

“Bora Bora Island, on a sustainable development”



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(Translated by M. WALKER)

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The 21st century will be marked by a twofold challenge: that of water resources and of sustainable development.

The water issue includes a dual set of problems: the access of the residents or of the tourists to the water resources and its sustainable management.

The utilization of water resources continues to grow: the available volumes of water can hardly meet all the needs, underpinned by population growth and economic development or tourism.

In the context of globalization of trade as we know, tourism, the first economic sector worldwide, is booming.

One can imagine the consequences that the increase in tourist flows, in the space of a single generation, will have on the environment if it is unchecked.

It is therefore essential to measure the impacts of tourism on the environment and on the welfare and culture of the host populations.

It is also imperative to consider the fact that the quality of natural areas and sites is now fully part of the tourism product offered to travellers.

Who would want to continue to visit Polynesia if its coral reefs or its lagoons were no longer preserved? The environmental quality is a factor of competitiveness and development

Economic development and environmental protection should not be opposed: on the contrary, they should reinforce each other. They are fully complementary.

I believe that the action is not only possible but necessary to promote the development of tourism and a sustainable environment.

If there is a real urgency to intervene in those areas, I am conscious of the way achieved over the past two decades in this field and of the quality of the guidance, the works and the experiments performed on our island BORA-BORA.

The municipality of BORA BORA has indeed put water and the development in the heart of priorities by setting up - since nearly 15 years - a plan of action based on various actions.

In terms of drinking water:

The supply of drinking water in sufficient quantity and quality is a major axis of development

Access to safe drinking water for all of the resident population and not just on a tourist area or administrative level is a necessity.

Thus, the works done in the municipality since 1992 have provided Quality Water to the entire population.

This simple historical reminder may help account for the progress in this sector:



1989: A distribution network of non-potable water, incomplete, limited to the western area, with frequent cuts of water supply.

1992: Closure of the distribution network of potable water, thanks to the implementation of drilling

1999-2006: successive linking up of hotels located on the motus.

2001: Establishment of units of sea water desalination to meet the

increasing demand. Realization of new drillings

2006- 2007 : New desalination units to follow the increased demand

In the end nearly 9 million euros were raised for the entire project.

However access to water cannot be viable without taking into account the following items, which are major themes of reflection and accompaniment:

- ▶ Knowledge of water resources as a decision-making tool
- ▶ The mobilization and the preservation of water resources by achieving savings on water (I cite the example of the re-use of wastewater after treatment), by the promotion of techniques and channels which are less consuming in water and of higher value.
- ▶ Increased funding of studies to anticipate the setting up of new projects.

The production of drinking water from seawater added the cost price, but the adjustment which has been put in place for the pricing has kept at a sustainable

cost the supplying of the population of Bora Bora - the tourist establishments supporting a larger share of the expenses of water production.

Wastewater treatment:



Waste water treatment is also one of the key pillars of development. Indeed supplying potable water, without water treatment, does not satisfy our health expectations.

This feils must be a priority in the overall development. It is indeed necessary to finance infrastructures related to the management of water resources to meet environmental, sanitary and food safety stakes.

Thus, since 1989 nearly 20 million euros have been invested in wastewater engineering in BORA-BORA.

1989: waste water

treatment network, only an autonomous inefficient treatment was in place. The risk of pollution in the lagoon was present

1993: first waste water treatment system for hotel keepers (main producers) on matira point. Establishment of the first collective WWTP (wastewater treatment plant) in Polynesia in POVAI

1995-2000: Connecting inhabitants in the south area to the network in place; extension of the network to the West Coast and strengthening of the capacity of treatment of the station

