WATER STORAGE AND HYDROPOWER DEVELOPMENT FOR AFRICA

International Conference and Exhibition

14 to 16 March 2017

Palais des Congrès de la Palmeraie

Marrakech, Morocco

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Conference mission
Aqua-Media International, in partnership with the International Commission on Large Dams, and with the strong support of the Government of Morocco, has reconvened the next regional conference for Africa, AFRICA 2017, which will take place in Marrakech. This follows the unfortunate need to postpone AFRICA 2015, at the time of the tragic ebola outbreak, on the advice of various relevant authorities.

The first conference in this series, AFRICA 2013, took place under the auspices of the African Union, in Addis Ababa. Practical aspects of advancing hydropower and water resources development in Africa were discussed by more than 600 participants from 67 countries. The conference, with the patronage of Ethiopia’s Minister of Water and Energy, brought together utility CEOs, officers of UNECA, leading experts from the IFIs, Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Secretaries of the water- and energy-related professional associations, eminent consultants, researchers, leading contractors and suppliers. Outcomes made a practical contribution to the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa. A Final Declaration was widely disseminated globally.

Morocco welcomes AFRICA 2017
The location of the Kingdom of Morocco in North Africa, together with rapid urbanization and greater demands on water resources, present the country with a number of challenges, and place water issues high on the national agenda.

Under the strong leadership of the King and his Government, Morocco has progressively developed an integrated approach to water resources management.

Today the country has an impressive portfolio of 140 large multipurpose dams (providing 17 km³ of storage), large and small irrigation systems, and a National Water Plan serving as a framework for investment programmes up to 2020.

The country is also seeking to expand its renewable energy, with the goal of generating 40 per cent of national electricity from renewable sources by 2020. Hydropower already plays a significant role, with more than 1300 MW of pure hydro in operation, and 464 MW of pumped storage. Morocco is thus an ideal meeting point for the world water and hydro community to discuss achievements, needs, challenges and plans.

Her Excellency Mme Charafat Afial, the Minister responsible for Water at Morocco’s Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment, has given her personal strong support and encouragement to AFRICA 2017, stressing the importance of water and energy experts meeting to discuss current challenges, especially in the light of climate change concerns.

Marrakech as host city
Located to the north of the snow-capped Atlas mountains, Marrakech is an ancient city founded in 1062 by Abu Bakr ibn Umar. The iconic red walls of the city were constructed a few decades later. With 130 000 ha of green vegetation including more than 180 000 palm trees, Marrakech is an oasis of rich plant varieties. The old fortified city, with its bustling medina, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985. It contrasts with the modern and elegant suburbs, including the luxurious and well equipped AFRICA 2017 venue, the Palais des Congrès de la Palmeraie de Marrakech.

The First World Water Forum took place in Marrakech in 1997, and COP22 is being hosted there in November this year, underlining the city’s capacity and enthusiasm to welcome large global congresses.

Registration and accommodation
Hotels have been blocked in several categories within the Palmeraie complex and nearby, for AFRICA 2017 participants. The on-line registration system will open in early December, when full details of the programme and tours will be available, and accommodation can be booked at that time.

Event management services, registration and hotel reservations are being handled by ASK Event Management Ltd. No other agencies are representing this conference, and we recommend that delegates do not pass credit card details to accommodation agents claiming to represent AFRICA 2017.
Focus on Morocco
A special session will be devoted to the host country, reflecting Morocco’s strong emphasis on water management, in view of the challenging conditions of erratic and unevenly distributed rainfall. Examples of some of the country’s large multipurpose dams and water transfer schemes will be presented.

The Head of Hydraulic Works at the Ministry responsible for Water will outline Morocco’s policy of mobilising surface water.

Papers from the Office Nationale de l’Electricité et de l’Eau will present the country’s activities in the field of hydropower, from the role of pumped storage, including a description of the major Afourer pumped-storage plant, to the national programme for rural electrification.

