, and of mobilising all stakeholders to apply the principles of integrated water resource management at local level.



Source : Time magazine

### Our Objectives ...

- To promote democratic water management,
- To raise public awareness and mobilise the general population, particularly young people,
- To foster fair access to water and sanitation,
- To protect water resources and aquatic environments
- To develop knowledge sharing and cooperation



Photo : SWE

### Further reading :

- *The Strasbourg Declaration : "Water, a source of citizenship, peace and regional development"*
- *SWE brochure (in French, English and German)*

2009 was a year of great changes for SWE. Indeed, the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2009 unanimously approved the new SWE statutes. Furthermore, during the Annual General Meeting, a new board was elected, made up of 8 members who are committed to the task for the next two years.

Solidarity Water Europe moved into new offices at 55 Avenue de Colmar in Strasbourg, France. The new two-storey office is perfectly suited to the work of the secretariat and offers a comfortable environment in which to hold meetings and workshops.



Photo : SEAM



## Reinforcing the team

In light of the new stakes facing SWE for the future, the executive committee created the position of General Secretary and re-organised SWE operations into programmes and projects. **Thierry Umbehr**, former coordinator of SDC's WatSan programme in Moldova, took up his new role in September. He is responsible for the coordination and engineering, as well as communication with the Board. The 2009 team was made up of the programme coordinators: **Nicole Crochet** for the Youth, **Cathy Martinez-Mermin** for Lobbying and Partnerships and **Emilie Brocard** (until December) for Youth projects. Another Youth Projects Manager will be recruited in 2010.

Solidaritate Europeană pentru Apă in Moldova (SEAM), the Moldovan branch of SWE also increased in number, with the hiring of one new permanent staff member. Alongside the Director, **Galina Cazimir**, the team now has a Project Manager, **Nina Plop** (left).

## The Board 2009

### *President*

#### **Raymond Jost**

Fonder of SWE and the International Secretariat for Water (ISW) and President of the Water Sages, Canada

### *Vice-presidents*

#### **Roland Anstett**

Advertising Manager, France

#### **Diana Iskreva**

Director of Earth Forever, Bulgaria

#### **Andreas Kraemer**

Director of ECO-Logic, Germany

#### **Victor Ruffy**

Former National Councillor of Switzerland, former President of the Commission on Political Issues of the Parliamentary Assembly and former Vice-president of the Environment Commission of the Council of Europe, Switzerland

#### **Annick Waller**

Engineer, retired, France

### *Treasurer*

#### **Alfred Fintz**

Retiree, France

### *Secretary*

#### **Jean-Jacques Fix**

Retiree, France



Photo : SWE



Photo : SWE

### *Members*

#### **Bernard Barraqué**

CNRS Research Director at LATTS, France

#### **Jean Briane**

Former Deputy of the French National Assembly, former President of the Environment Commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, France

#### **Antonella Cagnolati**

Director, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, France

#### **Philippe Dangelser**

Director Polyglotte, France

#### **Pierre-Marie Grondin**

Director of Programme Solidarité Eau (pS-Eau), France

#### **Irina Lucavețchi**

Civil engineer, Romania

#### **Pierre-Alain Roche**

Honorary President of IWFE, France

#### **Houria Tazi-Sadeq**

President of ALMAE, Morocco

#### **Pierre-Frédéric Ténière-Buchot**

Governor of the World Water Council, France

## Solidarity Water Europe's Actions in 2009

### The Youth

In 2009, the Youth programme became one of the two pillars of actions of the SWE. Not only does it encompass the holding of the European Youth Parliaments for Water, but it is continually expanding to include other activities, adding educational actions to those of event organisations. Two major activities marked this fulfilling year, the **9<sup>th</sup> European Youth Parliament for Water** in Russia, and the actions concerning **health and hygiene education** in Moldova. Indeed, organising a gathering of young people along the banks of the Volga was a first, both for SWE as for the different delegations of young people and for the Russian local and regional authorities. The different actions run by SWE for the youth, focusing this year on Eastern Europe, have once again demonstrated the force and the success of this programme.

### Nizhni Novgorod : 9<sup>th</sup> European Youth Parliament for Water



#### "Rivers' Treasures"

The 9<sup>th</sup> European Youth Parliament for Water, organised in cooperation with the Russian River Network (RRN), mobilised more than 80 participants from 10 countries and more than 150 Russian volunteers from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October. The theme "River' Treasures" was chosen as a means to focusing in a concrete and educational way on **integrated river management**. The region of Nizhni, through which the Volga and thousands of other small rivers run, offered an ideal work setting for the young people. The regional authorities of Nizhni Novgorod provided very important support for the project and the participation of experts from the Artois-Picardie Water Agency and WWF France as well as those from SWE and RRN, helped to approach the topic from different angles.



