

## **International Hydrological Programme**

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# **WORLD WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME**

Sub-item 8.3 of the provisional agenda

### **Summary**

This document constitutes a report on WWAP's activities for 2016-2017 and planning requirements for a comprehensive edition of the World Water Development Report (WWDR).



## Introduction

1. The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) coordinates the work of 31 members and 39 partners of UN-Water to produce annually the UN World Water Development Report (WWDR). The Report is a flagship publication of the UN System on freshwater, providing an authoritative picture of the state, use and management of the world's freshwater resources. As of 2003, four triennial reports were produced focusing on a comprehensive assessment of the resource. Following a UN-Water (coordination mechanism for UN organisation working on water) decision, since 2014, the comprehensive report has been replaced by an annual report focussing on a specific theme and provides the thematic backbone' of the chosen theme for World Water Day.

2. The overarching aim of WWAP in producing the WWDR is to provide water managers and key policy and decision-makers with the most recent evidence-based knowledge to facilitate their efforts in developing effective policies and strategies. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Italy and UNESCO on WWAP describes the overall objective of WWAP accordingly (see articles 4 and 5 of MoU presented at the end of the document as Annex): *'To meet the growing requirements of UN Member States and the international community for a wider range of policy-relevant, timely and reliable information in various fields of water resources development and management, in particular through the production of the WWDR.'*

## Ongoing and recent activities of WWAP

3. WWAP plays a critical role in fostering global processes to achieve water security and sustainability through three thematic "pillars":

- a) Synthetizing evidence-based knowledge to achieve water-related objectives of the 2030 Agenda (Pillar I);
- b) Advancing transformative water management through transdisciplinary projects (Pillar II);
- c) Informing Policy-Science Dialogue to enrich decision-making on water (Pillar III).

The headings below provide synoptic outlines of past and current WWAP activities under each programmatic pillar.

### 4. Pillar I:

- a) With the existing funds provided by the Government of Italy, WWAP successfully coordinates the process for the yearly production of the WWDRs and its dissemination. This includes printing and translation of the Reports and side publications (Executive Summary, Facts and Figures) in several languages and the organization of milestones events to present its technical findings.
- b) In 2016-2018 thanks to the financial support of a committed pool of donors, WWAP has coordinated the work of a UN-Water Task Force for the production of the first Synthesis Report on SDG 6. The project has been co-financed in kind by the Italian Government funds.

### 5. Pillar II:

- a) With financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and in partnership with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), WWAP is executing a water and gender component for the IW:LEARN project aiming at incorporating gender-sensitive approaches in the design and execution of the GEF International Waters portfolio for the benefit of recipient countries.
- b) WWAP is executing a water and gender component for UNESCO-IHP's project GGRETA (Governance of Groundwater Resources in Transboundary Aquifers) applying

the WWAP methodology in three selected aquifers in Central Asia, Central America and Southern Africa.

c) With the funds provided by the Government of Italy, WWAP initiated a research pilot on the water scarcity, migration and employment nexus. This provides a good basis to design projects with Member States and other stakeholders to strengthen resiliency to water stress at national and regional scale.

6. Pillar III:

a) With the funds provided by the Government of Italy, WWAP produces effective awareness raising campaigns to disseminate the technical findings and recommendations of the WWDR series through multiple means (including selected policy dialogues and events), achieving remarkable results (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002452/245229E.pdf>).

b) With the funds provided by the Government of Italy and ad hoc contributions from other donors, WWAP supported the activities of the UNESCO PCCP initiative (From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential) on water cooperation, transboundary waters and hydro-diplomacy (until 2016). This programme created a vast amount of training material and reference publications on conflict and dispute resolution on shared water resources.

c) With the grant provided by Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND), WWAP implemented a Capacity Development Project on Water and Sustainable Development resulting in two training workshops for African water professionals held at the UNESCO premises in Perugia in 2015 and 2016. The project has been co-financed in-kind by the Italian Government funds.

d) With the funds leveraged from the Italian Ministry of Environment, Unilever and Edison, WWAP designed and executed an educational project based on the WWDRs for the Universal Expo 2015. The project “The Water Rooms” consisted in five short movies and inspirational monologues available free of charge for anyone interested in raising awareness about the use, management and governance of water resources. The project has been co-financed in kind by the Italian Government funds.

e) With the Italian Government funds, WWAP has produced and published more than 70 national and regional case studies over 15 years to share best practices and lessons learned. In 2015 this activity was stopped due to insufficient funds.

