

ANNEX 1 Wake Up Call on Water

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Peace Palace, The Hague, 21 March 2013



Water is fundamental to human existence. Everyone knows. But while everyone can agree on the importance, consensus is a lot harder to find when it comes to making the tough choices that are needed in order to manage and share water properly.

Picture 2050...

This is the world as we would like to see it. In 2050, over 60% of the 9 billion people on the planet live in water-secure cities. The rest live in water-secure rural areas. The basic human right to water and sanitation is universally fulfilled. Also the bottom billion live in dignity; urban and rural dwellers, whether in slums or in formal settlements. Gender equality is reality. Water is shared to satisfy the needs of all. This has fostered society's resilience.

We couldn't have done this without massive investments. Since 2010, over 3 billion people have gained access to water that is truly safe and over 4 billion to effective sanitation that protects them and their environment. And those who already had access in 2010 can now be sure it is sustainable after an investment of around 1 trillion USD worldwide, most of it in urban areas, most of it in the countries in Sub Sahara Africa and South Asia that needed it most. Even larger investments have been made in protection against flood risk.

We could not have done it without making tough political choices. Guaranteeing enough water for people, food, energy, industry and ecosystems globally, meant difficult trade-offs nationally. Doing so nationally required tough choices locally. Water stressed areas have stopped over-consuming water to produce food staples. Instead, they import food reliably from places with good rainfall or very efficient irrigation, most of it through regional trade. Alternative employment has been created for farmers who cannot make a living from intensifying agriculture. Several large dams were built. But others were not, because their costs for certain groups did not outweigh the benefits for others. Urbanisation of water-unsafe areas that could not be protected from floods stopped. Cross-sectoral planning helped to make these trade-offs.

We could not have done it without engaging women, men and those who had been voiceless before, communities and different levels of government in better water governance. We could not have done it without partnerships between the public and the private sector and civil society, across all sectors of the economy. Farmers manage their land better and no longer pollute water resources. They have enhanced soil fertility and groundwater recharge, and have helped reverse the depletion of groundwater resources in over 25% of water-stressed countries.

We could not have done it without better policies, stronger institutions and better implementation and monitoring. The needs of the bottom billion and marginalised groups are better addressed. Water is allocated equitably and transparently across sectors and international boundaries. Solid data on water demand and availability are the basis. Cross-sector and transboundary cooperation is the mechanism. And allocations are effectively enforced. Evidence-based decision making has become the standard. Water is priced to reflect its real price. As a result the social, economic and environmental benefits of water have been optimized while inequalities have reduced.

We could not have done it without innovation. Water productivity in agriculture – by far the largest water consumer – has increased by an average 25%. Nonetheless, in order to feed a world of 9 billion agriculture globally consumes more water now than in 2010. Managing water stress is critical. And yes, the planet has warmed up by more than two degrees. This has been disastrous for many. Yet people and economies have learned to deal with this. Citizens, ecosystems and economies have become more resilient. We retrofit and build our cities and infrastructure to cope with the new rainfall patterns, to

collect and re-use water after it has been used. We have reduced fatality rates and economic damage from floods and droughts by 25% by effective early warning systems and other disaster risk reduction measures.

We could not have done it without a fundamental change in mindset, inspired by youth, religious leaders and champions for water security. We could not have done it without respect for planetary boundaries. Economic development has a smaller water footprint now than it used to. Consumption patterns have become more water conscious. Inequalities have reduced. And even though we are 9 billion people, and use 50% more water than in 2010, much of the extra water involves reuse of water that was used before. Successive uses of water upstream to downstream have been optimized. Again, better water governance is critical. The degradation of ecosystems has stabilized in parts of the world and been reversed in others. We use natural buffers like mangrove swamps to protect us instead of cutting them down or draining them like we used to. Our waterways and coastal zones are cleaner and fisheries thriving because waste is being reused or treated rather than dumped into rivers and lakes. In fact, waste has become a valued resource for fertilizer and energy. And industries no longer discharge toxic waste into water bodies. Education changed the mindset and behavior of billions around hygiene at household level. The concept of the circular economy – inspired in the first place by the water cycle – has been put into practice. We use water well, we reuse it, and then we use it again. Technology transfer and communication have spawned and spread innovative water usages globally.

