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Second International Conference SmallWat07 Wastewater Treatment in Small Communities Seville, Spain, November 11–15, 2007

Editorial

The main objective of the II International Conference *Smallwat07*, held in Seville in November 2007, was to present the latest scientific progress in the field of urban wastewater treatment in small communities. About two hundred scientific papers were heard at the Conference, including a region-by-region analysis of the current situation of basic sanitation and water purification worldwide.

Smallwat07 discussed the current role and situation of wastewater treatment in small communities throughout the world by creating a space for debate so that managers, technicians and users could identify their main problems in this field and draw up possible solutions. The Conference also considered how to take further steps towards achieving the water purification objectives laid down in European legislation and to promote sustainable development through a set of measures to help reduce differences between developed and less developed countries, bearing in mind the parameters established by the United Nations in the Millennium Development Goals.

As well as the speakers, the Conference also enjoyed the participation of authorities from leading international bodies and organisations such as the United Nations International Office for the Water Decade, the European Centre of the World Health Organisation, the International Office for Water, and the Central American Water and Sanitation Network.

From all the proceedings, the Scientific Committee drew a series of conclusions that were presented during the closing session of the Conference. In general terms, they pointed out the need for better legislative development, standardisation of the processes of selection between the different treatments available for waste water generated in small communities; they also noted significant deficiencies in the specific training and qualification of professionals in this field and the need to raise public awareness of the importance of sanitation and water purification for public health and the good ecological status of our natural water systems.

The current edition of the journal brings together a selection of the best scientific papers presented at *Smallwat07*, reviewed and adapted for publication. The subject matter includes research carried out on constructed wetlands, extensive treatments, tertiary treatments and water reuse, bio-films and membrane bioreactors, anaerobic processes, sludge and sequential reactors, and management in small communities. We should underline that the selection of the works to be published has not been an easy task, in view of the quality of the papers presented at the Conference.

Full information about the Conference and the latest news about the forthcoming edition is available on the Internet site: www.smallwat.org

Inmaculada Cuenca Fernández, Managing Director
Foundation Center for New Water Technologies (CENTA)
centa@centa.es