## Financing

7. The Government of Italy has been generously financing WWAP since 2007, with a total contribution of USD 22.2 million until 2016. WWAP has also received contributions from other partners as project-based funding.

8. Since 2008, the WWAP Secretariat has been hosted at the UNESCO Programme Office for Global Water Assessment in Perugia, Italy, within premises kindly offered by the Region Umbria. In 2013, the Memorandum of Understanding regulating the relationship between the Italian Government and UNESCO on WWAP was ratified by the Italian Parliament and became national law. The agreement stipulates a provision of annually EUR 1,653,000.00 (approximately USD 1,910,000). The open-ended nature of this law provides an uninterrupted flow of base funding to UNESCO to support the core functioning of WWAP. UNESCO established a special account for WWAP to receive the Italian funds as well as contributions from other partners.

9. The core funding from the Italian Government provides a good financial base, as it covers (see Table 1): i) the yearly production, publication and limited dissemination of the annual WWDR series; ii) the basic operational functions of the WWAP Secretariat; and iii) the provision and maintenance of the premises.

**Table 1:** Allocation of funds based on agreed upon Italian contribution of EUR 1,653,000 (USD 1,910,000)

Budget item	Fund allocation in USD
Staff costs	1,430,000
Knowledge Products (Pillar 1)	150,000
Trans-disciplinary Projects (Pillar 2)	20,000
Policy-Science dialogues (Pillar 3)	80,000
Running costs, maintenance, missions etc.	230,000

10. However, WWAP Secretariat has been working with lower allocations for a number of years when the full funding was not received.

11. In order to fully implement its mandate and to boost the Programme's potential as neutral and authoritative knowledge broker on crucial fronts, there is need to increase and secure additional sources of funding (in addition to project-based financing). The estimated total resource mobilization target amounts to USD 4,260,000 per year – which includes the Italian core funding and in-kind contributions by the Regione Umbria – to be achieved through annual and/or multi-annual contributions from a pool of donors. Therefore, the annual funding gap that needs to be leveraged to reach the total resource mobilization target is USD 2,000,000 per year.

### **Comprehensive Water Assessment Report**

12. The IHP Bureau requested at its 55<sup>th</sup> and 56<sup>th</sup> sessions a comprehensive WWDR, similar to the ones produced from 2003 until 2012, which ranged from 600 to 900 pages (4 to 6 times longer than the current thematic Reports). Such a report would provide a more holistic picture of the state of the water resources and not be focused on one theme; it would be coherent with the mandate assigned in the MoU with the Italian Government (see Annex): “interpret and regularly prepare the WWDR series, on the global water situation with regard to water availability (both in terms of quality and quantity) and its uses, and on the likely future changes of water availability and uses in relation to global drivers, in order to provide early warning to avoid potential water related conflicts”. Finally, it would be an important landmark publication considering also the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The proposal is that the comprehensive report would replace the annual version every five years. Understandably, production cost of such a report would not be comparable to current expenses for the annual WWDRs.

13. Estimated resources needed for a comprehensive report in addition to the existing core team, which will have to continue their full time occupation in producing the annual thematic report, would include, but are not limited to: a) Two senior professionals experienced in large scale data analysis and synthesis using global distributed hydrological and water resources modelling systems, supported by consultants working in partner institutes developing such models; b) two scientific editors covering the full thematic breadth, c) Specialized authors who would work on various chapters of the Report (to fill possible content gaps which the contributing UN-Water members may not be in a position to fill), d) one senior and one assistant publication specialist who would coordinate the publication aspects of such an extensive Report. In addition to human resources requirement, printing and distribution and dissemination costs would be substantially higher. These additional resources were part of the production costs when the annual budget of the Programme was USD 2.5 million (amount of the fund provided by the Italian Ministry of Environment, which financed WWAP from 2007 to 2012 under a FIT agreement, before the signature of the MoU with the Italian Government in 2013).

14. It is envisaged that the comprehensive report would be largely web-based (i.e. very limited hard copies would be produced). It would be complemented by side-publications (also as hard copies in different languages), such as, an executive summary (8 pages), a synthesis report (ca. 40-50 pages) and a series of stakeholder specific key messages (2-3 pages for politicians and community leaders/ business community/ financiers/ youth/ spiritual leaders/ lay-public etc.).

15. The Report will be developed in a participatory approach involving UN-Water Members and Partners, UNESCO Water Family, leading scientists, prominent experts, relevant associations and groups (e.g. insurance companies, water user associations etc.), advocacy specialists, Member States (e.g. contributions in the shape of concise case studies) etc.

