

## **Heading for Marseille 2012**

(27 April 2011) Over 50 water activists and trade union representatives met in Brussels for the preparation of the [Alternative World Water Forum](#) and the [official World Water Forum](#) next year in Marseille. The World Water Forum (WWF) is a commercial forum, focusing on commercial answers to social and environment related water problems. It has turned into a meeting place for water business. The Alternative Water Forum (FAME) wants to be a meeting place where the voice of people, communities, NGO's and trade unions will be heard for citizen friendly solutions to the world water crisis. Struggles and achievements in the fight for water as a human right and the fight against privatization of water were shown and will be in the programme for Marseille. Reports were given on activities that were held on World Water Day, 22 March.

EPSU presented the idea to launch a European Citizens Initiative on the right to water and sanitation in 2012. Given the relationship that trade unions have with water operators and governments as employers in public water services, EPSU and PSI stated that the trade unions must participate in both the WWF and FAME. Wherever the water industry meets, the unions have to be present to defend workers interests and make the workers have their say. National trade union representatives from France will discuss in their unions in what way the unions can participate in the two forums.

Besides FAME and WWF, the link and importance of water issues in other global forums was stressed. As a consequence of climate change water problems like increasing droughts, changing precipitation patterns will increase the struggle for scarce water resources between for example water for industrial use, water for agriculture and water for consumption. Water is an important issue on the agenda of COP 17 (December 2011) and the Rio+20 meeting next year (June 2012). EPSU calls all affiliates to prepare for a delegation to be in Marseille 12-17 March 2012.

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