



79th Annual Meeting: Three new countries join ICOLD, June 2011, Lucerne (Switzerland)



The International Commission on Large Dams held a **very successful meeting** in Lucerne (Switzerland) from May 29 to June 3. **More than 900 specialists** met to work together in the Technical Committees of ICOLD., joined by **ministers and officials from China, Africa and Central Asia**. Three new countries were accepted in the ICOLD family by the Executive Meeting : **Georgia, Armenia and Uzbekistan become the 93rd, 94th and 95th members of ICOLD.**

Switzerland participated in the foundation of ICOLD in 1928 and is an active member of the ICOLD family. The country has a **long experience in the design, construction and operation** of dams essentially for energy purpose. Almost 60% of the electricity consumed in the country is produced by hydro schemes, either as high head storage facilities or run of the river plants.

Switzerland maintains a **long tradition in dam construction**. There are 48 dams higher than 60 m, of which 25 dams are over 100 m high, including the 285 m high Grande Dixence Dam, the highest concrete gravity dam in the world.

The Swiss organizers had prepared an **International Symposium on June 1st, 2011** : Dams and reservoirs under changing challenges. During that Symposium, the Chinese and Swiss Government representatives signed a memorandum of understanding bearing on dams monitoring.

Georges Darbre, responsible for dams at the Federal Office for Energy (BFE), explained that **"The Swiss security concept is based on three pillars : a correct construction, supervision and a comprehensive contingency plan"**. It also includes the early detection of anomalies and a clear delegation of responsibilities. Darbre is responsible for the monitoring of 222 large dams in Switzerland.

During the Executive Meeting, **two vice-Presidents were elected** : Alejandro Pujol, from Argentina, and Tadahiko Sakamoto, from Japan. **Secretary General Michel de Vivo was re-appointed until 2015.**

In 2012, the **80th Annual Meeting and the 24th Congress of ICOLD** will take place in **Kyoto (Japan)**. **The 81st Annual Meeting** will take place in **Seattle in 2013**, as decided in Lucerne.

Finally, the delegates adopted a **new Constitution and new By-Laws** for ICOLD.