



# SECURE, ADAPT, SUSTAIN

WWC STRATEGY 2016-2018



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# FOREWORD

Water is a vital resource for which there is no substitute. In the vast majority of countries it is a public good. It is also an economic resource that produces local and global benefits; a social resource that is key to our wellbeing; and a cultural resource that nurtures our spirit. Its availability varies in time and space, it has both productive and destructive impacts, and it is a resource that moves around our planet constantly with no regard for man-made borders.

Water is at the nexus of energy, food and health; and water is the key to help humans adapt to most of the impacts of climate change. This unique and irreplaceable resource must be shared between many uses and users, each of whom wants security today. At the same time it must be managed sustainably, within its finite limits, to ensure water security tomorrow and to increase resilience of communities to water related disasters

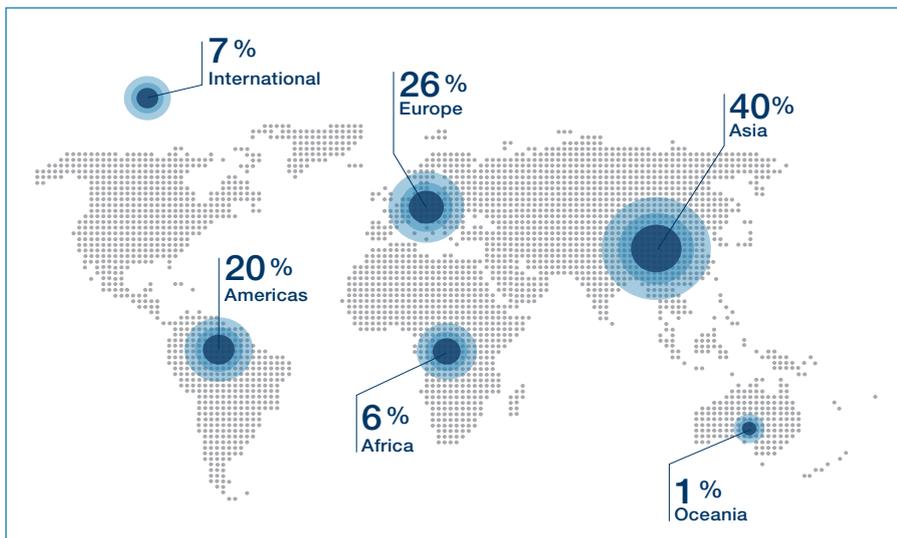
If we are to achieve security, sustainability, and resilience we have a shared responsibility to adapt approaches to water management to meet often changing social needs. Cross sectoral approaches are needed to address the opportunities and threats relating to water security and sustainability in the context of global change, rapid urbanization, and burgeoning consumer demand. Many complex processes are involved, and consistency and long-term commitment is needed in order to succeed.

Success requires fundamental changes in values, beliefs, perceptions, and political positions, not just among water management institutions, but most importantly at the highest political level.

## WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1996, the World Water Council is an influential leader. Our key focus is the political dimensions of water security, adaptation, and sustainability, and we work to position water at the top of the global political agenda.

Our mission is to mobilize action at all levels by engaging people in debate and challenging conventional thinking.



Geographic distribution of WWC Members Worldwide

The World Water Council (WWC), established under French law as an international not-for-profit institution, is independent, impartial and not tied to any special interests, working in close cooperation with member organizations, governments, and all major international organizations, both public and private. It is headquartered in Marseille, France.

The Council is guided by an elected Board of Governors who oversee its mission and values.

## WHAT WE DO

The Council's members include some of the most influential, talented and inspiring organizations in their fields, who challenge conventional thinking and are determined to make the world a better place. They are the heart of the Council activities.

Together with members and other stakeholders, the Council tackles the many challenges facing water security. It is a hub for exchange and action, contributing not only to public debates on global issues, but also to the policymaking processes that shape these discussions. Progress in forming alternative approaches to problems and in engaging the will to act on new ideas is made when all stakeholders are represented together – the power to adapt is generated by a commitment to action fostered by a common goal.

We do this by linking a strong network of influential connections, the expertise and commitment of our members, high-quality applied research, and policy-focused communication and debate. This strengthens the political-technical dialogue in which the Council believes there is the power to make change – where decision-makers at all levels and across sectors meet, discuss and take action for water security and sustainability.



