



Académie de l'Eau

*Cardinal Paul Poupard
Foundation*

**COP 21
SIDE EVENT**

***Interdisciplinary issues related to water management
in the context of climate change***

**European Union Pavilion
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FINAL STATEMENT

Water is the mirror of humans

In his *Metamorphosis*, the famous Latin poet Ovid recalls that water is source of life and death:

- By drinking it, Narcissus quenched the thirst that his hunting wanderings had inflicted on him.
- By contemplating himself in it, Narcissus succumbed to his own image until dying of it.

Water remains one of the most powerful mirrors of human being's choices

When examining the fresh or salt waters of the world, we could see the human hand: overexploitation, misuse, pollution caused by the spill of hazardous chemical, nuclear, metallic and toxic waste, invasion of ocean waters by microbeads, bags and plastic debris, which we extract from the corpses of birds, turtles and marine mammals.

When we consider the "Water and climate" interaction, we could see the choices made by the industrial Man, to maintain, at all costs, a lifestyle which is causing excessive emissions of greenhouse gases that are responsible for climate change.

The very ones that turn water into one of the greatest threats: storms, cyclones, floods, droughts, accelerated pack ice and snow melting, sea level rising, acidification of oceans, overexploitation of aquifers, bacterial and viral contamination, are the symptoms of the great disease we are inflicting on our planet, the stigmas of our abuses of Nature.

When discovering his beauty on the surface of the water, Narcissus died of it? Thus, we discover the irresponsibility of choices made to the detriment of the poorest who nowadays find themselves in the frontline of climate threat.

The speakers of our two roundtables masterfully illustrated the realities of water issues: spiritual, ethical and geopolitical aspects, models of water policy, criticism of commodification, adaptation to its scarcity, contextualization of the resilience, responsible uses, to trigger awareness leading to concrete actions.

We therefore have the duty to reconsider the world through the prism of respect, of Nature as well as of the humankind and his dignity.

We have the duty to rethink our most intimate gestures, our tiniest gestures.

We have the duty to rethink our overall behavior.

Because nowadays no one is safe from dangers caused by climate change.

No, all of this does not only apply to others. Today, the others are us.

What brings us here is our decision to no longer remain insensitive, to no longer remain deaf, nor blind, nor muted, are we now facing the necessity to put an end to our societal or even worldwide narcissism, which is resulting in these climatic disasters.

The "climate turning point" that we are living made us radically switch to another regime of historicity.

We are mobilizing to ensure that, through our actions and our words, the voice of Water will be heard and be brought, we hope, by a humanist morality, which must pass through a reform, a mutation, a *metamorphosis* in order to pay once again a tribute to Ovid.