



The World Water Council is an international multi-stakeholder platform organization, the founder and co-organizer of the World Water Forum. The Council's mission is to mobilize action on critical water issues at all levels, including the highest decision-making level, by engaging people in debate and challenging conventional thinking. The World Water Council, headquartered in Marseille, France, was created in 1996. It brings together over 300 member organizations from more than 50 different countries.

www.worldwatercouncil.org

Published in November 2018 by the World Water Council.

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This report has been printed on paper from sustainable forests.

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INTRODUCTION

Water issues continue to occupy more and more space in the public eye. While often the attention is generated by a crisis situation, it can also be an opportunity to catalyze positive change through the action of political and economic decision-makers, whether it concerns safeguarding the resource, improving the management of its distribution in the face of multiple stressors, or protecting the environment.

Water security, thus, is the principle priority for the World Water Council's strategy for 2019-2021-but not water security at any price. Water security must be sustainable, designed to respond simultaneously to social, economic, and environmental pressures. It must address essential human needs of everyday life, food, education and health; it must also support economic and social development to produce the necessary goods and services to increase standards of living; and finally, it must enable water to be returned safely to nature, so as to preserve biodiversity and resource availability and maintain ecosystems. It must also be resilient, able to cope with change and absorb stresses while continuing to ensure availability of resources for complementary uses.

But, of course, water is not just an end in itself. In order to create enough momentum for large-scale systemic transformation, it will also be necessary to actively involve other sectors for which water is fundamental, such as energy, agriculture, health, finance, industry, environment, and so many others. Water must also take a more prominent place within other international frameworks and agendas, such as the ensemble of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015), the Paris Agreement on Climate (2015), the New Urban Agenda (2016), or the

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015). Indeed, it is these interlinkages and the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals, for which water is fundamental, that are of crucial importance in realizing this ambitious agenda. For, is not water, in fact, the glue that holds Agenda 2030 together?

The efforts needed to secure water for today and tomorrow are too massive to make significant progress in isolation. Indeed, it is a shared responsibility to build our water future together. Since the World Water Council whole is greater than the sum of its parts, our collective ambition for change can foster the political will and commitment that is needed so that the ultimate goal of water and sanitation for all can become a reality.

The successful implementation of the Council's present strategy will, however, depend on the active involvement of all our members and partners to overcome these continued challenges in the coming years.

WHO WE ARE



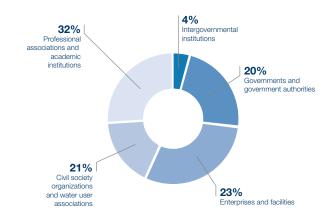
or over 20 years, the World Water Council has strived to be a Voice for Water and to position water at the top of the global political agenda. Our mission is to mobilize action on critical water issues at all levels by engaging people in debate and challenging conventional thinking.

The World Water Council, established under French law as an international not-for-profit organization, is independent, impartial and not tied to any special interests. It works in close cooperation with member organizations, governments, businesses, investors, citizens, and major international organizations, both public and private. It is headquartered in Marseille, France.

The World Water Council represents thousands of people from over 300 organizations in more than 50 countries. Together they form a unique network involving different sectors, regions, disciplines and professional fields with wide-ranging expertise and interests. Through collaborative efforts, members commit to advancing the water agenda. Their skills, experience and involvement help solve the complex water-related challenges found all over the world. Members help build the Council's strategy and shape its programs by taking an active part in its various working bodies.

The Council is guided by an elected Board of Governors, representing a balanced set of stakeholders from every horizon, which oversees its mission, values and activities. The Council is a place of exchanges and productions in a democratic, transparent, renewed and rejuvenated dimension.

College Distribution



Geographic Distribution



WHAT WE DO

The World Water Council focuses the scope of its activities around three principle areas:

- 1 Generating political influence and mobilizing political action;
- Deepening knowledge and exchanges around critical thematic issues, carefully considering social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability;
- Establishing the World Water Forum platform to catalyze ongoing collective action for water.

