



PRESS RELEASE

World Water Council and FAO step up their partnership to strengthen water and food security

Marseille/Rome, 18 June 2014 - The World Water Council (WWC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have agreed to intensify their collaboration in a bid to strengthen global water and food security.

Long-time partners, the two organizations will expand their joint work on a number of fronts, including: knowledge and technology development to enhance water productivity; the education of water management professionals and building human capital development in the water sector; and promoting sound water policymaking and better cooperation within the water and irrigated agriculture sectors.

FAO and WWC share the view that water security is essential to food security and human well-being, and acknowledge the possibility that water shortages could lead to increased local and regional tensions. The two organizations are cooperating to develop a range of activities to put water security higher on the political agenda, to mobilize political will on integrated water resources management, in order to achieve significant advances in economic development and the fight against hunger and poverty.

“Water is key to food security. Agriculture requires large quantities of water for irrigation. Agriculture is the largest user of water among all sectors. Enough water is available for our global future needs provided that efficient water management is implemented. This issue will continue to grow as the world’s population keeps on increasing”,” said Benedito Braga, President of the World Water Council. “Major changes in policy and management are needed to ensure best use of available water resources in meeting growing demands for food and other agricultural products”, he continued. “With FAO, the World Water Council will support and encourage governments to act in favor of water and food security to fight against hunger and poverty.”

“Agriculture today faces complex challenges, in particular that of producing more food while using less water and less land and adapting to changes in climate,” noted FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva. “The recently-released working group reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) present compelling evidence on the threat that climate change poses to food security. It is our duty to act now. Water -- and its sound management -- must be central in our response to these challenges,” he added.

The first major joint activity underway is a High-level Panel on Water for Food Security, led by FAO within the framework of the 7th World Water Forum, to be held in Daegu-Gyeongbuk, Republic of Korea, in April 2015.

This partnership with FAO on water and food security contributes to sustain the WWC’s strategic mission by addressing pressing issues including crop water productivity, irrigation techniques, water efficiency, water conservation and equitable access to water resources.

For FAO, the partnership is well aligned with the Organization's new Strategic Framework and Strategic Objectives which recognize the central role of water for food security and rural development and seek to pursue holistic approaches, inter-sectoral integration and partnerships at all levels to address key issues related to the sound management of this critical resource.

About the World Water Council

The World Water Council is an international organization that aims at promoting awareness, building political commitment and triggering action on critical water issues by bringing people together, through active hydro-politics, and serving as linkage between stakeholders and decision-makers.

The World Water Council, which has its headquarters in Marseille, France, was created in 1996. It brings together around 300 member organizations from more than 50 different countries.

It represents a multistakeholder water community including representatives from intergovernmental organizations, national governments, business sector, NGOs and water users associations, and academia.

Every three years, the World Water Council organizes the World Water Forum in close collaboration with the authorities of the host country. It is today the world largest water-related event. More than 20,000 stakeholders and decision makers from over 173 countries attended the latest edition, in a joint effort to build strong political commitment. The Council catalyzes collective action in between each World Water Forum and guarantees continuity and success from one edition to another.

www.worldwatercouncil.org

About FAO

Achieving food security for all is at the heart of FAO's efforts – to make sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives.

FAO has three global goals: the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and, the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations. Five strategic objectives frame the organization's work in helping its Members reach the goals they have established: ending hunger, sustainably producing and managing natural resources, reducing rural poverty, making food systems more efficient and inclusive, and building resilience.

An intergovernmental organization, FAO has 194 Member Nations, two associate members and one member organization, the European Union. Its employees come from various cultural backgrounds and are experts in the multiple fields of activity FAO engages in. FAO's staff capacity allows it to support improved governance inter alia, generate, develop and adapt existing tools and guidelines and provide targeted governance support, as a resource to country and regional level FAO offices. Headquartered in Rome, Italy, FAO is present in over 130 countries.

Press Contacts:

World Water Council

Carole Schaal Cornillet

c.schaal@worldwatercouncil.org

Tel. +33 4 91 99 41 05 or 00

Grayling : Bertrand Paul / Daniel Da Costa

Tel. +33 1 55 30 70 75 or 90

worldwatercouncil@grayling.com

FAO

Nicoletta Forlano

nicoletta.forlano@fao.org

<http://www.fao.org/nr/water>

Tel. +39 06 570 54068