

Letter from the President (31st December 2020)

Dear members of EURCOLD,

Dear colleagues,

We have just lived through a difficult year with a pandemic that is still killing more than 10,000 people a day in the world and particularly in Europe and has partially paralyzed our economy.

EURCOLD wishes 2021 to be a year of solidarity and development to put an end to this Covid19 crisis and minimize the following.

As far as dams in Europe are concerned, we are facing three major challenges:

The 2021-2030 UN decade on Ecosystem Restoration

In 2021, United Nations launches the UN decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development seeks to end poverty, conserve biodiversity, combat climate change and improve livelihoods for everyone, everywhere. These objectives, encapsulated in 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are unlikely to be met unless ecosystem degradation is stopped and ecosystem restoration is undertaken at the immense scale of hundreds of millions of hectares globally. This UN Decade has to inspire our dam community to collaborate and develop the appropriate skillsets for catalyzing and successfully implementing restoration initiatives across the world.

The 2050 Green Deal in Europe

In November 2018, the European Commission presented a long-term strategic vision to achieve a low-carbon climate-resilient future in a cost-effective way in 2050. To fulfill these objectives and build a secure and reliable electric system, with a large share of variable renewable energy sources, Europe needs to integrate the storage potential and flexibility capacities of hydropower into the current and future energy system. Ambitious dam constructions for new Pumped Storage Hydropower (PSH) will be critical in achieving this.

Climate change as a result of global warming is expected to reduce water availability in the Southern part of Europe. Moreover natural hazards and extreme flood events are likely to occur more frequently. Changes of generation potential, as well as changes of operating procedures used to manage these climate effects and impacts, have to be anticipated and developed. There is a need of water storage coping with loss of water availability and increasing risk of droughts triggered by the global warming.

The 2022 Hydropower Europe forum and the potential ETIP

Dams have been shown as a key infrastructure, and activities regarding dams, especially water supply, irrigation, sustainable transport and hydropower production have been appointed in most countries as essential services. This should encourage us to continue with our activities to strengthen society resilience to the climate change and to deploy ambitious research and innovation (R&I) targets.

However, we have no organization which works facilitating collaborative efforts across industry on issues that are not being addressed elsewhere. We need such organization.

The HYDROPOWER EUROPE project (2018-2021) is a first initiative. It brings together a forum of more than 550 people and drew up a list of research and innovations for dams, which will be presented to the European Commission at the end of October 2021. In order to develop and follow the financing of this R&I agenda, EURCOLD needs another structure. For this, we have two solutions:

1. To ask for the Steering Group of the SET Plan the implementation and the funding of an European Technology and Innovation Platform (ETIP) on Hydropower. The Steering Group is the SET Plan decision-making body, which gathers representatives from the European Commission and representatives from the 27 EU Member States and four associated countries -Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey-.
2. To launch a professional association, which will be in charge of facilitating collaborative efforts across industry, to fund research on dam safety and other innovations related to dams. It could be done possibly through a strategic partnership with the European Energy Research Alliance (EERA).

EURCOLD is at your disposal to find out about your solutions to these three challenges. Based on your thoughts, EURCOLD will determine its strategy at the next board meeting at the ICOLD Congress in Marseille. In addition, the Marseille Congress will be the opportunity to elect the **new president for the period 2022 to 2024 and to define the venue for the 12th European Symposium.**



With our best wishes for 2021,

Jean-Jacques Fry,

President of EURCOLD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JJFry".

Alfredo Granados,

Secretary General of EURCOLD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "AG".