Some of our programs involve all three of these areas, while others may involve only one or two. However, none of these three things can be done properly without the support of the Council's members who bring their strong networks of expertise and experience. Nor can they be done without adequate communications that enable the Council's messages to be heard. Finally, the Council is dependent on a support frame provided by its governance, rules, regulations, procedures and sound financial management. The Council is successful when all these interdependent components work together harmoniously.

Additionally, the Council's core working principles prioritize work on policy-related issues and support the implication and valorization of its members through opportunities for multi-stakeholder exchange. The World Water Council seeks to create multi-stakeholder dialogue around issues for which it can help clarify the debate and catalyze positive change, through the involvement of the international community. In this respect, the World Water Council acts as a strategic vector to unify and give a strong voice to the water community and ensure its connections with other key sectors, such as Nutrition & Health, Energy, Education, and Agriculture, among others.

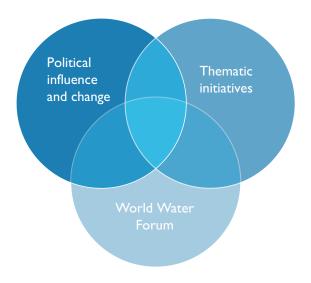


Figure 1: Conceptual Illustration of the World Water Council's activities

HIGHLIGHTS 2016-2018

The past mandate offered some of the most fruitful and prolific outcomes in the history of the World Water Council. Over the course of three years, the 9 World Water Council Task Forces and Working Groups launched 10 new initiatives, drafted upwards of 50 publications and participated in over 80 events, including the United Nations High Level Political Forum, reviewing SDG 6 in July of 2018.

These innovative and solid results could not have been achieved without the strong engagement of our members and partners, robust financial stability and management, continued access to high-level decision makers and global processes, and very dedicated and capable staff.

Main Publications

The World Water Council issued a number of important publications, including:

- Global Water Security: Lessons Learnt and long-term Implications;
- Ten Actions for Financing Water Infrastructure;
- Hybridity and Blended Finance;
- Increasing Financial Flows for Urban Sanitation;
- Start With Water: Putting water on local action agendas to support global change;
- Increasing Resilience to Climate Variability and Change;
- Water and Climate Blue Book;
- Implementation Roadmaps Progress Reports, and;
- Revitalizing IWRM for the 2030 Agenda.

Governance Commission

A major effort was carried out to review and update the Council's rules and regulations through the work of the Governance Commission. The majority of the recommendations of the Commission were adopted by an Extraordinary General Assembly in June 2018 and are now effective.

Main Initiatives

The mandate also gave rise to a number of strong partnerships, such as the Roundtable on Financing Water with OECD and The Government of The Netherlands. The Council was also involved in the creation of the High Level Panel on Water, especially supporting its work on financing issues.

One of the Council's most successful initiatives, however, was #ClimatelsWater, forming a coalition of over 60 water partners from around the globe to speak with one voice for water, especially during the annual UNFCCC Conferences of the Parties and the preceding International Conferences on Water and Climate.





8th World Water Forum

Organized for the first time in the Southern Hemisphere, the 8th World Water Forum, hosted in the city of Brasilia from 18 to 23 March 2018, marked the largest edition in history of the event, bringing water to the top of both the political and societal agendas. It was marked by a desire to put citizens at the heart of change, attracting more than 100,000 visitors to the Citizens Village. Under the overarching theme of "Sharing Water", it also highlighted the importance of sustainability throughout all its elements and convened a Business Day for the first time on the eve of the Forum.

Across 9 themes—climate, people, development, urban, ecosystems and finance, sharing, capacity and governance—over 100 sessions and high-level panels were organized around 32 topics, coordinated by over 430 organizations. Regional perspectives and specificities were also brought to light through additional sessions and reports. In addition to the other political processes, a segment was dedicated for the first time in a World Water Forum to the participation of over 80 judges and prosecutors. (For more detailed information, see the 8th World Water Forum Highlights.)