The workshops and debates helped the participants to get to know more about integrated river management, but also to look at more cross-cutting issues, such as **cooperation between youngsters and politicians** and to acquire more practical skills. After two days of work indoors, field research trips were organised in four different places, the results of which provided information on river conditions and the diversity of uses to which they are put. The field research also helped to discover how users and managers of waterways can



Photo: M. Strauss



work together. Back in the plenary session, the different lessons learned and experiences were discussed to develop concrete proposals for projects and actions to be undertaken.

The Parliament is also the occasion to award prizes in the **project contest and the photo and video contests**, organised beforehand. An international jury selected the winners during the event. Thematic and inter-cultural evenings further strengthened the ties of friendship between the young parliamentarians.

The conclusions drawn from the discussions and the development of structured arguments, contributed to the final declaration adopted by the young parliamentarians. The election of a President and two Vice-presidents for the Parliament by the participants gave rise to an uncontested choice. During the closing ceremony at the Kremlin of Nizhni Novgorod, the President and Vice-presidents presented the declaration on the integrated management of waterways to the regional and municipal authorities. It contains six main points:

- International Cooperation
- Knowledge and experience
- Sustainable environmental management
- Involvement of the population
- Taking into account of the local context
- Consideration of the interests of all Nations

*“As a former politician myself and having participated in many Youth Parliaments, I must say that the results of this parliament on the Volga have been characterised by the seriousness of the participants, mutual respect, friendship and joy. This Youth Parliament was more serious and more efficient than many adult parliaments I have presided over. I am proud of these young people”.*

Victor Ruffy, Vice-president of SWE

*Further reading :*

- *Report of the 9<sup>th</sup> European Youth Parliament for Water (French)*
- *Final declaration of the 9<sup>th</sup> European Youth Parliament for Water (English)*
- *Brochures of the Parliament (French and English)*
- *Programme of the Parliament (English and Russian)*

**Main partners :** Artois-Picardie Water Agency, EC-DG Education and Youth/Youth in Action Programme, MEEDDM, Office Franco-Québécois de la Jeunesse, ISW, Regional Council and Municipality of Nizhni Novgorod, NGO Dront, NGO Russian Rivers Network, SEAM



Photo : M. Strauss



Photo : M. Strauss



Photo: SWE



## **Moldova : Health and Hygiene Education for school children and their families**

Once the ecological toilets were installed in the Vorniceni High School, the focus turned to the consolidation of behaviours that are essential to the success of these new facilities. The target was not only the school children, but also their families, so that the link between school and home could be made, particularly as regards health issues. In order to increase the number of beneficiaries, the content of the educational programme was widened and more than **610 students** from two villages (Vorniceni and Seliște) participated.



Photo : SEAM

An educational toolkit box for covering the different aspects of water, sanitation and health was designed and **1000 sets** were produced to be distributed to schools, mayoralities and libraries across the country. It will increase the impact of a new type of health and hygiene education, which is urgently needed in the rural areas of Moldova.



Photo : SEAM

Education activities also covered the use of the new sanitation facilities and equipment, to prepare for the emptying and recycling actions planned for 2010.

With a view to creating a youth platform for water in the Moldovan countryside, groups of youngsters staunchly undertook to defend their aquatic environment by studying it and by interacting with the concerned users. The first experience, led with the high school students in the Nîrnova basin (Nisporeni) was very productive and gave rise to new projects: **construction of new sanitation facilities, regional basin forums**, etc. This form of awareness-raising significantly improves the ownership of these innovative projects and the “bottom-up” mobilisation of the civil society.



Photo : SEAM

### *Further reading :*

- *Brochure produced by the young people “Youth in the Nîrnova Basin” (English and Romanian)*
- *Educational leaflets and posters (Romanian)*

**Partners :** Rhin-Meuse Water Agency, SIAAP, Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova (SDC), SEAM, District Council of Strășeni, Municipality of Vorniceni, Municipality of Seliște





## Lobbying and partnerships

The second major line of SWE's activities, lobbying and partnerships, constitutes a programme that links many fields associated with water, focusing on the interactions between the different stakeholders (elected officials, young people, technicians, water users, etc.). The major international event in 2009 was the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Istanbul, in which SWE participated actively. Furthermore, SWE continued its ongoing commitment to networking and sharing experiences with other European water stakeholders, particularly those in France.

### *Istanbul : The 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum*



The 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, which was held in Istanbul from 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> March, was marked by the strong joint presence of SWE and ISW, not only at the **Citizens' House for Water**, located at Feshane and visited by more than 3000 people, but also in the different debates, panels and workshops organised by the Forum.

