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Together, building a public water future - Collective book on water remunicipalisation launched in French

Multinationals Observatory and Transnational Institute, along with five other organisations, is launching today the French version of its path-breaking book on the global experience of water remunicipalisation: *Eau publique, eau d'avenir. L'expérience mondiale de la remunicipalisation*.

The English version of the book, *Our Public Water Future*, published in April 2015 in the run-up to the World Water Forum in Seoul, showed that over the last 15 years, 235 cases of water remunicipalisation have been recorded in 37 countries, impacting on more than 100 million people. The pace of remunicipalisation is accelerating dramatically, doubling in the 2010-2015 period compared with 2000-2010.

"Launching the French version of our book is highly symbolic, since France has long been a stronghold of private water management, as well as the home of the world's leading water multinationals. Recently, however, it has turned into the epicentre of the global remunicipalisation wave", Satoko Kishimoto, lead editor and Transnational Institute water expert.

The French edition of the book includes a foreword by Célia Blauel, new President of Eau de Paris, the remunicipalised water service of the French capital, and of Aqua Publica Europea, the European network of public water operators, as well as a new chapter on the remunicipalisation of water services in Nice, France's fifth largest city, which took effect a few months ago.

More cases of water remunicipalisation have come to light since April, both in countries such as France or Spain and in countries such as India (end of private water contract in Mysore), where water privatisation is already coming under serious challenge even though it is fairly recent. The recent election of progressive municipalities in many Spanish cities, including Barcelona, with an explicit political platform of reversing water privatisation, may indicate that the remunicipalisation trend is yet to accelerate in this country.

Seven organisations - associations of public water operators, academics, unions, journalists and NGOs [1] - have joined their forces to publish this book which constitutes a unique effort to map the global wave of water remunicipalisation and to draw the first lessons of this emerging trend.

In spite of continued pressure but international financial institutions and some governments, local politicians and citizens increasingly choose to close the book on water privatisation not only because of its failed promises, but also because building a democratic and accountable public service is seen as the best solution for meeting the social and environmental challenges of ensuring the human right to water for all.

“Remunicipalisation offers opportunities for developing socially desirable, environmentally sustainable and quality water services benefiting present and future generations – issues that receive little attention by private water operators concerned with profits and shareholders,” adds the former Deputy Mayor of Paris Anne Le Strat, who was behind the flagship 2010 remunicipalisation of water in the French capital and is interviewed in the book.

“Moreover, public water operators are now joining forces within and across countries to support and learn from each other so we can achieve the human right to water for all.”

NOTE

A book launch event, organised by Eau de Paris, the remunicipalised water service of the French capital, will take place on Tuesday, 30 June at 7pm, at Pavillon de l’eau.