Launching of the 9th World Water Forum

Preparation for the 9th edition of the World Water Forum, to be held for the first time in sub-Saharan Africa, is already well underway. With an innovative and focused format, it will take place in the metropolitan area of Dakar during the third week of March 2021, celebrated under the over-arching theme of "Water Security for Peace and Development."



STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

n an effort to continue to focus and build on the World Water Council's substantive accomplishments from the previous mandate achieved with the support of its members and partners, it is proposed to continue to concentrate efforts on a limited number of areas where the Council can truly offer added value. These focus areas include namely water security, climate change, human settlements, financing, and Integrated Water Resource Management. Many of these efforts will also have direct relevance for the targets of SDG 6 and other water-related targets of Agenda 2030, where active promotion for the recognition of water within these other domains will be important.

In addition, World Water Forum organization remains central to the Council's activities, in particular as a platform for dialogue and collective action between stakeholders from every horizon: public, private and citizen. The 9th World Water Forum is pushing the boundaries of what a Forum can be and challenging how things can be done differently. Its preparation process is evolving so as to be more effective and may give rise to a more direct role in managing communities of practice to reach common goals on an ongoing basis. Under the overarching theme of "Water Security for Peace and Development", four priorities have been identified for the preparation of the 9th World Water Forum:

- Water Security;
- Rural Development;
- Cooperation;
- Means and Tools.

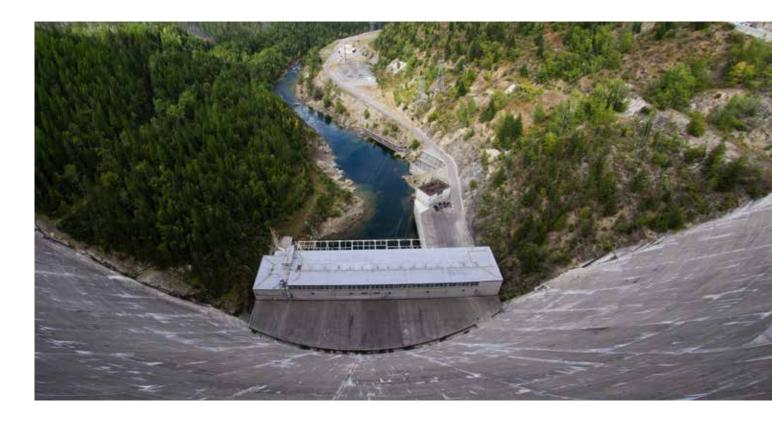
Preparing the Forum of Dakar will also position "Water for Africa" as a specific focus throughout the Council's initiatives, while strengthening the presence of the World Water Council on the African continent where needs are acute and developing stronger relationships with members and partners there. This is not to say, however, that developing a better understanding of regional perspectives from other continents, such as Asia, should not also be actively pursued.

In addition, the Council's efforts towards political mobilization remain the primary reason for its existence and involving key political actors from every level in each of these domains, and others, is essential. Likewise, we must be conscious of the interlinkages between each of these areas in order to make them work in synergy with each other, much like the way water, food, energy, health and education must be approached together, as different facets of the same central problem.

It would seem that the international water community remains too fragmented today to speak with a strong, unified voice to politicians, policy makers and other communities. The Council must play a role in strengthening the unity of this community in order to make collective contributions on water at different political levels, including within the United Nations, for the achievement of the SDGs, which has now become the global development reference and universal common language, particularly in developing countries. This voice should also reach those involved in the implementation of the Paris and the Sendai Agreements.

Finally, as described above the World Water Council's substantive work is supported strongly by its extensive communications efforts, the relationships built with its members, and sound administration and financial support. It is equally important that the roles and responsibilities of each of the Task Forces and Working Groups be clarified in order to render their work more efficient and effective.

