

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to present to you the report of the synthesis team from the Dialogs for Water and Climate that took place in the Fiesta Americana Hotel in Cancun, parallel to the activities and negotiations of the sixteenth meeting of the parties of the UN Framework on Climate Change.

The Dialogs for Water and Climate were very successful. Over 400 participants actively participated in the dialogs coming from all over the world, and coming from international, national and local organizations, from governments, civil society, research institutions and from the private sector. Indeed, CONAGUA, the initiator, can look back on very rich dialogues. On behalf of the water community, I would like to congratulate CONAGUA in having achieved its objectives to not only organize an excellent WATER and CLIMATE programme parallel to the COP-16, but also stimulate the WATER community to bring the WATER message into the COP community, and to stimulate the development of an agenda and partnerships on adaptation to climate change in the water community itself.

In the synthesis group we have been discussing what exactly we would bring to you. This was not an easy ride. We agreed not to come with another technical statement; instead, we have compiled an agenda for actions as it emerged from the dialogs.

**Point 1:**

Climate science informs us that the water cycle will be the main medium through which climate change expresses itself. Water-related impacts will be felt by everyone. Many crucial sectors related to water will have to adapt to these changes: agricultural production practices must adapt to changes in water availability, hydropower production must be climate-proofed and livelihoods of vulnerable societies and economies (coastal, urban and rural) must be adequately protected against water-related hazards and changes in water quality and availability. Changes in the water cycle will affect almost all people and economies in deltas, mountainous areas, small islands, arid regions, etc. The water cycle is key or the overarching natural resource to be taken into account by everyone.

It is therefore essential that water and the impacts of climate change on water resources and services are considered in development planning at the regional, national and local scales in all water-affected sectors.

**Point 2**

We have heard also here in Cancun that despite progress in climate science, meteorology and hydrology will not be able to provide exact information on the magnitude and times of changes in the water cycle, in precipitation, run off, sea level rise, etc. Forecasts and predictions will continue to carry levels of uncertainty. From the perspectives of development of societies and of sectors, the water cycle has become an additional uncertainty. For some that may bring opportunities, but for most it will increase vulnerability and risks.

The question is then, how to address these uncertainties and risks? One thing is clear, traditional engineering for food security, water security or energy security on the basis of historical data will not do any longer. Development plans have to address what can be called the 3 Rs: Robustness, Resilience and Recovery. Societies, economies and sectors will have to be robust to withstand water-related changes, have to be flexible to avoid or absorb changes, and have to be able to quickly recover from shocks and risks and go on. I compare this sometimes with Mohamed Ali. He was able to beat Sony Liston because he was robust when the blows came, he was resilient in dodging blows, and he recovered quickly and fought on.

To secure water, food and energy security as well as social and economic safety under climate change, the 3Rs are essential and require a Blue Revolution.

In other words, under the changing climate, it is of prime importance to assess and reduce water-related risks and vulnerabilities and introduce the 3R concept in all sectors including agriculture, energy, health, environment, urban planning, coastal defense etc.

But, what does this all mean for operations? This is where the three Is come in: Infrastructure, Information and Institutions.

### **Point 3:**

Under infrastructure the dialogs discussed and called for new concepts such as: “Building with Nature”, “Living with Water” (equally floods and droughts), technological innovation such as the energy factory that transforms wastewater into energy, decentralized water systems, more watts and crops per drop, cities for the future, etc.

### **Point 4**

Under Information, the dialogs discussed the availability and need for tailored climate services (meteo and hydro information), water-related vulnerability and risk assessment methodologies, decision making processes under uncertainty and making optimal use of indigenous traditions in the broad sense.

Information needs to be developed, supplied and tailored to the needs of the users.

### **Point 5**

Under Institutions, the dialogs discussed the need that water becomes an integral part of development planning and implementation, as well as sectoral planning at regional, national, municipal and local levels.

Institutional arrangements should be adapted to the new conditions, which implies close linkages between ministries of environment, water, energy, agriculture, planning, health, etc., including linkages between NAPAs, PRSPs, NSDSs and IWRM plans.

### **Point 6**

Lastly, the dialogs also discussed that water is an important aspect of mitigation and should be taken into consideration when following up this agenda.

This in a nutshell are the agenda points that emerged from the Dialogs on Water and Climate. Mexico and the participants of these Dialogs will elaborate and carry forth this agenda to cope with climate change. The water community is ready to act, and already acts, subsidiary to the climate change negotiations, and looks forward to closer cooperation with the climate community.

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