

# WWAP Information Brief

United Nations  
World Water  
Assessment  
Programme



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Educational, Scientific and  
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UN WATER

## The 4th edition of the UN World Water Development Report (WWDR4): **‘Managing Water under Uncertainty and Risk’**

The United Nations World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) is hosted by UNESCO, and brings together the work of 28 UN-Water members and partners in the triennial World Water Development Report (WWDR). This key UN-Water report provides an authoritative overview of the status, use and management of today’s world’s freshwater resources, and highlights the main challenges of tomorrow.

Although some progress has been made in certain countries and regions towards achieving water-related development goals, very little has changed overall in terms of the recognition of water’s central role in all aspects of economic development and social welfare. Furthermore, the world is changing faster than ever in often unforeseeable ways, creating additional uncertainty and increasing risks. As such, the relationship between the quantities of available water and shifting future demands can no longer be approximated solely on the basis of historical experience. These new uncertainties and associated risks create additional challenges to allocating and managing water resources. In this context, concerted action is needed more than ever to ensure that water’s many benefits are maximized and shared equitably. Business as usual is no longer an option.

This flagship Report analyses the interactions between water and the

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pressures from decisions that drive demand for water and impact upon its availability. It offers tools and potential response options for leaders in government, the private sector and civil society whose decisions depend upon – and ultimately affect – water, and which can help them address current and future challenges in the face of growing risks and uncertainties. It suggests ways in which institutions can be reformed, capacities improved, and institutional behaviour modified. In addition, it explores possible sources of financing for the investment in water which is urgently needed.

WWDR4 represents a milestone within the series of WWDR reports. This 4<sup>th</sup> edition introduces a new thematic approach to the WWDR4 (*Managing Water under Uncertainty and Risk*), and directly reports from the regions, highlighting hotspots. It reports on various challenge areas and has been mainstreamed for gender equality, which is addressed as a critical issue throughout the Report.

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