## THREE SIMPLE OBJECTIVES

- 1 | We proactively shape agendas and help to mobilize political action
- 2 | We bring key influencers and decision makers together to debate critical issues facing water
- 3 | We seek to challenge conventional thinking through our public communications, events, and publications



## HIGHLIGHTS 2013-2015

### World Water Council co-organizes the Budapest Water Summit with Hungary and the UN

More than 1,200 delegates gathered in Budapest for the Water Summit during which the Council appealed to the President of Hungary János Áder and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to define a common strategy to place water at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Financial Times Water Summit

The World Water Council joins the Financial Times as founding partner for the first Financial Times Water Summit, bringing together over 150 corporate representatives, financial actors, political leaders and the broader water community to address the strategic importance of good water management for businesses.

### G7 and G20 Publications

The President of the World Water Council was invited to provide op-eds in the official publications of the G7 Research and the G20 Business Summit magazine.

### 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum Water for our Future

The World Water Forum becomes the most important political event related to water in the world, with over 40,000 entrances from 168 countries.

### World Water Council and OECD call for global action on financing water infrastructure

The High Level Panel 'Infrastructure Financing for a Water-Secure World', supported by the World Water Council and the OECD, launched the report 'Water: Fit to Finance?' at the World Water Forum. Policy makers and business leaders were asked to address how to provide water security for the future demands of the global population and global economy.

# SETTING THE SCENE

The past two decades have witnessed unprecedented economic and social progress. Real incomes in low- and middle-income countries have doubled and poverty rates have halved. Two billion people have gained access to improved drinking water. Maternal mortality has dropped by nearly half, and the share of those who are malnourished has fallen by a third, yet at the same time the number of people living in poverty has increased. This has been one of the greatest and most rapid transformations in human history; and water resources management has helped initiate much of this change. But these achievements have been accompanied by mounting pressure on our natural resources, especially water.

Over the next decade the World Water Council see a number of strategic issues that will shape the water security and sustainability agenda and debate. These issues include:

## DEMOGRAPHY

Population growth and accelerating economies mean greater demand for energy and food, further increasing the pressure on limited water and land, while creating the opportunity for new technology to use water more efficiently. Mounting competition for water within and between states, and lower per capita availability, are all real and severe challenges. In addition, increasing demands for a better quality of life will also put increasing pressure on the world's water, while bringing opportunities for new technologies to reduce per capita water use. We will need to provide more for a larger population while using no more water than currently.

The global population is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050 – an increase of 4 billion over the level in 1990.



## SUSTAINABILITY



Sustainability is often defined as living within the means of our natural systems. While it can be easily defined it continues to be a difficult concept to grasp. In adopting a new sustainable development agenda the United Nations present the many dimensions of sustainability.

The Sustainable Development Goals set out an ambitious and transformational agenda of 17 goals, one of which specifically relates to water. However, water is also highly interlinked with other goals such as those on Food, Energy, Cities, etc. It is these interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals that are of crucial importance in realizing this ambitious agenda.

*“We envisage a world in which every country enjoys sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all. A world in which consumption and production patterns and use of all natural resources – from air to land, from rivers, lakes and aquifers to oceans and seas - are sustainable. One in which democracy, good governance and the rule of law as well as an enabling environment at national and international levels, are essential for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger. One in which development and the application of technology are climate-sensitive, respect biodiversity and are resilient. One in which humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected.”*

“Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,  
United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Today, many reasons cited as to why we should be concerned with climate change relate to the impacts of water including, sea level rise, floods, droughts, and tsunamis. At the same time little effort is spent investing in measures to deal directly with, or adapt to the impacts of such events. This raises a significant public policy issue: are we raising fears and anxieties over impacts of projected changes in climate while inadvertently denying the means to cope with these impacts?

Most people on the planet live in places where water comes only in short periods during the year, while climate variability is bringing more uncertainty and changes that are projected to significantly affect the availability, predictability, and geographical distribution of water. These flow through impacts are already being felt in all countries of the world. Investment in water has been, and will continue to be, the major social action that societies can take at a macro level to deal with the exigencies of nature.