National and regional overviews
The Opening Plenary session will feature short talks from high level ministry and utility representatives on potential and development opportunities in their countries. Later there will be a round table discussion on market competitiveness and energy reforms in various African nations, in the context of encouraging private investment. Regional sessions throughout the conference, with input from power pools and river basin development agencies, will highlight achievements, challenges and on-going projects in North, West, Central, East and Southern Africa.

Climate issues
Outcomes from the COP 22 meeting, which will recently have taken place in Marrakech, will be discussed. Presentations from experts in various parts of Africa will reflect on the impacts of climate on water and food security (Algeria), on domestic water use (South Africa) and on hydropower development (Cameroon).

Finance and legal aspects
There will be an update on the World Bank’s recent report on Hydropower in Sub-Saharan Africa. High level representatives from the major financing institutions will review their activities, and there will be updates on the priority projects of PIDA, as well as a presentation on the African Development Bank’s ‘Light Up Africa’ initiative. Case studies reflecting achievements in private sector development will be presented from various African countries.

On legal aspects, one speaker will look at the role of the offtaker in project-financed hydro schemes in Africa from a lawyer’s perspective, and another will discuss legal reforms associated with electrifying Africa.

Safety of dams, hydro plants and associated works
There will be strong emphasis on safety and risk, covering dams, powerplants and gateworks. Topics will include: risks associated with gated spillways in developing countries, the impact of freeboard on the overtopping of embankment dams, and powerplant security systems.

A special half-day session will be held on ‘Essential elements of a dam safety programme’.

Rural development
Several sessions will focus on small-scale community-based systems, including mini hydro, as well as design, construction and safety issues specific to small dams. The importance of developing small hydro schemes for rural electrification, in addition to large-scale regional schemes, will be addressed in papers from South Africa and Uganda.

O&M and rehabilitation
Throughout many parts of Africa, hydro plants are operating at levels much lower than their rated capacities, and civil works have deteriorated below acceptable safety levels, because of inadequate maintenance. This can be a result of insufficient funding, or a lack of training or capacity. Approaches to planned refurbishment, implementing systematic maintenance, and training personnel will be discussed by African, European and American experts. There will be input relating to schemes in Malawi, Liberia, Ghana, Uganda, South Africa and Zambia/Zimbabwe.

Sediment management
Sedimentation is recognized as a major global problem affecting the long-term sustainability of reservoirs. Renowned experts from the USA, France and South Africa will discuss strategies for managing sediment. Among the case studies described will be Ruzizi I and II on the border of DRC, Rwanda and Burundi, and other schemes in Ethiopia and Morocco.

Hydropower machinery
A session on electro-mechanical equipment will cover a broad range of topics, from new developments in large and small turbines, to monitoring and automation systems. Major manufacturers will discuss equipment supplied to African schemes, with emphasis on innovation, reliability and economy.

Environmental and social aspects
Protection of flora and fauna, integrated river basin development, and stakeholder communications will be key topics in the E&S sessions, along with case studies and lessons learned from some projects in various parts of Africa.
The modern and well equipped Palmere Exhibition and Congress Centre will provide a magnificent setting for the Exhibition, which will take place in parallel with the AFRICA 2017 Conference.

Exhibition space is generally sold in units of 6 m² (with some areas reserved for larger pavilions). Each space reserved includes white panelling, a table, two chairs, spotlights and, a company name sign. The price for each stand space (6 m²) is US$ 3340, which includes one complimentary delegate registration and two more places at discounted rates. Lunch and refreshments will be served each day in the Exhibition halls, to ensure that international participants have plenty of time to visit the exhibitors. Various opportunities are also available to sponsor or co-sponsor social activities, such as apéritifs, lunches, receptions and coffee breaks. This is a memorable way of bringing your organization to the attention of the international participants.

If your organization is actively involved in water resources or hydropower development in the African region, you should not miss this opportunity to be represented at AFRICA 2017, which will bring together high level delegations in a region of the world with the greatest potential for future development.

For more details of the Exhibition or sponsorship opportunities, contact: sales@hydropower-dams.com
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