

Summary of the Intervention of the Water Program of IANAS in the 8th World Water Forum

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The Water Program of the Interamerican Network of Academies of Science (IANAS) with the contribution and special support of the Academy of Sciences of Brazil and the International Hydrological Program (IHP) of UNESCO participated in the 8th World Water Forum (WWWF) organized from the 18th to 23th of March in the city of Brasilia, Brazil. The Water Program of IANAS prepared a special session on “Urban Water Challenges in the Americas” on the 21st as part of the Regional Process component of the WWF.

The session was coordinated by Dr. José Galizia Tundisi, of the Academy of Science of Brazil and the International Institute of Ecology (IIE). Speakers and Panelists were the Director of the International Hydrological Program of UNESCO, Dr. Blanca Jiménez; the Co-Chair of the Water Program of IANAS, Dr. Katherine Vammen; Dr. Ernesto González, representative of the Academy of Physical, Mathematics and Natural Science of Venezuela and Director of the Institute of Experimental Biology of the Central University of Venezuela; and Dr. Nicole Bernex, member of the Academy of Science of Peru and President of the Geographical Society of Lima.

Results of the recently published book of IANAS, **Urban Water Challenges in the Americas: A perspective from the Academies of Sciences** were presented which analyzes the specific situation of water resources in urban centers of 20 countries from North America, Central America to South America. This book is unique because of the participation and contributions of over 120 authors, all experts in different aspects of water sciences. The book can be downloaded without cost, in English or Spanish from the web page of IANAS: http://www.ianas.org/docs/books/Desafios_Agua.html and http://www.ianas.org/docs/books/Urban_Water.html.

In her presentation of the Urban Water Challenges in the Americas, Blanca Jiménez, emphasized that the urban population of the Americas is 82% which is the highest urbanization coverage worldwide and has abundant renewable water resources which represents 33% of the world's water. In spite of this, there exists great disparities in available drinking water: 25 million people have no access to an improved drinking water source and 106 million do not have access to improved sanitation. (Most of these live in periurban slums and rural areas). There is a high variability of conditions in the Americas to secure access to water between countries, regions and islands, which have different conditions with arid and semiarid territories.

The representative from Peru, Nicole Bernex stressed in her intervention the influence of climate change on the water situation in urban centers. She emphasized the growing vulnerability of cities related to their water resources due to the impact of extreme events and natural disasters which has been estimated as “a loss of 520.000 million US\$ (according to the World Bank and GFDRR, 2016) in worldwide consumption and has forced 26 million people into poverty every year. Just in Peru in 2017, the impact of “El Niño” meant a daily loss of 20 million dollars.” This structural