It is clear that adaptation is urgently needed, and it is closely linked to water and its role in sustainable development. Developing and adopting highly adaptive water investment, infrastructure, and resource management approaches presents genuine human and economic development opportunities. These measures, building upon existing land and water management practices, have the potential to create resilience to climate change and to enhance water security and sustainability.

In the face of climate change, especially at short decadal level, it is clear that adaptation is urgently needed.





## URBANIZATION

The world's urban population is forecast to grow by about 1.4 billion to 5 billion between 2011 and 2030. Non-OECD countries will account for well over 90% of the increase. One prominent feature of this urbanization will be the rapid growth of small and mid-sized cities alongside the development of urban clusters. The number of 'megacities' worldwide – those with more than 10 million inhabitants – will also rise in the same period.

From a water perspective, urbanization can also lock

By 2050, 70% of all the people on earth will live in an urban environment.

in water resource-intensive development paths for decades to come. Equally, uncontrolled urbanization is a factor that is increasing the number of people exposed to the negative effects of extreme weather hazards. For example, the insurance industry projects that over 60% of the world's population will be living in vulnerable mega cities near coasts by 2030. At the same time there are practical challenges as the water infrastructure and water resources management within cities adapts to ever changing social and economic circumstances. Yet, cities can also emerge as centres of opportunity, incubators of innovation and political change; they are a major driver of economic growth and investment; and they are becoming increasingly water sensitive.

## BALANCE OF POWER

New state and non-state actors and multiple new agendas are increasingly present. Banks and large multinational companies are recognizing the need for water security and sustainability. The private sector is gradually moving away from regarding water as simply part of its corporate responsibility, to see it increasingly as a core area of its business plans. Green economic strategies are being developed where the old sectoral boundaries fade away and water, energy, food, and health intersect. The impacts of rapidly growing economies on water resources are significant. With growing industrial use and increasingly large scale agriculture, produce more goods but also more waste. This is accompanied by changes in lifestyle and consumption patterns which also greatly affect water use. At the same time, globally, the balance of economic power continues to shift from North and West to South and East.

# FACTS & FIGURES



Globally **884 million** people (one in eight) live without safe drinking water and 2.6 billion (two in five) do not have adequate sanitation.

**70%** of all freshwater withdrawals are for irrigation and yet 870 million people suffer from chronic hunger.



By 2050 food demand will increase by 60% and energy by 100% if current trends continue.



More than **80%** of the world's wastewater flows untreated into the environment

**3.5 million**

people die prematurely each year from water-related diseases

**US\$2.5 trillion**

economic losses from disasters so far this century – 70% relate to floods and droughts

**250**

More than internationally shared watercourses contribute to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of 70 percent of the world's population.

**2015**

water was ranked as the highest risk impacting global society by the World Economic Forum

The costs of climate change were estimated to total nearly one percent of global GDP in 2010, or nearly

**\$700 billion**

and this is expected to double by 2030.



New urban development between 2010 and 2030 is expected to equal what was built in all of human history.

**1.3 billion**

More than people lack access to affordable, reliable electricity. At the same time, energy subsidies cost a staggering \$2 trillion, when factoring in externalities.

**1 billion**

Over people already face water scarcity, and this may triple by 2025.



The global middle class will expand from 2 billion people today to 5 billion in 2030, fundamentally altering consumption patterns.

# OUR APPROACH

Water is key to all aspects of development: food security, health, and poverty reduction, as well as sustaining economic growth in agriculture, industry, and energy generation. However, water is seen as a low political priority, receives inadequate funding, and is invariably absent from economic development plans.

# Water Leaders Summit

## Water For All: Solutions For A Better Future



## WATER AND THE POLITICAL AGENDA

Water enters the political agenda with three essential characteristics that position it as an issue that is very difficult to address:

- It takes centre stage as a problem, for example a flood, a drought, over extraction, pollution, etc.
- There is a high cost and long timeframe to solve the problem, which means less money for something else, and
- There are winners and losers, or trade-offs to be made, for example more water for cities less water for agriculture.

These essentially political characteristics of water are often exacerbated, at the national and international level, by poor governance, poor coordination between the various actors engaged in water, inadequate regulation and a lack of performance monitoring of progress against plans. Yet, there is no 'one-size-fits-all' strategy. Each country has its own unique set of physical, social, economic, political, and environmental circumstances that will determine its pathway towards water security and sustainability.

