

IN BRIEF

Hannes Wasmer and his activity at EAWAG

Hannes Wasmer died on October 13, 2001 at the age of 62. He was at EAWAG for over 30 years and contributed significantly to EAWAG's success, its recognition in the environmental sciences, and to the development of environmental protection in Switzerland.

Hannes Wasmer joined EAWAG in 1969 as a collaborator in the Department of Waste Research, hired by the then director Otto Jaag. That same year, he became head of the "International Reference Centre for Waste Management", an institution of the WHO that had its home at EAWAG and which led to the current process area SANDEC "Sanitation in Developing Countries". In 1970, the new director Werner Stumm promoted him to the position of vice director. Hannes Wasmer was chosen primarily because of his education as a mechanical engineer at ETH-Zurich and as a sanitary engineer at the University of Berkeley, but also because of his professional experience in Switzerland, the USA, and his managerial abilities, which became apparent early on.

Hannes Wasmer was active at EAWAG until the Spring of 2001 and contributed significantly to shaping EAWAG. Since 1969, EAWAG has roughly quadrupled both its budget and personnel and has continuously increased its national and international recognition through research, education and scientific services. Despite the overall upward trend, there were a number of difficult phases during which Hannes Wasmer's leadership qualities were needed.

Over the years, Hannes Wasmer became involved in a variety of areas, always maintaining his trademark of future-oriented thinking. As Chief of Logistics, he was responsible for providing EAWAG with money, personnel, instrumentation and infrastructure. Early on, he successfully advocated liberalization of budget management and flexible, client-oriented administration. He recruited competent personnel and together with them, built an efficient organization that oversaw all areas of logistics, from human resources to building management.

In his last few years at EAWAG, he initiated and headed a common facilities center for the four institutions of the ETH domain.

As the head of consulting services, Hannes Wasmer advocated that scientific consulting should not be a one-way street from research to application, but rather an active cooperation between equal partners. Furthermore, he personally ensured that EAWAG's services were of the highest quality. He was legendary for his stringent quality control, and he was also highly respected for it. Hannes Wasmer also led demanding consulting projects himself; for example, during the aftermath of the catastrophic fire at Schweizerhalle in 1986. He immediately created a task force that offered scientific support on-site.

Over the years, Hannes Wasmer developed a high level of expertise in legal issues and had considerable influence on the development of policies within the ETH domain. He also contributed to the development of modern environmental law, particularly with respect to waste management and to accident prevention and risk management. He continuously expanded his knowledge and maintained an enormous range of expertise, from waste management, recycling and raw materials management to risk management, where he drew on his analytical capabilities and made major contributions to the development of new concepts. His activities affected EAWAG itself, but his influence was felt well beyond EAWAG. He passed on his knowledge in many lectures and courses. He was highly respected by EAWAG partners at ETH and other universities, and by the federal government, the cantons, and industry.

We have all benefited a great deal from Hannes Wasmer's activities. We experienced his visions with forward looking,



unconventional ideas, as the thinker who could breakdown complex relationships with analytical clarity, as a patron who had a deep sense for justice, as one always engaged in looking after EAWAG personnel, and last but not least, as a colleague who always put the cause above his own fame. Moreover, he was all this while a distinct, original personality. With his humanity and his efforts for EAWAG and its employees, he earned many friends. He was always trusting towards other people and, in turn, was deemed to be trustworthy by others. We will always remember Hannes Wasmer as a personality that shaped his environment and as a reliable friend.

Ueli Bundi

Ecoelectricity for Expo 2002

Expo.02 is the first large Swiss consumer to tap exclusively into sustainable electricity sources. According to a mandate by the federal government, Expo.02 had to develop a comprehensive energy plan which included the exclusive use of “naturemade star” ecoelectricity from hydroelectric power plants. The “naturemade star” label is based on the certification procedure “greenhydro” which was developed at EAWAG and signifies that the electricity was produced in hydroelectric power plants that are operated in an environmentally sound manner. The electricity supplier has created “expo.star”, a “naturemade star” certified electricity product especially for this event and will be offering this product only during Expo.02. A number of exhibitors and Expo.02 partners have decided to sign up for “expo.star” ecoelectricity.



No Danger in Goma

In early 2002, approximately 1 million m³ of lava flowed into Lake Kivu near Goma (Ruanda). There was a great concern that CO₂ and methane, which are dissolved in large amounts in deep layers of the lake, may outgas and that the developing gas cloud might suffocate nearby residents. A team of researchers measured depth profiles for various parameters and concluded that there was no threat to the population.

A. Lorke, EAWAG



New Workshop Building in Dübendorf Replaces Tüffenwies

In the construction of the new workshop building in Dübendorf that replaces EAWAG's Tüffenwies facility, ecological criteria were top priority. All of the construction materials were disclosed and evaluated be-

fore the beginning of the project. The eventual demolition of the workshop building and the materials produced in the process were also considered. In spite all of these considerations, the workshop building was completed within budget and without compromising in functionality. The new building, designed by the architectural firm of Bob Gysin and Partners AG, is a utility building with an expected lifetime of approximately 20 years. Bob Gysin sees his creation as a “light, floating box”. Transparent polycarbonate panels form the façade, enclosing the wooden construction and creating a bright, friendly atmosphere on the interior. All laboratories and offices are housed in movable red construction containers, allow-

ing maximum flexibility for their arrangement. The heart of the new building is an experimental wastewater treatment plant where new water treatment processes can be tested. It replaces the out-of-date facility EAWAG had been operating at Tüffenwies in Zurich.



BerFA, Dübendorf

Ruth Dreifuss Visits EAWAG

In October of last year, Federal Council Ruth Dreifuss visited EAWAG, along with representatives of the ETH Council. From among the broad palette of EAWAG research, the projects “Fish Net” and “Solar Water Disinfection” were selected for special presentations. The reception following the talks led to a number of interesting conversations between the visitors and EAWAG personnel. The day ended with a “water tasting” in which Ruth Dreifuss sampled a young surface water and a 30,000 year old ground water taken from a depth of 200 m.

PEAK Program 2002/2003

Under the name PEAK (practice-oriented EAWAG courses), EAWAG offers ongoing education in the environmental sciences for professionals working in the field. The

courses are based on current research and the newest findings.

More information can be found under: <http://www.peak.eawag.ch>

24–26 September	System identification and modeling with AQUASIM
7–11 October	Modeling of water flow and solute transport in variably saturated media
28–30 October	Fische in Schweizer Gewässern
29 October	Infotag zum Thema “Alpine Gewässer”
5 and 6 November	Water treatment at household level
3–5 December	Chemische Problemstoffe
20–22 January 2003	Neue Methoden der Restwasserbemessung

The language of the course title indicates the language in which the course will be offered.

S. Wey, Zürich

