

Water Rich Brazil Faces Water Shortage

Contributed by Ivan Richard
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Brazil's Federal Water Agency (ANA, Agência Nacional de Águas) and the environmental organization WWF-Brazil signed an agreement Friday, August 26, in Brasília, the Brazilian capital, covering technical and scientific cooperation.

The accord also includes cooperation in the areas of training, education, and social mobilization on behalf of the preservation of water sources and the implementation of the National Water Resource Management System (Singreh, Sistema Nacional de Gerenciamento de Recursos Hídricos).

The president of the ANA, José Machado, considered essential the partnership with the WWF for the construction of an environmental policy to avoid worsening the problem of the scarcity of potable water in the country.

According to him, the possibility of water shortage in Brazil is not a fantasy. "The crisis has already reached our doorsteps in some regions of the country. This is the fruit of a process of chaotic development. We have to make up for lost ground," he affirmed.

Machado emphasized that Brazil is a privileged country in terms of water supply, but it needs to make progress in the process of formulating policies aimed at preservation.

"The legislation and the policies for water are very recent in our country. Therefore, we must work against the clock and prepare society to participate in the process," he said.

In Machado's view, the government alone is unable to resolve a problem of this complexity. "Water management in Brazil is decentralized and shared. Therefore, it is essential for society to be present."

Machado recalled that the WWF is an international environmental organization with a great deal of experience in training and mobilization. "This partnership will bring the system invaluable support," he added.

According to Machado, the partnership with the WWF is just the beginning. "We want to broaden this process, constructing a policy of alliances capable of making our water policy more efficient."

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