WATER SECURITY



The World Water Council understands Water Security as referring to "the availability of an adequate quantity and quality of water to sustain socio-economic development, livelihoods, health, and ecosystems." Water Security rose high on the political agenda during the 8th World Water Forum with the book published by the World Water Council and the Government of China on Global Water Security. The subject will also feature prominently during the Forum of Dakar as one of the four main priorities and as part of the overarching theme "Water Security for Peace and Development."

While Water Security can be conceptualized by the various SDG targets, it also implies a wide range of cross-cutting areas outside of SDG 6 that should not be neglected, including, for example, trade and transport impacts on water resources. Additionally, increasing water security depends greatly on implementing appropriate solutions for adaptive and sustainable infrastructure.

- Seek to promote the messages developed within the Global Water Security publication;
- Continue to study the policy implications of water security around the globe, including for peace, and design actions in cooperation with governments to promote water security, in particular those aligning with SDG Targets 6.1, 6.4, and 6.6, in particular towards the preparation of the 9th World Water Forum;
- Develop messaging about the interconnections of water-foodenergy-health-education, with attention to gender aspects, highlighting water as a prerequisite for the achievement of SDGs 2, 7, 3, 4, and 5;
- Develop activities related specifically to water scarcity for agriculture, food security and nutrition, linked to the achievement of SDG2, including supporting the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG).

¹ Global Water Security: Lessons Learnt and Long-Term Implications, World Water Council, 2018.

WATER AND CLIMATE CHANGE



limate variability is bringing more uncertainty as to the availability, predictability and geographical distribution of water. It also poses major risks to our economies, societies and ecosystems. Indeed, the costs of climate change are expected to reach 1.67 trillion Euros by 2030 according to a study done by the United Nations University. Investment, infrastructure and resource management approaches in water will be necessary to adapt to these changes in nature and to continue to ensure sustainable development.

In this perspective the Council, with the support of its members and partners, encourages governments to implement national policies and plans that prioritize the water sector as a means of creating resilience to climate change while enhancing water security and sustainability. Over time, the World Water Council should seek to generate momentum for nationally based activities that contribute to improving significantly water security and climate resilience, hand in hand, in a large number of countries across the world.

- Drive and pursue work with individual countries or groups of countries through the informal mechanism of the Working Group on Water and Climate launched at the 8th World Water Forum by the World Water Council and its partners;
- Continue to follow and contribute to UNFCCC processes and prepare the international water community's messaging annually by organizing the International Water and Climate Conference;
- Continue to lead and strengthen the activities and outreach of the #ClimatelsWater initiative and its communications activities;
- Lend support to other climate initiatives and emphasize the role of water for the achievement of SDG 13.

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, A HUMANITARIAN IMPERATIVE

he global population is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050, with most of the growth occurring in small and mid-sized cities in developing countries. and Africa potentially hosting twelve of the world's 20 biggest megacities by the end of the century. Population growth, migration, and accelerating economies mean greater demand for energy and food, further increasing the pressure on limited water and land resources. At the same time, the impacts of urban development and industrial pollution on our water resources need to be taken into account. However, the opportunity is also present for new technology to encourage more efficient use of water and to keep the environment healthy. In any case, we will need to provide more for a larger population with the same amount of water, and this will require financing, investment, as well as more efficient management.

For the new mandate, we chose to focus on communities and settlements, rather than cities alone, in an effort to incorporate a broader set of issues and linkages, including rural ones. Indeed, examples and approaches on a variety of scales may serve to enrich the applicability of our work to different contexts. Building relationships with Local and Regional Authorities remains crucial for creating the political will to manage water in communities in a holistic way. Also, since more than 80% of the world's wastewater is discharged untreated into the environment, sanitation must stay at the forefront of our preoccupations.

