

**UN-Water Day at Rio+20  
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Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM):  
Benefiting countries for a sustainable and equitable future  
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It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today on behalf of the Global Water Partnership and to contribute to Water Day at Rio. First and foremost, congratulations to UN Water for so successfully leading this work. Today marks the release of the UN Water Report on Water Resources Management, which was specifically produced for this Conference, and to which GWP contributed through our 13 Regional Water Partnerships, 80 Country Water Partnerships and over 2500 Partner Organizations, as well as at the global level, where we were a member of the working group.

GWP, as some of you may know is an intergovernmental organization that was established in 1996 and has, since then, supported the development and implementation of IWRM and efficiency plans - our mission is the sustainable development and management of water resources at all levels. In 2003, we carried out a baseline stakeholder survey, immediately after the WSSD, and followed this with another survey in 2005, which was combined with work by others to form the first UN-Water report on IWRM planning and was submitted to CSD16 in 2008.

I would like to make three brief points about the report, make one plea and end my comments with two recommendations.

### About the Report

The 2012 UN-Water report provides a breakthrough in reporting on WRM. It assesses progress on the application of integrated approaches to water resources development, management and use as set out in Rio 20 years ago. It also indicates progress on IWRM planning as set out in the WSSD Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and confirms that this

*“remains relevant and must be a key component of emerging strategies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and a key element in building climate resilience.”*

The report is extensive, addressing social, economic and sustainability aspects and, for the first time, financial and investment aspects. Also, it makes a link between means (integrated approach) and ends (water security and growth). The survey shows that most progress is on the means (integrated approach) and that more work is needed to show how this is being translated into sustainable ‘ends’.

Finally, the report paves the way for a more strategic approach to monitoring and reporting on this critical issue. It shows that a more formal and structured reporting mechanism is needed if we are to make wise decisions to achieve water security for sustainable growth. We must however keep this as simple and practical as possible.

### Need for Real Leadership

One of the key objectives of water day is to demonstrate to decision-makers in particular that some of the major challenges facing humanity today are water resource-related. Unfortunately water is the natural resource that is most likely to be taken for granted in overall economic planning – Decision-makers often focus their attention based on the demand of their many stakeholders - on the immediate and albeit extremely important development issues such as water supply and sanitation, primary health care, power in the home, food on the table, without remembering that **water resources** are a crucial and key ingredient to getting those sustainable solutions to the people and water resources have to be developed, managed, shared and protected in the process. They have also paid little attention to maintaining the quality of water resources, perhaps forgetting that excessive use, mismanagement and pollution now will lead to severe problems for the next generation – our children. And, they have paid little attention to the potential for their IWRM plans to be tools for successful climate adaptation responses.

Indeed decision-makers need to openly recognize the crucial role that water resources play in socio-economic development affecting all sectors and take the necessary and collective

action to ensure its sustainable management. We don't want to wait another 20 years for decision and policy makers to be bold enough to take action. No one said that this is easy, but the fact that managing water resources is complex and requires us to work with each other in and among government, civil society, donors, private sector, should not be used as an excuse for inaction. Indeed, the time to stop taking water resources for granted is now. Tomorrow will be too late! The Bonn Nexus Conference on Water, Food and Energy Security has helped to refocus our attention on how water supply/sanitation, food and energy security are interconnected - through water resources. Let us also remember that in order to have sustainable basic water supply, sanitation, and hygiene services which we are all advocating strongly for, there has to be a sustainable resource.

### **Recommendations**

GWP fully supports the recommendation to capitalize on the progress illustrated in the report, and ensure continuity through a specific target: *establishment of a global reporting mechanism on national water resources management which UN-Water is committed to facilitate and coordinate.*

In addition, the GWP recommends that each country be encouraged to develop by 2015, *specific targets and timeframes for preparing and implementing a program of action and financing strategy to take its integrated approaches to water resources management forward for completion by 2030. UN Water could then monitor progress in countries.*

Congratulations again to UN Water for leading the preparation of this report. GWP is proud to have been a partner in this endeavor. Thank you.