

world hydropower congress



Addis Ababa | 9-11 May 2017

Organising partners



2017 World Hydropower Congress

African Union Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, 9-11 May 2017

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Overview

The World Hydropower Congress (WHC) is a biennial, multi-stakeholder event, bringing together leaders and specialists with hydropower-related responsibilities from government, industry, finance, UN agencies, academia and civil society. The WHC is open to delegates from all countries and regions where hydropower is on the agenda (hydropower plays a role in more than 150 countries).

The 2017 WHC will take place from 9 to 11 May at the African Union Conference Centre in Addis Ababa. The organising partners for the 2017 WHC include the International Hydropower Association (IHA), the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the World Bank Group and the Government of Ethiopia (GoE). The African Development Bank (AfDB) is being requested to assist in the organisation of the event.

Additional international partners and sponsor organisations will contribute to the detailed development of the WHC programme, side events and study tours.

A ground agent will be appointed to take responsibility for logistical matters, such as accommodation, transfers, catering and tours.

The working languages for the 2017 WHC will include English, French and Portuguese (additional languages may be selected, depending on the interest and resources available).

Background

The WHC has been convened previously under the auspices of various governments and institutions in: Turkey (2007), Iceland (2009), Brazil (2011), Malaysia (2013) and China (2015). Depending on the capacity and accessibility of the host venue, the targeted size of the WHC is normally 1000 delegates from 100 countries.

Each WHC has a defined objective and seeks specific outputs. This has covered, progressively, stakeholder engagement, the formation of partnerships, sector initiatives, the delivery of tools and protocols, and commitments to adopt and implement congress recommendations.

A key outcome of the WHC series has been the growing consensus to utilise the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol to help guide project selection, development and operation, and to inform other aspects of decision-making.

Convening the congress in Africa

In May 2015, the World Hydropower Congress concluded with a mandate for the hydropower community to strengthen collaboration and advance sustainable hydropower where it is most needed, and in particular in Africa.

Indeed, over 645 million Africans have no access to electricity and power consumption per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa is the lowest of all continents¹. At the same time, Africa's rising population is driving demand for water and the need for optimal management has never been greater. About 66% of Africa is arid or semi-arid and more than 300 of the 800 million people in sub-Saharan Africa live in a water-scarce environment². In parallel, many Africans remain vulnerable to the effects of extreme floods.

The multipurpose role of hydropower, and its contribution to water and energy supply are important to understand in this context.

General context

From a development perspective, the international community has recently pledged its support to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 7 aims to "ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all" and enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to renewable energy and promote investment in energy infrastructure. Goal 6 aims to "ensure availability and sustainable management of water" and Goal 13 calls for "urgent action to combat climate change and its impact". As provider of energy, water and climate services, hydropower can contribute to these goals.

While about two-thirds of the hydropower potential is currently unutilised, especially in the developing world, the total installed capacity of hydropower is now significant, at 1,211 GW. This is enough low-carbon electricity to supply more than a billion people.

¹ Source: African Development Bank

² Source: UNDESA

Hydropower can be developed over a wide range of scales, from kW to GW, and from isolated projects to regionally interconnected systems. It has an exceptional level of efficiency and operational flexibility, and can provide both storage and backup for other sources of generation; in particular, other forms of renewable energy.

Hydropower can also contribute to multiple freshwater services, including water supply, irrigation, navigation, flood control, drought mitigation and tourism.

Conversely, hydropower's contribution to modern energy and water systems is often misunderstood and suboptimal. Past experience and good practice are not always well known, and opportunities for better outcomes have been missed.

Hydropower's role in a changing world is a dynamic that calls for an integrated approach, with a strongly connected sector, and a high level of open-mindedness. With the right commitment, it can form an integral part of sustainable development, and play a key role in delivering modern energy and water services in a climate-constrained world.

The 2017 WHC presents the opportunity to develop a common understanding of 'better hydro' and to optimise its contribution to international initiatives such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the New Deal for Energy in Africa.

High-level participants

The following participants will be invited:

- Ministers with hydropower on their agenda;
- Heads of relevant regional and international organisations;
- Directors of key initiatives relating to energy, water and climate change;
- Representatives of the finance and investment sector;
- Heads of non-governmental organisations working on hydropower;
- Leaders and specialists from business and industry.

Structure

In 2017, the WHC programme will include three components: a core set of plenary sessions, a number of parallel briefings and discussion sessions, and a networking area for delegates, partner organisations and sponsors.

The WHC is preceded by the Hydropower Consultative Council, an invitation-only forum for heads of delegations. It gives participants an opportunity to discuss candidly the objectives for the WHC and priorities for action.

The WHC also acts as a platform for partner and sponsor organisations to launch and report on their own initiatives, through special side-events.

Capacity-building workshops and expert meetings will be organised to precede the WHC. These may cover technical, contractual, financial, environmental and social topics.

Immediately preceding the WHC, a networking/cultural tour in Addis Ababa will be organised to give delegates an opportunity to become more familiar with the host city.