Climate change, population growth, the surge in vulnerable populations, and the exacerbation of certain conflicts affect nearly 800 million people and are causing a continuous escalation in the frequency and intensity of humanitarian and migratory crises. In fragile states, people are four times as likely to lack access to basic drinking water, and twice as likely to lack access to basic sanitation, with obvious repercussions on public health. Altogether, more than 180 million people lack access to basic drinking water in such humanitarian contexts.



- Continue to collaborate with Local and Regional Authorities and their networks on an ongoing basis on a variety of subjects, especially in Africa, relating in particular to the achievement of SDG Target 6B and SDG 11;
- Pursue work on the subject of improving sanitation and its financing, in particular in Africa, with a broader set of members and partners, relating in particular to the achievement of SDG Targets 6.2 and 6.3;
- Explore water, energy and land interdependencies in urban areas.
- Seek out cooperative partnerships to reinforce the capacities of communities to improve their disaster preparedness and resilience in the event of emergency situations, humanitarian crises and forced migration, as related to the achievement of SDG Target 11.5, while encouraging a shift from crisis management towards risk management;
- Give a voice and support to WASH Humanitarian actors, through international fora and initiatives.

FINANCING WATER



B ased on a long history of work on financing issues ever since 2003 with the Camdessus Report, the World Water Council is committed to pursuing its work in this domain with its members and partners. Economic development, finance, investment, and valuing continue to be issues that are of keen interest to political audiences at all levels, but the stark reality is that we are still not investing enough in the water sector², and that must change.

- Strive to overcome barriers to finance flows for water through continued work with OECD and the Government of The Netherlands on the Roundtable on Financing Water;
- Based on the Council's previous work, continue efforts on a series
 of framing notes, studies, and actions, which may also contribute
 to the Forum of Dakar on the issue of financing;
- In addition to investing in hard measures, emphasize the importance of investing in soft measures, such as knowledge and data availability for sound decision-making;
- Initiate and support follow-up actions related to financing and valuing as outlined in the outcome document of the High-Level Panel on Water, the Valuing Water Initiative, the High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, and related analytical frameworks, and as related to SDG Target 6.A;
- Continue building relationships with a broader set of finance actors to support global efforts, such as the finance community, World Economic Forum, Sanitation and Water for All, etc.

² Investment in the Water Sector is currently 7% of the Overall Development Assistance, and 4% of the Humanitarian Financing Envelope (OECD-CRS 2016 and UNOCHA FTS, 2017).

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



With the cooperation of its members and partners, the World Water Council has also been exploring perspectives on Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and water governance, which led to the publication of a Challenge Paper and a High-Level Panel on IWRM during the 8th World Water Forum.

The Challenge Paper explains that IWRM should be regarded simply as the means to an end, rather than the objective in and of itself. It deems IWRM to be an overarching, demand-driven, adaptive strategy for change that needs to be able to be applied to specific, local contexts, rather than a single, one-scale, prescriptive response. This requires an integrated approach across sectors and users, involving a wider range of stakeholders both inside and outside of the water box.

- Support work relating to SDG Target 6.5 on IWRM and transboundary cooperation, including in responding to waterrelated disasters at the basin level;
- Explore linkages to other areas such as governance, nature-based solutions, biodiversity, and groundwater;
- Consider freshwater-seawater interactions, including the reduction of plastic pollution and source to sea pathways, as related to SDG 6.3 and 14.1.

WORLD WATER FORUMS



The 9th World Water Forum in Senegal will encourage an examination of water challenges through an African lens, while building on the results of other events from around the world. The Forum will be organized differently than ever before to provide responses developed through dialogue and political outcomes around each of the 4 main priorities: water security, rural development, cooperation and means and tools. Indeed, the involvement and the substantive contributions of the Council to the Forum of Dakar (political and thematic dimensions, Dakar 2021 Initiative, financing, etc.) constitute a real priority for the Council, going beyond the actions carried out for the two previous Forums. Organizational, structural and decision-making instances will also require significant attention.

very three years, the World Water Forum becomes the key meeting place for stakeholders involved in water issues. They are major forces in developing and extending networks and bringing new stakeholders together to tackle existing challenges, in addition to generating political traction for water issues.

