

GENERAL ASSEMBLY of EWRA
Catania, Sicily
June 30th, 2011

Minutes of the Meeting of the General Assembly of EWRA

President:

I welcome you all in the General Assembly of EWRA here in Catania. There are several topics which we will discuss in this session. However, because time is restricted I would ask you to be brief and up to the point so that we convene this important session of our Association in an effective way.

The General Assembly takes place together with the Board of Management of the Association. In fact the Board of Management is inactive after the amendment to the statutes done 6 years ago.

The Agenda of the GA is:

1. Honouring Prof. M. Benedini
2. Amendments to the statutes
3. Review of the implementation of WFD in Europe
4. International Conference of EWRA in Porto 2013
5. Organisation of Permanent Working Groups
6. Other activities

So we start with item 1, Honouring Prof. M. Benedini

President:

I will start by highlighting some important dates and activities from Prof. Benedini's CV: Born in 1932, he graduated in Civil Engineering at the University of Padova in 1957 and was awarded the Lecturer Degree ("Libera Docentia") on Hydraulics in 1968.

He served as Assistant Professor to the Chair of Hydraulics and responsible of an experimental section for research in applied hydraulics at the Institute of Hydraulics of Padova University.

In 1969 Prof. Benedini joined the Water Research Institute of the Italian National Research Council in Rome, where he was appointed Head of Water Resources Department.

In 1975 he was awarded the Degree of "Director of Research" in the National Research Council.

In 1999 he formally retired from the Water Research Institute.

He has worked in the field of theoretical and applied hydraulics using the experimental facilities of Padova University.

Within the Water Research Institute he has been responsible for research on advanced methods for water resources management and published many articles in journals and several very interesting books.

He has worked as an expert in various international organisations (OECD, European Commission, UNESCO).

He has been also active member of International Associations {IAHR, IWRA, EWRA (founding member)}.

He has also taught post-graduate courses in various Italian Universities.

We know Marcello Benedini as the real founder of EWRA. The idea to create a European Association of Water Resources was conceived by us during the conference "Water in the year 2000" which was held in Athens in 1984.

EWRA was established in Athens in 1986 during the International Symposium "Water for Agricultural Development". In the first Executive Committee we both (myself and Prof. Benedini) participated together with Prof. J. Nemeč (acting as president) (WMO) and Prof. J. Kindler (Poland).

During the IAHS Conference in Budapest we presented EWRA in the General Assembly and EWRA became ECOWARM (European Committee for Water Resources Management) as a regional committee of IAHS.

Later Prof. V. Klemes (President of IAHS) thought that water resources management is something wider and could not be under the umbrella of IAHS. Then we run into a crisis and Prof. M. Benedini took the responsibility to become the interim president up to 1992 when EWRA was re-established in the form we have today. That is an independent European Association on water resources.

Prof. Benedini was always available to help the association in its activities. He represented EWRA in TECHWARE and participated in successful European projects originated by EWRA.

Due to Prof. Benedini, EWRA obtained a respectable status organising successful conferences and publishing journals.

I am not far from reality to say that EWRA exists due to the entire commitment of Prof. Benedini.

I think the last thing we could do is to express our sincere gratitude to his devotion to the idea of EWRA and the persistent way he served its objectives for integrated and adaptive management of water resources and its final goal of global water security.

I feel honour and luck as the President of EWRA to be able to express the gratitude of our members to you Prof. Benedini by giving you this letter of honour.

Prof. Benedini received the "Letter of honour" and thanked the association and the President for the gesture. He thanked also his wife for her support throughout his career and all the colleagues who cooperated with him. Addressing the young scientists of the conference he advised them to be persistent and devoted to their goals. He quoted "From 100 targets you are aiming at your way fail in 99. But it is still worth trying to succeed just in one".

Finally one of the organisers of the Symposium Prof. G. Rossi took the floor and addressed Prof. M. Benedini with warm words mentioning his contribution to the Italian Hydrotechnical Association and Water Resources Management in Italy in general.

Item 2: Amendments to the statutes

President:

During the last year and after the Conference of EWRA in Lemessos (Cyprus) I started receiving requests from scientists from non-European countries expressing their willingness to become members of EWRA. Unfortunately so far members of EWRA can be only physical or legal persons from a European country. To some of these colleagues I promised to bring this issue in the next General Assembly aiming at transforming EWRA in an entirely International Association.

So we ask you as members of EWRA to accept the following amendment to our statutes:

Article 6 (before)

Member of the association can be any physical or legal person from a European country who is engaged in an activity which is compatible with the aims of the association.

Article 6 (amended)

Member of the association can be any physical or legal person from any country of the world who is engaged in an activity which is compatible with the aims of the association.

Further, Article 8 becomes:

Kinds of membership:

- 1. Membership of physical persons from any country of the world*
- 2. Student membership*
- 3. Institutional membership for commercial enterprises, public institutions, water resources associations, NGOs etc.*

No fees are paid for the first two categories. An annual fee of 200 euros should be paid for each member of category 3.

All present members agreed with the amendments.

Item 3: Review of the implementation of WFD in Europe

Key presentations on this issue were presented by Prof. R. Maia and G. Monacelli reviewing the existing progress regarding the implementation of WFD in member states. The experiences in other countries (e.g. Turkey) were presented by Prof. N. Harmancioglu.

Their reviews will appear in the next issue of EWRA news.

Item 4: International Conference of EWRA in Porto 2013

The Vice President Prof. R. Maia presented the decision of the EC to organise the next Conference in Porto (Portugal). He presented the city and the university where the next conference will be held.

He promised to organise a very successful conference and urged the participants to come to Porto in late June 2013.

The title of the conference and the first announcement will be ready by October 2011.

The presentation of the Vice President was received warmly by the participants.

Item 5: Organisation of Permanent Working Groups

The permanent working groups of EWRA were presented and a deadline for member who wishes to join them was set at the end of December 2011.

The permanent working groups and the responsible member of EC are:

- Water Quality, Desalination and Non-conventional Water Resources (G. Tsakiris)
- Water Resources Management (R. Maia)
- Climate Change, Extreme events, Water security (A. Cancelliere)
- Water Systems efficiency (B. Charalambous)
- Energy and Technology (S. Hamilton)

The groups will finally organised next January appointing their coordinators who will be selected by their members. Interested scientists and professionals are asked to communicate with the responsible EC members.

Item 6: Other activities

The journals of EWRA were presented as follows:

- WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (Springer, IF 2.201)
- EUROPEAN WATER (free access)
- WATER UTILITY JOURNAL (launched in 2011)

EWRA also supports the following journals:

- DESALINATION AND WATER TREATMENT (EDS, IF 0.75)
- HYDRO HAZARDS (CANAH, abstract journal)
- EARTH OBSERVATION AND NATURAL DISASTERS (CANAH, abstract journal)

It was stressed that all the above journals improve their position from year to year. A unique example is the main journal of EWRA Water Resources Management, which reached the 6th position (rating according to the Impact Factor) out of about 80 journals in the field of Water Resources.