

ABSTRACT VOLUME

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Drainage Basin Security
– Balancing Production,
Trade and Water Use



Water Resources Management in Brazil: Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice

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The Brazilian National Water Resources Management System was settled by Law n.9433 in 1997. The system is composed of the National Water Resources Council – CNRH; the National Water Agency – ANA, the State Water Resources Councils, the river basin committees and authorities and the governmental organizations in the federal, state and local levels whose competencies are directly or indirectly related to water resources management. To support the implementation of this system, the National Water Agency – ANA promotes the integration between stakeholders such as state government, river basin committees and agencies.

In 2002, an integration agreement was signed by ANA, the state governments of Minas Gerais, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and the Paraíba do Sul River Basin Committee – CEIVAP. The aim of this five year agreement is to promote the integrated water resources management of the basin. The Paraíba do Sul basin comprises 180 municipalities with 13.8 million inhabitants 60% of which in the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro. The water resources plays an important role in the economic development of the region and reclaiming, preserving and promoting the sustainable use of these resources is much in need.

Besides the integration agreement, ANA develops a wide range of actions in Paraíba do Sul river basin, in cooperation with a scientific institution – The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro:

- Technical support for the implementation of water charges
- Preparation of the river basin water resources plan
- Development and implementation of the water resources information system
- Water quality and quantity monitoring system

Preparation of Soil Conservation and Flood Control Programs

Technical studies on values and procedures for the water charge in Paraíba do Sul river basin was accomplished with CEIVAP and the National Water Council in 2002. It was target to the industrial, farming, fisheries, small hydroelectric dams, basic sanitation and to the definition of criteria for insignificant uses. Other activities being developed in the basin together with the state water management organizations include: establishment of criteria and procedures for registration and water charges; consolidation of the basin agency; the call for water users self-registration; the design of the information and regularization systems.

ANA is also developing a program on water resources regulation in the Paraíba do Sul basin. This program comprises the elaboration of an automatic system for registration,

permits, payment and enforcement. In this system, the user answers to the call for registration and sends, through the web, his self-declaration of water resources use. A Help Center and the Support Offices that offer personalized help to the users are being installed in the basin.

Pollution Abatement of River Basins – PRODES

A major challenge in water management is the pollution abatement, especially in the dense urban and industrial areas of the country. The lack of urban sewage treatment is the main cause of this pollution. In Brazil, only 20% of the urban sewage is treated and sewage is usually discharged directly in water bodies. ANA established a Program - PRODES (Programa de Despoluição de Bacias Hidrográficas) aimed at reducing the water pollution levels in these basins. The Program also stimulates the implementation of state level water resources management systems, the water committees and agencies and the water charge system. PRODES offers a financial incentive to the sewage service agencies that invest in the implementation and operation of sewage treatment plants, through the payment for treated sewage. The conditions are settled in a contract signed by the federal government (ANA) and the public or private sewage service agencies that guarantees the payment for treated sewage, by the time the sewage treatment plant starts operating. This contract defines the levels of pollution reduction to be achieved by the sewage treatment plants, the value of the financial incentive to be provided by ANA, as well as the disbursement plan. Current values may reach up to 50% the cost of investment in the sewage treatment plant.

Once the contract is signed, the resources for the contracted plants are deposited in a specific current account in a Federal Bank - Caixa Econômica Federal – in the name of the service provider. These resources remain blocked and are automatically converted in quotas and invested in an investment fund – that has been specially and exclusively created for these reason. Once the treatment plant is built and starts operating, the contracted agency receives a water pollution abatement certification, a precondition for resource releasing from the Fund. The success of this program can be measured by the high demands in the first two years of existence: one hundred and seventy initiatives, from many states and from 38 river basins have applied to the program. With this innovation program, ANA has effectively fostered the process of pollution abatement of river basins in Brazil, with important improvements on water quality and quantity in the most densely and industrialized region in the country.