The preparation, unfolding, and follow-up of each Forum is an ongoing activity of the World Water Council Secretariat that mobilizes all staff and requires the active participation of and constant interaction with the entities in the host country, as well as with all its members and partners. Indeed, each of these stages provides an opportunity to foster permanent dialogue with relevant stakeholders, creating communities of practice and catalyzing collective action towards common objectives, both inside and outside the water box so as to create interlinkages and accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Special efforts should be made to involve World Water Council members in the preparatory process and to address their needs. Indeed, members could be called upon as regional relays to support the Forum's preparation and contribute to it.

- Develop and implement a follow-up mechanism for the 8th World Water Forum outcomes;
- Co-organize the 9th World Water Forum in a way that
 accommodates flexibility since the concept and design continues
 to evolve—keeping in mind the design of the best possible
 participant experience, especially for World Water Council
 members;
- Conduct the selection process for 10th World Water Forum host country and city, considering implications in format modifications for future editions;
- Call upon the experience and perspectives of a World Water Partnership Advisory Board of former Forum host countries to help guide ongoing processes.

INVOLVING KEY POLITICAL ACTORS AND THE FORCES OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Water is seen generally as a low political priority, although it is key to all aspects of development, and vital in emergency responses. Often, it is only considered when it becomes a problem, requiring a high cost and long timeframe to solve and putting it in competition with other political priorities.

The Council aims to make water the first political priority for any decision-maker faced with tough choices and local contexts. The President of the World Water Council as the organization's political figurehead will be directly responsible for reaching out to political actors at the highest levels to convince them of the necessity to put water first.

In addition, specific activities can be pursued to strengthen and deepen our political engagement at all levels, with the support of our members, to make those political messages and transformative agendas land regionally and apply to local contexts. In this way, involving key political actors, both inside and outside the water sector, in all our initiatives will be a cross-cutting activity, for which our members can be a vector and can contribute to building trust amongst stakeholders.

To support and foster this from country level, the World Water Council aims to give a voice to civil society, or the aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions that acts in the best interest of citizens, through its most active members. But also, it works towards privileging citizens' responses and making heard voiceless stakeholders, such as youth, women, indigenous peoples and disadvantaged populations.



- Integrate specific activities to identify and involve key political actors at every level and from a diversity of sectors within each of the Council's thematic initiatives, especially those from Africa, with the support of Council members;
- Maintain relationships with various levels of political decisionmakers, intergovernmental bodies, mechanisms and initiatives and multilateral political forums to solidify the good will that has already been expressed for the cause of water;
- Finalize the work initiated on the Right to Water and Sanitation;
- Develop a program to address equity concerns that involve youth, women, indigenous peoples, and disadvantaged populations and communicate their responses to water challenges more broadly;
- Create synergies with UN-Water members and partners in order to influence policy and technical advisories;
- Engage actively with the High Level Political Forum and other intergovernmental mechanisms of the UN pertaining to the implementation of SDG6 and other water-related targets with a focus on water governance issues;
- Remain open to the development of new potentially beneficial partnerships, both globally and regionally, in particular with entities outside of the water sector.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATIONS



The massive efforts expended to clarify the debate on various issues are for naught if we are unable to communicate those ideas clearly to each other and to the outside world, in particular to policy makers both inside and outside of the water sector, the international water community and the media. Good communication is also essential to maintaining strong working relationships, raising awareness, and creating traction for the cause of water.

The Council has progressively built its communications efforts and outreach, culminating in particular with huge impact generated through the 8th World Water Forum event. The Council will continue to build on this success to increase visibility for the institution and its activities, as well as create broader awareness for the issues and responses, in cooperation with its members and partners and the media.