There are undoubtedly immense challenges to be addressed. Hence, the impact of an organization, on its own, can only be modest – but by combining intelligently with members and partners at many levels, and being clear about our strengths and limitations, we believe we can make a difference.

There is no  
'one-size-fits-all'  
strategy.



## THE EXPERTISE THAT WE BRING

The World Water Council brings together some 300 member organizations:

- From large corporates to local community organizations
- From governments to leading NGOs and international organizations
- From global research institutions to consultants in private practice

### Our expertise encompasses:

- Agriculture
- Climate change
- Education and capacity building
- Energy
- Environment, nature & biodiversity
- Financing
- Governance
- Green growth/green economy
- Infrastructure
- Integrated water resources management
- Monitoring and data collection

We are in an enviable position of being able to draw directly on a breadth and depth of expertise.

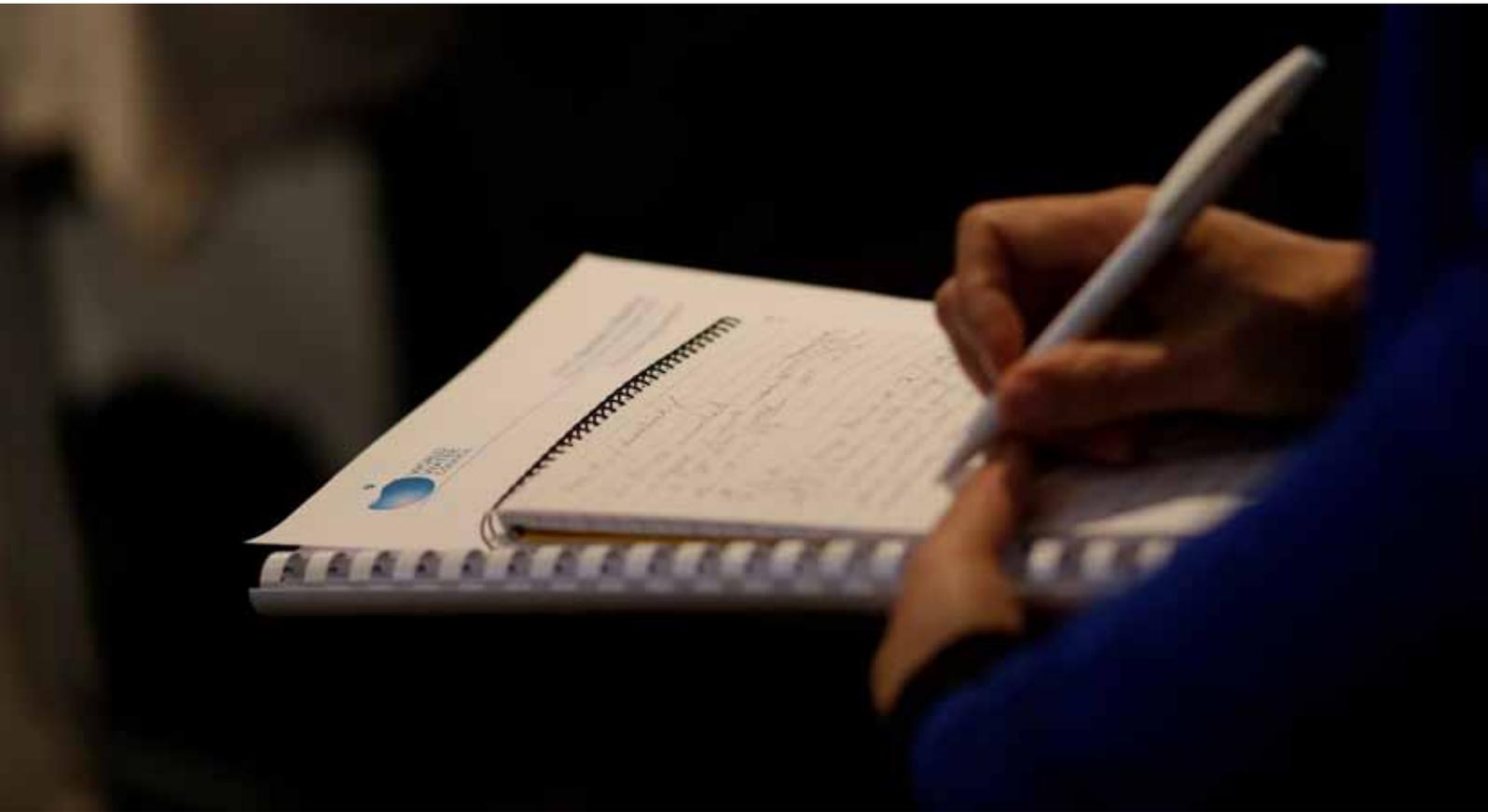
Beyond the expertise and experience of our members, the World Water Council provides a distinctive platform for ongoing engagement through the World Water Forum processes – the world’s key political water event outside the United Nations – which attracts high-level participants from governments, decision-makers, academia, civil society, and the private sector.