This was an opportunity to put realities from the field on the agenda, for instance, via Galina Cazimir's presentation (director of SEAM) during the regional Europe session (17/03/2009).

SWE's Vice-president, Victor Ruffy, chaired a session that brought together more than 200 elected officials from 50 countries, in order to discuss for the first time at a global level issues such as the right to water, decentralisation, the management of international waters and global change (Parliamentarians for Water, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2009).

Before the Forum, SWE supported the ISW which brought together around 20 youngsters from seven countries during preparatory meetings in order to step-up exchanges of experiences in the field of international cooperation and water management. This encounter gave rise to a final declaration and proposed water-related projects to be implemented. These were presented at the Citizens' House for Water.



Photo: SWE



Photo: SWE

*Further reading :*

- *The presence of ISW, SWE and their partners at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (French)*

**Partners :** ISW, SEAM, Youth for Habitat, Galatasaray and Türçek High Schools



## **France: Mobilising Mayors for Decentralised Cooperation**



SWE's networking activities in France were very intense in 2009, focusing on lobbying local elected representatives to take action. Now that the Oudin Santini Law in France encourages the implementation of decentralised cooperation actions through the contribution of a percentage of local water and sanitation budgets, all opportunities to publicise this mechanism and encourage its application must be seized. SWE is an active member of the French network of NGOs working in the water and sanitation sector, **Coalition Eau** and is involved in the "Mobilising Mayors" working group to increase the availability of funding for cooperation actions in the fields of water and sanitation. Several events drew attention to these activities: World Water Day, the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum and the Mayors' Forum in Paris, etc.



Photo : PFE

**Partners :** MEEDDM, Coalition Eau

## **France : Preparation for the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Solidarity Week for Water**

North-South cooperation is to be joined by West-East cooperation. The efforts undertaken by the different networks working in Europe will be promoted during the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Solidarity Week for Water. This edition is planned for November 2010 and preparations began during 2009. Location, themes and the issues to be debated have been decided upon. The objectives are varied and focus on decentralised cooperation approaches in Europe: **promoting East-West cooperation, raising stakeholder and public awareness on "water and sanitation issues", creating an interface of exchange for East-West cooperation.** Thanks to its established network in the target countries, SWE will coordinate this week to make it an event not to be missed by the concerned stakeholders.



**Partners :** MEEDDM



## Central and Eastern Europe: A Guide for Decentralised Cooperation and the Blue Books



Over the past five years, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have experienced various changes. Some have joined the EU, some have entered the Euro zone, some have joined the Schengen countries, while others are hovering between the CIS and their EU neighbours. The Berlin Wall came down twenty years ago, but in terms of water and **sanitation the gap has widened**. It is with a view to filling this gap that the Central and Eastern Europe Guide was designed and its objective will be to raise awareness in the West of the alarming situation in these neighbouring countries and to propose ways and means to take effective action.

The preparatory phase has been completed for the first three countries concerned (Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria) and the content has been specified as follows:

- An introductory section giving a general outline of the state of the Central and Eastern European countries, illustrated by technical sheets and maps;
- A description of the many different stakeholders working in the water and sanitation sector in each country, including bilateral and multilateral cooperation;
- A section presenting successful and sustainable projects in each of the countries;
- A section to dispel the clichés and preconceived ideas that any new stakeholder undertaking cooperation with these countries may have. The keys to cooperation and typical situations that may arise are presented in a visual manner (cartoons).

A second interesting phase, discussed in 2009, concerns the adaptation of the Blue Books, produced by ISW in Africa, for Eastern Europe. It is important to note that each continent has its own characteristics and that despite the deplorable situation in terms of water and sanitation, it is deemed premature to begin to develop the Blue Books in this region.

**Partners :** MEEDDM, Rhin-Meuse Water Agency, Artois-Picardie Water Agency, Fondation de France, NGO Earth Forever, SEAM

