

Mega-City Water Forum at Georgia Tech

The Georgia Water Resources Institute and the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering in cooperation with the City of Atlanta and CIFAL Atlanta co-hosted the first Mega-City Water Forum “An integrated approach to Water Resource Management: Strategies for the 21st Century” at the Georgia Tech Learning Center on May 1-3, 2006. This event was also co-sponsored by several professional associations, foundations, and corporations including the International Water Association, the American Water Works Association and Research Foundation, the World Bank Institute, the Global Environment and Technology Foundation, the Alliance to Save Energy, Veolia Water, Coca Cola, Bank of America, Western Summit, Goldman Sachs, King and Spaulding, Rockdale Pipeline, and Delta. The Mega-City Water Forum was attended by more than 85 city officials, executives, and utility managers from some of the world’s largest cities in 17 countries.

The Forum was officially opened by President Wayne Clough, Commissioner Rob Hunter (Atlanta Department of Watershed Management), and Atlanta’s Major Shirley Franklin who welcomed the participants and emphasized the urgency to secure clean and safe urban water supply and to develop innovative strategies for water supply as well as sanitation management. The Key Note Address was delivered by Paul Reiter, Executive Director of the International Water Association.



Mega-City Water Forum Inaugural Luncheon showing (from left to right) Commissioner Robert Hunter, Atlanta Dept. of Watershed Management; Axel Leblois, Executive Director, CIFAL Atlanta; President Wayne Clough, Georgia Tech; Mayor Shirley Franklin, City of Atlanta; and Paul Reiter, Executive Director, International Water Association.

The forum deliberated Mega-City water challenges from an integrated perspective. Parallel breakout sessions focused on water supply and sanitation using the United Nation's interactive and participatory knowledge management approach. The findings of these discussions were evaluated within the context of watershed management and ecological sustainability and distilled into a summary of best practices. This summary document will be available through the websites of the Georgia Water Resources Institute (gwri.org) and CIFAL Atlanta (cifalatlanta.org).

In their closing remarks, forum organizers, including Professor Aris Georgakakos, Director of the Georgia Water Resources Institute, declared the forum a success and re-affirmed their commitment to continue the dialogue on sustainable water supply and sanitation strategies for US and international mega cities.