- Right to water
- Risk management/disasters
- Science and research
- Sustainable development
- Technology & innovation
- Transboundary cooperation
- Urbanisation
- Wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse
- Water footprint/virtual water
- Water quality/pollution
- Water supply and/or Sanitation

## OUR WORKING PRINCIPLES

In delivering our work we abide by three working principles:

- 1** | We restrict ourselves to policy-related issues and address other issues only if they are cross-cutting or controversial,
- 2** | We play the role of facilitator for cross-cutting programs and do not do work that could be done by our members, and
- 3** | We cooperate with our members to identify the policy implications of their work.



# HARNESSING OUR EXPERTISE

The World Water Council has accomplished a lot since the establishment of its first strategy. However, there is always room for refinement and innovation.

Therefore, over the next three years the World Water Council will adopt an approach based upon “continuity with change”. We will seek to increase the contribution of members, our political convening power, and our communications to play a catalytic role as a force for change. We will do this through an approach that will promote key issues and at the same time allow our membership to use the umbrella of the Council to promote their own initiatives. This will be achieved by a combination of signature and member-led initiatives.

## SIGNATURE INITIATIVES

In line with our working principles, and bearing in mind the existing work programs and directions of partners, the World Water Council has identified a number of areas where we believe we can harness the expertise and experience of our members to make a more distinctive contribution.

These are areas where we see exceptional opportunity to increase our visibility, impact, and influence with our target political audiences (governments, parliamentarians, and local and regional authorities). These are the signature initiatives of the World Water Council. These signature initiatives will be guided by Task Forces nominated by the Board of Governors, with dedicated resources within the Secretariat.

### 1 | WATER FIT TO FINANCE

Economic development, finance, and investment are issues that are of keen interest to political audiences at all levels, from government ministers to local mayors.

In the face of current challenges we are simply not doing nor investing enough. The World Water Council is committed to scaling up solutions, increasing investment, and adapting to more rapidly changing circumstances. Our work in this area builds on a longstanding interest in these issues. For example, the Council was instrumental in establishing the Camdessus Panel in 2000, which went on to shape investment in water for a decade. In 2014 the Council and the OECD established a High Level Panel on Financing Water Infrastructure for a Water Secure World, whose findings were presented to the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Korea.

#### Over the next three years we will:

- work with partners to maintain the profile of water in relation to the economy, finance, and investment
- develop, as a founding partner, the FT Water Summit as an annual platform to engage the business and investment community
- undertake, with key partners, targeted analysis to identify the barriers to finance flows from non-traditional sources



## 2 | CITIES AT THE HEART OF GROWTH

Cities are faced with critical drivers: population growth, changing consumption patterns and uncertain changes in climate variability. In concert these drivers could lead to reduced water security, increased flood vulnerability, and more degraded and stressed natural systems. However, as the pace of urbanization increases cities will continue to be at the forefront of economic growth, and will consequently draw ever growing levels of investment in infrastructure and services.

Now, and even more so in the future, cities will have to interact much more with the hydrological cycle to provide the water security essential for sustained economic prosperity. This will be achieved through the efficient use and reuse of the diversity of water resources available within the city; enhancement and protection of the health of urban waterways and wetlands; and, mitigation against flood risk and damage. It is also expected that cities will create public spaces that harvest, clean and recycle water and reduce urban heat island effects.