What triggered the paradigm change?

For one, the achievements between 2000 and 2015 under MDG 7c demonstrated that a common goal, consistently measured can make a difference. The vision of universal access to safe drinking water helped mobilise political will, triggering public support and mobilizing investments. This success turned out to be a stepping-stone towards realizing the ambitious vision of a water-secure world post-2015.

The social media revolution of the 2010s opened up new platforms for citizens' participation in political processes across the world. Citizens realized, after a series of impactful floods, droughts and pollution events that uncertainty around future water availability was no excuse for inaction now. They pressured politicians and governments to rise to the occasion. So did certain companies. It was this joint pressure that gradually inspired political leadership at national and local levels.

The public sector *had* to get its act together. Eventually it did. Some cities, certain countries and several basin organizations led the process. They built the required capacity. They enforced regulations for industries to treat their wastewater adequately. They ensured that water productivity in agriculture increased. They allocated water resources to maximize their social, economic and ecological benefits. They ensured that the costs of water security were recovered. And they were in it for the long haul. This brought others on board that had not been in the frontline for a water-secure world yet. Over the course of several decades, this created the groundswell that turned a water-secure world from a fantastic dream into plain reality...

It is time to act now. It is time to wake up to the enormous challenges of a water secure world and finish the unfinished agenda of fulfilling the basic human right to drinking water and sanitation for all.

Wake up political class ... make those tough political choices, locally, nationally and internationally which go beyond the next election results! Your inaction will cost society, economies and ecosystems dearly!

Wake-up administrators ... enforce existing laws and help political leaders to design enforceable rules!

Wake-up finance ministers ... track development not just by GDP but by ecological and social wealth too!

Wake-up finance officers in all sectors... allocate enough budget to maintain infrastructure we've built!

Wake up citizens ... join the global movement for the "Great Transition" to a water secure world!

Wake up consumers ... take responsibility and reduce the water footprint of what you eat and wear!

Wake up CEOs ... treat your wastewater and ensure water security in all links of your product chain!

Wake up religious leaders ... inspire the change of mindset needed for a water secure world of 9 billion!

Wake us up youth ... let your creative solutions for a water secure world resonate!

Wake up scientists ... develop water smart innovations!

Wake up farmers ... guard the fertility of your soils, promote recharge and enhance water productivity!

Wake up entrepreneurs ... create markets for water smart innovations, turn waste into a commodity!

Wake up International Financial Institutions ... invest in water smart policies and institutional changes, capacity building and spread know-how!

Wake up private banks ... invest responsibly, ensuring financial returns, long term sustainability and equity among users!

Wake up UN ... ensure that water security features prominently in the post 2015 agenda!

Goals and Process Development of the Wake-up Call for Water

The Wake-up Call for Water is the result of the inspirational Multi Stakeholder Dialogue, that took place on 21 March 2013, preceding World Water Day 2013. A draft had been prepared in advance, inspired by the online thematic debates 'Prioritising Water Post 2015' facilitated by The Broker and by the online Global Thematic Consultations on water, including conferences held in Monrovia in January and Geneva in February 2013.

The target audience for the Wake-up Call is the wider public with an interest in development and water issues. The Call will reach the public through (social) media and outreach activities by participants and their organizations.

The Call will be presented to members of the High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Development Agenda who will be participating in the High Level Forum on WWD in The Hague on 22 March 2013.

The aim of the Call is to deliver a clear message with one voice, coming from a diversity of women and men, representing stakeholders that have participated in the Global Thematic Consultation on Water in the post-2015 agenda.

The Call is short. It presents a vision, describes the challenges ahead, and calls the world to action.

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