- Demonstrate the Council's thought leadership and convening power through the development and systematic use of simple, strong and consistent messages that can be adapted to different circumstances and used by everyone in order to raise awareness and catalyze change;
- Support substantive work and 9th World Water Forum preparations with unique and adapted campaigns and products that improve visibility for the issues;
- Reinforce tools and platforms for better information management;
- Build on the positive outcomes of our press and media outreach;
- Develop the Council's digital and online presence further, including website development, social media and video;
- Continue regular reporting on activities, both internally and externally;
- Ensure World Water Council presence at selected global public events and conferences, while supporting its members to represent the Council regionally;
- Renew the World Water Council and World Water Forum image, branding and visual identity;
- Look into new administrative measures to strengthen the Water Policy Journal as a forum for worldwide policy reflection and debate.

VALUING OUR MEMBERS AND THEIR INITIATIVES



As mentioned before, the World Water Council mosaic is enhanced by the diversity of its membership base. But, our members are more than just names on a roster. We need to strengthen continually our relationship with each one of them to understand what their preoccupations are, where their expertise lies and how we can respond to their expectations. This will require developing member-specific communications efforts and tools on an ongoing basis and providing regular opportunities for exchange, such as annual members meetings.

In addition, member initiatives create a valuable space for our members to reach out to others, work together, and learn from each other. They also create greater visibility for our members' work and an opportunity to showcase their rich expertise. Under the oversight of the World Water Council Bureau, member initiatives offer the flexibility to accommodate new and emerging issues emanating from our membership.

- Develop a strategy and value propositions, in collaboration with World Water Council members, to diversify the Council's membership base in a deliberate way, especially in Africa;
- Build stronger relationships with members and seek their effective support and involvement in a wider range of Council activities, while supporting them in their own activities and outreach through immediate access to appropriate tools;
- Encourage members to engage in the World Water Forum preparatory processes;
- Improve our information management to communicate more reliably and regularly with our members and their networks;
- Continue to support the World Water Systems Heritage program proposed by ICID as a member initiative;
- Develop a new water security and capacity building initiative proposed by the Asia Water Council as a member initiative;
- Consider new proposals for member initiatives to be implemented.

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION



The Council's decision-making instances work in close coordination with the staff in our Secretariat to ensure a healthy working environment and core support functions, such as ongoing administration, human resources, supply and equipment acquisition, logistics, and financial management.

- Maintain the smooth operation of the Secretariat and the recruitment of an Executive Director and other staff as needed;
- Continue to provide institutional support to the General Assembly, Board, Task Forces, working groups, Bureau and President's Office, including the nomination of new youth delegates;
- Study issues related to the Council's rules and procedures through the ongoing work of the Governance Commission;
- Ensure sound financial management and seek to diversify revenue sources.

CONCLUSION



The strategy proposed here is in compliance with the World Water Council's Constitution and By-Laws. The present strategy also gives rise to a workplan of specific actions to be undertaken that will guide the work of the WWC Headquarters in a more detailed manner.

We would encourage our members to express their interest to participate in any of the initiatives detailed in this document and would welcome their contributions.

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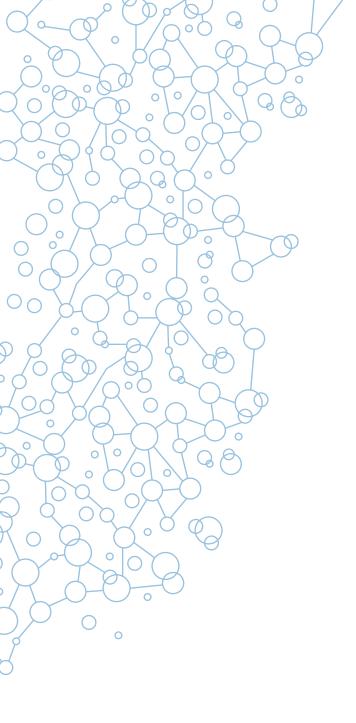
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