Equally, cities provide a particular focus for existing work to engage mayors in the water debate. This dimension of the strategy also offers opportunity to strengthen linkages with the local and regional authority processes of the World Water Forum.

### Over the next three years we will:

- work with local and regional authorities, parliamentarians and other partners, to identify effective measures to promote universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation;
- undertake, with key partners, targeted analysis to identify the financial barriers and economic opportunities of enhanced urban water security; and
- undertake, with key partners, targeted analysis to place integrated urban water management at the heart of sustainable urban development and planning



### 3 | WATER KEY TO ADAPTATION

Climate change is a daunting challenge that poses major risks to our economies, societies, and ecosystems. These risks include: damage to coastal infrastructure, shifting patterns of infectious diseases, and loss of food security. Responding to these risks and the impacts of climate variability requires measures to increase resilience and capacity to adapt to the impacts that occur, along with long term measures in the energy sector.

Throughout history, human ability and willingness to adapt has brought prosperity and social growth. This has occurred within the broader context of managing our interactions among dynamic natural, social and economic systems. Such adaptation may be incremental or transformational, and it is often the outcome of efforts to challenge conventional thinking or disruptive innovation.

To support adaptation to changing patterns of climate variability it is vital that we anticipate its adverse effects and taking appropriate action to prevent or minimize the damage it can cause. At the same time it is important to encourage decision makers to take advantage of opportunities that new patterns of variability may present.

#### Over the next three years we will:

- work with governments and key partners to elevate the role of water in adaptation to climate change on the political agenda
- work with partners to better define the financing challenges of multi-purpose infrastructure
- pursue, with key partners, opportunities for adaptation on critical water issues by challenging conventional thinking



## 4 | WATER ACTION SPEAKS LOUDER THAN WORDS

During the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum a wide range of public commitments were made. These range from the broad commitments made within Ministerial declarations to the more specific action oriented commitments made as part of the Daegu-Gyeongbuk Implementation Commitment. These latter commitments are referred to as Implementation Roadmaps, and an online Action Monitoring System has been established to track progress. This has the potential to fill a critical gap, and enduring criticism, of the World Water Forum that there is no formal mechanism to track what has been done in the intervening years.

Over the next 12-18 months it can also be expected that greater clarity will emerge on the targets and indicators that will support the Sustainable Development Goals. It is clear that the Implementation Roadmaps are well placed to make a substantive contribution to the overall means of implementation.

### Over the next three years we will:

- provide light touch oversight, monitoring, and reporting of Implementation Roadmaps
- work with Implementation Roadmap champions to integrate actions into the Sustainable Development Goals
- develop mechanisms to track the public commitments made by political actors during successive World Water Forums



# 5 | WATER

## THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

Water is an essentially political issue, built on technical foundations. Managing the interactions between the technical and political is the space where the World Water Council sees much opportunity to make progress on water security and sustainability. Helping illuminate this space is not an exact science: we must accept that searching for the perfect solution should not be the enemy of the pragmatic solution.

To deliver on our mission of mobilizing action through challenging thinking and engaging in debate, the World Water Council will continue to strengthen and deepen our political engagement at all levels.

**Over the next three years we will:**

- work with governments, and partners, to increase the visibility of water on the agenda of key multi-lateral political forums
- work in partnership with the host country to engage political actors between successive World Water Forums



## WWC MEMBER-LED INITIATIVES

Our signature initiatives focus on our key political audiences, and a set of issues that we believe will engage them directly on the issues of water security, adaptation, and sustainability. However, it is vital that we are able to generate new thinking and ideas more broadly to support this political engagement.

The World Water Council believes that by harnessing the expertise of our members, through member-led initiatives, we will be able to enhance our role as a force for change. These member-led initiatives will be deeply embedded in the expertise and experience of our members, yet it will draw members together to work across boundaries to challenge conventional thinking. In this way we can envisage a diversity of member-led initiatives across the spectrum of areas within which our member organizations have expertise.

World Water Council member-led initiatives can be proposed by any member organization of the Council. The Board of Governors will endorse the proposal, on the advice of a Task Force, and will oversee progress through regular reporting.

