

## **The Government presents Catalonia's contribution to the Zaragoza Expo**

The Government has announced details today of Catalonia's contribution to the Zaragoza Expo, whose theme is "Water and Sustainable Development). The event was attended by José Cuervo, the Government's delegate to Madrid and representative of the Generalitat of Catalonia for Zaragoza Expo 2008, Manuel Hernández, director of the Catalan Water Agency (ACA), and Roque Gistau, president of ExpoAgua. Catalonia's pavilion in the Autonomous Community's building was also unveiled



From left to right: the president of ExpoAgua, Roque Gistau; the Government's delegate to Madrid and representative of the Generalitat of Catalonia for Zaragoza Expo 2008, José Cuervo, and the director of the Catalan Water Agency (ACA), Manuel Hernández.

## **The Generalitat's contribution to Expo Zaragoza 2008**

### **Expo Zaragoza 2008**

The first International Exposition following the new model recognised by the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE) will take place in Zaragoza from 14th June to 14th September 2008. It is called **Zaragoza 2008, ExpoAgua**, and its theme is "Water and Sustainable Development".

Expo Zaragoza 2008 falls between the universal expositions in Aichi, Japan, in 2005 (whose theme was "Nature's wisdom") and that in Shanghai, China in 2010 ("Better city, better life"), both organised by the BIE. The 2008 Expo therefore forms a bridge between the two.

If we exclude the Barcelona exhibitions of 1888 and 1929, Zaragoza is the nearest venue to Catalonia at which such an international event has ever been held.

The general theme of "Water and sustainable development" is broken down into three sub-themes to help understanding and to organize participants' contributions: Water, a unique resource; Water for life; and Waterscapes. There is also a fourth overarching sub-theme, of especial relevance as the Expo is an event intended to deal with issues that affect the entire planet: Shared Water.

### **General information**

The International Exhibition site is located on the Ranillas meander of the river Ebro, to the east of Zaragoza. It occupies 25 hectares and the building work now is at an advanced stage. The site is starting to take on its final shape.

The organizers expect 6.5 million visitors to the Expo during the three months that it will be open to the public. There will be more than 120 participants, including 102 states from every continent, the autonomous communities of Spain, international organisations, NGOs and companies.

## **Catalonia and its commitment for water**

The Generalitat's objective in participating in an international exhibition such as this in Zaragoza is to raise Catalonia's profile in the outside world. On this occasion, this will be done through examining how it deals with water related questions (landscape, ecological, production and leisure issues), and on explaining its water management policy in line with the European Union's Water Framework Directive.

The Generalitat's presence at Zaragoza Expo 2008 is a great opportunity to promote knowledge about Catalonia's current position in this area, and to raise awareness about the need for a change of philosophy, for a new culture of water that makes human development compatible with the preservation of the common heritage represented by our water resources.

Apart from the official contribution, there will be a strong Catalan presence at ExpoAgua. Many of the goods and services providers to the exhibition are professionals and companies based in Catalonia, such as Grup Agbar, which will supply water to all of the Expo's facilities.

### **Bodies responsible for the Generalitat's contribution to ExpoAgua.**

In charge of Catalonia's official contribution to ExpoAgua and representing the Generalitat in the organisation of the event is José Cuervo, the Generalitat's Government Delegate in Madrid.

The organisation and co-ordination of the Generalitat's contribution to ExpoAgua will be carried out by the Presidential Department's Directorate General of Corporate Information, with the collaboration of the Catalan Water Agency (ACA), of the Department of the Environment and Housing.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Housing, through the company Prodeca (Promotora d'Exportacions Catalanes SA), will be responsible for managing the space assigned to the Generalitat in the catering-dining area of the autonomous communities' pavilion, and will organise tastings of quality products during the Expo.