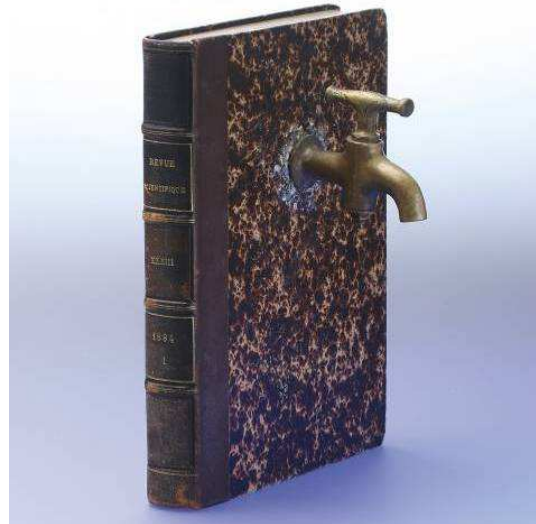


Photo : R. Waydelich



Photo : Erdenkäufer

## Projects in the Field

### *Moldova : Sanitation at the Vorniceni High School and Kindergarten n°2*



The “**Ion Inculeț**” **High School** in Vorniceni, with more than 540 students is at the heart of actions led by the Moldovan branch of SWE, SEAM. The new sanitation facilities completed in 2008 are currently under the responsibility of the local administration, in coordination with the school management. In order to finalise the sanitation system of the school, a sewer will also connect the **grey water** from the kitchens to the new sewage treatment. The follow-up to the implementation of these facilities was carried out throughout the year via health and hygiene educational activities (see Moldova, page 7).



Photo : SEAM

The critical sanitary situation of facilities at the **Kindergarten n°2**, which is frequented by more than 100 children, poses another serious concern. During 2009, the kindergarten was closed for health reasons until the local authority made certain renovations. It was decided, before undertaking the civil engineering works needed, to carry out a **sanitation feasibility study** of the entire sector, in order to establish the priority actions for sanitation in that area of the village.



Photo : SEAM

The results of the study were published and discussed in cooperation with SEAM, during **round tables**, in order to involve as many stakeholders as possible. This type of participatory approach on such a new subject as sanitation is one of the key areas of focus of SWE in supporting good governance.



Photo: SWE

A young Moldovan consulting company was contracted to carry out the study in cooperation with SEAM. Several debates and consultations were held in 2009 and will continue in 2010, in order to develop a sanitation action plan.

#### *Further reading :*

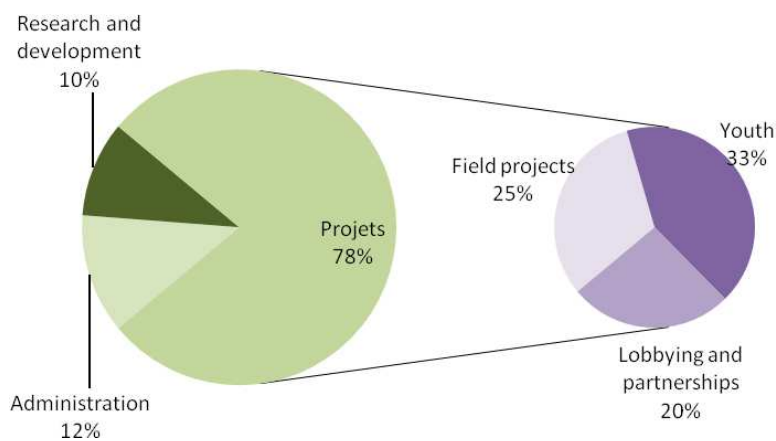
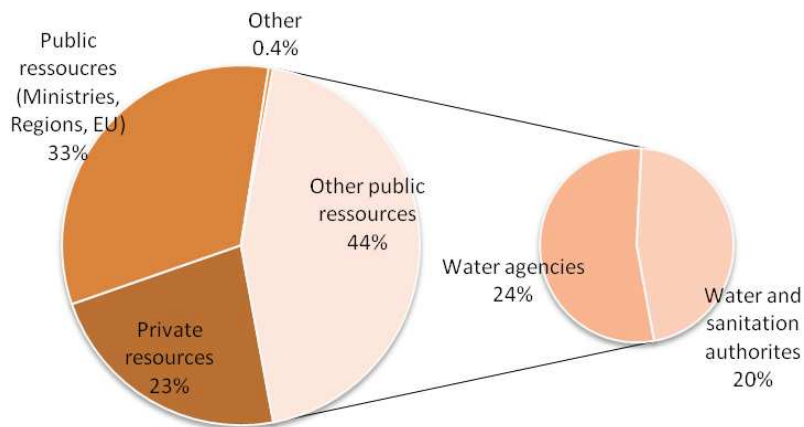
- *Feasibility study on sanitation for the Kindergarten n°2 and surrounding neighbourhood (RO)*
- *Set of 12 postcards produced from the “Moldova, Europe’s Kitchen Garden” photo exhibition*

**Partners :** SIAAP, Rhin-Meuse Water Agency, Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova (SDC), SEAM, District Council of Strășeni, Municipality of Vorniceni, EcoExpert SRL



## Financial Report

In 2009, SWE increased its annual budget to 244 000 Euros (+35%), due in particular to the hiring of new staff and the holding of the 9<sup>th</sup> European Youth Parliament for Water in Russia. As has been procedure from the outset of SWE's operations, the accounts are validated and certified annually by a national auditor.



Further reading :

- *Audited 2009 accounts*



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