### Over the next three years we will:

- work with members to develop member-led initiatives that will directly support Signature Initiatives of the Council
- integrate, through existing communication platforms, a diversity of member perspectives on water security and sustainability
- work with members to increase visibility and impact of political engagement regionally, in both bilateral and multi-lateral forums
- reach out to new members to strengthen the strategic position of the Council



## ONGOING INITIATIVES

### **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)**

The Council has been exploring perspectives on IWRM and good water governance through a dedicated Task Force during the 2013-2015 mandate. The results are to be further articulated, drawing on the experience and expertise of a wide range of Council members and partners, into a Joint Paper “Integrated Water Resources Management: A New Way Forward” in 2016.

### **World Water System Heritage (WSH)**

The World Water System Heritage Program is a World Water Council endorsed initiative of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage. The proposal is currently in the formative stage, including the institutional and technical components required and funding options.

### **Smart Water Management**

During World Water Week in Stockholm the World Water Council signed an MOU with the Korea Water Resources Corporation to explore the role of technology and big data in smart water resource smangement. This effort builds on the K-water Smart Water Management Initiative (SWMI) that was launched during the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.



# EQUIPPING WWC FOR THE TASK

The World Water Council stands on a solid foundation. However, to deliver on this strategy we acknowledge that institutional change and development is necessary to ensure that we can take the organization to the next level of impact and influence.

Delivering on our strategy will require us to enhance our internal systems and strengthen our operations. We will deepen our capacity in our core support functions: human resources, financial management, information and communications technology, development, communications, and results management. We will seek to build our economic and political capacity and leverage our Board of Governors and members to play a bigger role in our global impact.



## DELIVERING VISIBLE RESULTS

WWC is driven by a commitment to outcomes that have real-world impacts. Over the past decade, we have developed a robust approach to presenting our activity. However, to go beyond activity to demonstrate impact and influence will require reinforcing and developing our monitoring and reporting. Our approach will require compelling theories of change; regular monitoring; and deliberative learning from our successes and shortcomings.

### Over the next three years we will:

- report on activity and impact every quarter
- publish a report on Implementation Roadmaps every six months
- host, with partners, an annual review of Implementation Roadmaps
- select, share, and celebrate our “Top Outcomes” through our annual report

## COMMUNICATING TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE, AT THE RIGHT TIME

WWC has a reputation for engaging a political audience, at global, national, and local levels. We will continue on this pathway of influencing decisions at the highest levels and achieving results on the ground.

We will expand our global communication capacity to raise our profile in priority media channels in priority countries. Our staff and membership network will use an integrated approach to reach decision-makers and other influential audiences. We will utilize the internet and new platforms to deliver our messages faster and to the right audiences. We will work to sharpen our messaging and storytelling capacity.



### Over the next three years, we will:

- leverage our convening power to establish new and enhance existing events to complement the World Water Forum
- place more thought-leadership commentary and garner more elite media coverage
- adapt our online presence for today's changing times
- develop a blog for greater impact, and make it open to perspectives from our members
- use social media to engage new audiences



## USING OUR TALENT: WWC'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS

WWC's Governors carry considerable influence, access, and reach worldwide. We believe that our Governors can do even more to enhance WWC's impact on local, regional, national and international water policies. Within three years, we envision that all Governors will contribute substantively to our work and will have clearly defined and active roles in supporting the organization. Opportunities to engage Governors could include participation in a Task Force, keynote participant in events, or as a regular contributor to the WWC blog.

### In the next three years we will:

- ensure that all Governors are directly engaged in supporting the work of the Council

## ORGANIZE TO DELIVER

On a day to day basis the professional staff of the World Water Council will be responsible for the delivery of this strategy. However, as our strategy reorients, there is a need to align the back office functions.

### In the next three years, we will:

- upgrade and restructure our information and communications technology to focus on seamless information and relationship management
- redefine and renegotiate the balance of outsourced communications activity to ensure closer alignment between media relations and strategic directions
- redefine membership relationship functions to focus on increasing the level of member involvement in the day to day work of the Council
- redefine existing staff functions to increase flexibility, responsiveness, and accountability

## FINANCIAL MEANS

The Council is currently in a healthy financial position, which includes generous support from our host city Marseille, membership fees, Forum fees, and ad hoc project revenues. However, there remains a need for vigilance.

### In the next three years, we will:

- change the balance between different revenue sources, thereby improving the long term financial sustainability of the Council

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