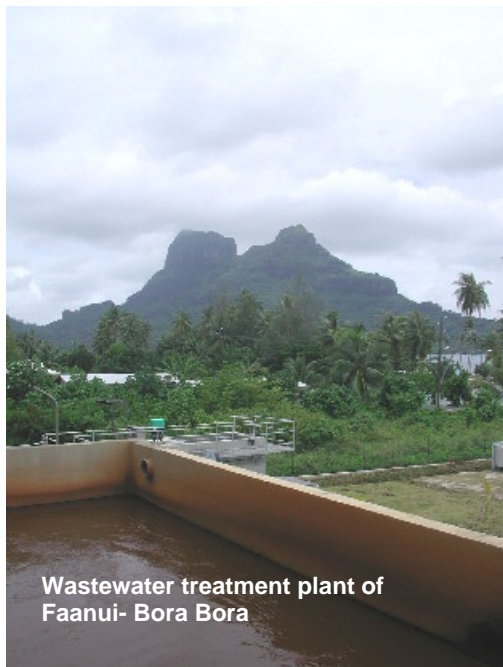
2002: Progressive connection of hotels situated on motus

2002-2007: Extending the network to the north and east areas, and all around the island. Construction of the second wastewater treatment plant in FAANUI

2005: Construction of the production unit of water for industrial use by ultra filtration, it was rewarded by the prize for innovation SUEZ.

This new water treatment service, accessible to the entire population of Bora Bora, is largely financed by tourism.

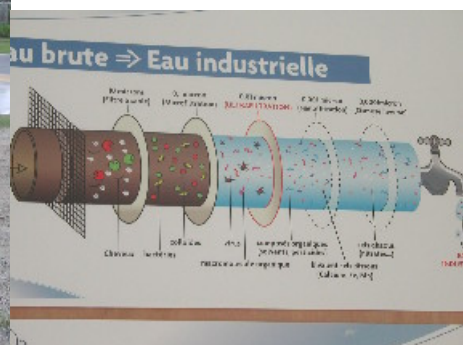
Today the island of BORA-BORA can boast of having a quality of water that meets the expectations of consumers and responds to a level of preservation of the environment ever more advanced.



Wastewater treatment plant of Faanui- Bora Bora



Wasterwater treatment plant of Povai- Bora Bora



(Photos: droits réservés)

Financing

These projects, however, do not see the light of day without the appropriate funding. The financing of infrastructure has been accompanied by measures aiming at:

- ▶ [Defining a policy of water,](#)
- ▶ Organizing a concerted and sustainable management of water resources,
- ▶ Promoting principles of access and good governance,
- ▶ Involving local actors (associations, private operators, civil society),
- ▶ Diversifying funding instruments, which may have a supporting effect on the resources mobilized, for example by developing local financial markets (hotels),
- ▶ By mobilizing help from institutional partners (State, European union...).

Information

Education and awareness are also essential principles.

The municipality of BORA BORA never stops encouraging private and public stakeholders to take appropriate steps allowing tourists and people to feel more concerned about the environment.

To this end, we must encourage and support pilot projects and best practices, such as:

The Training for tourism stakeholders to the environment

- ▶ Creating awareness among tourists and residents to protect the environment

The training in the hotel units, schools, and the media

As such the [label's blue flag](#) is a perfect example of realization, ensuring that determination.

For the last 8 years the municipality of BORA-BORA, the only one in the Pacific, is distinguished by the prestigious label that rewards efforts to provide an ideal living environment for all.

As a conclusion

Investing in the environment and in human resources is the key to a more prosperous economy responsive to the expectations of each and the needs of future generations.

It is clear that government policies on sustainable development must include concrete goals and be time-bound as for the implementation, guaranteeing real action and tangible results.

Aware of the development of civil society in recent years, I want to stress the importance of partnerships between government and civil society organizations, including companies. Partnerships are a complementary tool for promoting sustainable development, particularly in our islands, which have a high development potential.

In conclusion, the development may not be without:

- ▶ A more rational management of resources as a prerequisite to improved access to water and sanitation
- ▶ Promoting access for all services and involve more local players

Prior to the extension of services to a large number the improvement of their performance is required.

Improving the efficiency of services and provide a better leverage effect.

The issues of monitoring, of evaluation and dissemination of information remain an essential key to measure the distance covered and the one that remains to be done to achieve the goals of sustainable development.

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