16. A minimum additional budget of 1.2 million Euro has been estimated for the production of the comprehensive water assessment report. This will include related communication and outreach activities (global and regional launch events).

17. For the WWAP Secretariat to start planning for the quinquennial edition(s), the first one scheduled for 2021, it is necessary that WWAP receives pledges of support (cash or in-kind) from Member States when the idea is presented to UN-Water for their endorsement. Cash contributions for this purpose (or other complementary activities under recently established WWAP multi-donor partnership) can be made to WWAP special account whereas in-kind technical support would entail seconded international water experts/publication specialists working temporarily at the WWAP Secretariat.

#### **The process in selection of topics of complementary WWAP publications:**

18. During the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the IHP Bureau, Member States requested clarity on the selection of topics of complementary WWAP publications.

19. WWAP, as a part of WWDR production, follows the international agenda and identifies issues of critical importance (i.e. contemporary challenges). These are either proposed to UN-Water for consideration as theme for World Water Development Report or further developed by WWAP through concise publications (see the abovementioned Pillar II).

20. WWAP submits its publication proposals (including the WWDR series) to UNESCO's publications board for review in terms of originality, budget, multilingualism, author diversity, intended audience and public-use objectives and quality control measures. The procedures and rules of the UNESCO Publication Board are followed strictly; the drafts undergo external and internal reviews, and the check and evaluation of gender mainstreaming made by the Gender Focal Point of the Water Division and by the UNESCO Gender Division. WWAP often reaches out to its professional peers to request further evaluation of scientific rigour and solicit comments. WWDR, as a UN-Water publication is reviewed and endorsed by 31 UN Agencies. Tentative titles the Secretariat foresees to develop in 2018-2019 (pending that necessary funding is secured) are:

- Groundwater governance and gender policies in transboundary contexts
- Regional monitoring of Gendered Water Data
- WWAP Water and Gender Toolkit for Sex-disaggregated Water Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting (updated edition)

21. Other titles might come up depending on realisation of project proposals.

**Annex.** Parts of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Italy and UNESCO on WWAP:

ARTICLE 4

**Objectives and Functions of the UNESCO Programme Office hosting the WWAP Secretariat**

1. In accordance with the mandate accorded to it by UN-Water, the WWAP Secretariat shall have the following overall objective:
  - To meet the growing requirements of UN Members States and the international community for a wider range of policy-relevant, timely and reliable information in various fields of water resources development and management, in particular through the production of the WWDR.
  
2. In accordance with the mandate accorded to it by UN-Water, the WWAP Secretariat will carry out also with the support of its donors, the following main functions, *inter alia*:
  - through its access to a wide range of water resources information, help Member States assess the efficiency and effectiveness of their water policy decisions and programmes and monitor the implementation of various internationally agreed water related goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDG);
  - interpret and regularly prepare the WWDR series, on the global water situation with regard to water availability (both in terms of quantity and quality) and its uses, and on the likely future changes of water availability and uses in relation to global drivers, in order to provide early warning to avoid potential water related conflicts;
  - develop the conceptual and methodological framework for internationally comparable data and indicators for water resources;
  - assist Member States to build and improve their capacities to collect and analyze data of relevance to their water policy initiatives;
  - analyze data in partnership with policy-makers and researchers, and promote wider and more informed use of data for policy purposes at different scales.

ARTICLE 5  
**Potential Joint Activities**

The Parties may also collaborate on resource mobilization for WWAP activities and, subject to the availability of additional funds, the Parties may cooperate in consultation with other donors to implement the following additional activities, *inter alia*, within the framework of WWAP:

- 1) Disseminating the results of WWAP by producing various means of effective communication and public education tools in the official UN languages;
- 2) Developing specific indicators as well as data bases and information gathering, analysis and dissemination systems;
- 3) Developing geo-referenced water-related global data bases;
- 4) Enhancing, developing and linking water-related simulation models for the better understanding of the global drivers on water related natural and social change at regional and global scale, particularly for data-scarce regions;
- 5) Developing regional, sub-regional and national WWAP case studies with Member States;
- 6) Assisting regional UN entities, such as Economic Commissions, and national projects to produce Regional Water Development Reports underpinned with regional data bases;
- 7) Further developing the conflict resolution component of WWAP;
- 8) Organizing major regional and national WWAP capacity-building and training programmes to enable Member States to launch their own National Water Assessment Programmes in conformity with the WWAP methodology;
- 9) Developing and testing educational material at all levels based on WWAP findings as a part of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development and the UN Decade "Water for Life".
- 10) Working towards implementing the relevant outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).