Pre-congress and post-congress study tours will offer participants the possibility to augment their experience with a visit to notable hydropower projects in Africa.

Objectives and outcomes

The general objective of the World Hydropower Congress and associated events is to provide an international platform among high-level decision-makers with a stake in hydropower, across key topic areas. In 2017, the following specific objectives and outcomes are targeted:

2017 WHC OBJECTIVES	DELIVERABLES / OUTCOME
(1) Contribute to the definition of “better hydro” and understand its contribution to sustainable water and energy systems, with the support of commitments from leading organisations.	Commitments from key sector leaders to contribute to “better hydro” and description of how these contributions will help increase the positive impact of hydropower on sustainable development.
	Communique approved by the high-level segment of the congress, outlining recommendations on priority topics for knowledge sharing and capacity-building
(2) Review energy, water and climate initiatives and identify the potential contribution of hydropower to achieve their goals.	Set of recommendations on how better hydro can help existing energy, water and climate initiatives realise their goals.

Organisation and schedule

The organising partners will meet at monthly intervals to discuss the substantive planning and address, if necessary, high-level logistical matters. Key responsibilities will be allocated to subgroups of the committee. An initial schedule is proposed below:

2016

January-April	Meeting with stakeholders to establish strategic partnerships
May	Public launch of the WHC
May onwards	Monthly meetings of the WHC committee
February-June	Outreach to government ministers and heads of organisations
September	Announcement of the WHC programme

2017

January-April	Monthly meetings of the WHC committee
7-8 May	Pre-congress study tour(s)
7-8 May	Pre-congress workshops and expert meetings
9 May (am)	Consultative Council Meeting
9 May (am)	Networking tour in Addis
9-11 May	World Hydropower Congress
12-14 May	Post-congress study tours

About the African Union Commission

The AUC is implementing and providing support to various energy sector development initiatives, in order to meet the growing energy demand, promote power trade between countries and regions and improve energy security. These initiatives include among others:

- (a) The Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) dedicated to facilitating continental integration, socioeconomic development and trade, through improved regional infrastructure of Transport, Energy, ICT and Trans-boundary water thus supporting and speeding-up the establishment of the African Economic Community as outlined in the 1991 Abuja Treaty; the priority projects to be implemented by 2020 include nine hydropower projects and four power transmission corridors;
- (b) The Hydropower 2020 Initiative aiming at harnessing the hydropower potential in the major river basins of the continent and focusing primarily at training and capacity building;
- (c) The implementation of the Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme under the Africa- EU Energy Partnership, which focuses on the implementation of Political Targets to install various renewable energy systems in Africa by 2020 that include 10000 MW of hydropower, and providing access to modern energy services to an additional 100million Africans.

In fact, the development of regional infrastructure is one of the key components in realising the African Union Vision which is *"an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena"*. As clearly indicated in the African Union Agenda 2063, it is necessary to enhance regional and continental efforts for accelerated and integrated infrastructure development and the effective & sustainable deployment of energy resources in Africa, through high-level policy development and engagement, consensus building, promotion of regional integration, as well as mobilisation of financial and technical resources in African Member States. The African Union Commission has already started implementing some flagship projects of the Agenda 2063 in the infrastructure sectors as drivers for development and integration such as the Grand Inga Hydropower Project.

About the UN Economic Commission for Africa

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa is one of the UN's five regional commissions. ECA's mandate is to promote the economic and social development of its member States, foster intra-regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa's development. ECA also provides technical advisory services to African governments, intergovernmental organisations and institutions. In addition, it formulates and promotes development assistance programmes and acts as the executing agency for relevant operational projects.

The Commission provides specialised regional advisory services and meaningful capacity development support to member states in the following areas: promotion of industrialisation, design and implementation of macroeconomic policy, design and articulation of development planning, supporting mineral resources contract negotiations, promoting the proper management of natural resources for Africa's transformation.

ECA's activities in the area of innovation and technology are focused on assisting African countries in the formulation, adoption and implementation of new technology and innovation policies that will help them accelerate the development processes.

About the International Hydropower Association

With members and partners active in more than 100 countries, IHA is a non-profit network of people and organisations working to advance sustainable hydropower.

As part of its objectives, IHA seeks to create an open and innovative platform to share knowledge on hydropower. By working with stakeholders around the world, IHA advances policies and strategies to strengthen the sector's performance.

IHA supports the deployment of the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol, a tool governed by a multi-stakeholder forum that helps operators and developers assess the performance of a hydropower project across more than 20 topics, ranging from safety and financial viability to biodiversity and resettlement.

IHA also provides global and regional statistics on hydropower deployment and monitor trends in the sector across the world. By partnering with academic institutions and research institutes, the association advances knowledge in areas where gaps have been identified. Current research projects include GHG emissions of freshwater reservoirs, sediment management and climate resilience.

Extracts from the 2015 WHC:

www.hydropower.org/blog/video-2015-world-hydropower-congress