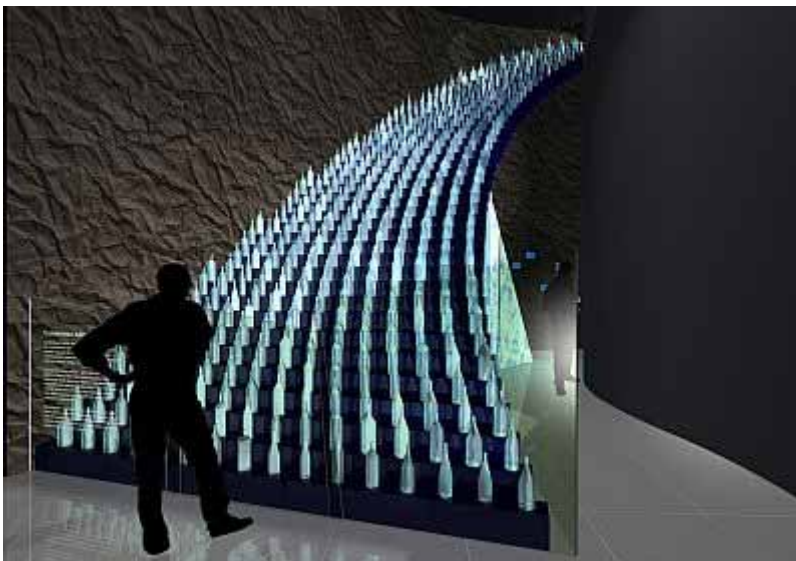
Finally, the Catalan Broadcasting Corporation (CCMA) will collaborate with the Generalitat, through a group of technology companies, in the preparation and presentation of the contents of the Catalonia pavilion.

The construction of the pavilion will involve an investment of 1,400,000 euros, financed equally by the Presidential Department and the ACA, while the Catalan Broadcasting Corporation will contribute a further 100,000 euros. Apart from this, the company Prodeca will finance the construction and running of the space in the catering-dining area.

The Generalitat will also rely on the contributions and collaboration of a great number of professionals and organisations, such as the Laboratori Dr. Oliver Rodés and the Casa Catalana de Zaragoza (Zaragoza Catalan Centre), which is celebrating its 45th anniversary this year.

### **The Catalonia Pavilion**

Catalonia will have a pavilion located in the autonomous communities building of the Zaragoza Expo 2008. The pavilions are organised in groups of four in this building, and the Catalan pavilion will be reached from a wide walkway which will also provide access to the pavilions of the Balearic Islands, the Community of Valencia and the Region of Murcia.



On 6th February the Generalitat's representative at the Expo, José Cuervo, received the keys to the space where the Catalan pavilion will be installed. It will measure 323 square metres and will include an exhibition that will allow visitors to make a "journey of the senses", following the course of the water.

The average visit to the pavilion will take 20 minutes. Expected visitor flow is five people per minute and the maximum capacity will be around one hundred people.

Swiss architect Laurent Godel is the designer of the space, while the project is being managed by Catalan interior designer Pepe Cortés (winner of the National Design Award 2006, presented by the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce and the BCD Foundation, and the FAD Interior Design Award 2007). The aim of this singular space is to provide educational information on the distinctive features of current water policy intended to address issues of economic growth and climate change, with sustainability and balance being the key to the future.

### **The exhibition**

Upon entering the pavilion, the visitor will begin touring the exhibition under a “waterfall” created out of bottles of water from all over the world, lent from the private collection of the Laboratori Dr. Oliver Rodés (founded in 1902), from Barcelona. From this point, the visitor will be submerged in a sensory journey through the waterscapes of Catalonia, obtaining information along the way.

The company DVA Associats is in charge of designing the exhibition, with the assistance of Sono, an audiovisual producer, and the director Rosa Vergés.

Visitors to the pavilion will be able to obtain all the information they want about Catalonia, its tourist attractions and its water policies from the pavilion’s staff and from other media. A website in various languages will also allow visitors to pay a virtual visit to the exhibition from anywhere in the world, giving access to information about the Expo, tourist attractions, culture, gastronomy and water policy.

### **The National Day of Catalonia**

On the 11th of September the National Day of Catalonia will be celebrated at ExpoAgua. The events will begin in the afternoon with the arrival of the president of the Generalitat at the Expo, where he will be received by the representative of the Spanish Government and the Commissioner of the Expo.

The programme will include ceremonial events, such as the raising of the flag, signing the dignitaries’ book, speeches and visits to the different pavilions, and also more popular events, such as a recital by the musician Lluís Claret, who will play the traditional tune “El cant dels ocells” (“Birdsong”) in the Expo Conference Centre, before 300 invited guests.

### **Audiovisual Show and official dinner**

On the evening of 11th September, there will be an open air audiovisual show, in front of the Aragon Pavilion, which will be attended by the president of the Generalitat and by any visitor to the Expo who wishes to attend. Grup Agbar, which is celebrating its 140th anniversary this year, is expected to be the main sponsor of the show, and Televisió de Catalunya (celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary) will broadcast the show live.

After the show there will be a tasting of Catalan cuisine for all the guests. The president of the Generalitat, the President of the Government of Aragon and other dignitaries will attend an official dinner. The two meals, the tasting and the official dinner, will be prepared under the direction of Joan Pallarès, chef of the Can Boix restaurant in Peramola, in the Alt Urgell, a Catalan county in the Ebro Basin.